



Myanmar **Red Cross Society**

Contribution to the Implementation
of the Hyogo Framework of Action
2005-2015



This document reflects a review of available documents and interviews with numerous key informants; two workshops ensued to discuss the initial drafts. Although all efforts were made to provide correct information, neither the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre nor any individual or organization mentioned are responsible for any inaccuracies. The analysis and conclusions presented in this document were considered appropriate at the time of its preparation but may need to be modified in the future.

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Abbreviations	
MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
IDRL	international disaster response law
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Local Myanmar Red Cross Society volunteer Kalay,
Myanmar, August 2015
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Foreword

In 2005, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was one of 168 Governments to endorse the first global plan for disaster risk reduction – the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005 to 2015. In the same year, the Government joined in the first legally-binding HFA related instrument in the world – the Association of Southeast Asia Nations Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.

Since that time, the Myanmar Red Cross Society - in our role as an auxiliary to the public authorities in carrying out humanitarian activities - has complemented the efforts of the Government by placing an important emphasis on disaster risk reduction programming across the country.

In the past ten years alone, the Red Cross has reached more than 450 villages in 103 townships with disaster risk reduction activities or assistance. Awareness campaigns have reached nearly 275,000 people, including children who spread life-saving messages to their peers and families, making an impact for generations to come.

In light of these achievements, on behalf of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, I am honoured to share with you the following report, which documents the concrete contributions that the Red Cross has made for disaster risk reduction as party to the Hyogo Framework for Action. The report captures the achievements made towards the HFA strategic goals and five priorities.

In presenting this report, I wish to honor the network of over 40,000 Red Cross volunteers nationwide who dedicate themselves on a daily basis to the cause of assisting others. Our volunteers allow the Red Cross to reach the needs of thousands of communities across Myanmar.

I also wish to acknowledge our partners and donors for their support, and with whom our achievements are truly shared. Along the way, we have worked in collaboration with a range of partners – from the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, to international non-governmental organizations, and several UN agencies. Together, we have contributed to a range of consultative processes, including that which led to the Myanmar HFA National Progress Report in 2010, as well as the Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2012.

The Myanmar Red Cross is pleased to now shift our focus in the future, to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 to 2030. We will continue building on these successes achieved under the HFA, remaining as steadfast as ever in our mission to protect and build the resilience of vulnerable communities.

Much remains to be done.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tha Hla Shwe'.

Prof. Dr Tha Hla Shwe
President of Myanmar Red Cross Society



Executive summary

Since 2008, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) has contributed to the country's disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction efforts. MRCS has proven itself a critical responder in emergency situations through its actions during the various disaster events that have severely hit Myanmar over the past decade.

Although there is wide recognition for its role in the promotion of safe and resilient communities across Myanmar, no detailed analysis has been carried out on the direct contribution of MRCS to the country's disaster risk reduction commitments.

The Hyogo Framework for Action is the internationally accepted instrument that defines the goals and issues that governments in all countries need to target to reduce their disaster risks. In light of the important MRCS role in disaster risk management, this report presents analysis of its contributions towards achieving the five priorities defined in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015. For the report, MRCS projects and activities from the past ten years were reviewed against the indicators included in the Hyogo Framework for Action. The analysis is based on desk research and interviews with key informants carried out in August–October 2014.

Through the analysis and follow-up consultations on the initial drafts of this report, it is clear that MRCS is an important player in disaster risk management in Myanmar. MRCS has contributed to all five Hyogo Framework priorities, with a particularly large contribution to the fifth priority for action: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels. The report cites details the MRCS contribution to each of the indicators under all five priorities.

MRCS and its nationwide network of volunteers will continue to promote a more healthy and safe environment for the people of Myanmar, giving priority to the most vulnerable communities and individuals. MRCS will continue its work in disaster risk management and especially in disaster risk reduction and will continue to support the government in reaching its disaster risk reduction commitments under the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (known as HFA2).

1. Introduction

Through its prominent role in the response to Cyclone Nargis from 2008 to 2011, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) gained recognition as a critical player in mobilizing local and international support during an emergency. This was further reinforced throughout the response to the 2010 Cyclone Giri and the current recovery activities in Rakhine State. Over the past ten years, MRCS has focused on community-based disaster risk reduction, reaching more than 450 villages in 103 townships with activities or assistance.

At the national level, MRCS has contributed to the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction (2009–2015) and the Myanmar National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change, which was enacted in 2012. After the new Disaster Management Law was passed in July 2013, both MRCS and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) became members of Myanmar's disaster management rules and regulations task force, involved in the drafting of subsequent decrees. MRCS is also an active contributor to the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group, to the contingency planning of the Humanitarian Country Team as well as to the Health Subcommittee under the Central Committee for National Disaster Prevention which is organized at various levels of government. MRCS works closely with the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, as mandated by the 2009 Standing Order on Natural Disaster Management in Myanmar.

Several evaluations on the MRCS role in disaster risk reduction highlight its disaster risk reduction achievements, activities and advocacy messages. These outputs provide evidence of MRCS to community resilience building in the country as well as to national and regional disaster risk reduction commitments. This report singles out the MRCS projects and programmes that have contributed towards achieving the priorities targeted in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 as well as the continuous MRCS support of government initiatives in the area of disaster risk reduction.



Flattened village near Bogale in Myanmar after Cyclone Nargis 2008. Thousands of homes were destroyed
© Masanao Mori - Japanese Red Cross

2. Background

As the leading and oldest humanitarian organization in the country, MRCS is committed to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable people across Myanmar. MRCS began its operations in 1920 as a branch of the Indian Red Cross Society. After Burma formally separated from British India in 1937, the Society obtained official, national status in 1939 and was admitted to IFRC in 1946. The Burma Red Cross Act was enacted in 1959 (with additional amendments in 1964, 1971 and 1988), which conferred responsibility to the National Society in implementing humanitarian activities and alleviating human suffering. Additionally under the Act, the St. John Ambulance Brigade Overseas was taken over by the Society, which was renamed the Burma Ambulance Brigade. The organization was again renamed in 1989 as Myanmar Red Cross Society, in accordance with the legislative change of the country's name from Burma to Myanmar.

MRCS has engaged in disaster risk reduction activities since 2008, in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis. Such activities have been carried out largely under six projects:

- Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Programme (2008–2012)
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Urban Disaster Risk Reduction (2013)
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (2013–2015)
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Management and School-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (2013)
- Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Building and Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Coastal Area Programme (2009–2014)
- Enhancing Disaster Safety in Vulnerable Communities and Schools in Myanmar (2013–2014).

In 2007, IFRC developed an overarching vision to strengthen and coordinate its disaster risk reduction efforts and launched the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Global Alliance set four main outputs: i) increased community orientation on global and national disaster risk reduction policies; ii) expanded community-based programming to identify and tackle disaster risks; iii) enhanced community-centred disaster risk reduction measures as part of comprehensive disaster response management; and iv) strengthened IFRC capacities to deliver and sustain disaster risk reduction programmes. MRCS designs its activities in line with that overarching vision and the four outputs.

3. Assessment methodology

To assess the MRCS contribution to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in Myanmar, a desk review of documents and interviews with key informants were conducted in August–October 2014. The review covered MRCS annual plans and reports, including financial information; disaster risk reduction project plans and reports; disaster risk reduction publications, evaluation reports of projects and activities; and various other MRCS or partner National Society documents from the past decade (see the annex for a list of all documents reviewed).

