

Volume 2 – Change Stories

	Theme	Intermediate/Immediate Outcome	Focus
1	Disaster Law	1100: Improved representation of community Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) issues in national policies, plans, and programmes	This case focuses on IFRC's DL partnership with UNDP and the added value that IFRC was able to bring to the partnership to ensure the development of ASEAN-country disaster related laws.
2	Disaster Law	1100: As above	This case focuses on DL development in Lao and the partnership with UNDP.
3	Disaster Law	1100: As above	This case focuses on DL development in Cambodia and the partnership with UNDP.
4	Disaster Law	1100: As above	This case focuses on DL development in Myanmar.
5	Regional partnerships (external)	1200: Increased effectiveness of SEA regional DRR cooperation mechanisms	This case focuses on IFRC's partnerships with external actors and how those partners perceive IFRC contributions to reducing vulnerability in the region.
6	Regional Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how IFRC has successfully worked at the regional and country-levels to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into regional, national and local policies, strategies and tools.
7	Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how Lao Red Cross has successfully worked at the country-level to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into national and local policies, strategies and tools.
8	Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how Malaysian Red Crescent has successfully worked at the country-level to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into national and local policies, strategies and tools.
9	Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how PMI has successfully worked at the country-level to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into national and local policies, strategies and tools.
10	Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how Philippines Red Cross has successfully worked at the country-level to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into national and local policies, strategies and tools.
11	Gender and Diversity	1200: As above	This case focuses on how Vietnam Red Cross has successfully worked at the country-level to ensure issues related to G&D are meaningfully incorporated into national and local policies, strategies and tools.
12	ASEAN partnership	1200: Increased effectiveness of SEA regional DRR cooperation mechanisms	This case focuses on IFRC's partnership with ASEAN and how the partnership has contributed to the AADMER.
13	AMCDRR contributions	1200: As above	This case illustrates IFRC's investment in the Asian Ministerial Conferences on DRR (AMCDRR) 2014/2016 and the added value brought to those conferences.

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14	ASSI	1200: As above	This case illustrates the effectiveness of IFRC DRR cooperation through the ASEAN Schools Safety Initiative (ASSI) and the promotion of youth.
15	NS and the Comprehensive School Safety Framework	1200: As above	This case documents National Society contributions to the Comprehensive School Safety Framework and illustrates how the ASSI support has translated to community level.
16	Climate Change	1210: Increased DRR cooperation between RCRC, ACDM and other regional organisations	This case illustrates IFRC's support to ASEAN's Climate Change initiatives.

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Preamble

Throughout this Volume, the terms *RRI* (Regional Resilience Initiative) and *IFRC* (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) when referring to contribution to achievements or outcomes are used synonymously unless otherwise stated. The reason for this relates to a key challenge related to 'attribution of achievement' i.e. was it IFRC, RRI or National Societies (NS) – one, both or all three – that contributed to or secured the outcome?¹

At the outset of developing the case/change stories/studies contained in this Volume, it was agreed that identified contributions to outcomes and/or achievements would be attributed to *both* the IFRC and the RRI on the basis that the RRI is an IFRC initiative (thus causing a 'synonymous' IFRC/RRI attribution) or by using phrasing such as "with RRI support, IFRC secured . . .". These distinctions are undertaken on a limited and selected case-by-case basis for purposes of narrative clarity as agreed with the IFRC Bangkok Country Cluster Support Team at the time of developing each case/change story/study.

¹ This issue is of particular importance and the reader is directed to Section 4, Lessons Learned, lesson 2 in the main report for further explanation.

Cooperation with United Nations agencies (UNDP and UNOCHA) on Disaster Law in Lao, Cambodia and Myanmar - Improving representation of community DRR issues in national policies, plans, and programmes

Background

To provide context to this case story it is important to illuminate the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) role in the promotion of Disaster Law (DL). The IFRC Disaster Law Programme seeks to reduce human vulnerability by promoting effective legal frameworks for disaster risk reduction and legal preparedness for disasters. The Programme works in three main areas: (i) collaborating with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (RCRC) and other partners to offer technical assistance to governments on disaster law issues; (ii) building the capacity of National Societies and other stakeholders in disaster law; and (iii) DL dissemination, advocacy and research. In Southeast Asia, IFRC's DL work is part of an integrated approach to strengthening community resilience undertaken in close collaboration with initiatives related to: disaster risk reduction (DRR); disaster management (DM); humanitarian diplomacy (HD); advocacy; gender and diversity (G&D); and communications. Through these thematics IFRC aims to build capacity and sustainability within National Societies and contribute to national and regional law and policy processes.

For a number of years, the IFRC has worked in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme² to promote effective DL through joint projects, events and other disaster law related initiatives. Both IFRC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) see DRR as an integral part of their development work, recognising that appropriate governance is fundamental to effective DRR. Joint IFRC and UNDP research has demonstrated that laws can play an important role in ensuring community engagement and defining the rights and responsibilities of all actors in building more resilient communities and promoting a whole-of-society approach. While IFRC has led (and currently leads) DRR research and tool development³, there is limited information about what works and what does not regarding legislation for disaster risk reduction, and here IFRC has worked closely with UNDP to support governments with the best evidence and advice available on this topic. In 2014 the partnership developed a key joint publication: 'Effective Law and Regulation for Disaster Risk Reduction: a multi country report'.⁴ Building on this collaboration, IFRC and UNDP continued to work together on:

- advocating for the recognition of DRR law in the Sendai Framework, as well as the consultations on the sustainable development goals and the universal climate agreement;
- developing programmatic and analytical tools based on the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) law typology to be used by IFRC and UNDP staff and National Societies in supporting lawmakers;
- facilitating the exchange of best practices and lessons learned among countries;
- developing a 'DRR law checklist' to assist lawmakers, as well as DRR and development practitioners with reviewing legal frameworks for Disaster Risk Management.

² And the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

³ In particular, volunteer mobilisations, vulnerability capacity assessments, beneficiary communications and accountability, as well as the application of gender-positive approaches National Societies contribute to IFRC research and tool development, ensuring theoretical notions are based on and reflect grassroots applicability and are adapted to respond to and reflect the concerns of vulnerable communities within their countries.

⁴ IFRC and UNDP (2014).

Following the aforementioned multi-country report, IFRC and UNDP developed a 'Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction' (the Checklist)⁵, with feedback from this publication being used to develop another joint IFRC-UNDP initiative, the 'Handbook on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction'.⁶ Both tools have provided practical guidance to lawmakers, officials, and practitioners on how to review and improve laws and regulations to ensure DRR is prioritized in all sectors and at all levels with clear mandates and accountability frameworks.

Regional Resilience Initiative support to Disaster Law

IFRC's Regional Resilience Initiative's DL work focuses on strengthening legal frameworks for disaster management and responses. Through the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI), the IFRC provides technical assistance and capacity building to both National Societies and their governments to promote the inclusion of risk reduction and best practices in related laws and regulations that are under development or review across the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) countries. The RRI also strengthens National Societies' knowledge of disaster law themes (including International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) and Disaster Risk Reduction and Law) helping them to contribute to policy making processes and thereby enhancing their auxiliary disaster management role to government.

With RRI support, the IFRC-UNDP partnership has pursued joint initiatives on law and DRR as a natural evolution of their engagement with countries at the national and community levels, which has been formalized through a global Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and country level agreements (in both Lao and Cambodia). This commitment is premised on the understanding that to reduce regional and national vulnerabilities; community, national and regional level efforts must be linked (National Societies have been recognised as an ideal vehicle for accomplishing this goal). The IFRC and UNDP partnership has been instrumental in supporting the development of DM/DRR policy and regulations to make changes to existing policies or to develop new subsidiary legislation, regulations, guidelines, policies and plans to facilitate the implementation of revised legal frameworks.

