

REGIONAL COMMUNITY SAFETY AND RESILIENCE FORUM

Monthly Updates – June 2020



Myanmar Red Cross Society's (MRCS) volunteers are [supporting local governments](#) to turn the quarantine facilities back to schools, as the government prepares to open schools in the coming months. MRCS's activities include disinfecting classrooms and teacher's rooms, putting up posters, distributing awareness raising leaflets, posters and masks to teachers as can be seen in the pictures above from Eastern Shan State. More information [here](#). Photo Courtesy: MRCS

Welcome to our newsletter providing updates of Southeast Asia for May 2020. All photos used in this publication are from the respective Red Cross Red Crescent National Society or IFRC unless mentioned otherwise. In addition to these monthly updates, you can find Southeast Asia Red Cross Red Crescent's resources, tools, events and updates at the Resilience Library at <http://www.rcrc-resiliencesoutheastasia.org>.

Updates from National Societies

Laos: Creating an informed public to reduce COVID-19



Trainer demonstrates the process of explaining proper hand-washing technique to the community. Photo: Lao Red Cross

The Lao Red Cross (LRC) team has reached 11,177 people with information and assistance for protection from COVID-19, during the past few months. Training staff and volunteers on basic measures of self-protection and training on fielding queries from the public is key to ensuring that accurate information reaches people all over the country. During June, LRC completed a training on “COVID-19 basic knowledge” for 68 staff (34 female) in the branches of Bokeo and Luangprabang. The training covered topics such as

COVID-19 symptoms, prevention and disinfection, basic hygiene interventions and social distancing. Similar trainings have been conducted for 113 staff (63 women) in Champasak, Savannakhet and Xaignabouli branches as well. The LRC team will also distribute nearly 3,600 bars of hand soap and 200 bottles of hand gel among the public in these provinces in coming days. Earlier, LRC distributed 6,200 posters and 4,500 leaflets to people in 87 communities and public areas such as the airport, markets, and hotels in Luangprabang.

Myanmar: Prevention and protection to promote good health

While prevention efforts for COVID-19 carry on at full steam, MRCS is also stepping up its preparedness for the upcoming monsoon season which generally sees a spurt in instances of Dengue in the community. MRCS branches around the country have disseminated Dengue prevention messages, such as getting rid of stagnant water around the house. Fumigation with insecticide is also taking place.

Separately, MRCS is strengthening its corps of First Aid providers by conducting regular trainings. During June, MRCS held three [trainings](#) on Psychological First Aid, Basic Life Support, Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) for 67 MRCS volunteers (29 women) with a focus on COVID-19, in Yangon. The training is



Left: MRCS volunteers conduct fumigation for Dengue prevention in Mon state. Right: A session at the First Aid Training in Yangon. Photo: MRCS

based on IFRC's global tools related to the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

Philippines: Caring for the Caregivers



Health care workers undergoing tests for detecting COVID-19 infection in Manila. Photo: PRC

To help protect those who are working on the frontline, the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has partnered with hospitals to conduct testing for COVID-19 for health care workers. PRC has committed to regularly test medical workers in 15 hospitals in the National Capital Region every 14 days. As of 26 June, 4,315 front line health care workers have been tested and 54 were found positive for coronavirus. The testing will soon be expanded to cover thousands of healthcare workers both in government and private hospitals across the country.

Currently, the PRC's seven molecular laboratories can process test samples within 24-72 hours and can test up to 36,000 samples per day. The quicker the turnaround time, the faster is the tracing, isolation, and treatment for COVID-19 patients. The IFRC is supporting the PRC in its effort to significantly increase testing capacity by constructing molecular laboratories across the country to make COVID-19 testing accessible to all who need it. Once all laboratories are completed, the PRC can test up to 48,000 samples per day. For more details click [here](#). To know more about the overall response of the PRC, click [here](#).

Singapore: Meet father-daughter teams of First Aid Responders

Singapore Red Cross (SRC) set off a unique initiative, on **Father's Day**, profiling father-daughter teams whose efforts in Community First Aid and First Aid Training have been inspiring.

