d, Randhir

**RDRT Status in South-East Asia**

September 2015

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1. **Introduction**

The Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) is a tool created by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to enhance regional resources in support of individual National Societies and their emergency response systems. The concept is an essential part of IFRC’s Disaster Management (DM) programme and then the Regional Disaster Management Committee’s (RDMC) Framework and now Regional community safety and resilience forum (RCSRF) Framework in Southeast Asia. The framework itself includes the disaster response and recovery along with DMIS/Knowledge sharing.

RCSRF aims to effectively utilize the human resource capacities and capabilities of National Societies (NS) to support sister societies in emergency response operations through cross-border deployments. Resources and assets may be used based on requests by NSs for emergency operation, knowledge sharing and capacity building in non-emergency situation.

IFRC South East Asia Regional Delegation (SEARD) organized 12 different RDRT training sessions in the last 15 years and trained 290 people. The **Annex-1** is the related database.

1. **Deployment history**

SEARD deployed a total of **109 RDRT** members from 2005 to2015. The table below would give a short snap of deployment history. Most of the time, the same RDRT members individuals were deployed in different missions.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of deployment | Number of deployed RDRT members | Thematic areas | Deployment | Disasters |
| 2005 | 8 | Relief | Indonesia | Nias Earthquake |
| 2005 | 23 | Relief | Pakistan | Earthquake |
| 2006 | 1 | Relief | East Timor | Flood and storm |
| 2006 | 9 | Relief | Indonesia | Yogyakarta Earthquake |
| 2006 | 4 | Relief | Philippines | Typhoon Xangsane |
| 2006 | 4 | Relief | Philippines | Typhoon Cimaron |
| 2006 | 6 | Relief | Philippines | Typhoon Durian |
| 2008 | 1 | Relief | Bangladesh | Cyclone Sidr |
| 2008 | 11 | Relief | Myanmar | Cyclone Nargis |
| 2008 | 12 | Relief | Philippines | Typhoon Fengshen |
| 2009 | 1 | Cash for work | Vietnam | Cash for work |
| 2009 | 3 | Relief | Philippines | Typhoon Ketsana |
| 2009 | 2 | Relief | Myanmar | Typhoon Ketsana |
| 2010 | 4 | Relief | Pakistan | Flood |
| 2011 | 2 | Relief | Laos | Flood |
| 2012 | 2 | Relief | Philippines | Flood |
| 2013 | 5 | Relief, Logistic, Watsan, Assessment | Philippines Laos | Cyclone and flood |
| 2014 | 1 | Relief | Malaysia | Flood |
| 2015 | 10 | Relief, Watsan, Assessment, Logistic | Nepal | Earthquake |
| Total | **109** |  |  |  |

1. **Strengthening RDRT in South-East Asia (SEA)**

**3. a. Standardization of RDRT database**

In line with AP Zone “Direction of Travel in Asia Pacific (Year 2012-2014) for RDRT”, SEA RCRC National Societies came together on 16-18 September 2014 in Bangkok to attend the Regional Community Safety Resilience Forum (RCSRF). This forum is considered the best platform to share the learning and exchange ideas among the National Societies of the region as well as to identify the areas to strengthen the regional cooperation. The National Societies discussed a number of agenda related to Organization Development, Health as well as Disaster Management during the three-day forum.

*SEA Office sent a letter to SEA NS leaders during first week of April,2015 alerting them on upcoming monsoon in the region and encouraging them to update their preparedness measures along with possible deployment of RDRT. IFRC received good response from NSs with the names of available RDRT members.*

National Societies continued to prioritize RDRT as one of the best regional cooperation tools since the inception of RDRT. The learnings of previous deployments as well as the real time evaluation (RTE) of the Haiyan operation highlighted the importance to strengthen RDRT. A long discussion was held during the RCSRF meeting in Bangkok and colleagues from National Societies came out with the idea of **RDRT- Keeping it alive**. The meeting representatives agreed to meet with selected representatives of National Societies along with colleagues from IFRC AP Zone, ICRC and SEARD to come up with some concrete recommendations on RDRT in order to standardize the national and regional response mechanism.

Following that agreement, SEA NS met with IFRC AP DMU, ICRC and SEARD from 28-29 October 2014 in Bangkok as a technical team to collectively review the roster and outline the process to standardize the RDRT roster. **The following criteria were outlined to standardize the RDRT roster** in order to sort out the potential RDRT persons who can be mobilized in short notice for around 4 to 6 weeks:

* Members who have been working as volunteers and staff with NS;
* Members who can communicate in English. A regional language is always an asset;
* Members who can be available within 72 hours of request;
* Members having good mental and physical health;
* Members who have good facilitation skills; and
* Members who can be released by NS for IFRC to facilitate the RDRT and NDRT training across the region.