The IFRC-UNDP partnership has been enhanced through initiatives such as the Regional Disaster Law Forum⁷, where National Societies and governments in Southeast Asia come together with key partners (the ASEAN Secretariat National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO), Ministries of Foreign Affairs, parliamentarians, United Nations agencies and non-government organisations - NGOs) to discuss disaster law developments at national, regional and international levels; as well as with UNDP in the Asia Pacific Disaster Law Field School in 2017, where UNDP partnered with IFRC to run sessions on DRR/climate change adaptation (CCA) and recovery and law.⁸ Importantly, the Forum highlights the role National Societies have to play as the bridge between the community/local level and national level disaster law and policy making processes.

The IFRC-UNDP partnership has been instrumental in IFRC's RRI DL approach, an approach that is framed by four key aims (encapsulated in boxes) which are instrumental to ensuring Outcome 1 (refer graphic at page 4) is secured:

1. Consolidating the "community voices" or DRR concerns of vulnerable communities, from Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA) conducted by National Societies (NS) in the region, to be used for advocacy at a national and regional level. National Societies, through their community work combined with their engagement and auxiliary role to

⁵ Released as a pilot version in Sendai, Japan at the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015.

⁶ IFRC and UNDP (2015). The Handbook on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction.

⁷ Held in Bangkok, Thailand in June 2015.

⁸ A mix of policy and interactive scenario based learning involving 3 SEA NS and 3 government ministries including ASEAN.

government, represent the ideal conduit for ensuring the voice of vulnerable communities are heard. Through regional collaborations among SEA National Societies and IFRC, the RRI has supported National Societies to air these concerns at the highest regional levels, for which the Local/Community Disaster Law Dissemination packages⁹, aimed at supporting community and local level authority to know their rights, roles and responsibilities in disasters, has greatly empowered NS to be engaged in decision making.

In mid-2017, IFRC participated in ASEAN-OXFAM's Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Journey Learning Conference to share experiences in peer learning and exchange through its disaster law programme. The Learning Conference was the culmination of the project's mapping of Disaster Risk Management peer to peer platforms in ASEAN and a showcase of peer learning case studies implemented in Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar¹⁰, which had a focus on IFRC's work with National Societies brought community voices to decision-making tables in ASEAN, highlighting how RCRC have been supporting governments and humanitarian/ development partners to ensure that disaster law and policy frameworks are people-centred and are rooted in good coordination and communication with communities themselves through advocacy and technical support based on their global research on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction, which provides evidence and strategies for ensuring engaged communities in disaster risk management decision making.

2. Supporting National Societies to advocate for and influence national DRR issues and policies, based on community-identified thematic issues, by supporting the development or enhancement of the required skill sets to advocate on their behalf. This aspect of capacity building and operational support has included supporting the Asia-Pacific Field School and the Regional Disaster Law Forum for Southeast Asia¹¹; holding sensitization, advocacy and training workshops with National Society staff, volunteers, governments, NGOs and the United Nations in Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand and Timor Lesté; and deploying the IFRC Regional Disaster Law Delegate to provide International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) support to the Myanmar flood operation in August 2015. Throughout this process, there was a lot of 'learning by doing' by NS staff who were involved in policy-making processes and were part of all advocacy activities in their countries.

3. Assisting National Societies to advocate for better disaster laws within their respective countries. Over the years, IFRC *Technical Assistance* (TA) has been instrumental in influencing ASEAN Member States to adopt laws and regulations drawing from the 'Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance' (also known as the 'IDRL Guidelines') in Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar and Cambodia. Technical Assistance has also contributed to the development and/or review of DM laws and regulations in Indonesia, the Philippines, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) and Timor Lesté; and has helped complete International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) and/or Law and DRR projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Indonesia (and has contributed to the IDRL project currently underway in Myanmar).

⁹ Rolled out in 2017 in the Philippines, Cambodia and Vietnam.

¹⁰ Cross-learning and knowledge management falls under Priority 8 of the AADMER work programme (LEAD) although it is also cross-cutting to all priority areas.

¹¹ Held in Bangkok in June 2015 and bringing together over 60 participants from National Societies, governments, parliamentarians, NGOs, donors, international and regional organisations to discuss key disaster law issues and developments in the region.

4. Supporting National Societies to consider gender equality as a central component in DRR programme planning and implementation. The RRI acknowledged this would require a strong knowledgebase and range of capacities within SEA National Societies to enable them to apply a gender lens and to ultimately advocate with key government ministries and regional bodies for more gender and diversity sensitive DRM Governance frameworks. Thus, the RRI employed a combined bottom-up and leading-through-example approach in pursuit of this aim by encouraging and supporting National Societies to feed gender-inclusive data and information to national and regional bodies. This approach has helped build National Societies' gender knowledge, skill sets and capacities, and provided them with a foundation for successful integration of a gender approach into their DRR policies, plans and programmes.

2017 RRI supported DL Initiatives

Other RRI supported DL initiatives have included in 2017, IFRC and ASEAN Secretariat facilitated key partners to discuss how to strengthen preparedness and response through law and policy as part of the ASEAN Disaster Law Mapping Consultation, under a wider joint initiative endorsed by ACDM to promote peer to peer learning on DL among ASEAN policy-makers and practitioners. The consultation was designed to invite feedback from Member States and National Societies on the first draft of the "Institutionalization of AADMER [ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management & Emergency Response] in Domestic Law and Policy in ASEAN: Regional Synthesis Report"¹², which aims to provide an evidence-base for identifying and addressing good practices, gaps and challenges in institutionalizing the AADMER provisions in domestic legal frameworks.

2017 also saw the first ever Asia Pacific Regional Disaster Law Field School. This was co-hosted by Australian Red Cross and IFRC, which brought together an extensive range of partners in key international and regional legal and policy frameworks for disaster risk management, utilizing global tools¹³ and sharing experiences around national and local level implementation of law and policy best practice. The partners included the twelve (12) SEA National Societies with their respective governments, the RCRC Climate Centre, and other regional organisations that included: ASEAN and Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS); the Secretariat for Pacific Community (SPC); and the Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC). UN participants included UNOCHA and UNDP. RRI also supported the ASEAN Secretariat and three SEA RC NS - Myanmar, Lao PDR and Indonesia - to attend the Regional Disaster Law Field School. Overall, a total of 45 (20 F/25 M) participants attended the course, with 8 of those funded through the Regional Resilience Initiative.

The RRI has also supported the Vietnam Red Cross to host study exchange tours with groups from Lao PDR and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to examine good practice in development and implementation of disaster management legislation; DRR and Law research project in Indonesia (using the IFRC-UNDP 'Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction'); and the Philippines DL project which included training on DL and legislative advocacy for Philippine Red Cross. The IFRC's *advocacy and partnership* work has involved strengthening international and regional partnerships through legislative advocacy, including undertaking sessions at the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management and International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR) celebrations; the ASEAN DL mapping initiative; and presenting on disaster

¹² The research falls under the *ASEAN Peer to Peer Learning: Disaster Law and Policy Platform*, a partnership between ACDM, IFRC and Lao Red Cross.

¹³ Such as the IDRL Guidelines and the Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction, Minimum Standard Commitments to Gender and Diversity in Emergency Programming for scenario based application.

law experience from Southeast Asia at the Canadian Risk and Hazards Network Symposium in Calgary.¹⁴

In parallel to RRI's support, in 2017 IFRC (under separate funding) facilitated the Pacific Islands Forum and ASEAN to share experiences on regional governance and make progress to better enable effective partnerships and support resilient communities through a learning exchange¹⁵ between the PIF and ASEAN. The exchange was the first of its kind between these regions and enacted commitments made in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit Agenda for Humanity, which sought to strengthen collaboration within and between regional organisations. A key learning from the event was how clear policy frameworks have paved the way for ASEAN institutions and member states to work effectively for the benefit of people in times of disasters. The added value of this initiative is in the contribution to the creation of a platform for continued dialogue and collaboration between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum on how to make communities in Asia Pacific safer and more resilient in times of disasters.