Joshua Liew and Ophelia Liew: Together, this father-daughter duo spend their weekends with SRC's First Aider on Wheels (FAOW) team, patrolling East Coast Park and Pulau Ubin on their bicycles and providing first aid to park goers-in-need. Their experience serving the community

together has brought them closer and inspired each other to do more for the community. Check out their story [here](#).

Anthony Poh and Angela Poh: Anthony Poh joined the Singapore Red Cross Academy in 2016. His daughter, Angela Poh was certified as a first aid instructor at the age of 18. This formidable first aid training team share about what inspired them to start training others and how they motivate each other to do better. Check out their story [here](#).



Left: Joshua Liew with his daughter Ophelia. Right : Anthony Poh with his daughter Angela. Photo: SRC

Thailand: Assistance for drought affected people

The Relief and Community Health Bureau of the Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS), dispatched an Emergency Water Purification Unit producing 20,000 liters of safe and clean drinking water per day, to those affected by drought in 48 villages of Noen Kham District in Chai Nat Province during 6 – 22 June 2020. In April, the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), had declared a drought in 25 provinces covering 6,846 villages in 146 districts. In addition to its COVID-19



People collect purified drinking water in their containers. The water purification system deployed by TRCS is on the right. Photo: TRCS

management measures, TRCS has been assisting the drought affected people by deploying water purification units for providing drinking water in the affected areas. For more photos and videos, please see [here](#).

Feature Story: Viet Nam Red Cross's strategy for management of COVID-19

Viet Nam reported its first case of coronavirus on 23rd January 2020. Since then, the total number of cases in the country has only been in the 300's and not a single death has been recorded- achievements that have gained worldwide recognition. The Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) with its previous experience of managing pandemics (SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak in 2003 and later the swine flu (H1N1) in 2009/2010) has worked in tandem with the government to help in protecting most vulnerable groups from the Coronavirus pandemic.

As an auxiliary to the government and an active member of the National Steering Committee for Countering COVID-19 Response and Prevention, VNRC worked with the Ministry of Health and the Centre for Tropical Disease Control (CDC) in formulating a response for COVID-19. With operations in all parts of the country – from villages to the capital city and a team of 138 staff, 4 million members and over 3.8 million volunteers/youth, VNRC played an effective role in responding and managing the spread of COVID-19 in Viet Nam through:

Implementation of awareness raising and preventive measures

As soon as there were signs of an epidemic, VNRC implemented a number of communication activities to raise awareness about disease prevention measures. More than 15,300 information leaflets were distributed and 10,450 articles on management of COVID-19 were shared through various mass media channels, and digital platforms like the VNRC and IFRC website and social media channels including a performance on the now viral '[Go Corona](#)' song. As of 2nd June 2020, almost 7,000 communication events about COVID-19 prevention and management were held in communities and schools with nearly 1.5 million attendees. These events also included free distribution of protective materials like soap, sanitizers and face masks. Nearly 2.5 million face masks; 400,000 pieces of soap and hand sanitizers have been distributed, so far.



Blood Donation Drives

Through the public awareness and public education campaigns, thousands of people were encouraged to donate blood to counter the blood shortages nationwide, which is acknowledged as a serious consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, a total of 430,105 units of blood were collected, which contributed to near 100% compensation of the shortage in blood requirements of blood banks in the country by April.



Support to vulnerable people

VNRC aimed to reach at least one million people who lost their income as a result of the pandemic and especially those who were considered to be vulnerable under these circumstances such as: in-patient cases who have been unable to recover their livelihoods, the elderly, and women headed households. In the month of May, VNRC launched a campaign called "Humanitarian Month of May" across the country-appealing to the public to make donations for vulnerable people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 350 [Humanitarian markets](#) were held in all 63 provinces. These markets provided unconditional vouchers worth

USD 14 each to 110,000 vulnerable people. They could exchange these vouchers at the markets for items of necessities, free of cost. VNRC coordinated with the local authorities in each city/province to identify the vulnerable persons in need of such support. Similarly, in all other activities related to COVID-19, VNRC has maintained its focus on supporting vulnerable people across the country.