The goal of the desk review was to analyse activities that contributed to the indicators of the five priority actions of the Hyogo Framework. Caution was exercised to only include validated information in this report. For some indicators, no direct contribution of MRCS could be determined, and thus these sections are blank. All information included in the report is based on information available in September 2014. The information is subject to change, and additional contributions of MRCS may be added in the future.

Two workshop consultations followed to discuss the report's content.



Local Red Cross volunteers mobilize in response to floods, Kalay 2015
© Emil Helotie / Finnish Red Cross

4. Myanmar Red Cross Society's contributions to the Hyogo Framework for Action

The Hyogo Framework for Action is structured with three strategic goals, five priority actions and four cross-cutting issues. This section follows a similar structure. First, the contribution of MRCS to the three strategic goals is described, followed by description of its contribution to the five priorities for action. Each indicator is discussed separately, with examples of MRCS work included. The four cross-cutting issues are then discussed.

4.1 Contributions to the three strategic goals

AREA 1: The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.

The MRCS mission is to be the leading humanitarian organization in Myanmar. Through its nationwide network of volunteers, MRCS promotes a healthy and safe environment, giving priority to the most vulnerable communities and individuals. In times of distress and disaster, MRCS assists those affected and helps them return to some form of normalcy.

MRCS is a strong advocate for disaster risk reduction in Myanmar; its Strategic Plan 2011–2015 cites the importance of disaster risk reduction. MRCS is continuously striving to integrate disaster risk reduction in all aspects of its work and is well known for helping to increase the safety and resilience of communities across the country by carrying out preparedness and mitigation activities towards reducing vulnerabilities to natural hazards and reducing disaster risks in a sustainable manner.

AREA 2: The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.

As part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, MRCS focuses on building community safety and resilience in the face of disaster risk. The concept of community safety and resilience was cited as a strategic direction at the IFRC global meeting on disaster risk reduction in Costa Rica in November 2006. Based on those discussions IFRC developed and approved in 2014 a Framework for Community Resilience, which defines several characteristics:

- A resilient community is knowledgeable and healthy. It has the ability to assess, manage and monitor its risks. It can learn new skills and build on past experiences.
- A resilient community is organized. It has the capacity to identify problems, establish priorities and act on what needs to be done.
- A resilient community is engaged in the development of local policy relevant to reducing risks.
- A resilient community is connected. It has relationships with external actors who provide a wider supportive environment and supply goods and services when needed.
- A resilient community has infrastructure and services. It has a strong system in place to help mitigate, for instance, climate change. And it has the ability to maintain, repair and renovate that system.
- A resilient community has economic opportunities. It has a diverse range of employment opportunities, income and financial services. It is flexible, resourceful and has the capacity to accept uncertainty and respond (proactively) to change.
- A resilient community can manage its natural assets. It recognizes their value and has the ability to protect, enhance and maintain them¹.

MRCS relies on this framework in its focus on building community safety and resilience in the face of disaster risks.

AREA 3: The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement considers disaster risk reduction a holistic approach for managing disasters, encompassing all aspects of preparedness, response, recovery, development, prediction, prevention and mitigation. Every programme that MRCS initiates includes disaster risk reduction aspects, always striving towards the development of safe and resilient communities across the country.

1. See *The Road to Resilience: Bridging Relief and Development for a More Sustainable Future*. IFRC discussion paper on resilience, June 2012.

4.2 Contributions to the five priorities for action

This section details the MRCS contributions under each of the five priorities for action of the Hyogo Framework.

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 1 Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority, with a strong institutional basis for implementation.	
CORE INDICATOR 1	CORE INDICATOR 2
<p>National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists, with decentralized responsibilities and capacities at all levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the MRCS Strategic Plan 2011–2015 • MRCS contribution to government initiatives: Drafting of Disaster Management Rules and contribution to the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee for Disaster Management 	<p>Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of MRCS budget for disaster risk reduction • Training of staff and volunteers
CORE INDICATOR 3	CORE INDICATOR 4
<p>Community participation and decentralization is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to the local level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of 330 township branches • Establishment of Branch Development Guidelines • Establishment of a minimum of 35 Red Cross volunteers in each township branch • Links with local authorities (as members of MRCS branch executive committees) 	<p>A national multi-sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing disaster risk reduction forums (one in 2009 on youth participation in disaster risk reduction and one in 2011 on school-based disaster risk reduction) • Contribution of MRCS to the Advisory Committee for Natural Disaster Management • Contribution to the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group

MRCS CONTRIBUTIONS IN DETAIL

CORE INDICATOR 1

National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists, with decentralized responsibilities and capacities at all levels.

As noted, the MRCS Strategic Plan 2011–2015 spells out the importance of disaster risk reduction. In line with the plan, MRCS works on building up the skills of staff within its headquarters, chapters and branches regarding disaster risk reduction, thereby improving the overall capacity within the country to reduce risks.

MRCS also supports government initiatives related to disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction, including the development of relevant legal and policy frameworks. In 2013–2014 and as part of the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group, MRCS assisted the Relief and Resettlement Department (within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement) in drafting a set of Disaster Management Rules to implement the Disaster Management Law, enacted in July 2013. In addition to the Relief and Resettlement Department, MRCS works with other partners in this process, including the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. MRCS participated in several consultation meetings for the development of the Disaster Management Rules and worked with the IFRC Disaster Law Programme to provide technical feedback on the draft rules. These efforts were linked to the disaster law activities undertaken by MRCS, as outlined under the priority for action 5.

MRCS is a member of the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee for Disaster Management, which facilitates the implementation, coordination and evaluation of policies and decisions of the National Committee for Disaster Management related to disaster risk prevention, mitigation and preparedness as well as emergency, relief and rehabilitation assistance.



Volunteer educates survivors of Cyclone Nargis about emergency health care, shows them how to use MRCS relief packages 2009
© IFRC



Myanmar Red Cross volunteers erecting a temporary shelter near Labutta
© Htien Win