Overall IFRC/RRI/NS contribution to ensuring ASEAN countries have effective disaster laws has been significant and a crucial factor in supporting vulnerable populations in times of disaster and non-disaster. With IFRC/RRI/NS support, southeast Asia has made significant strides on disaster law and risk management practices at both national and regional levels as illustrated in the two tables below. Much credit goes to IFRC/RRI/NS for these successes.

The three case studies below illustrate how the IFRC-UNDP partnership has been leveraged in three ASEAN country National Societies to advance representation of community DRR issues in national policies, plans, and programmes.

¹⁴ November 2015.

¹⁵ Development and Operationalisation of Regional Governance Frameworks on Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation.

Disaster Law work in Lao PDR

The Red Cross has been involved in Disaster Law activities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) since 2009 when the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Lao Red Cross (LRC) worked together to undertake research on legal preparedness for responding to disasters and communicable disease emergencies. Since 2013, IFRC and LRC have been working with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MoNRE) to strengthen the governance framework for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. Through the partnership, IFRC provides Technical Assistance for Disaster Law (DL) development for Lao PDR through UNDP's Integrated Disaster and Climate Risk Management (IDCRM) Project and Development of the National Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Law in Lao PDR.¹⁶ There is strong UNDP and MoNRE recognition of IFRC's contribution, engagement and partnership in the development of the country's disaster law; and RRI funding has enabled the NS to host a national DL workshop¹⁷ in 2015, which allowed both the LRC and MoNRE to better understand the complexities of disaster law.

Consolidating "community voices"

IFRC and LRC supported the consultation process on the draft disaster risk management and climate change adaptation law with the Lao Government, the wider humanitarian/development community, and with affected populations. IFRC provided technical input and advice into the draft law. IFRC has supported LRC to enhance its capacity on legislative advocacy and explore opportunities to deepen the capability of the National Society (NS) to engage in and influence national law and policy making processes. The Lao Government has committed to working with the IFRC and LRC, which puts the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement at the centre of policy and law development in the country. IFRC Technical Assistance (TA) has also included support to and facilitation of peer exchanges with the Government and Vietnam Red Cross Society, which provided a platform for peer learning on disaster risk management law and systems between the respective National Societies and governments.¹⁸ Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) Project funding has enabled the NS to invite government officials to relevant Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) events e.g. the Asia-Pacific Field School and International DRR Day, enabling LRC to profile its work. A less visible RRI support but nonetheless of equal importance is the way social media platforms and have been used by LRC to reach out to the communities they serve.

Supporting National Societies to advocate for and influence national DRR issues and policies

Over the years *IFRC has made considerable investments in building both the capacity of LRC staff and supporting them to engage in humanitarian diplomacy and DRR advocacy.* RRI funding has enabled LRC to present data to government officials that illustrated how floods have affected communities during a RRI supported training event involving 3 representatives from the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MoNRE).¹⁹ IFRC funding has also allowed LRC to engage with key individuals from District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC)²⁰ through joint training events, which increases local official awareness in LRC's Disaster Management capacity and role (and is thus an important relationship building

¹⁶ Signed April 2015.

¹⁷ Co-hosted with MoNRE.

¹⁸ The occasion also enabled the Vietnam Red Cross Society to share experiences with the Lao Red Cross on the role they played in both law and policy making and the co-hosting of a draft law national consultation workshop in 2015.

¹⁹ Plus a total of 42 LRC HQ and Branch staff.

²⁰ The LRC President is a member of the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC), and key LRC DM staff are engaged members of select DDMC.

tool) as well as helping LRC to develop its own Red Cross (RC) law through exposure to processes related to policy and law development.

Assisting National Societies to advocate for better disaster laws

IFRC has supported LRC to influence national decrees, laws and/or guidelines specifically in relation to engaging and influencing national legal and policy discussions on DRR. Specifically, IFRC has supported LRC to adopt a more strategic approach to preparing for and engaging in regional meetings related to disaster law, which has extended to LRC identifying quality speakers, supporting speakers in preparing presentations, and enabling the production of materials for use in conferences.

Supporting National Societies to consider gender equality as a central component in DRR programme planning and implementation

In Lao PDR, IFRC's DL work supports important gender and diversity initiatives, for example, through Checklist area 9 of the DRR and Law Checklist, which is specifically oriented gender and diversity and how to integrate these themes into law; as well as IFRC's work with NS gender and diversity colleagues on Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) and the ASEAN project. These efforts have contributed significantly to ensuring the inclusion of Gender and Diversity statements in the country's disaster law. Close TA collaboration in advance of the *Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction* in 2016 ensured that the Disaster Law checklist was highlighted during the Gender and Diversity thematic session as good practice towards Priority 2 of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, which has now become a key regional resource for internal and external stakeholders. Technical Assistance collaboration also ensured effective IFRC influence and representation²¹ at the Asia Pacific Regional Conference on gender and disaster risk reduction organised by UN Women and the Government of Japan.

²¹ Thus influencing the outcome statement of that event which had a key focus on gender sensitive DRM Frameworks.

Disaster Law work in Cambodia

(Previously used sub-headings are not applicable to this study.)

Since 2014 the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Cambodia have been working together to support Cambodia's legislature to develop and pass the country's Law on Disaster Management (DM Law). The Law, which was finally passed in June 2015, has the objective of regulating disaster management in Cambodia through three goals:

- Prevention, adaptation and mitigation in the pre-disaster period due to natural or human-made causes.
- Emergency response during the disaster.
- Recovery in the post-disaster period.

The Disaster Management Law also clarifies that hazard risk prevention programmes need to address climate change adaptation and contains a chapter on international assistance and cooperation, based on recommendations made by the IFRC and the 'Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance' (2011). In addition to a strong focus on response, the DM Law calls for the integration of disaster risk reduction measures into development planning, and mandates Cambodia's National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) to issue guidelines on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The IFRC and UNDP partnership in Cambodia has been instrumental in ensuring the Disaster Management Law was developed. IFRC in partnership with UNDP, worked with the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia to research and make recommendations on how to best implement the DM Law through the development of subsidiary Legislation. The report, entitled *Implementing the Law on Disaster Management in Cambodia: Developing Subsidiary Legislation* includes an analysis of the provisions and overall priorities of the DM law, as well as Cambodia's commitments to regional and international cooperation and disaster risk reduction. Such commitments include the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (SFDRR). The research process included key informant interviews, focus group discussions in addition to making an assessment of the law and proposed decrees using key disaster law tools such as the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) Guidelines and the Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction. In early 2017, the Cambodia Red Cross in partnership with the NCDM undertook two sub-national workshops to strengthen the public's awareness on the 2015 Law on Disaster Management.

The IFRC and UNDP partnership drew on a range of sources concerning international best practice on implementing laws and developing subsidiary legislation on disaster risk management (DRM) and disaster risk reduction (DRR). This included IFRC and UNDP's prior work on effective law and regulation for disaster risk reduction and on legal preparedness for international assistance during major disasters.

IFRC and UNDP jointly undertook the original research, key informant interviews and focus group discussions and drafting of the initial report. The technical and funding support provided by IFRC enabled key consultative meetings and workshops to be held with stakeholders (that included the Cambodian Red Cross, NCDM and UNDP) to inform the development of the draft DM Law, which then underwent several rounds of reviews with inputs being provided by relevant Cambodian Ministries and Institutions.

