

Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network meeting report

[Gender and Diversity / Southeast Asia / October](#) 2015

Background to the Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network

Throughout 2015, the Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network has been growing and gaining momentum. From a recommendation to create a regional network during the Southeast Asia Gender and Diversity Forum in November 2014, a TOR was drafted and this was presented at the 12th Annual Southeast Asia Red Cross Red Crescent leadership meeting in February 2015. Since the leadership meeting ten National Society leaders have endorsed both the network and have elected a gender and diversity focal point in their National Society. Since the endorsement of National Society Focal Points, communication within the network has taken place predominantly through an 'e'-mailing list, as well as through an introductory teleconference which was held in September 2015.

Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network Meeting

The Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network Meeting took place on Friday 9th October from 8.30am to 1.30pm. The meeting was attended by 11 gender and diversity focal points/representatives; 10 from Southeast Asia National Societies and 1 from IFRC in the Pacific.



Group photo from the network meeting: apologies to Khun Chamnong, Thai Red Cross Gender and Diversity Focal Point who does not appear but was in attendance earlier in the meeting. Apologies to Ms. Charis Chan Singapore Red Cross Gender and Diversity Focal Point who was unable to attend the meeting.

Attendees at the Network Meeting

| Name of Focal Point/Representative | National Society | Position in National Society |
|---|--|---|
| Datin Hajah Siti Hajar Bte Pokss Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mohd Yussof | Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society | Director for Gender and Diversity |
| Ms. Mom Chanthy | Cambodian Red Cross | Deputy Director of Health Department |
| Mr. Agapito da Silva | Cruz Vermelha de Timor Leste | Organizational Development Coordinator |
| Ms. Andreane Tampubolon | Palang Merah Indonesia | Head of Restoring Family Links Sub Division |
| Ms. Ketkeo Oupalavong | Lao Red Cross | Advancement for Women – Mother and Child Work Division |
| Mr. Saiful Izan Bin Nordin | Malaysia Red Crescent | International Humanitarian Law, Legal and International Relations |
| Ms. Khin Khin Shein | Myanmar Red Cross Society | Director of first aid and services division |
| Ms. Norwina Eclarinal | Philippine Red Cross | Officer In Charge International Relations and Strategic Partnerships Office |
| Khun Chamnong Sangmahachai | Thai Red Cross Society | Assistant Secretary General for Personnel |
| Ms. Tran Thi Quy | Vietnam Red Cross | Social works department |
| Mr. Lesu Waqaniburotu | IFRC Pacific | Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Manager |
| Ms. Christina Haneef | IFRC South East Asia Regional Delegation | Southeast Asia Gender and Diversity Officer |

Objectives of the meeting

An introduction was given by IFRC (interim chair of network) to highlight the purpose of the face to face meeting and to agree on the agenda and some objectives. Some key points included:

- The meeting being the first time focal points met face-to-face since their election into the role
- It would provide a space for information sharing, peer-to-peer support and to highlight the work being undertaken in the region with regards to gender and diversity.
- To provide a platform to support each other's activities, to celebrate success and to discuss lessons learnt.

- One of the key aims of the network would be that it becomes a sustainable platform and face to face meetings are one way to work towards this.
- The meeting would allow the opportunity to discuss expectations and hopes for the network and to create an action plan for 2016.
- To elect a chair from among the focal persons to take the network forward, whilst all focal person have a key role in the network as well as acting as the link between IFRC and the National Society, within the National Society as well as externally.
- A priority for 2016 is to strengthen the collaboration between the members of the gender and diversity network.

Group discussion

The first agenda item was to discuss the role of a focal point within the National Society. For this participants discussed the following points.

- Terms of Reference for the focal point and based on this what they believe the responsibility of a National Society Focal Point is
- The key responsibilities and expectations from the regional network
- What support the focal points need to perform their role

Feedback from each focal point highlighted the following areas in terms of the Focal Person's role and expectations from the network:

- Focal points should ensure co-ordination and follow-up within the National Society with regards to gender and diversity issues
- Sharing reports at the country and regional level.
- Ensuring gender and diversity is seen as a cross cutting issue, the focal person is responsible for: obtaining information from their colleagues in the National Society; to update colleagues and to report back and share with other focal points in the regional network.
- To have a clear understanding of what needs to be done within the National Society to increase gender and diversity integration.
- There can be confusion as to where gender and diversity falls, it was thought that it should be in OD but focal points have been appointed from different units so ensuring this is clear within the National Society.
- The phrase gender and diversity is familiar but it is important to do more as focal points to ensure that gender and diversity is taken more seriously.
- It is very important for the focal person to share their experience from their National Society.
- Focal persons would be responsible to make or facilitate links with government counterparts and ministries responsible for gender and diversity. However it was highlighted that this can at times be difficult.
- Gender and diversity should be inclusive and not exclusive. It would be interesting to have external representatives attend the networks meetings. Perhaps, on occasion, ICRC, external NGOs or agencies. Also other members of the National Society to attend if appropriate and to have IFRC attend because they are a key stakeholder. In addition, options to invite the chairperson from other regional networks e.g. from the Pacific or South Asia.
- We should ensure we look at Red Cross "value & character" to integrate gender and diversity