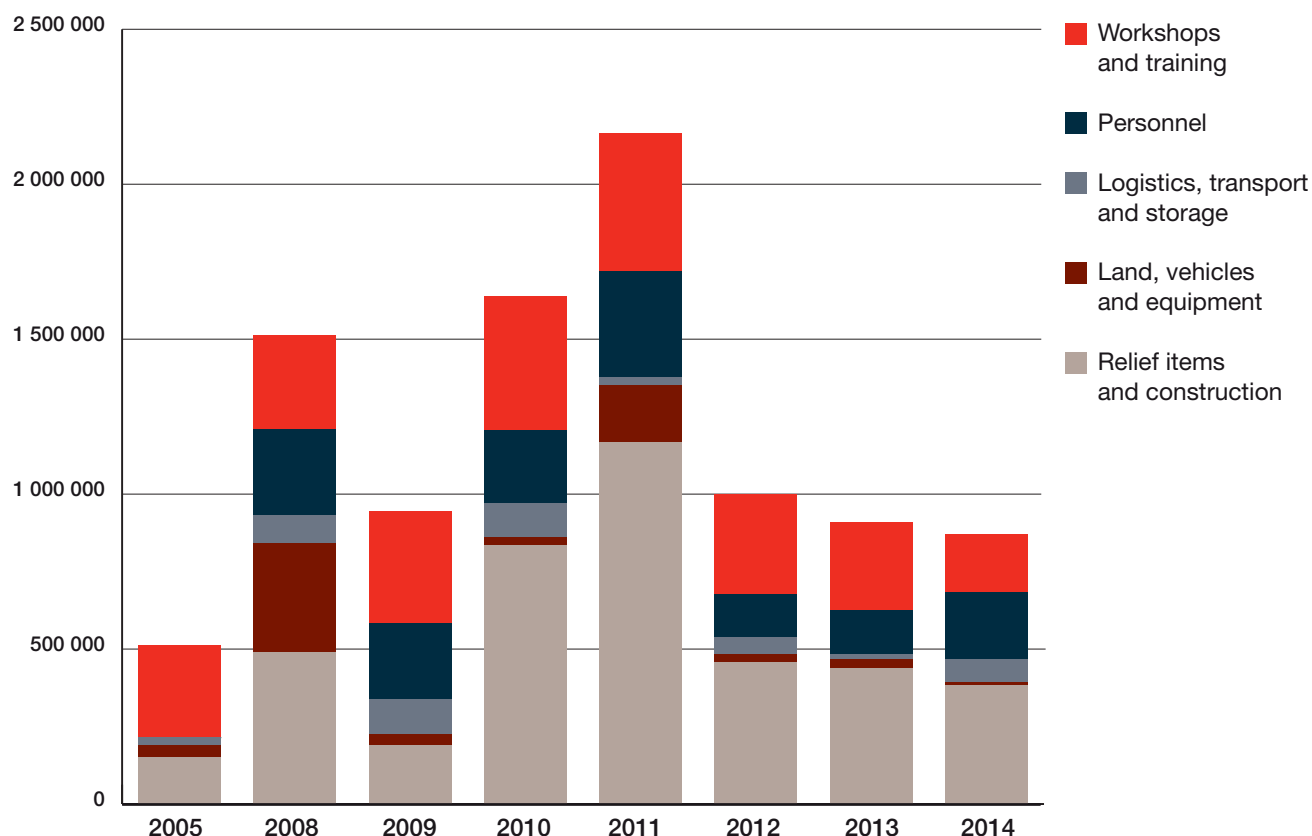
CORE INDICATOR 2

Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels.

As a strong advocate of disaster risk reduction, MRCS implemented several related projects, with assistance from partner National Societies. Figure 1 illustrates the MRCS budget under the IFRC Annual Appeal. The first category includes all training events and workshops within Myanmar organized between 2005 and 2014 to build up capacities and raise awareness in such areas as health, disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

The second category – personnel – refers to the budget for National Society staff. The third category – logistics, transport and storage – covers the allocation related to storage, distribution, monitoring, transport and vehicle costs and logistics services. The fourth category – land, vehicles and equipment – covers the budgets related to vehicles, computers, telecommunications and office and household equipment. The fifth category includes shelter and relief items, construction facilities, construction materials, clothing and other textile items, water, sanitation, hygiene, medical and first aid, utensils, tools and other supplies and services.

Figure 1. MRCS budget under the IFRC Annual Appeal (in Swiss francs)



Note: Data from 2006 and 2007 were not available.

In addition to the IFRC Annual Appeal, MRCS receives additional funds for disaster management under bilateral agreements with partner National Societies.

CORE INDICATOR 3

Community participation and decentralization is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to the local level.

As one of the leading community-based disaster risk reduction organizations in the country, MRCS pushes to improve the needed capacities at all levels. A total of 330 township MRCS branches have been established (one branch in each township). In 2013, MRCS established Branch Development Guidelines that specify the minimum requirements for its state, region and townships offices to ensure that communities receive the necessary support to reduce disaster risks in a sustainable way. One of the minimum requirements is the availability of 35 trained Red Cross volunteers in each township branch to support the implementation of the organization's initiatives. This ensures that there are a minimum of 11,550 well-trained Red Cross volunteers in Myanmar who can support preparedness, response and recovery activities at any time.

According to the MRCS branch development model, chapters at the state/region level and branches at the township level are closely linked with local authorities; officers from various ministries at those three levels comprise the Executive Committee for each MRCS township branch. Implementing the branch model allows MRCS to continuously improve the capacities of local authorities and its volunteers; thus authority and resources are evenly distributed throughout the country.

CORE INDICATOR 4

A national multi-sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.

The disaster risk reduction forums organized by MRCS are conducted at the national level, with participants from relevant working groups (the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group, in particular), international and local NGOs, government agencies, the MRCS headquarters and other partners. Three forums have been organized so far; one in 2009 on youth participation in disaster risk reduction; one in 2011 on school-based disaster risk reduction; and a small forum in 2012 on the documentation of best practices.

To date, all disaster risk reduction forums have been project based. These forums are essential in providing a platform for disaster risk reduction practitioners in Myanmar to come together and exchange ideas, experiences and knowledge on disaster risk reduction.

MRCS is not only a member of the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group but also sits on its steering committee and thus has a prominent role within the group.



MRCS volunteer briefing before going to village to assist victims of flooding, Kalay, 2015
© Emil Helotie / Finnish Red Cross

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2

Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.

CORE INDICATOR 1	CORE INDICATOR 2
<p>National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting vulnerability and capacity assessments and that include hazard and risk assessments 	<p>Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on hazards and vulnerabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard mapping and ranking of all states, regions and townships
CORE INDICATOR 3	CORE INDICATOR 4
<p>Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of loudspeaker in the emergency kit Conducting table-top simulations and drills to test early warning mechanisms Installment of phone lines to support early warning Inclusion of Red Cross volunteer role in early warning activity Implementing the Early Warning, Early Action Programme 	<p>National and local risk assessments take account of regional and transboundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close collaboration with neighbouring National Societies (exchange of best practices and development of common methodologies)

