

# Southeast Asia Regional Gender and Diversity Network Updates

[Gender and Diversity](#) / June 2015

## Gender and Diversity Network and Focal Points/Representatives

We are very pleased to announce that we have received endorsements from five National Society Leaderships for National Society Gender and Diversity Focal Points and the SEA Regional Gender and Diversity Network. We would like to welcome Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society, Cambodia Red Cross, Malaysian Red Crescent Society, PMI and Thai Red Cross to the Network. Other National Societies are also mainstreaming gender and diversity issues within their work including CVTL, Laos Red Cross, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Philippines Red Cross, Singapore Red Cross, and Viet Nam Red Cross.

**The formation of the gender and diversity network is an important step in working towards gender equality within Southeast Asia.** It presents an exciting opportunity for Gender and Diversity Focal Points to build their capacity in an area that is of such a high priority to the IFRC and National Societies at this time. Whilst we encourage all members of a National Society to be engaged in integrating gender and diversity within their work, having a focal point is valuable: to allow for a better exchange of information and collaboration between IFRC and National Societies; to share resources, opportunities and ideas; and maintain good communication within the region.

## Functions and strengths of the Gender and Diversity Network

The SEA Regional Gender and Diversity Network will provide a platform that will ultimately strengthen and enhance the quality and effectiveness of National Societies existing and future programs in areas such as Disaster Management and Health, through better understanding and addressing the needs of the communities we work with.

## Linkages with the Asia-Pacific wide network

The Southeast Asia Regional Network will also have the opportunity to be a part of the wider Asia-Pacific network. Through this, Focal Points in Southeast Asia will receive information on initiatives that are ongoing in all the regions in Asia Pacific, as well as useful resources and updates.

Stronger collaboration

Knowledge and capacity building

Encourage and enable peer-to-peer support

Co-ordinated regional approach to gender and diversity equality

Promote the gender and diversity work NSs are engaged in

Enhance strategic direction on addressing gender and diversity issues

## Gender and Diversity Developments in the region

### The Community Safety and Resilience Forum

The CSR Forum is taking place from 4-6 August 2015 and will kindly be hosted by PMI in Jakarta, Indonesia. This will be the first time the Gender and Diversity Network will have the opportunity to play a key role in the Forum and therefore provides an excellent chance for representatives from the Network to attend and to highlight the great work being undertaken in the region. The main aim of the CSR Forum is to bring together decision makers from NSD, Health and Disaster Management Units to enhance regional co-operation and to promote an integrated approach to the work we do. For the Gender and Diversity Network, we will have the opportunity to present on the activities that are taking place in our National Societies and play a key role in updating the regional road map and formulating recommendations to the leadership for discussion at the next annual meeting.

### Baseline reporting and gender mapping

A baseline report on the current status of gender equality was prepared based on five countries of Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. The overall goal of conducting a baseline analysis was to provide the necessary background information and tools to design a planning framework, to achieve the overall gender outcomes determined by the [IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity Issues 2013-2020](#). Gender-scoping missions have also been conducted in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia and Viet Nam, and discussions on gender and diversity issues were held with National Societies in Myanmar, Thailand and Timor-Leste. It is hoped that in 2015 and 2016 missions can be conducted in all countries in Southeast Asia!

## Gender and Diversity Resources

### Gender and Diversity for Resilience Toolkit

The development of a **Gender and Diversity for Resilience Toolkit** is being developed. The Toolkit will comprise a comprehensive but selective set of resources that IFRC and its member National Societies can access to support the practical integration of gender and diversity within all aspects of their work. The Toolkit will comprise information, practical guidelines, factsheets, checklists and activities in key sector areas such as DRR and DM, Health, Violence Prevention, Shelter and WATSAN. Summary information explaining the key objectives of each resource will be developed. **This will be translated into nine languages of the region. On request, resources can be translated, in full for each National Society.**

If you have tools that you use in your National Society and believe would be a helpful resource for other National Societies we would appreciate it if you could let us know so that we can include these in the toolkit. Please contact Christina Haneef at [christina.haneef@ifrc.org](mailto:christina.haneef@ifrc.org)

### SEARD's Online Library

A [Gender and Diversity](#) page has been uploaded to SEARD's online library which highlights: the importance of gender and diversity; IFRC's approach and key definitions. It also provides an introduction to the upcoming Toolkit and once this has been developed, a link to the Toolkit will be provided. This page will be ever-evolving, now containing resources such as the '**SEA Gender and Diversity snapshot**' and '**Highlights from the First Annual Gender and Diversity Network meeting**'.

## Southeast Asia Gender and Diversity Snapshot

A Snapshot has been developed to highlight gender and diversity mainstreaming activities and plans for 2015-16 in areas including research, the review and development of policies and strategies, tools development and trainings.

**Mainstreaming gender and diversity** is fundamental to the work IFRC and its National Societies are engaged in. By mainstreaming gender and diversity throughout all sectors of National Society work and within policies, programs and tools, it allows for these approaches to be truly integrated and crosscutting, rather than being seen as an 'add-on'. In the Snapshot you can read how, in Southeast Asia we are mainstreaming gender and diversity in DRR, DM, climate change and resilience, in migration, with the youth and in violence prevention and response.