Regular fundraising focused on support for COVID-19 activities

VNRC mobilized resources to support frontline health workers/volunteers and forces with medical supplies and necessities. From March to May 2020, more than two million dollars were mobilized both in cash and in kind, including medical supplies from domestic and international organizations, corporate houses and individuals. These were used for immediate response and prevention measures as well as for training of VNRC staff and volunteers. VNRC has also launched resource mobilization campaigns through text messages and social media (Facebook) for COVID-19 as well as for people affected by drought and saline water intrusion in their farmlands in the Mekong Delta.



In view of the pandemic, a business continuity plan was developed early on with support from IFRC to revise and update the National Societies' operational plans to include COVID-19 prevention and response activities.

Collaboration with the government for COVID-19 and other natural disasters



Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) is a member of the National Steering Committee on COVID-19 disease prevention and control, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, since the beginning of the pandemic response in the country. The steering committee held daily meetings for implementing COVID-19 response in the country. Most provincial Red Cross chapters also participated in the Provincial Steering Committee for Disease Prevention and Control. VNRC promptly implemented the guidelines announced by the government, throughout the country

through regular coordination with the provincial chapters in the country. Now, as the country transitions into a season of heavy rains when extreme natural disasters usually occur, VNRC has stepped up preparations to meet any eventuality. It has organised Pre-Disaster planning meetings with participation from Steering Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, Disaster Management Prevention and Control Authority, other government agencies, meteorological office, UN agencies, disaster management working groups and INGOs in the country.

Even in the midst of managing the pandemic in Viet Nam, VNRC also reached out to support other National Societies in the region including China, USA, Cambodia and India with 802,500 facemasks valued at USD 176,000, as well as contributing USD 30,000 to IFRC's Global Appeal for COVID-19.

VNRC has shared its experiences on various platforms such as: Virtual meeting with Leaders of Southeast Asia Red Cross-Red Crescent Societies on Covid-19 and other Red Cross National Societies; Live interview with [ABC Television](#) (Australia); Virtual meetings to share best practices on the Covid-19 response with Singapore Red Cross; and very recently through a live online briefing for Member States to the UN in New York on the role of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Asia and the Pacific in response to COVID-19 and in anticipation of other risks.

Voices from the Field – Cambodia Red Cross (CRC)

Mr. Vong Samoeun, 48 years old, is a Red Cross Volunteer (RCV), at Oung Knong Village in Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia. He has been trained on COVID-19 prevention by the Red Cross Branch staff in coordination with local health authorities. Equipped with IEC materials on prevention of COVID-19 and importance of good hygiene, he goes around the village delivering messages on COVID-19 prevention through home visits, small group discussions and a mobile loudspeaker. According to him, the biggest challenge in protecting against infectious diseases like COVID-19, is the poor hygiene practices in the community. He tries to model good hygiene practices in his own village so that his community members can see and replicate the simple steps he takes to maintain good hygiene to protect himself and his family from illness. His efforts have slowly yielded fruit and some members of the community are adopting better hygiene practices. He supports early detection and early action for COVID-19 prevention by collaborating with the local health authorities and Red Cross branch regarding health issues in the community.