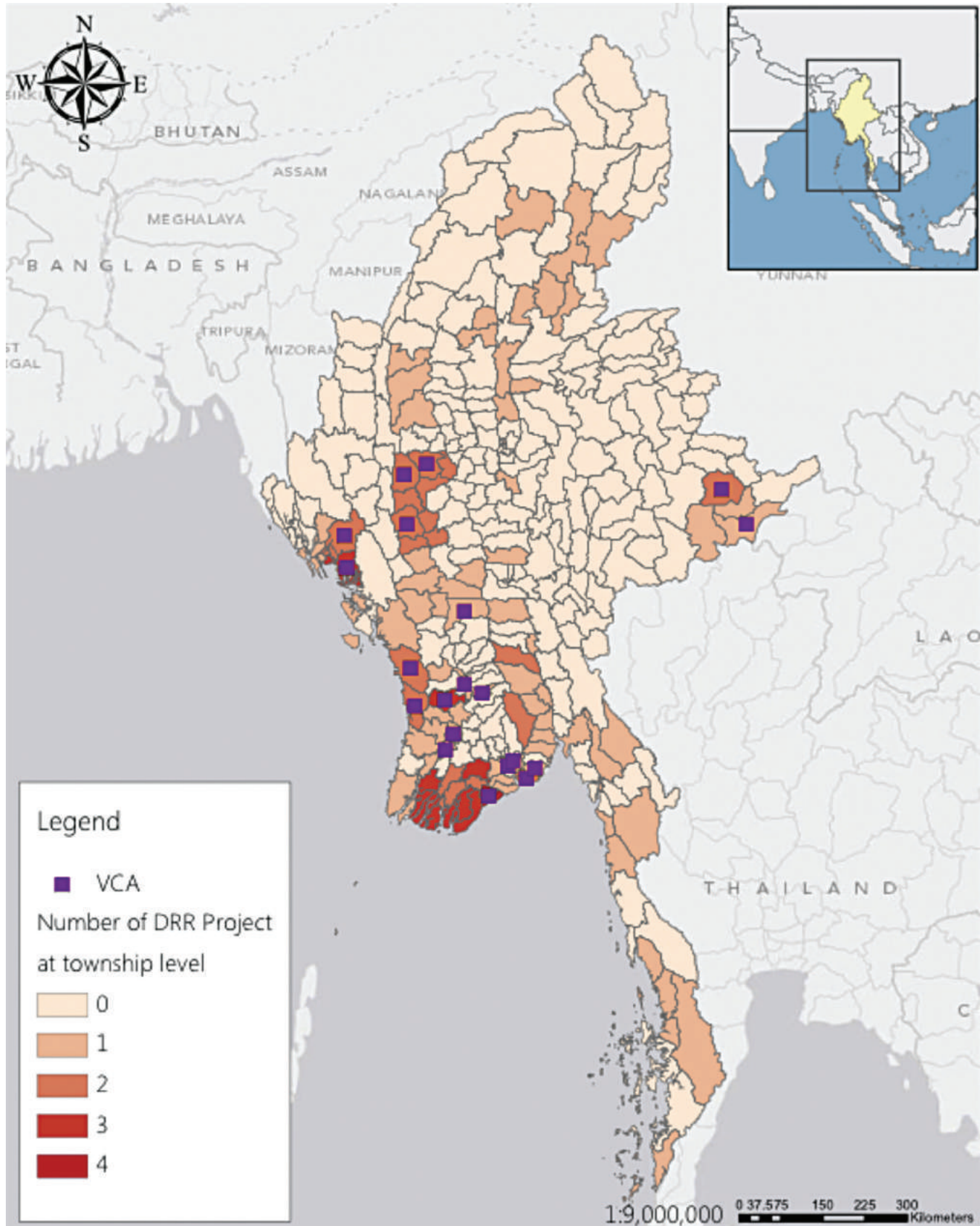
MRCS CONTRIBUTIONS IN DETAIL

CORE INDICATOR 1

National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.

Since 2009, MRCS has been building up the skills of its staff and volunteers that are needed to assess the vulnerabilities and capacities of communities. Although various assessment formats have been used over the past years, the recently developed multisector assessment tool enables the collection of vulnerability data related to individual sectors, such as health, disaster preparedness and livelihoods. According to the *Manual on Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction*, which MRCS developed in 2013, the multisector assessment is an essential step in every community-based disaster risk reduction programme because it allows for systematic analysis of vulnerabilities and capacities throughout the country. Figure 2 illustrates the townships where a vulnerability and capacity assessment and/or a multisector assessment have already been carried out as part of the programme.

Figure 2. Map of where MRCS has conducted a vulnerability and capacity assessment and/or a multi-sector assessment



CORE INDICATOR 2***Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on hazards and vulnerabilities.***

In 2009, MRCS began what is an ongoing hazard mapping and ranking exercise at the state, divisional and township levels. The information is used to design disaster management activities to further enhance the coping capacities of the most vulnerable communities, including school activities, as entry points for building safer communities.

CORE INDICATOR 3***Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.***

MRCS includes early warning aspects in all its programmes and activities. For example, one of the tools included in the emergency kit given to each project community is a loudspeaker that can be used to warn residents of emergency situations. Awareness-raising activities on the importance of early warning are conducted, and simulation exercises (both table top and field exercises) are carried out in communities to prepare them for emergency responses. Local emergency preparedness is one aspect of the MRCS Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. Within that programme, MRCS is constantly striving to build up capacities at all levels to improve local preparedness and early warning mechanisms.

MRCS has installed phone lines in selected state/region chapters as well as township branches to ensure the effectiveness of early warning systems. As table 1 indicates, 71 phone lines were installed from 2008 to 2012.

Table 1. Phone lines the MRCS installed, 2008–2012

State/region	No. of phones installed	State/region	No. of phones installed
Ayeyarwady	11	Kachin	4
Rakhine	11	Tanintharyi	6
Bago	9	Mon	5
Shan	4	Chin	1
Sagaing	5	Mandalay	3
Magway	7	Kayah	1
Kayin	4	Yangon	0

The experiences from the disasters that have hit Myanmar over the past ten years (such as Cyclone Giri, the Magway floods and the Shan State earthquake) underscore the importance of Red Cross volunteers when it comes to early warning. In the Cyclone Giri response, for instance, MRCS headquarters and state and regional chapters issued an early warning to the townships in Rakhine State and Magway Region that were likely to be affected by the cyclone. The township branches, in turn, through their respective volunteer brigades and in close cooperation with local authorities, helped alert communities and evacuate people in areas at risk to safer places.

Additionally, MRCS is implementing the Early Warning, Early Action Programme in Dedaye Township in Ayeyarwady Region. The programme focuses on raising the public's awareness of early warning issues and includes training activities on preparing communities to quickly react to an early warning in an emergency situation.

CORE INDICATOR 4

National and local risk assessments take account of regional and transboundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.

MRCS has a close relationship with other partner National Societies in the region; all Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies exchange best practices and develop common methodologies that can be used to tackle common problems within the region regarding disaster risk reduction.



MRCS volunteer conducts community health education
© Myanmar Red Cross Society

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 3

Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

CORE INDICATOR 1	CORE INDICATOR 2
<p>Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels to all stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and distribution of information and education materials (including a multi-hazard application) • Distribution of 10,000 pieces of information and education materials in 2009, reaching around 275,000 people • Celebration of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 	<p>School curricula, education materials and relevant training sessions include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting disaster risk reduction activities in 55 schools and training of 168 teachers and 1,210 students from 2010 to 2012 • Development of school-specific information and education materials • Participation in the Disaster Preparedness and the Disaster Preparedness and Response Education Working Groups
CORE INDICATOR 3	CORE INDICATOR 4
<p>Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost-benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information available 	<p>A countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction festivities • Organization of essay and poem competitions at the township level • Development and distribution of information and education materials • Development of education information on radio and TV broadcasts

MRCS CONTRIBUTIONS IN DETAIL

CORE INDICATOR 1

Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels to all stakeholders (through networks and information-sharing systems).

MRCS addresses the need for developing a disaster risk reduction culture at all levels with various communication and public education tools, such as organizing awareness-raising sessions, distributing information and education materials and conducting drills and simulation exercises. Three major groups of audiences are targeted: (i) communities and households, (ii) students and teachers and (iii) disaster risk reduction practitioners. MRCS has developed a large number of information and education materials in Myanmar language to raise awareness on disasters, disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and health-related issues. Information and education materials are distributed in all project villages and townships, including posters, flyers and vinyl banners. In 2009, around 10,000 pieces of information and education materials were distributed by MRCS, reaching around 275,000 people.

In addition, awareness messages and notices are broadcast on radio and television, capturing a broader range of stakeholders across the country. MRCS developed an animated film (on DVD) on disaster risk reduction information, which is especially useful for delivering information to illiterate community members.