The recommendations made in the report refer to legislative tools and research developed by the IFRC and UNDP, as well as Cambodia's regional and international commitments under AADMER and the Sendai Framework. Throughout the whole process, IFRC and UNDP worked closely with the Cambodian NCDM, the Ministry of Planning, and the Joint Action Group (JAG) Cambodia.²² Since the finalization of the research (October 2016) and publication of the report (June 2017), there has been substantial progress in Cambodia in the development of many of the suggested implementing rules and regulations. IFRC, along with other humanitarian partners in Cambodia, is also part of the Disaster Law Roadmap for Cambodia Steering Committee that supports government in development of sub decrees and relevant dissemination package. In 2017, IFRC also rolled out the 'know your 3Rs' - *rights, roles and responsibilities in Cambodia* (dissemination package) - and worked closely with the government and Cambodian Red Cross on ASEAN DL mapping.

²² Joint Action Group (JAG) presented on the nature of their role in Disaster Management as a consortium of humanitarian organizations working especially with disaster risk reduction. JAG has a permanent membership of 17 different NGOs and agencies, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, IFRC and Cambodian RC are observer members.

Disaster Law work in Myanmar

(Previously used sub-headings are not applicable to this study.)

In 2013 legal issues in international disaster response were being given increasing visibility in Myanmar, largely due to the advocacy work of the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). In July 2013, Myanmar adopted a new National Law on Disaster Management (DM), followed by the ongoing development of a set of implementing disaster management rules involving IFRC, MRCS, the Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD)²³, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), government ministries and other organisations through a consultation process in which DM rules for the new law and IDRL were presented.

Early 2014 saw IFRC and MRCS provide written comments on the draft DM rules. This was followed by a high-level disaster law advocacy workshop hosted in Nay Pyi Taw by the RRD, MRCS and IFRC. During this process, stakeholders agreed to undertake an international disaster response law (IDRL) research project. In late 2014 the RRD, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), MRCS, OCHA and UNDP hosted a National Disaster Relief Simulation Exercise which included a session on international disaster response law. The simulation was run in collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance, MRCS, and various United Nations agencies including OCHA, UNDP, and the World Food Programme (WFP).

The simulation exercise helped reinforce the valuable role of MRCS during disasters, and emphasized the importance of IDRL with government, regional and humanitarian actors. Participants had the opportunity to review copies of the new DM law in Myanmar to identify relevant procedures for expedited visa processes, customs clearance, and provisions on how to recognise foreign medical qualifications. Recommendations from the exercise highlighted the need for a stronger legal framework for international assistance.

In 2015, following the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent, another resolution was adopted calling for the acceleration of progress on the domestic implementation of IDRL guidelines into appropriate laws, policies, rules and procedures at national and subnational levels. In response, MRCS, IFRC and the RRD worked together with key partners including UNOCHA and UNDP to develop the Disaster Management Rules in Myanmar, which were adopted in April 2015, which included a brief chapter on international assistance and cooperation, based on recommendations from MRCS and IFRC. In August 2015 at the request of the RRD, an IDRL expert was deployed to support the national Emergency Operations Centre during the flood response: following which, the 'Guideline on International Assistance' was drafted in consultation with the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Relief and Resettlement Department.

In early 2016, The IDRL research began led by an international consultant and MRCS IDRL Advisor. This led to a high level IDRL consultation workshop held in Nay Pyi Taw (which brought together stakeholders including from the Union of Myanmar's parliament, national assembly and Union Government departments, international organisations, foreign donor agencies, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and the private sector), to discuss findings and recommendations of the IDRL research, following which the 'Nay Pyi Taw' outcome statement²⁴ was adopted, highlighting the next steps for IDRL in Myanmar.

²³ The RRD has the objective of providing relief for victims of natural disasters and taking precautionary steps to minimize loss of life and property of victims of natural disasters. It is part of the Myanmar Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

²⁴ The Nay Pyi Taw Outcome Statement Consultation Workshop on International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) in

Positively, the statement acknowledged the resolutions from the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which encouraged the Myanmar state to review and strengthen its national legal frameworks for international disaster response; and the relevant provisions of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.

Between March and October 2016, the IDRL Research report was drafted, however, finalisation of the report by the Government of Myanmar is pending in light of a number of other recent humanitarian challenges in the country, notably those in Rakhine State. Nonetheless, it is valuable to reflect on statements made by the Government of the Union of Myanmar²⁵, in which they reaffirm the partnership with MRCS on the research report and acknowledge the support provided by IFRC in the development of the report. The Government noted how the research provided a strong evidence base on what has worked well in past operations and where improvements are needed, in addition to providing recommendations for future proofing the framework in Myanmar and to continue to develop and strengthen domestic procedures related to Disaster Law.

Myanmar: Strengthening the National Framework for International Disaster Response (2016).

²⁵ Foreword to the IDRL Report.

Illustration of improved partnerships between IFRC and regional organisations²⁶

Between 2014 and 2017 there has been a marked increase in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) partners reporting *regular and satisfactory coordination meetings within Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) in the region*. Whilst most RRI partners had some form of pre-existing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) focused partnership with the IFRC²⁷ in Southeast Asia (SEA) in 2014 (e.g. through Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Practitioners Group, Emergency Response & Assessment Team (ERAT) Training, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA) Centre Executive Programme (ACE) Programme participation, Asia-Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS) etc.) they were not particularly formalised or characterized by a common orientation or goal.

By 2017 the number of partnerships had increased, with partners noting an *improved clarity of partnership objectives* and a greater *collective ability to demonstrate or document the outcomes of joint DRR work*. Between 2014 and 2017, partners also reported a significantly heightened awareness of IFRC's DRR work in Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, as well as improvement in the way IFRC actively shared DRR-related information with its partners. Partners also reported an increase in their organisation engaging in joint DRR activities with IFRC, as well as significant increase in working jointly together on advocacy issues related to DRR. Partnership work related to gender and resilience increased between 2014 and 2017, with the ASEAN Secretariat highlighting the *ASEAN-IFRC Joint Study on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)*, which was conducted to better understand how public authorities and humanitarian actors can prevent and better respond to gender-based violence during and after disasters through the mapping of available SGBV response services during disaster periods.²⁸

In terms of IFRC's cooperation with ASEAN, partners reported *increased satisfaction with the way in which IFRC engaged with and attempted to influence Southeast Asian DRR policy*. There was also increased perception of *IFRC implementing DRR projects in ASEAN countries that more strongly reflected the priorities of its partners* (a key partnership dimension), but it was felt the increase here is more likely related to improved partner awareness of IFRC's work rather than actual change/re-orientation of IFRC DRR projects and practices. Significantly, partners felt that between 2014 and 2017, *IFRC had contributed to reducing vulnerability to natural disasters for vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia* (with an emphasis on women, boys and girls) by both a 'great deal' and 'above average amount'. While partners noted improved *IFRC contribution to representation of ASEAN country community issues in national policies, laws, plans and programmes* (and were described by one partner as the 'go to' organisation for Disaster Law - DL), perceptions of progress were not as strong as in other areas of IFRC's DRR work. This is possibly due to partners conflating Movement DL work and thus not singling out IFRC's work.

Partner perceptions of IFRC's cooperation with other DRR practitioners in relation to making contributions to increased effectiveness of Southeast Asian regional DRR cooperation mechanisms that addressed the needs of vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia (with an emphasis on women, boys and girls) between 2014 and 2017 improved, with IFRC being noted as "a very strong partner" with the United Nations (UN) on advancing the Sendai Framework

²⁶ Online partner surveys and partner interviews were used as the evidence/source material for improvements ratings.