### Gender and Diversity IFRC South-East Asia regional delegation

#### Background

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian and development network, with millions of volunteers in 189 member National Societies. With a mandate to prevent and alleviate human suffering without discrimination and to promote human dignity, gender and diversity are fundamental aspects of Red Cross Red Crescent activities worldwide.

From disaster management to health programming, the Red Cross Red Crescent recognizes that men and women have different capacities, strengths, needs and vulnerabilities, which can impact resilience to disasters and crises. The IFRC is guided in its work on gender and diversity through the following:

**The Fundamental Principle of Impartiality:** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement makes no

discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Strategy 2020:** Strategy 2020 calls for equality within the organization and in work, by ensuring that there is no gender-based or other discrimination in our policies and practices, and enabling greater participation by 'vulnerable people'.

**2014 Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity (2014-2018):** Provides strategic direction to the IFRC and its member National Societies by encouraging and promoting gender equality and respect for diversity.

**'Sex'** refers to the biological differences between men and women.

**'Gender'** refers to the social differences between men and women.

**'Diversity'** refers to the understanding of differences between people and respecting those differences. These differences can be physical or social and can include gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, HIV status, socio-economic status, religion, nationality and ethnic origin.

**'Gender and diversity equality'** refers to both men and women having the freedom to make choices, to progress and to develop, without being restricted by the roles or expectations placed on them because of their gender. Men and women do not have to be the same, but they should have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities.

Below: The Myanmar Red Cross includes training on what to do before and during a disaster with a focus on (in parentheses) child-friendly language (CFL).

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## Gender and Diversity in Disaster Management and Disaster Law.

On the 10-11 June the Regional Disaster Law Forum took place in Bangkok. A presentation was given on 'Gender, Diversity and Gender-Based Violence in the context of disaster law' and a new publication was developed. A key outcome from the Forum with regards to gender and diversity was feedback as to the importance of gender and diversity considerations being reflected in the law, to ensure that the most vulnerable groups are protected during a disaster and the right aid gets to the right people. The resource prepared for the event can be found on the [Gender and Diversity page](#) of SEARD's online library.

## Participation in regional events

### Gender in Emergencies training

Between 4-5 June, the IFRC with the Australian Red Cross conducted a 'Gender in Emergencies' Training, in Melbourne Australia. Daw Khin Khin Shein from the Myanmar Red Cross Society and Ms. Norwina Eclarinal from Philippines Red Cross attended the training. We are looking forward to hearing from both representatives about their experiences and believe that all Gender and Diversity Focal Points in the Region will be able to benefit from their experiences through peer to peer exchanges in the future.

### Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Seminar

SEARDs Gender and Diversity Officer attended the International Seminar on Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Tehran on 4-7 May. This provided an opportunity to draw attention to the excellent initiatives currently being undertaken within SEA with regards to gender and diversity in DRR and to ensure that the importance of a gender and diversity approach was highlighted. A key outcome of the Seminar was to ensure that increased awareness and focus is placed on urban centers and that actors are better prepared and equipped to respond to urban disasters.



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**Gender and diversity for urban resilience: An analysis**

A **\*NEW\*** resource was developed and distributed during the Seminar. The resource 'Gender and diversity for urban resilience: An analysis' outlines the importance of gender and diversity in urban DRR, relief and recovery. It provides some key considerations, as well as some helpful recommendations for staff and volunteers of all levels of National Societies. The resource can be found on SEARDs [online library](#).

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### AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme

Between 27-29 April, IFRC and PMI co-facilitated a Red Cross Red Crescent Induction training which formed part of a 6-month AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme, aimed at building the capacities of disaster management professionals in ASEAN. The training was held at PMI's training centre in Semarang, Central Java, and was attended by 16 representatives of National Disaster Management Offices from 8 ASEAN Member States, as well as 3 participants from the AHA centre. A participatory 90 minute session on gender and diversity in disaster management was conducted and covered key concepts, issues and recommendations for mainstreaming gender and diversity approaches within DRR, relief and recovery programming. Strengthening the capacity of disaster management professionals in Southeast Asia on gender and diversity will ensure that, as a region, we will be better prepared for future disasters and will be able to ensure an inclusive approach to our response; thus saving lives and protecting those most vulnerable.

### The way forward

#### There are two key next steps for the SEA Gender and Diversity Network:

- 1) To hold the **first network teleconference** that will take place on a quarterly basis thereafter. This meeting will provide an opportunity for all focal points to be introduced to one another and to discuss initiatives in their National Society. We will also elect a chair person who will lead the network for six months. An overview of key regional events taking place in the next year will also be discussed.
- 2) **Gender and diversity through the use of new technology:** Monthly webinar sessions will be planned and will be open to all interested parties within Asia Pacific. National Society Gender and Diversity Focal Points will have the chance to propose topics that they, and their National Societies would like to learn about and propose topics that they themselves would like to host for a session.