Students undertake disaster preparedness drills at a school in KhePaung
© Felix La Framboise

Table 2. Information and education materials distributed by the MRCS Disaster Management Division, 2013

Types	Pieces distributed
<i>Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Handbook</i>	1,000
<i>Disaster Management Policy</i>	2,000
Pre-monsoon warning poster	10,000
Fire, flood, cyclone and earthquake education pamphlet	5,000
<i>Community-Based Urban Disaster Risk Reduction Education Handbook</i>	1,000
Vinyl poster with fire, flood, cyclone and earthquake information (Burmese language)	4,000
Vinyl poster with fire, flood, cyclone and earthquake information (Shan language)	10,000
Disaster education comic series (7 total, each specific to a hazard, such as tsunami, floods or earthquakes)	10,000

MRCS contributes to the celebration of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, focusing on large-scale awareness raising related to any disaster issue. In the 2010 festivities, for example, its “Making Cities Resilient” message reached more than 7,000 people in 16 townships. In the 2013 festivities, MRCS distributed disaster risk reduction messages through an animated film (on DVD) and the comic book series.

In September 2014, MRCS began promoting the latest innovation for disaster awareness and knowledge sharing – a multiple-hazard application available for downloading free of charge to android phones and tablets. The MRCS Multi-Hazard Application provides users with tips on safety and preparations for natural disasters, such as floods, storms and earthquakes. In the future, the application also will provide disaster warnings.

CORE INDICATOR 2

School curricula, education materials and relevant training sessions include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.

MRCS regards school-based disaster risk reduction as a primary element of sustainable disaster risk management. Since 2009, school-based disaster risk reduction has been part of ongoing projects. School disaster management committees have been established in several villages that oversee all school-based disaster risk reduction activities. Since 2010, MRCS has trained school-based disaster risk reduction facilitators. Table 3 highlights the number of trained teachers and students in three regions and one state.



Early warning is critical to disaster preparedness
© Mandy George

Table 3. School-based disaster risk reduction training activities in three regions and one state, 2010–2012

Year	State/region	Township	School	Trained teachers	Trained students
2010	Ayeyarwady	5	9	30	198
	Bago	5	10	30	220
Total	2	10	19	60	418
2011	Bago	5	10	30	220
	Magway	5	10	30	220
Total	2	10	20	60	440
2012	Shan	4	8	24	176
	Magway	4	8	24	176
Total	2	8	16	48	352
Total	6	28	55	168	1,210

MRCS has developed a variety of information and education materials for use in schools to teach students how to prepare for and respond to an emergency situation. Along with generic information materials, such as climate change fans, disaster pamphlets, posters and storm booklets, MRCS has developed games and simulation exercises. This includes a room-based simulation exercise for the school disaster management committees; awareness sessions for students; and essay, poem and painting competitions as part of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. MRCS developed a *School-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Manual* and a *School Disaster Management Committee Guidebook* to ensure that disaster risk reduction is strategically included in all its projects. School-based disaster risk reduction has an important role in community-based disaster risk reduction, which is why the Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Framework MRCS developed in 2013 stresses the inclusion of such school activities.

CORE INDICATOR 3

Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost-benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.

No information was available.

CORE INDICATOR 4

A countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.

MRCS promotes disaster risk reduction and disaster awareness across the country using various tools. MRCS has developed information materials, simulation exercises, awareness events, games, guidelines and manuals for this purpose. The tools are available for use within communities, schools and townships or by other practitioners and are specifically designed for target groups.

Although the simulation exercises and games are only used in project townships, the information materials are distributed across the country, such as during the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (celebrated each year on 13 October). At the national level, MRCS is a regular contributor to the annual day's celebration through an exhibition space, showcasing MRCS disaster risk reduction initiatives and disseminating disaster risk reduction-related information. At the township level, MRCS organizes essay competitions related to the specific disaster risk reduction slogan of the annual day's festivities. Prizes are awarded to winners by the township Red Cross executive committee.

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 4

Reduce the underlying risk factors.

CORE INDICATOR 1	CORE INDICATOR 2
<p>Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment-related policies and plans, including for land use and natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information available 	<p>Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerability and capacity assessment exercises identify the most vulnerable people Village disaster management committees or shelter and disaster management committees have at least 40% female members
CORE INDICATOR 3	CORE INDICATOR 4
<p>Economic and productive sectoral policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Cyclone Nargis Recovery Programme, which offered cash-for-work activities, recovery of productive assets, agriculture and business support and a revolving fund for women Inclusion of income-generation activities in community plans and based on vulnerability and capacity assessment results 	<p>Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of <i>How to Build Safer Shelter</i> booklets
CORE INDICATOR 5	CORE INDICATOR 6
<p>Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of a multiple-sector approach in the Cyclone Nargis Recovery Programme, including a disaster risk reduction component Development of guidelines on the integration of disaster risk reduction in recovery activities 	<p>Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information available

MRCS CONTRIBUTIONS IN DETAIL

CORE INDICATOR 1

Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment-related policies and plans, including for land use and natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.

No information was available.

CORE INDICATOR 2

Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.

MRCS works to ensure that people most at risk are included in its activities. When establishing a village disaster management committee or school disaster management committee, common practice is to have at least 40 per cent women as members. The vulnerability and capacity assessment exercise targets the most vulnerable people and includes them in the planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction activities. The Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, which was developed in 2013 to promote an integrated approach, stresses the importance of including various cross-cutting issues, such as climate change adaptation, sustainable livelihoods, violence prevention, gender-issues sensitivity and the inclusion of persons with disabilities during programme design and implementation processes.

CORE INDICATOR 3

Economic and productive sectoral policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities.

MRCS includes livelihood activities in a number of its programmes. During the Livelihood Recovery Programme after Cyclone Nargis, for example, MRCS reached more than 35,000 beneficiaries. The recovery programme started in October 2008 with cash-for-work activities, such as the repair of roads, bridges and jetties, reinforcement of river embankments and tree planting, and expanded to the recovery of productive assets (such as livestock and fishing boats), agriculture and business support and a revolving fund for women.

Another common activity in the MRCS programmes is income-generation. Based on the results of the vulnerability and capacity assessment that MRCS conducts, community action plans are developed that often include activities related to livelihoods and economic opportunities (such as seed banks and microfinancing schemes).

CORE INDICATOR 4

Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.

MRCS targets the proliferation of safer shelters, using various awareness-raising mediums. In particular, though, MRCS disseminates the *How to Build Safer Shelter* booklet in all its Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Programme activities. The booklet includes easy-to-understand information on the construction of safe shelters that can withstand rain floods and storms and uses a variety of graphics to depict the information in a practical way. The principles cited are applicable to both timber and bamboo shelters – the main types of shelter in rural Myanmar. It also contains a checklist of critical shelter components and a list of materials that can be used by a community member to build a safe shelter. UN-Habitat developed the booklet, and MRCS translated it into Myanmar language.

CORE INDICATOR 5

Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.

During the Cyclone Nargis recovery phase, MRCS, together with IFRC, designed a recovery programme with an integrated multiple-sector approach. Its main focus was to ensure that the most vulnerable households regained a sustaining independent life. Recovery activities covered several sectors, including health, psychosocial, water, sanitation, shelter and livelihoods. The recovery programme also emphasized building community capacities to prepare for future disasters.