²⁷ IFRC in this context also includes ASEAN National Societies.

²⁸ The study contributes to AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 Priority Programme 4: PROTECT, component 6, on "Ensuring social protection and establishing social safety nets in the context of disasters".

(2015), with effective use being made of National Societies. Partners strongly acknowledged IFRC's continuous improvement in increasing integration of gender equality into national and regional DRR policies and programmes, with the many end line gender and diversity case studies and change stories providing a strong evidence base. Other examples of constructive partnership work include with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and IFRC, who together are working on advocacy issues through the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group and collaborating on joint talking points in DRR fora, such as International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), participating in discussion forums, and forging agreements to action Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) aimed at linking SEA National Societies and IPPF member associations, with a focus on providing effective response and preparedness especially within health and Gender-based Violence prevention.

In terms of work that partners felt best illustrated their partnership with IFRC DRR work in Southeast Asia (and helped to highlight *peer-to-peer learning and exchanges*), cited examples were numerous and included: collaborating through Gender in the Humanitarian Action Working Group; collaborating on joint talking points in DRR fora (such as ISDR); participating in discussion forums; cross capacity building i.e. ACE programme, Emergency Response & Assessment Team (ERAT), and currently Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) between AHA Centre and IFRC; and the joint lessons learned exercise with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) after the December 2016 Pidie Jaya Earthquake.²⁹

At the 8th Practitioners Workshop on risk Reduction and Resilience in Asia³⁰, IFRC was a member of the conference Steering Group (along with the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNDP), and led the thematic session on community resilience. The same partners organized in August 2017 the Global Agenda Workshop³¹ with a focus on resilience/local actors. Finally, RRI contributed technically to the Disaster Preparedness ECHO Programme (DIPECHO) 20 years of action lessons learning workshop in December 2017³², in which the ADPC reviewed 20 years of ECHO support in SEA as part of an ECHO-funded project led by IFRC, and covered important discussions related to community resilience and the institutionalization processes for community-based DRR in selected countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia.³³

The ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI)/Save the Children commented that IFRC has been a consistent non-formal partner of the ASSI consortium which greatly supports the implementation of ASSI.³⁴ ASSI Consortium partners and IFRC have mutually supported each other's project activities in the past 3-4 years, with ASSI providing technical support to IFRC's regional learning workshops, and IFRC providing financial and technical support to the organisation of the ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety which is led by ASSI consortium partners.

²⁹ Which fed into the 2017 Indonesia Humanitarian Country Team Contingency Planning exercise for a large-scale disaster in the country.

³⁰ <http://www.adpc.net/igo/contents/blogs/pw2015/index.asp?pid=929>

³¹ <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/events/demystifying-the-global-agenda-frameworks-into-practice-29-30-august-2017-bangkok-thailand/>

³² <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/events/regional-lessons-learned-workshop-on-20-years-of-dipecho-actions-in-southeast-asia/>

³³ <http://www.adpc.net/igo/contents/blogs/pw2015/index.asp?pid=929>

³⁴ An ASEAN regional program for implementing school safety in the region, under Priority 2 of the AWP 2016-2020.

The IFRC Regional Perspective – Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the IFRC and among Southeast Asia National Societies prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2014, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Bangkok Office showed strong leadership support for Gender and Diversity (G&D) issues.³⁵ The Office was leading on the migration file,³⁶ specifically for overseas domestic workers, and had a Focal Point for G&D-related issues. However, the direction for G&D strategy was limited and was not systematically acknowledged by staff or integrated into IFRC programme work. The term 'G&D' had also just recently been adopted by the IFRC (in the 2013 Framework) and there was some confusion within IFRC as well as among National Societies (NS) with regard to linkage with other cross-cutting files that were being promoted in parallel (namely: disability inclusion, social inclusion, child protection, gender, ageing populations, and migration). Within IFRC, *gender* tended to be mentioned in project proposals/documents as a cross-cutting issue, but there was little effort to consider the practical implementation of the thematic.

During this period there was also a lack of understanding of the key G&D issues at stake, as well as a lack of information and analysis of ongoing NS domestic/internationally-funded projects (outside of the IFRC-funded ones) with a G&D dimension. Furthermore, the G&D thematic lacked a set of practical tools to operationalize what was still considered by many as conceptual discussions or sensitive topics. In terms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and disability inclusion, there was no overall IFRC strategy or commitment. Existing G&D initiatives were not necessarily recognised as such, and there was a lack of information sharing between NS, IFRC offices and partners. In terms of knowledge management, there was no repository for NS or IFRC to access G&D resources or updates.

Prior to 2014, there had been no specific G&D training in IFRC, and the necessary key tools had not been developed to support DRR programming e.g. inclusive Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA), Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA), Minimum Standards of Commitment (MSC), self-assessment tools etc. Furthermore, no standardised G&D training had been provided to NS either at regional level or at national level. It is suspected that there must have been some sensitization sessions or even short trainings on G&D-related issues (e.g. disability, gender, etc.) as part of IFRC projects, but this was certainly not standard and not systematically captured by either NS or IFRC reporting. Similarly, sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) was not systematically promoted as a key accountability and programming requirement.

The above limitations and challenges notwithstanding, between 2012 and 2014 there were consistent management advocacy efforts within IFRC and with NS leadership to promote the importance of G&D, including through the development of RRI proposals as an innovative regional project with a dedicated outcome on gender and diversity. This advocacy work was supported by the following existing IFRC policies and strategies:

- The IFRC Gender Policy (1999)
- The Global Strategy on Violence Prevention, Mitigation and Response (2011)
- The IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity issues 2013-2020
- IFRC Child protection, anti-harassment policy
- IFRC Code of Conduct
- Gender-sensitive approaches to disaster management (Asia-Pacific)

³⁵ Then a regional office for SEA handling relations with ASEAN, UN regional offices as well promoting regional networks among National Societies.

³⁶ Not only in Asia-Pacific but also working with Middle-East National Societies.

Gender and Diversity among Southeast Asia National Societies prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

At national level, some NS had Child Protection policies in place, including Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Lesté/Timor-Lesté Red Cross Society (CVTL), Cambodia, Myanmar, and Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR). Cambodia had an existing gender policy, and there were G&D strategies related to Lao PDR (overall) and Indonesia (specifically for DM). At programme/project level, NS were working on good G&D initiatives. These included: community-based women's and children's health; violence prevention; working with the elderly and people with disabilities and minority groups. However, this was done through specific projects and not systematically integrated in NS strategies and/or programmes.

At NS leadership level, there were varying levels of understanding and commitment in relation to G&D. The main coordinating mechanism in the region at the time was through regional networks (with a main vehicle being the SEA Leaders Meeting and the Community Safety and Resilience (CSR) Forum³⁷), with some NS having experience of working in partnerships with UN agencies and INGOs at country level. In emergencies, there were no specific gender and diversity positions, and the theme was not systematically included within emergency plans of action (EpoA), Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) or National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) training or other regional/global tools.

Gender and Diversity partnerships in southeast Asia prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In terms of G&D engagement with regional partners, there was overall limited interaction. IFRC had started to engage with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) processes such as the AHA Centre Executive Programme (ACE) Programme 2014 (International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) session only), but this did not include any G&D content. The ASEAN strategy on DM/DRR (ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management & Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2010-2015) only had *one* mention of gender and no practical recommendations. Furthermore, the ASEAN Commission for Women had limited interaction with the ACDM on G&D DRR collaborations. During the 2014 period, IFRC also had limited interaction with UN WOMEN, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) or Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) at regional level. The engagement in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR 2012) and 2014 did not include any G&D component, and IFRC was not part of the stakeholder group working on these issues.