- We must ensure we increase visibility of the network to other stakeholders e.g. relevant networks within the National Society, the RCRC Movement, governments and NGOs, and connect better with these stakeholders.
- We need to look at the timing of the meeting to ensure it is feasible for all members.
- Look at how the network can be linked to ASEAN
- Use the network to support or explore options regarding pledges with other National Societies and governments up to and following the 32nd International Conference.

Support required to focal points included:

- Human resources within the National Society to operationalize gender and diversity initiatives, that have been highlighted in National Society strategies and plans.
- Need to have the backing from the decision makers in the National Society who would champion gender and diversity from within the Board.
- Support from other focal points, including sharing of experience and solutions from other National Societies.
- Need to have an action plan for the network to guide its functioning.
- Support in knowing how to convey messages of gender and diversity to others in each National Society
- Support in understanding how to integrate gender and diversity into plans of action, programming and how to prioritize this.

Entry points and action planning

Network members then looked at the exercise conducted during the Training of Trainers (5-8th October). From the key entry points outlined in the groups they expanded on these to include information regarding the type of support needed, a tentative timeframe and how they could monitor and evaluate these plans. The aim was for the plans to bring together opportunities and entry points for the integration of gender and diversity, that will complement and feed into the formal action planning processes of National Societies. The aim would be for this to link to the overall Regional Action Plan for the network.

Communications within the network

In the first discussion, ideas and expectations around ‘information sharing’ ‘collaboration’ and ‘peer-to-peer’ learning were prominent. As such discussions followed on the best ways to achieve this. One important way of keeping communication was through the ‘e’-mailing list which was preferred to be kept to the network members only. From this the focal points would then be responsible for contacting other members of the National Society and PNS representatives who are interested.

The teleconference held in September was through Webex. This was seen as a good platform to share information and present PowerPoints on specific pre-agreed topics however it was not seen as the best platform to hold discussions. A preference from the group would be to limit the number of people calling in as this can cause disruptions with the connection. Therefore it would be decided in advance of each teleconference whether to invite external members to the network meeting (ie. from National Society or PNSs) if the teleconference agenda/topic was particularly relevant to those staff. However the focal points would be the main participants of the

teleconference and would feed back to the rest of the National Society. Skype was seen as the cheapest means of communication – other methods were suggested such as whatsapp or Google Hangout, for members to stay in touch in a more informal group setting.

Collaborations with ASEAN were discussed as a potential connection for the regional network. However it was seen as being too soon as the network is still starting out. A priority was made to strengthen connections within the countries first e.g. with ICRC and other agencies and strengthen collaboration between network members before discussing other avenues for collaboration.

32nd Red Cross Red Crescent International Conference

One request for an agenda item before the meeting was to have an overview of the conference and a discussion around the pledges and resolutions. A short powerpoint presentation was given regarding updates on the International Conference related to sexual and gender-based violence as well as what National Societies could do to engage their governments and National Societies to support the joint IFRC and ICRC resolution on SGBV.

Discussions focused on the pledging system as well as the disability inclusion strategy. Members discussed whether their National Society would be pledging and the idea of a joint pledge between National Societies. Some had already agreed to pledge with a PNS and others would need to revert back after the meeting.

As information regarding the resolutions and pledges have evolved in the lead up to the conference these have been conveyed via e-mail from IFRC to the network members.

Representative from IFRC Pacific

In addition to the focal persons from Southeast Asia, Lesu Waqaniburotu, Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Manager, from IFRC in the Pacific attended the network meeting. The Pacific network was created in August 2015 and has 8 National Society focal point members as well as IFRC Representatives and they had recently held their first face to face meeting. Lesu presented an overview of the network and developments to date. Some developments included the Fiji Red Cross developing IEC Materials with UN Women on preventing GBV at community level as well as Vanuatu Red Cross and IFRC developing a “Pocket Guide” to Gender and Diversity in Emergencies during TC Pam. The guide was not used during TC Pam, but in recovery assessments and will form part of the volunteer emergency packs for future emergencies.