The Cyclone Nargis recovery programme focused on four areas: (i) generating wage employment opportunities among vulnerable households; (ii) livelihood asset recovery and cash support; (iii) restoring natural resources in cyclone-affected areas; and (iv) community capacity building on livelihoods.

Using a community safety and resilience approach, MRCS also developed guidelines for integrating disaster risk reduction into recovery activities.

CORE INDICATOR 6

Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.

No information was available.

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 5 Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels	
CORE INDICATOR 1	CORE INDICATOR 2
<p>Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management are in place, with a disaster risk reduction perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the national disaster risk reduction platform • Conducting disaster management capacity-building activities on different levels (such as village disaster management committees) • Review of domestic laws against the IFRC International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles • Development of <i>Emergency Operations Manual</i> 	<p>Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are conducted to test and develop disaster response programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a key role during response to Cyclone Nargis • Development of nationwide multiple-hazard contingency plan and standard operating procedures (in line with an Inter-Agency Standing Committee response plan) • Operating as a key agency in the joint agency assessment after the Shan State earthquake in 2011
CORE INDICATOR 3	CORE INDICATOR 4
<p>Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishment of the MRCS Emergency Management Fund • Access to Disaster Response Emergency Fund • Allocation of 250,000 Swiss francs from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to respond to the Cyclone Giri destruction • Establishment of warehouses storing up to 12,000 family packages and 4,000 standard packages 	<p>Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters and to undertake post-event reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an emergency operation centre in Yangon and Nay Pyi Daw • Establishment of an emergency task force and 24-hour duty system for emergencies

MRCS CONTRIBUTIONS IN DETAIL

CORE INDICATOR 1

Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management are in place, with a disaster risk reduction perspective.

MRCS is an active member of the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group and is constantly engaged in associated activities. As part of its project and programme implementation, MRCS focuses on building capacities at various levels, such as the establishment of village disaster management committees or the improvement of skills at MRCS township branch level. As stated in the Standing Order on Natural Disaster Management in Myanmar, the MRCS is a key stakeholder during all phases of disaster management. Especially in the immediate response during a disaster event, the Standing Order stresses the importance of MRCS in supporting the work of the Government to ensure an efficient response.

MRCS integrates disaster risk reduction in all its disaster management activities. The Cyclone Nargis response operation, for example, included a strong disaster risk reduction focus. During the operation, resilient construction techniques were set as standards, and carpenters were trained by MRCS to comply with these standards. Other activities that included a disaster risk reduction focus were the reinforcement of river embankments to prevent saltwater intrusion or tree planting for wind-breaking. Early warning systems were introduced, and many communities developed disaster preparedness plans. Disaster risk reduction training was also provided to teachers and students through the School-Based Disaster Risk Management Programme.



MRCS volunteer talks to villagers about personal hygiene and sanitation, Kyone Thin
© U Nay Lin / Myanmar Red Cross Society

CORE INDICATOR 2

Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are conducted to test and develop disaster response programmes.

The MRCS response to the deadly Cyclone Nargis in May 2008 was enhanced through consultation with local authorities and the launch of a contingency planning process prior to the cyclone. Through a series of meetings and regular dialogue with 26 government departments, MRCS was able to foster understanding of its role in responding to disasters and the importance of developing contingency plans. As a result of these efforts, the National Society was able to respond to the needs of people affected by Cyclone Nargis immediately after it struck the Ayeyarwady Delta and the city of Yangon. Because authorities were fully aware of the National Society's role and actions in such situations, access was permitted to the affected areas and customs duties were waived.

In the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, MRCS further improved its response capacity by developing a nationwide multiple-hazard contingency plan and standard operating procedures for localized small-scale disasters. The contingency plan is in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee response plan, and thus directly supports the government response in disaster situations. The MRCS response to the earthquake in eastern Shan State in March 2011 demonstrated the effectiveness of the organization's contingency plan and standard operating procedures. Within 48 hours of the disaster, two senior staff members from headquarters were mobilized to facilitate coordination and assessments in Tachileik Township. These two staff members supported the MRCS township branch in coordinating activities as well as mobilizing volunteers – a total of 100 volunteers from Tachileik and neighbouring townships conducted search-and-rescue activities and assessments, and distributed relief items.



In Yangon, women train as firefighters, giving them the skills and confidence to prevent and face fire
© Mandy George

At the legal and policy level, MRCS works with the Government (through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement) to strengthen the legal framework for disaster management and response. MRCS and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement jointly organized a high-level advocacy workshop on international disaster law in May 2014, with the participation of representatives from government departments, United Nations agencies, donors and international NGOs. The event was preceded by a training workshop for MRCS staff to expand their knowledge and understanding of disaster law.

Building upon the outcomes of the high-level advocacy workshop and in addition to their role in the development of the Disaster Management Rules, MRCS will be working with the Relief and Resettlement Department to review the existing legal framework against the IFRC Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (also known as the IDRL Guidelines).

MRCS has also taken an active part in simulation exercises to test the coordination and disaster preparedness for response among different actors (government, the humanitarian sector and international actors). In September 2014, MRCS had a significant role in a disaster response simulation exercise jointly hosted by the government and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at Inle Lake. MRCS organized the event, which included a presentation on International Disaster Response Law and its accompanying Guidelines as part of the academic session and the consideration of International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles and the role of MRCS as a responder.

MRCS finalized its *Emergency Operations Manual* in 2009, which stresses the tasks and activities that must be carried out in disaster events. The manual guides the implementation of relief and response activities to ensure efficiency and to avoid delays as best as possible.

CORE INDICATOR 3

Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support response and recovery activity when required.

MRCS oversees that financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support its response and recovery activities whenever required. The MRCS Emergency Management Fund, created in 2012, is used to replenish the disaster preparedness stock, deploy rapid assessment teams as per the MRCS standard operating procedures for relief assistance for small-scale disasters and preposition disaster preparedness stock in strategic warehouses. Additionally, MRCS can access the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund that the IFRC manages and the IFRC Emergency Appeal, both of which support partner National Societies in their response to large-scale disasters, such as Cyclone Nargis and the Shan State earthquake.

MRCS provides assistance to thousands of disaster-affected people throughout the country each year. In 2014, MRCS assistance reached 9,989 families (41,114 people), of which 2,674 families (11,006 people) were affected by natural disasters. In 2013, MRCS reached 30,517 people (2,918 families) with assistance. Of them, 14,431 individuals had been affected by a natural disaster (the others benefitted from development, social and health care activities).

The MRCS emergency relief operations after Cyclone Giri aimed at assisting 13,912 of the most affected households (69,560 beneficiaries) in four townships of Rakhine State through the provision of non-food items, hygiene and health promotion and water and sanitation services. In total, 250,000 Swiss francs was allocated from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to support MRCS activities.



MRCS also ensures that sufficient emergency supplies are available at any time. Warehouses have been established in various states and regions (Tanintharyi, Kayah, Bago, Yangon and Naw Pyi Daw), storing up to 12,000 family packages in 22 locations. Each family package includes a kitchen set, two blankets, one mosquito net, clothes for children and adults and soap. In addition, MRCS stores 4,000 standard packages in its disaster preparedness stock (each package contains a rope, a hammer and two tarpaulins).