NSs have agreed to review the roster list as attached in annex-1 on the basis of head count and proper consultation with the individual considering the criteria above. The NSs have sent the revised list of the RDRT and we have now updated the roster – which is attached as **Annex-2**. The following is the **summary of updated RDRT roster**:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| National Societies | Type of RDRT | | | | | | | | | Total | Gender | Remarks |
| **Induction** | **Relief** | **Logistics** | **IT** | | | **Health** | | **Watsan** |
| Brunei | Info is not available | | | | | | | | | | | Info is not available |
| Cambodia | 10 | 6 | 1 | | 1 | 4 | | 1 | | 13 | M=11, F=2 | 13 members are active. |
| Laos | 4 |  | 1 | |  |  | | 1 | | 4 | M=4 | 4 members are active. Out of 4, 1 person was trained on Induction, Logistics and WATSAN. |
| Indonesia | 11 |  | 3 | |  | 5 | | 6 | | 21 | M=20, F=1 | 21 members are active. Out of 21, 2 were trained on Induction and WATSAN and 1 is trained on Induction and Logistics. |
| Malaysia | 26 | 10 | 4 | | 1 | 5 | | 6 | | 26 | M=25, F=1 | All are active |
| Myanmar | 2 | 2 | 2 | |  | 1 | | 1 | | 8 | M=4, F=4 | A total of 8 are active members. |
| Philippines | 1 | 18 | 3 | |  | 2 | | 19 | | 31 | M=21, F=10 | 31 are active RDRT members. Among them, 2 were trained on Relief and Logistics, both and 8 members were trained on relief and WATSAN. |
| Singapore |  |  |  | |  |  | | 1 | | 1 |  | Overall info is not available. One person was deployed in Nepal Earthquake. |
| Thailand | 9 |  |  | |  | 10 | | 4 | | 10 | F-10 | 10 RDRT are active. All were trained on Induction and Health. Among them, 4 were trained on WATSAN. |
| Timor Leste | 1 |  |  | |  |  | | 2 | | 3 | M=3 | 3 members are active. |
| Viet Nam | 3 |  | 1 | |  | 1 | | 1 | | 6 | M=4, F=2 | Six are active. |
| Total | **67** | **36** | **15** | | **2** | **28** | | **42** | | **123** |  |  |

The technical team recommended reviewing the roster further (Annex-2) in order to finalize the roster for RDRT with following criteria and the same **criteria have been recommended to nominate participants for RDRT training in the future, namely:**

* At least 1 year experience in the disaster response operation in the country represented;
* Attended the National Disaster Response Team Induction Training of the NS;
* Language skills (English);
* Good report writing (knowledgeable to write a report);
* Possess at least one specialized skills such as relief, watsan, logistics, health, shelter – camp management, and IT;
* Can work within a Team (team player);
* Self-reliance and discipline.

The meeting also discussed about the equipment’s for RDRT and list down the items for one RDRT member during the deployment. SEARD procured 4 set of equipment’s following the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Unit |
| Laptop (with all accessories) – new | 1 |
| USB memory stick (64 GB) – containing all key documents | 1 |
| Mobile phone with wind-up charger | 1 |
| Electrical adapters / car charger | 1 |
| Head torch with spare batteries | 1 |
| Rain gear: coat and trousers (light weight) + rubber boots | 1 set |
| Compass | 1 |
| GPS | 1 |
| Sarong / “loin cloth” | 1 |
| Mosquito net / dome | 1 |
| Digital camera + charger + memory stick (shock and water proof) | 1 |
| Sleeping bag with liner (thinner – more portable) | 1 |
| Pocket Knife/multi-tool, Swiss army model etc. (not in hand luggage) | 1 |
| Sewing kit (not in hand luggage) | 1 |
| Water bottle with purification filter (empty) + water purification tablets | 1 |
| First Aid Kit including: Oral Rehydration salts; Anti-diarrheal drug (Immodium); Anti- inflammatory cream, Antifungal cream, Mosquito repellant, Paracetamol, Hand sanitizer (gel). We review the date of expiry periodically. | 1 set |
| Protective Masks/Respirators (N95) - We review the date of expiry periodically. | 5 pcs |
| Self sanitizing bags | 5 |
| Some dry food (granola bar, instant noodle, nuts, dried fruits, etc.) We review the date of expiry periodically. | 1 |
| Mug, plate, eating utensils | 1 |
| Rope (2 x 5m) – light | 1 |
| Light T-shirt / polo (depending temperature) | 2 or 3 |
| Vest + cap | 1 |
| Backpack / suitcase | 1 |
| Stay safe / other security manual (hard copy) | 1 |
| Sphere standards (extracts – hard copy) | 1 |
| Notepad + pen / pencil | 1 |
| Note: this list is understood for 1 RDRT member. | |

**3. b. Optimize RDRT in SEA**

One of the lessons learned from Haiyan operation is that RDRT was marginalized and underused. Following this lesson, the team recommended four different scenarios to maximize the RDRT/s in the future:

* **Scenario 1:** RDRT should be activated along with DREF operation. The size of DREF must be more than 150,000 CHF. If SEARCRC launches the emergency appeal, IFRC- RDRT must be deployed in parallel. The number of RDRT members and duration of deployment should be finalized as per the context and needs.
* **Scenario 2:** If government announces a state of emergency following any given disaster/crisis, RDRT may also be deployed. The number and duration should be finalized as per the context and needs.
* **Scenario 3:** If humanitarian community activates the cluster system (formally and informally) because of different political reasons to address the needs following disasters/crisis, RDRT should be deployed.
* **Scenario 4:** RDRT should be released to participate in different regional simulation exercises which are organized by different regional organizations like ASEAN, bilaterally /multilaterally by governments of this region, civil military exercise, etc. RDRT also should be mobilized to train NDRT people within the region.

**Pre-agreement with leaders:** Different scenarios have been discussed to maximize RDRT. It will be good to have pre-agreement with SEA RCRC leaders for the deployment in line with the scenarios above.

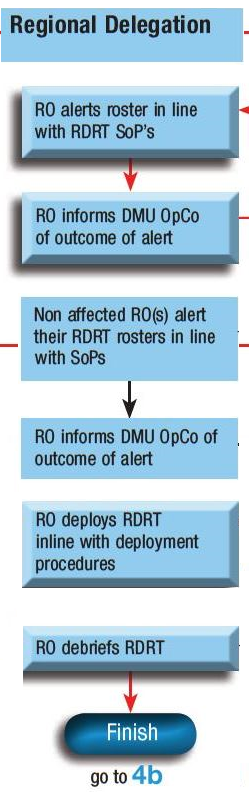
1. **Recommendations**

**4. a. Institutionalization of RDRT**

Since RDRT is growing as one of the global tool of IFRC, we have to agree collectively with the National Societies leadership on maintenance of RDRT as well as arrangement of deployment as part of above mentioned “**pre-agreement with leaders**” in line with ERU and FACT management. For this, we might need to ask NSs leadership about their interest and position to engage in RDRT mechanism with minimum requirements/commitment. It would be good, if we take ERU and FACT requirements/commitments for NSs as reference while developing requirements/commitment for RDRT from NSs. We might not get confirmation from all NSs after our communication. However we can request to those National Societies who will confirm their interests for RDRT to advocate for RDRT concept to their peer National Societies at a later stage.

**4. b. Mobilization of RDRT**

Chart - Mobilization of RDRT as per the current AP SoP (at 7.a)



RDRT actually supports and strengthens regional network as per current regional structure. This needs direct support from regional leadership network. Considering this, it would be good to allow those IFRC offices who will coordinate leadership meeting of their areas as per former regional structure might better work out for management of RDRT. Management includes RDRT roster management and mobilization of RDRT. The deployment provision can be continued as mentioned in current AP SoP (**7.a**. **Mobilization of RDRT**) - *please see the diagram on the right with the flow*. The experiences of Nepal Earthquake are one of the good examples of RDRT mobilization which is in line with current AP SoP. The entire RDRT deployment was coordinated by AP/DMU but roster and alert were managed by former regional offices. This might reduce the burden of transitional process. The current AP SoP also defines that the Regional Disaster Management Coordinator (or designated equivalent) manages the development and maintenance of the RDRT within their region. The Regional Disaster Management Coordinator will alert and deploy RDRT based on a request from the DMU (AP SOP-8.2.2.8.).

1. **Proposal for way ahead**
2. Annex-2 is recently updated roster list, however Annex-1 is the master roster of RDRT. RDRT roster needs to be updated as per the set criteria periodically. This will further establish the strong connections between RDRT members, NSs and IFRC. It would be good to issue “**ID card**” to RDRT members from IFRC with 2-year validity. If any RDRT wants to continue with RDRT role, they will automatically request for renewal of their ID cards, which will help to update roster.
3. The four different scenarios would be good to consider for pre-agreement with leadership as mentioned at 3.b. The pre-agreement should define the roster list update; time period to release RDRT member after confirmation of deployment; length of deployment and cost involve for RDRT deployment.
4. We need to standardize NDRT training as per national, regional and global context. This helps to enhance the capacity of the RCRC volunteers and staff gradually as well as to increase the effectiveness of national and local response. The database of NDRT people must be maintained at National Society level, and should be used to nominate participants for RDRT training.
5. It would be good to consider the five different contexts as mentioned in 3.b. above to optimize the RDRT. It looks more rational to continue the RDRT management as mentioned in 4.b. as per current AP SoP. However It would be good that AP/DMU takes the lead in the development of RDRT which means training, materials development as well as ToR and SoP for RDRT in the line of the new direction. This will help to standardize the RDRT concept within NSs across the AP.
6. Some NSs do have SoP and some are in progress. It would be good to provide the standard of SoP for NS with consideration of IFRC different level SoP, SoP of response tools and possible role of NSs in their context during emergency and recovery.