Some common plans and expectations between the Southeast Asia Network and the Pacific Networks were evident, including the emphasis on peer-to-peer learning and developing common gender and diversity-sensitive tools, as well as training and capacity building. It was highlighted that as Timor Leste is often involved in Pacific Island Forums that this was a good opportunity to bridge the two networks and to share insights into the types of work ongoing in both regions. The importance of looking at how we can measure the “impact” of the networks was also raised and can be further discussed in the next network meeting.

Election of Network Chair

Until this point IFRC was acting as Interim Chair of the network. During this meeting the members all decided on an election process and voted for a Chair person. It is a pleasure to now welcome the Chair of the Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network as **Mr. Saiful Izan Bin Nordin from Malaysian Red Crescent Society**. The network agreed that the position should be held for a period of two years before a new election process takes place. The idea of having a Secretary was discussed but not felt necessary by the members. IFRC will take on the responsibility of taking minutes of the next network meeting.

Regional Action Plan

The networks members agreed on an action plan for 2016. This outlines some key events over the next year and activities that the network can work towards together. This can be revised and added to at the next Regional Network Meeting which has been planned for May 2016. Please see the Regional Action Plan attached at the end of the report and a summary of this below.

Next steps for the network

- The next annual meeting will be in May 2016 after Red Cross Red Crescent day on the 8th May 2016.
- It was suggested that this be held alongside a gender and diversity refreshers training or that the refresher training be held later in the year, rather than another TOT. Maximum three days for the refreshers training and two days for the network meeting. Proposed location is Kuala Lumpur. The Network Chair is responsible for collecting suggestions from the network members as to what the training should include- to ensure that it meets the needs of the network members. The Chair will also be responsible for developing the agenda for the network meeting with feedback from all focal points.
- Teleconferences will be held once a quarter – currently planned for February, August and November 2016. The next teleconference meeting will be held over Skype as this was deemed the best mode of communication in terms of connection and cost.
- The Network Chair will take the lead on the next teleconference, with the support of IFRC, including setting the date and the agenda. This will be done with collaboration and feedback from all network members.
- To increase visibility of the network, members suggested that they produce a newsletter with an update from each National Society, who wishes to contribute. The aim is to finalise the first newsletter by May 2016 and review this during the network meeting before printing and disseminating.
- To increase collaboration and to facilitate building networks on a country-level, a mapping exercise was agreed on to identify the key actors and activities that are currently in each country for gender and diversity. This would be conducted by National Society Focal Points and then support from IFRC would be provided to bring together all the country maps to produce a regional overview.
- It was decided that each National Society will contact their ICRC representatives to make the connection and to discuss potential collaborations.

Contact information

Ms. Christina Haneef

Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Officer

IFRC South-East Asia Regional Delegation

E-mail: christina.haneef@ifrc.org

Attachments

Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network Action plan 2016

Southeast Asia Regional Gender & Diversity Network action plan 2016

[Gender and Diversity / Bangkok](#) /October 2015

| Topic area | What we will do | When we will do it | Member(s) responsible for |
|---|--|---|---|
| Communication and collaboration between network members | Annual Meeting for Regional Network | Date: May 2016 Location: Suggested Kuala Lumpur Duration: Two days | Saiful to check when legal advisors meeting is (in February) IFRC gender and diversity officer and Focal Points to identify if next year's TOT/refresher training will fit in with Network meeting or be separate events |
| | TOT/refreshers training | Suggested 3 days | Saiful to email all members to request suggestions for content and objectives All members responsible for contributing suggestions |
| | Quarterly teleconferences | Dates: February, August, November 2016 (Excluding May due to the face-to-face meeting) | Saiful (chair) with support from network members and IFRC to develop agenda and content of the meetings. |
| | Preparation of newsletter – to share with zones and other networks on gender and diversity developments in the region. Information sharing, including case studies, pictures and key updates. | First edition by May 2016. To be finalized at the network meeting. | Saiful (Chair) Norwina to share samples of case studies National society FP to share information 3 weeks before AGM to Network Chair |
| | Facebook | To be discussed at next network meeting regarding continuing with Facebook as a platform for information exchange | Norwina to continue updates up until the next network meeting |



| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Tools and resources | Dissemination of Resource library and MSCs | Ongoing | All Focal points |
| Mapping activities of networks | Some examples provided during the meeting included: working with the youth and people with disabilities linked with road safety Psychosocial support. First aid training for the elderly How the National Society is link with other organisations e.g. NGOs, Universities | To be completed by 31 st October 2016 | Christina share template week beginning 12 th |
| 32 nd International Conference | Focal points to contact International relations manager to discuss possible pledges or support for pledges | In the lead up to International Conference and beyond | All Focal Points Christina to share link of resolution to network members |
| National level networks | Contact person at ICRC: Each member to find out and contact gender and diversity focal person in ICRC to increase collaboration | Ongoing | All Focal Points |