MRCS established a national disaster response (NDRT) team and trained volunteers from various townships who can be deployed to a disaster site within a reasonable amount of time. MRCS conducts regular training for the team members on logistics, first aid, coordination of relief and search and rescue. To date, MRCS has trained 131 national disaster response team members and 736 emergency response team members. Of them, 180 people have received specialized training related to emergency response. Each emergency response team consists of six members, which means that a total of 144 teams specialized in emergency response have been established. The effectiveness of the national disaster response team was demonstrated during relief efforts after the Shan State earthquake in 2011.

CORE INDICATOR 4

Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters and to undertake post-event reviews.

MRCS set up an emergency operation centre in Nay Pyi Daw and is still in the process of establishing one in Yangon, which, when done, will link with each other. The centre in Nay Pyi Daw is not complete but is partly functioning. During emergency situations, MRCS sets up an emergency task force, comprising representatives of MRCS departments, IFRC and partner National Societies, which is responsible for coordinating emergency relief operations, including assessments. During the Cyclone Giri response, MRCS also activated a 24-hour duty system, mainly with staff of its disaster management division, and placed 30 Red Cross volunteers of the Yangon division branch on standby for immediate deployment in operation areas if needed.

MRCS participated in the joint-agency assessment carried out after the Shan State earthquake in 2011. According to its standard operating procedures, MRCS instituted a beneficiary selection process and maintained close coordination with local authorities and other humanitarian actors to avoid duplication in this process. Relief was distributed accordingly in affected areas. A total of 100 Red Cross volunteers were involved in relief distributions, administering first aid and psychosocial support and raising public awareness on potential communicable diseases. The volunteers distributed 1,000 information and education pamphlets to people living in affected areas.

4.3 Contributions to the four cross-cutting issues

GENDER-ISSUES SENSITIVITY

MRCS adheres to a gender-balanced approach in all its projects and activities. As stated in the *Manual on Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction*, a gender-sensitive approach is a cross-cutting issue in every community activity; in particular, the manual advises on how best to include women in every step of the process.

MRCS also strives for gender balance among its staff and volunteers. As of 2011, the organization had a volunteer base of nearly 30,000 volunteers, 40 per cent of whom were women. MRCS encourages women to apply for staff positions, and the male-female ratio at the headquarters is fairly balanced.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

MRCS contributes to the skill development of its volunteers and staff members. According to the *Manual on Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction*, capacity building is a critical activity of any disaster risk reduction initiative of the organization. Capacity building is managed through training, the distribution of guidelines and manuals, learning-by-doing experience, drills and simulation exercises. In general, all Red Cross volunteers must undergo a rigorous training programme related to first aid, which has resulted in a highly capable and knowledgeable volunteer base. In addition, there are a variety of other courses, such as training on emergency, livelihood or disaster response; administration duties and finance training; computer and office work training; communication and facilitation training; and gender-issues sensitization. The courses, which began in 2008 and are offered at a variety of levels (table 4), encourage Red Cross volunteers and staff members to expand their skills and knowledge.

Table 4. Training courses provided to MRCS staff and volunteers, 2008–2014

Year	Training	No. of people trained	Level
2008	Community-based disaster risk management training of trainers	280	Township level
2009	Community-based disaster risk management training of trainers	108	State/region level
2009	Community-based disaster risk management multiplier course	3,360	Community level
2009	Climate change adaptation	36	National level
2010	Logistics management	96	State/region level
2010	Communication	60	National level
2010	Climate change	84	National level
2010	Disaster management	26	Abroad
2010	Community-based disaster risk management training of trainers	110	State/region level
2011	National disaster response team training	36	National level (HQ staff)
2011	Emergency response	180	State/region level
2012	Community-based disaster risk management multiplier course	886	Community level
2013	School-based disaster risk reduction and psychosocial support programme	88	Mandalay and Sagaing
2013	National disaster response team	30	National level (HQ staff)
2013	Disaster risk reduction field session trainings	30	National level
2013	School-based disaster risk reduction facilitators	31	State/region level
2013	Vulnerability and capacity assessment training	34	State/region level
2013	Emergency response teams 1 and 2	60	State/region level
2013	Sensitization session on the Disaster Law Programme (formerly the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles Programme)	20	National level
2014	Training workshop on the Disaster Management Law	25–30	National level

Additionally, MRCS supports the Government's Relief and Resettlement Department programme on youth volunteers, which works to build up the skills of youth to prepare and respond to disaster events.

Volunteers are a reliable resource in the work of MRCS, and the wide range of capacities of volunteers trained under MRCS has been acknowledged during the response of natural disasters that have hit Myanmar in the past decade (such as Cyclone Nargis, Cyclone Giri, the Magway floods and the Shan State earthquake) where Red Cross volunteers significantly contributed to response and recovery activities.

COMMUNITIES AND VOLUNTEERS

In 2008, MRCS established a volunteer movement diary in all its branches, encouraging staff to record and support volunteer work. Branches have registered all volunteers since then, thereby improving overall volunteer management. In 2010, 29,566 registered volunteers were trained and available for immediate deployment (an 11 per cent increase compared with 2009).

An important achievement of MRCS for its volunteers is an insurance scheme, which provides coverage during all activities and ensures that volunteers work in a safe setting.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

MRCS is part of the Preparedness for Climate Change Programme, implemented globally by the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre. As part of the programme, MRCS conducts trainings across the country on climate change adaptation and organize awareness campaigns on climate change issues. Climate change adaptation is considered at every stage of community-based disaster risk reduction programmes, as stated in the *Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Manual*, which was developed as part of the Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Framework in 2013.



In Rakhine district, MRCS volunteers are on hand to help with common health complaints and issues
© Andreas Weissenberg / IFRC



5. Projects and programmes promoting the Hyogo Framework priorities

Name	Description	HFA 1	HFA 2	HFA 3	HFA 4	HFA 5	Partners
Community-Based Health and First Aid Project	The project applies an integrated approach involving health, first aid, water, sanitation and disaster management activities to enhance the capabilities of communities to build a safer, healthier and more resilient environment. The disaster preparedness activities include disaster risk education, disaster preparedness and risk reduction training; development of village-level disaster preparedness plans; and the establishment of early warning systems.			X		X	IFRC Appeal/ Hong Kong branch of the Red Cross Society of China, Swedish Red Cross, Finish Red Cross
Community-Based Health and Resilience Project	The project's main objective was the strengthening of community capacities to prevent and respond to health issues. The project included the establishment of village disaster management committees as well as disaster risk reduction and mitigation activities. Red Cross volunteers were trained to increase their disaster preparedness and response capacity.				X	X	Australian Red Cross (bilateral support)
Community-Based Health Development Programme Focused on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Programme	The programme's main objective is to improve the health status of the country's population. Targeted communities are supported in the construction and rehabilitation of water systems and/or are provided with safe water treatment solutions that focus on reducing underlying risks.				X		Consortium of Danish Red Cross, British Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross (bilateral support)
Strengthening the MRCS Capacities in Water, Sanitation, Emergency Preparedness and Response Project	The project's main objective is to strengthen disaster preparedness, response and risk reduction activities of the MRCS water and sanitation unit. The water and sanitation staff in headquarters were trained in emergency response activities. Standard operating procedures and deployment guidelines were developed, along with standard assessment guidelines for water and sanitation emergency needs. A roster of emergency response team members was developed, and emergency response equipment was rehabilitated in strategic locations.					X	IFRC Appeal

