Myanmar Red Cross Society
Disaster Management Policy-2010

1. Introduction

Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) recognizes its role as auxiliary to the Government in humanitarian services. Government of the Union of Myanmar has issued Standing Order on Natural Disaster Management in 2009. MRCS is the member of two national level committees which are notified in the Standing Order of the Government. MRCS is also the member of Health subcommittee as notified in the Standing Order of the Government.

Cyclone"Nargis" is by far the most catastrophic disaster in Myanmar history. The relief and recovery operation on the disaster of such magnitude has benefitted MRCS with invaluable lessons inestimable hands-on experience on disaster response and risk reduction networking.
The Standing Order, Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Contingency Plan, and Myanmar Action Plan in Disaster Risk Reduction (MAP-DRR) are the major initiatives formulated as a result of Cyclone "Nargis", to reduce the impact, and activate commensurate response for future disasters in Myanmar.

MRCS sets the process to revise its first Disaster Management (DM) Policy-2003 in order to be more compatible with the recent country level initiatives as well as regional and global trends on disaster management. MRCS hopes the revised version of DM Policy-2010 will serve and guide to implement its DM programming effectively.

The Standing Order of Government of the Union of Myanmar, Strategy-2020 and Asia Pacific DM Strategy of International Federation are the major guiding documents referred in revising and updating this MRCS DM Policy.

The revised version of MRCS DM Policy comes into effect from _____.

2. Aim

MRCS expects that the revised version of DM policy-2010 will guide to design and implement its DM programming to reduce the impact and respond effectively to future disasters.

3. Vulnerability and Hazards

MRCS aims to reach the most vulnerable in Myanmar context. MRCS acknowledges factors related to physical, political, social, economic, environmental, age and gender specificity, which gravely increase risk and vulnerability of people in different circumstances with the impact of hazards. MRCS also admits the potential risks and vulnerability of people in population movement outbreak scenario. MRCS concurs with the changing nature of risks and vulnerability in Myanmar context.

MRCS also identifies Fire, Floods, Tornado/Storm, Cyclone, Earthquake, Drought, Landslide and diseases like Malaria, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis' etc as potential hazards/threats for the country.

4. Policy statements

- MRCS undertakes emergency response according to the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, SPHERE standards, Code of Conduct for the International

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief.

- MRCS recognizes preparedness, relief, recovery and risk reduction initiatives as its primary activities and focus of implementation in Myanmar. This includes climate change adaptation and mitigation.

- MRCS commits to work for migrated people like extremely vulnerable people, displaced people, people affected by disturbances and other emergencies and disasters. MRCS liaises closely with International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), UN Agencies, and Civil Societies to improve humanitarian actions in Myanmar.

- MRCS prioritizes coordination, collaboration and advocacy with International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and Partner National Society to improve humanitarian actions in Myanmar.

- MRCS maximizes all available resources at its disposal for relief, recovery operation and risk reduction, and appeals to generate the resources from national and international level.

- MRCS maintains Disaster Management Division in National headquarters to coordinate and implement DM programmes. Expansion of MRCS DM structure at different levels like State/Division and Township, will be implemented gradually.

5. Components for Disaster Management

a. Preparedness

- MRCS manages warehouses situated in different parts of the country with DP stocks as well as other related emergency kits and continuously explores the opportunities to expand and systematize warehouses management.
- MRCS promotes networking among stakeholders to implement effective preparedness, emergency response, relief, recovery and disaster risk reduction programme.
- MRCS strengthens relevant structures to implement DM programme from headquarters to Township level.
- MRCS enhances its capacity at all levels through training and workshops to implement effective preparedness, relief, recovery operation and risk reduction initiatives.

b. Relief

- MRCS ensures appropriate approaches and tools to conduct rapid assessment.
- MRCS implements emergency shelter, water and sanitation, re-establish family links (RFL) as well as First Aid and health services and distribution of food and non-food items within the frame work of set standards.
- MRCS contributes to search and rescue activities together with related institution and organizations.

c Recovery

- MRCS ensures appropriate approaches and tools to conduct timely recovery assessment.
- MRCS implements activities to restore or improve pre-disaster living conditions and reduce risks of disasters. This may include livelihood, shelter, health, water and sanitation as well as reconstruction and rehabilitation.
- MRCS maximizes opportunities from recovery activities to build capacities of community in connection with DRR and thus enhance resilience profile.
- MRCS maximizes opportunities from recovery operation to build capacities of national society to better cope with future disasters and reduce vulnerability.

d. **<mark>Community Safety and Resilience</mark>**

▶ MRCS mobilizes communities to assess its hazards, vulnerability and capacity to generate awareness about potential risks and initiate respective counter measures.

▶ MRCS organizes social mobilization events at school level to generate awareness on potential risks and basic preparedness measures.

▶ MRCS supports community-based initiatives in the most vulnerable communities, including early warning, structural and non-structural mitigation, simulation exercises and measures to strengthen and protect livelihoods.

▶ MRCS organizes social mobilization events at community and school level to generate awareness about the hazards, vulnerability, potential risks and respective counter measures.

▶ MRCS develops and distributes the advocacy and teaching materials.

6. Cross cutting components

▶ **Volunteer mobilization:-** Most of the MRCS activities are based on Red Cross Volunteers. MRCS develops the related activities for volunteers to enhance their capacity on DM programme.

▶ **Community mobilization:-** MRCS gives priority for community mobilization to implement activities at community levels. MRCS continues this as one of the implementation strategy and keep improving the process of community mobilization within the purview of cost effectiveness and sustainability.

▶ **Gender sensitivity:-** MRCS promotes the concept of equal opportunities and gradually regularize to bring into practice. MRCS respects the crucial needs for gender specificity.

▶ **Resource management:-** MRCS gradually strengthens resources generation opportunities for effective implementation of DM activities as mentioned in scopes of this Policy. MRCS identifies financial, human, information and physical as the four main resources.

7. Revision/Amendment

MRCS Executive members are vigilant to revision and amendment of the policy, as and when the need arises.

8. Reference documents

✥ MRCS DM Policy-2003
✥ Strategy-2020
✥ Myanmar Action Plan on DRR(MAP DRR)
✥ Standard Operating Procedure(SoP)- Government of the Union of Myanmar
✥ Lesson Learnt from Cyclone Nargis Operation
✥ WPNS checklist-2007 and 2010
✥ Asia Pacific DM Strategy-2010(Draft Version)
✥ Federation DP Policy, Integrating Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Policy, Emergency Response Policy