International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Disaster Law disseminations in Vietnam

Concept Note / Bangkok / June 2016

# Background

In June 2013, the Government of Vietnam adopted the ‘Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control’, a landmark disaster management law which set a precedent throughout Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific region. The law outlines provisions for prevention and response, roles and responsibilities at different levels, procedures for international cooperation, and contains elements relating to disaster risk reduction (DRR), among other areas. Vietnam Red Cross Society (VNRC), in their unique role as auxiliary to public authorities, played a crucial role in influencing the development of the law and providing advice and comments to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the National Assembly. VNRC advocated, together with the IFRC, about the importance of prioritizing DRR, highlighting the role of the Red Cross in disaster preparedness and response, and the need to have rules in place to facilitate and regulate international disaster assistance, in line with international standards such as the ‘Guidelines for the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance’ (also known as the ‘IDRL Guidelines’). More recently, international guidance has also been developed by IFRC and partners such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which focuses on DRR, including a checklist and accompanying handbook on law and DRR.

The Disaster Prevention and Control Law came into effect in May 2014. Since that time, MARD has been working together with VNRC to ensure the effective implementation of the new law. One key step to ensure implementation is to undertake dissemination and awareness-raising about the new law and the procedures and information it contains. This is especially important with regard to roles and responsibilities, coordination between actors, and knowing what procedures are most relevant for actors at all levels, including at the local and community level.

VNRC has been active in this process, including through the facilitation and participation of peer-to-peer learning exchanges about disaster law and the experience of Vietnam. They have hosted groups from Lao PDR and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), and even travelled to Pyongyang with MARD to share their experience with senior DPRK officials and the DPRK Red Cross Society.

VNRC and IFRC have recently had discussions about how they can continue to play an active role in the implementation of the Natural Disaster Prevention and Control Law, and propose to hold a series of dissemination sessions in Vietnam, together with MARD and the Central Steering Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control. The disseminations will target authorities and VNRC branches and volunteers at different levels, including national, provincial and local levels. This work also seeks to better integrate disaster law, community engagement and accountability, by ensuring that local actors understand what laws can do for them (e.g. ‘know your rights’); and explaining how laws outline key roles and responsibilities for local actors.

# Purpose

The purpose of the disseminations will be three-fold:

1. To familiarize participants with the most relevant components of the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, especially with regard to roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations. This may also extend to other relevant sectoral laws, as appropriate.
2. To reinforce and highlight the role of Vietnam Red Cross Society as a key community-based actor; outline their mandate as recognized by the National Red Cross Law, their role in disaster management and as a bridge between the community / local level and national level policy and decision making processes; and highlight the fundamental principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent which guide VNRC’s work.
3. To introduce key international disaster law themes and standards, and their relevance for Vietnam. This may include International Disaster Response Law (IDRL), Law and DRR, and First Aid law.

# Methodology / Programme

The disseminations will run for a one day each, and the agenda will be developed according to the three key aims of the dissemination and the topics described above.

The disseminations will be delivered by a facilitation team from VNRC, MARD and IFRC. They will be conducted predominantly in Vietnamese, except for the IFRC presentations. Simultaneous translation will be provided.

# Desired outcomes

The desired outcomes of the disseminations are to:

* Provide an introduction to key components of the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control
* Promote a ‘know your rights and responsibilities’ approach to understanding and implementing the law
* Highlight the role of the Vietnam Red Cross, and improve understanding about their role in disaster risk management and the fundamental principles behind the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement
* Outline and promote awareness of key international disaster law themes and standards, and their application / relevance in Vietnam.

# Timing and Location

It is proposed that the disseminations be held in three locations: Hanoi, Danang, and Ho Chi Minh. It has been suggested to hold the disseminations between August and September 2016.

# Participants

The disseminations aim to target national, provincial and commune level authorities, and VNRC branches (including volunteers). The groups should not be bigger than 40 – 50 participants at each dissemination.

Participants will be invited from:

* VNRC HQ and branches in the three locations and surrounding provinces.
* The relevant government ministries and departments e.g. MARD, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Training; Ministry of Defence; local/provincial level authorities.
* Participants may also be invited from relevant civil society, NGOs, international organizations and the media.

# Budget

The budget is currently being prepared by VNRC and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

# Resources

For more information and resources on disaster law, visit: [www.ifrc.org/dl](http://www.ifrc.org/dl) and [www.drr-law.org](http://www.drr-law.org)

VNRC’s official website is available at <http://www.redcross.org.vn/redcross2/vn/home/index.jsp>

# Contact information

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