Name	Description	HFA 1	HFA 2	HFA 3	HFA 4	HFA 5	Partners
Sexual and Reproductive Health Project	This project included advocacy activities targeted at the review of emergency response plans of various stakeholders (United Nations Population Fund, Myanmar Department of Health, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and MRCS) to include a minimum essential service package into their respective emergency response plans. Emergency rapid response teams were trained to integrate the minimum essential service package into their disaster response activities in three states and regions. MRCS supported the inclusion of reproductive health issues and gender-issues sensitizing into the disaster management plan of the Ministry of Health.					X	United Nations Population Fund
First Aid and Safety Project	One of the project's main objectives is to strengthen MRCS capacity to manage an integrated community-based approach for both emergency and normal situations, in line with Ministry of Health standards. The project includes a variety of training activities all targeted towards increasing the skills of community members and Red Cross volunteers to provide first aid in emergencies. The project also includes first aid training for staff of United Nations agencies, international and national NGOs and government departments.			X		X	IFRC Appeal (Japanese Red Cross, Singapore Red Cross, French Red Cross)
Ambulance Service Project	The project aims at reducing the incidence of death, illness, injury and impact from disasters and from newly emerging or re-emerging diseases and public health emergencies.					X	Singapore Red Cross
Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Urban Disaster Risk Reduction Project	This project promotes community safety and resilience activities in disaster-prone areas through a disaster risk reduction focus. The activities involve training and mitigation procedures using an integrated risk reduction approach. Preparedness and response kits are distributed in targeted communities.			X	X	X	IFRC Annual Appeal (multilateral support)
Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Programme	This programme promotes community safety and resilience activities in disaster-prone areas through a disaster risk reduction focus. The activities involve training and mitigation procedures using an integrated risk reduction approach. Preparedness and response kits are distributed in targeted communities.			X	X	X	IFRC Annual Appeal (multilateral support)

Name	Description	HFA 1	HFA 2	HFA 3	HFA 4	HFA 5	Partners
Community-Based Disaster Risk Management and School-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Project	This project promotes community safety and resilience activities in disaster-prone areas through a disaster risk reduction focus on school-based activities. It also includes the distribution of basic response kits to communities as well as early warning system tools and education materials.			X	X	X	IFRC Annual Appeal (multilateral support)
MRCS Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Building and Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Coastal Area Programme	The programme aims to increase the resilience of populations at risk of natural disasters in coastal areas. The project strives to build capacities at the township level and enhance MRCS branch organizational preparedness for disasters. School- and village- based disaster management committees have been established and comprehensive training and awareness-raising activities are carried out to increase the overall resilience of targeted communities. Small-scale mitigation activities are supported at the village level, based on the results of the vulnerability and capacity assessment.			X	X	X	French Red Cross and Canadian Red Cross (bilateral support)



Name	Description	HFA 1	HFA 2	HFA 3	HFA 4	HFA 5	Partners
Disaster Response Preparedness Project	The project aimed at improving disaster preparedness and response capacities by strengthening the skills of staff and volunteers and the National Society structures and facilities, from headquarters to branches. Emergency response teams were trained, and national disaster response team members received specialized training on shelter, health, water and sanitation. SPHERE standards were translated into Myanmar language, and one SPHERE training was conducted in a local language. National, state and region disaster contingency plans for a variety of hazards were revised and/or developed.					X	IFRC Annual Appeal (multilateral support)
Response Replenishment and Prepositioning Disaster Preparedness Stock Project	Activities under this project included the procurement and distribution of 4,000 sanitation and hygiene kits and 4,000 women's emergency kits. Additionally, 2,000 sanitation and hygiene kits, 2,000 women's emergency kits and 140 first-aid kits were replenished in the MRCS Yangon and Mandalay warehouses. And 200 sets of personal emergency equipment for Red Cross volunteers were procured.					X	Danish Red Cross (bilateral support)



Myanmar Red Cross volunteers try out their first aid skills in a competition, 2013
© Ent Paw Oo / Myanmar Red Cross Society

Name	Description	HFA 1	HFA 2	HFA 3	HFA 4	HFA 5	Partners
Supporting Tarpaulins and Student Kits for Internally Displaced Persons in Kachin Project	The project aimed to reduce the effects of conflict on the population in Kachin State, with 6,000 tarpaulins and 5,000 student kits provided to the most vulnerable people.					X	Singapore Red Cross (bilateral support)
Project Cycle Management Training in Kachin Project	The project aimed at building capacities of MRCS in Kachin State to develop response plans for any hazard. The project included a one-week training session on assessments in emergencies.					X	International Committee of the Red Cross
Supporting Shwebo Earthquake-Affected People and Students Project (2012)	The project was conducted in the aftermath of the earthquake in Shwebo city in 2010, aiming to reduce the impacts of the earthquake as well as to raise awareness about earthquake preparedness for the future. Local Red Cross volunteers and teachers were trained in disaster risk reduction and school safety, with multiplier courses and drills conducted in schools.			X		X	Government and People of Republic of Korea
Enhancing Disaster Safety in Vulnerable Communities and Schools in Myanmar Project	The project aimed to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters by strengthening safety and resilience in public schools and communities. Under the project, an emergency operations centre was established, and emergency response teams were trained and equipped. Early warning focal points were established, and basic early warning communication equipment was installed in the MRCS headquarters and targeted branches and communities. In addition, the <i>Early Warning, Early Action Manual</i> and materials were introduced at the community level.		X	X		X	American Red Cross, United States Agency for International Development and Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
Logistics Capacity Development Project	Under this project, the capacity of MRCS regarding emergency response was strengthened, with a focus on the logistics sector. Capacity-building activities were carried out in emergency response, emergency relief and distribution of emergency relief. The MRCS response plan was reviewed and revised, and a standard warehouse system was established.					X	IFRC Appeal Taiwan Red Cross
Warehouse Construction and Renovation Project	Under this project, the capacity of warehouses in disaster-prone areas was improved to strengthen disaster preparedness and response. Three warehouses were constructed and one warehouse was renovated. Red Cross volunteers were trained in logistics.					X	Singapore Red Cross

6. Future outlook

The review, interviews and consultations on the Myanmar Red Cross Society's contribution towards realizing the five priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action found that the organization is a leader in terms of disaster risk reduction in the country. Through its numerous projects and programmes, MRCS has contributed substantially towards implementing the Hyogo Framework, thereby promoting safe and resilient communities across Myanmar. In line with its understanding of disaster risk reduction as encompassing all phases of the disaster management cycle, MRCS has contributed to emergency preparedness and has proven its important role when it comes to disaster response and rehabilitation. Throughout all activities, MRCS has reduced disaster risks in a sustainable way while including the most vulnerable people in the population in its activities.

MRCS will continue promoting a more healthy and safe environment for the people of Myanmar, prioritizing the most vulnerable communities and individuals. MRCS also will continue to support disaster risk reduction initiatives, both in stand-alone projects and government initiatives. As noted in the MRCS Strategic Plan 2011–2015, disaster risk reduction is of utmost importance; expanding and strengthening capacities for the implementation of Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Programme will remain a significant activity. MRCS will continue to support government initiatives related to disaster risk management as well as disaster risk reduction, including the development of relevant legal and policy frameworks. MRCS will continue to support the government in reaching its disaster risk reduction commitments under the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (known as the Sendai Framework for DRR).



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The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It 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.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



For further information, please contact:

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