Changes experienced by the IFRC during the Regional Resilience Initiative

A key change during the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) implementation period was the increased understanding among IFRC and NS on G&D related issues. This was the result of various inter-connected strategies/activities that included:

- An initial mapping (scoping) of existing G&D work at national level in 2014, which increased confidence of NS staff members to provide examples of existing G&D practices;
- A series of regional trainings over the years which created a pool of facilitators (not only G&D focal points, but other NS staff involved in programming as well as IFRC/PNS staff)³⁸;

³⁷ However pre-RRI G&D was not part of the agenda of the CSR Forum (then called RDMC).

³⁸ The pool of facilitators later conducted numerous trainings and sensitization sessions in nine countries (some being directly funded by RRI, others as part of the ongoing NS programming or through other PNS funded projects).

- The compilation of key policies, reference documents and tools by IFRC, which were made available to NS and partners through the resilience library.

The process of raising awareness and increasing G&D knowledge and skills ensured NS attitudes toward G&D gradually evolved from being 'indifferent' to ones of a more positive or proactive nature. In many contexts, there was a clear move from "talking about it" to actually "acting on it", supported by the availability of new global tools and approaches to put G&D into action.

In parallel, the Southeast Asia (SEA) Leaders meeting endorsed their respective NS G&D Focal Points, and the regional G&D Network became active.³⁹ This was a key change in terms of the IFRC's ability to connect both national and regional levels, and to promote a common understanding and messaging around the various issues. At the same time, broader changes in the organisation took place (starting mid-2015), which helped advance G&D issues. These included:

- The new IFRC management reorganised the global planning process, which afforded a greater visibility to the G&D, social inclusion, and migration files (and was also more linked to operations/service delivery in communities as opposed to Organisational Development (OD)/process-oriented strategies).⁴⁰
- The Asia-Pacific (AP) Regional Office gradually increased its leadership on G&D, including having a dedicated person and G&D as a non-negotiable part of the planning. Having G&D and CEA provisions in all emergency plans of action of the IFRC throughout AP was also a performance indicator of the AP Regional Director, hence of all IFRC Heads of Offices.
- More systematic leadership and management support, which was influenced by RRI evidence from various sources that included Hanoi, UN-Women, AHA Centre, and engagement in the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) network etc.

In terms of tools for G&D operationalization, a critical change during the period was the formulation of global tools such as the Minimum Standards of Commitment (MSC) for G&D (pilot version in 2015), the G&D self-assessment tool (2016), and the SGBV training package (2016-2017). Using these tools, the RRI team was able to maximize opportunity by investing available resources to: contextualize the tools to SEA and NS context; use the tools in regional and national trainings; translate them into various languages (based on requests by NS focal points); and create related IEC materials such as posters, the child protection comic book etc.) Other standard IFRC DM/DRR toolboxes were also reviewed with a G&D focus such as VCA, RDRT and National Disaster Response Teams.⁴¹

Another key change over the years has been the appointment not only of Focal Points (FPs) in the National Societies but in IFRC Country Offices and Country Cluster Support Teams (CCSTs). The participation of NS and IFRC in the Regional Gender and Diversity network for SEA in the past 3 years has been a successful initiative that was facilitated through the RRI. The peer-to-peer network is well recognised inside the RCRC and among external actors, with regional and national stakeholders wishing to connect with NS focal points at country level.

Having grown in confidence and expertise over the years, IFRC began to invest time and resources in fostering regional partnerships with the expectation to jointly influence DRR regional policies and plans (mostly through the AMCDRR as the official platform for the Sendai

³⁹ Based on a TOR drafted by its founding members in late 2014.

⁴⁰ This obliged every IFRC office to have a dialogue with NSs and in-country partners as part of their 2016 and 2017 planning.

⁴¹ In the case of the VCA, the guidance note for its increased G&D inclusion was developed and tested in 2017 and fed into the global review process of the toolbox, which is an unexpected outreach of the initiative.

Framework roll-out in Asia, and the ACDM as the ASEAN body responsible for DM/DRR with its AADMER work programme 2015-2020). At ASEAN level, the first engagement related to G&D was the inclusion of thematic elements in the 2015 edition of the ACE Programme training, which received positive feedback and was replicated in subsequent years. IFRC's AHA Centre counterparts would later comment this was the only G&D inclusion in the whole programme, acknowledging IFRC's critical added value.

In parallel, IFRC was approached (mid-2015) by the ASEAN Secretariat to lead a research project on SGBV and disasters.⁴² The discussions led to a research methodology endorsed by both the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Member States (within the ACDM) in April 2017, leading to the research implementation in three countries (Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines) between May and December 2017. Beyond the research, the process resulted in many unexpected outcomes, in terms of (1) engagement with the ASEAN Commission for Women, (2) the positioning of the three respective NS vis-à-vis their national authorities, (3) attitudes of stakeholders with regards to the SGBV theme (not mentioned in AADMER work programme but discussed in several ACDM meetings as part of our research updates, and (4) skills building of many staff members and volunteers on this complicated and sensitive issue.

With regard to the AMCDRR-related influence on G&D, there was a clear change between the overall IFRC approach to the conferences.⁴³ The starting point was the AP Regional Conference on Gender and DRR hosted in Ha Noi (Viet Nam) organised by UN-Women. IFRC's participation in event preparations allowed for an increased engagement with UN-Women in Bangkok as well as members of the GiHA working group (and bridged the gap with the work of the Gender Stakeholder Group of the AMCDRR). Such interactions also facilitated other areas of G&D work, including getting UNFPA support for the SGBV research, designing a joint global call for pledges on the Gender Inequalities of Risk (GIR) with UN-Women and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) (launched at the World Conference on DRR in Cancun in 2017), and increasing the exchange of knowledge and tools across organisations (through the GiHA case study series, sharing reports, attending joint meetings, planning joint initiatives such as the 16 Days Campaign for the elimination of violence against women, etc.). The support of the UN Regional GBV Advisor (REGA) was a significant development both through the RRI and wider G&D initiatives in the region. The UN REGA provided strong support to IFRC's work with a focus on SGBV in disasters through the SGBV research in all three countries, as well as for the SGBV in emergencies training developed by the IFRC.⁴⁴

[Southeast Asian RCRC Gender and Diversity in 2017](#)

In 2017, the IFRC continues to receive strong support and leadership from its Senior Management in the Bangkok IFRC Office. Management ensure G&D is on the agenda for the SEA Leadership Meetings, including taking the voices of the SEA National Society Network members to these meetings (from outcomes of the Regional face-to-face network meetings). In addition to the endorsed 11 NS Focal Points, Leadership in six National Societies elected secondary Headquarter (HQ) Focal Points, Branch Focal Points, or have formed working groups to further G&D initiatives, all of which has contributed to the outcome of having a more cohesive and common understanding of G&D between NS and IFRC - a multiplier effect and unintended outcome of RRI support.

⁴² Which likely resulted from the initial changes outlined as well as the ongoing drafting at the time of a SGBV resolution in preparation of the 2015 RCRC International Conference (December 2015).

⁴³ Two took place during the RRI timeframe: Bangkok in June 2014 and Delhi in November 2016.

⁴⁴ The REGA invited IFRC to present during the global IASC GBV AOR call which highlights the recognition of IFRC in this space.

By 2017, the IFRC Bangkok Office had also been recognised for taking a lead role in G&D and DRR, being tasked to lead the file in Asia Pacific. IFRC now has: Resolution 3 on SGBV and the Disability Inclusion Strategy 2015, both endorsed at the International Conference 2015; IFRC's Organisational Assessment toolkit for G&D (2016), which complements the Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) and Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment (BOCA) processes; Gender and Diversity sensitive VCA guidelines developed through the support of the RRI; and the Violence Prevention module in Community Based Health and First Aid. These have been led at the global level, but also supported or in some cases led by the Bangkok CCST G&D work (the VCA guidelines in particular). There is also a greater understanding (than 3 years ago) in terms of G&D integration within key tools and training such as RDRT, and the IFRC have noted the need to ensure Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) is included into emergency response, as seen in Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and the Philippines.