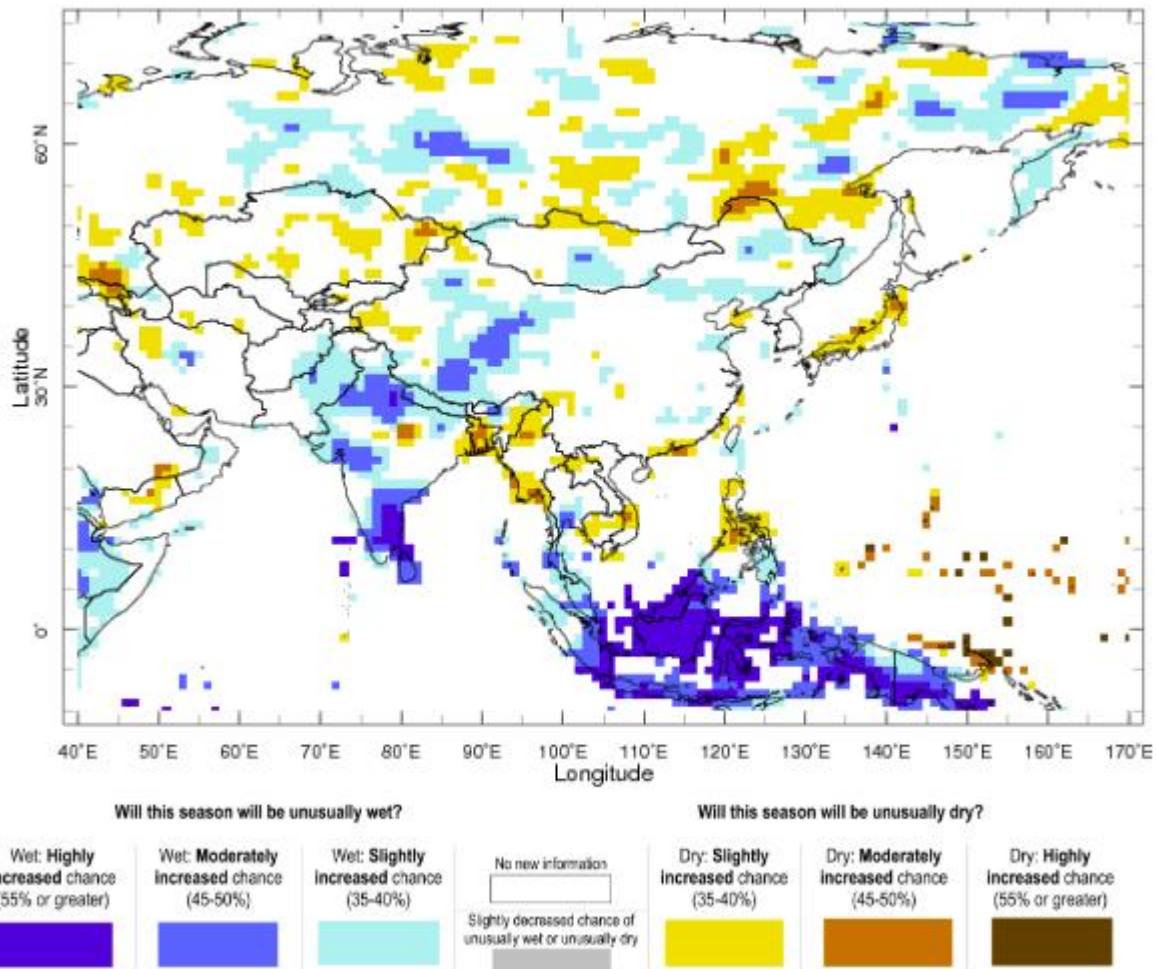


He loves being a Red Cross volunteer as he is able to improve his knowledge as well as keep everyone safe from COVID-19. He says *"My work is important because it could improve my community's knowledge, encourage them to adopt positive health practices and help them to be free from possible disasters/disease outbreaks- especially the current pandemic"*.

Seasonal Forecast

July to September 2020

Forecast for Jul-Sep 2020, Forecast Issued Jun 2020



For the interactive map from IFRC IRI, click [here](#)

Meteorological agency in the respective Southeast Asian countries:

[Brunei Darussalam](#) | [Cambodia](#) | [Indonesia](#) | [Laos](#) | [Malaysia](#) | [Myanmar](#) | [Philippines](#) | [Singapore](#) | [Thailand](#) | [Timor-Leste](#) | [Viet Nam](#)