In 2017 the IFRC and NS have an increased and common understanding of G&D issues, with NS showing increased development of their G&D plans, policies and tools. At the national level, six NS have developed G&D institutional policies/strategies, with five having them endorsed by their National Societies. Seven NS have revised, contextualized or translated G&D tools for inclusive programming (based on inclusive VCA and Minimum Standard Commitments), with 3 having conducted institutional G&D self-assessments.⁴⁵

In 2017 there is also a positive, innovative and collaborative environment between staff and teams, including among those working on Health, Knowledge Information Management, PMER, Disaster Management, Community Engagement and Accountability Teams. This has increased communication within the region allowing not only for a common understanding of G&D, but also allowing IFRC to raise the voices of communities. In addition, there has been an increased sharing of resources and commitments from other partners to National Societies. Several PNSs in the region have supported RRI initiatives, and by doing so furthered their own G&D activities and supported consolidation of G&D processes with National Societies.

By 2017, a number of capacity building initiatives had been undertaken, with three rounds of regional training for NS, IFRC and PNS colleagues, as well as collaboration with external partners. This led to nine NS having run awareness raising/training for their NS technical and management teams. SGBV research trainings have also been conducted in three countries with the support of the UN REGA, which recognises IFRC as a technical expert in SGBV in disasters. Regional external actors such as the AHA Centre, UN-Women and UNFPA now recognise IFRC's leadership and technical expertise on DRR and G&D/SGBV, and are working jointly to build their capacities to influence the DRR & G&D agenda. Through the partnership with UN-Women, in the development of the GIR proposal, as well as collaboration in advance of AMCDRR (with the gender stakeholder group and the ongoing role IFRC has in the GIHA group), this highlights not only the technical collaboration and influence taking place, but also the G&D provisions being included in regional tools and plans, regional policy, and conference declarations.

With regard to G&D communications, a number of initiatives have begun to connect regional and national advocacy to community voices. Examples of this include:

- Videos promoting women leadership in DRR at the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management (ADDM) 2017 (with specific requests from Myanmar RC to develop videos on gender, diversity and DRR).
- The 16 Days Campaign is starting to be recognised and followed by some NS (e.g. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Philippines), with NS holding national level initiatives and

⁴⁵ These have been largely uploaded to the online library or shared between the Network members through the community of practice online, which has contributed to a strong repository/platform.

engaging communities and volunteers in their advocacy efforts as well as through dissemination of key messages through social media and other NS communication channels.

- As part of the ASEAN research, videos and interviews are taking place to record the experiences of communities, as well as to document the research process (with Finnish Red Cross support).⁴⁶

With regard to co-operation with ASEAN, G&D inclusion and engagement with the ACE Programme has steadily increased. One unintended outcome at the regional level relates to ASEAN requesting IFRC to lead the research on SGBV/initial collaboration with the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW). This works towards the outcome for G&D provisions being recognised and included in regional tools and plans, regional policies, as well as IFRC being recognised as a key actor able to conduct quality research.⁴⁷

Looking forward, the RRI has provided a foundation to support NS to mobilise resources through a number of project proposals that include: The IFRC-UN-Women-UNISDR GIR proposal (Vietnam and Indonesia); World Bank (Lao PDR); Finnish RC (Mekong countries); RRI (SEA countries). These collaborations highlight the recognised expertise of IFRC and NS in areas of G&D, as well as IFRC and regional partners working jointly to influence the DRR & GD agenda (AMCDRR).

⁴⁶ Although resources are from outside of RRI, this is part of the wider initiative.

⁴⁷ Although AADMER 2015-2020 mentions social protection to an extent, since 2017, ACDM leading on development social protection guidelines in collaboration Social Welfare departments. IFRC has been invited to participate in this process.

Lao Red Cross – National Society Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the Lao Red Cross prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2013, few staff within the Lao Red Cross (LRC), including its leadership had any understanding of the meaning or importance of Gender and Diversity (G&D). Fewer than 0.3 % of female staff were in management positions, with some LRC divisions comprising solely of male staff. There was no appointed G&D Focal Point (FP), and little linkage existed between aspects of the National Society's (NS) limited G&D work and other LRC divisions such as Disaster Management (DM), Health and Communications.

A Strategy for the Advancement of Women within the National Society existed (covering the period 2013–2015 and funded by the Australian Red Cross), but this focused primarily on the personal development of female staff rather than on addressing any G&D constraints or issues. During this period, the only external partners the LRC worked with that had a G&D focus were the Lao National Council for the Advancement of Women (NCAW) and the Lao Women's Union (LWU), with resources allocated for this engagement a lowly 1,750 CHF per year.

Changes experienced by the National Society during the Regional Resilience Initiative

Since the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) began its work with the LRC in 2014 a number of significant G&D improvements and changes have taken place. In a first step, the LRC officially appointed a G&D Focal Point (FP) in 2015, and since then there has been a continuous and proactive advocacy approach on the definition and importance of G&D at all levels within the NS - from leadership level to all the 18 LRC branches throughout the country.

As LRC leadership became more sensitized to G&D and recognised how crucial addressing G&D was for both organisational and national development, they increasingly supported the promotion of G&D within headquarters departments and local level branches. This G&D commitment was endorsed within the LRC's Gender Strategy 2016–2020, and resulted in a growing awareness and understanding among staff that 'gender' did not just relate to the personal development of women, but was also an issue that should and could be mainstreamed into the planning and programming of activities in other aspects of the NS' work.

In addition to the above organizational changes, there has been a progressive change in staff attitudes toward G&D issues. Women within the NS have also become more active and engaged in their work, with the number of female staff in management positions increasing to 1% as of 2015. The NS also appointed G&D Focal Points to each department within the NS, and ensured they received appropriate training to enable G&D to become fully integrated into relevant aspects of departmental work, as well as acting as departmental liaison points for any G&D issues.

With RRI's technical and financial support, the LRC G&D Focal Point has been a key driver in integrating G&D into all aspects of LRC's work, including promoting the NS' G&D work to external partners at both national and international levels, for example, during participation in International Women's Day together with the Lao National Council for the Advancement of Women.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Gender and Diversity tools (based on Minimum Standards of Commitment) have been contextualized for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Health work, and have been made available for use and dissemination by respective departments throughout the National Society at both national headquarters and branch levels. A good example of how G&D has been mainstreamed into the NS' DRR work is through the inclusion of G&D sessions in the National Disaster Response

Team (NDRT) curriculum, which is currently provided to all Disaster Management (DM) staff in the LRC's 18 branches.

The LRC G&D Focal Point has benefited significantly from participation in the RRI supported South East Asia G&D Network, and has progressively been recognised as a key G&D reference person within the National Society by being invited to participate as both a technical facilitator and speaker in trainings and workshops organised by LRC's partners, including government ministries, external organisations and Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Partner National Societies. It is noteworthy that some Lao government departments and agencies consider the LRC to be a 'role model' for having developed a Gender Strategy.

[Gender and Diversity within the Lao Red Cross in 2017](#)

Today, LRC's G&D work is recognised internally by national staff and externally by its partners. The LRC's Gender Strategy 2016-2020 has reinforced the integration of G&D in all areas of National Society work; with regular monitoring and reporting on activity progress being supervised and undertaken by the G&D FP, results of which are reported to both LRC leadership, and shared with the Lao National Council for the Advancement of Women.

A significant G&D achievement in 2017 has been the implementation of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) research initiative, which has been carried out with financial and technical support from the Regional Resilience Initiative. This six-month activity reflects the commitment of LRC leadership and the continuous engagement of LRC staff, and has ensured the ongoing training and sensitization of G&D related issues throughout the National Society.

In conclusion, the technical and financial support received from the RRI has substantially and - in the words of the National Society - "exclusively" contributed to enabling the LRC's G&D work to move beyond solely advocating for gender equality in the workplace. These results have been secured by enabling LRC to have a leadership endorsed G&D FP who has been able to support the mainstreaming of G&D in all relevant aspects of LRC's work. In addition, the sensitization of NS leadership to G&D accompanied by the capacity building of technical staff in G&D related issues has improved external partner recognition of LRC's work; which in turn has allowed the NS to approach new potential partners in an effort to sustain and expand key National Society activities to reach more people in need.

Malaysian Red Crescent Society – National Society Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the Malaysian Red Crescent Society prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2014, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) approach and attitude towards Gender and Diversity (G&D) was broadly positive; and although there were no formal or specific policies related to G&D being adopted by the National Society (NS) other than the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Strategy 2020, the MRC leadership and senior management were very open to the concept of G&D in practice. The National Society's formal understanding of G&D was mostly enshrined within the MRCS code of conduct which was orientated to ensuring respect between sexes, and ensuring that males and females were treated as equals. However, few questions were ever asked as to how G&D was being implemented in practice, either within the organisational development aspects of the National Society or through its programme or projects that had a direct impact on beneficiaries particularly during times of disaster.

In addition, in 2014, there was no dedicated or appointed NS G&D Focal Point (FP), and the MRC did not actively engage with any other sister or partner NS on G&D issues. From a programme perspective, the main MRC department accounting for G&D issues was the Disaster Management Department, which mostly involved the department undertaking community or beneficiary assessments with a gender rather than a diversity lens.

Changes experienced by the National Society during the Regional Resilience Initiative

Since 2014, beginning with the engagement of the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI), the MRC leadership began to support the integration of G&D issues into all activities and programmes of the National Society. The fact that the MRC Secretary General had considerable experience of working with the Department of Welfare vis-à-vis the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development championed the entire G&D initiative, not least due to his awareness of the importance of mainstreaming G&D into programme work. This approach and attitude had a positive impact on the MRC, and led to the appointment of a dedicated G&D Focal Point who was committed to implementing G&D in the NS with the support of the IFRC.

Prior to the introduction of G&D workshops and the creation of the G&D FP, G&D issues were mostly restricted to Disaster Management and Community Service functions: progressively, however, since 2014, the MRC G&D Focal Point has been able to encourage the incorporation of G&D into all other activities of MRC's work – a process greatly aided by the peer-to-peer support provided through the G&D Network. The G&D FP has since been invited to provide presentations on G&D for other MRC department workshops, thus illustrating that G&D is increasingly treated as an important concept, and accompanied by an understanding that its acceptance and implementation in programme and project work brings positive benefits to those concerned.

During the period 2014-2016, the IFRC was encouraging National Societies within the Southeast Asia (SEA) region to undertake Organisational Capacity Assessments (OCAC) and Branch Organisational Capacity Assessments (BOCA), both which emphasised the importance of having key policies in place to guide the work of national societies. Results from these assessments encouraged the MRC to develop a G&D policy (a process that was enabled by Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) funding), which was subsequently endorsed by the MRC National Council i.e. the highest decision-making platform within the National Society. Following this, a number of relevant G&D initiatives have taken place, significant of which is

the promotion of MRC's anti-harassment guidelines and child protection policy, which defines non-acceptable conduct related to staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

This integration of G&D within all MRC programmes and activities was reinforced by a pledge related to addressing sexual and gender-based violence made during the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) in 2015; in which the MRC stated: "The Malaysian Red Crescent Society as an auxiliary to the Malaysian government pledges to raise awareness and take action to prevent sexual and gender based violence in times of disasters, emergencies and armed conflicts."

Gender and Diversity within MRC in 2017

Today, the MRC has a dedicated G&D Focal Point. The majority of staff and volunteers at National Headquarters level have increased their understanding of G&D and understand its importance to the National Society's work. Efforts continue to disseminate G&D knowledge and awareness to volunteers and staff at branch and chapter levels through workshops; with an added value aspect of this awareness raising related to increased understanding of the MRCS's anti-harassment guidelines and child protection policy.

The introduction of the G&D policy has also contributed to raising awareness among staff and volunteers as to how they should conduct their daily behaviour with each other, as well as importantly how to behave towards beneficiaries during time of disasters. However, MRC also acknowledges that dissemination and awareness needs to be stepped-up if real capacity is to be built, particularly within its branches and chapters.

In 2017, primarily thanks to support received through the RRI, G&D issues are an important element in MRC humanitarian activities. The NS now discusses G&D issues with other humanitarian actors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) during times of disaster, with partners expressing a keenness to understand how MRC goes about its G&D work (and extends to matters related to the anti-harassment guidelines and the child protection policy).

While there has been much progress related to formalising G&D within MRC programmes and projects, there is still a need to increase and strengthen G&D awareness among government agencies, particularly those that have a focus on women, gender, diversity and/or gender-based violence e.g. with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, as well as with the newly created National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA). It is hoped that as auxiliary to the Malaysian government during times of disaster⁴⁸, the NS has the leverage and skills to not just influence the rest of the NS in terms of adopting a progressive attitude towards G&D, but also to be able to influence its many partners.

⁴⁸ Directive 18 of the Malaysian National Security Council is a directive signed by the Prime Minister of Malaysia and describes the function and role of the government organs, departments, police, ambulance, military, NGOs and statutory bodies such as MRCS during period of natural disasters.

Indonesian Red Cross – National Society Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the Indonesian Red Cross prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2014, Gender and Diversity (G&D) was considered a rather “insignificant” cross cutting issue within the Indonesian Red Cross’ (Palang Merah Indonesia – PMI). Gender issues were a basic concept in the NS’ community-based training for staff and volunteers, mostly aimed at ensuring women’s participation in community-based programmes and providing for a better representation of women on village committees and as community volunteers. The National Society (NS) did not have the required organizational capacity and assessment tools to guide G&D work, nor did it have a G&D Focal Point (FP) to provide the necessary technical support to ensure the issue was systematically incorporated into PMI’s programmes and projects. While PMI had a gender strategy on disaster risk reduction (DRR) as reference tool for field programme staff in efforts to better mainstream gender issues, it was not used systematically and led to some negative attitude among staff and volunteers, particularly in respect of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) acceptance and awareness.

During this period the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) began supporting an organisational development/capacity building (OD-CB) programme within PMI. This involved the Secretary General and three board members attending G&D Ten-Steps training as a means of improving leadership awareness on violence prevention. As a follow up to this training, PMI conducted violence prevention socialization and dissemination to remaining board members as well as to NS staff. This buy-in from the leadership enabled PMI to continue conducting Ten-Step training with national and provincial level staff and volunteers as well as to establish a working group (in 2014) that had the main aim of promoting violence prevention and safer access thematic issues. This working group consisted of representatives from National Headquarter, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), CRC and Australian Red Cross (ARC). However, as there were no Movement partners working specifically on gender and diversity, no feedback and/or complaint mechanisms were put in place, meaning that G&D challenges related to emergency response operations were not properly captured or subsequently addressed.

Changes experienced by the National Society during the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2015, following the National Society’s participation in the first RRI Regional G&D Network meeting, PMI appointed a dedicated G&D Focal Point. This further led to PMI appointing two NHQ staff as members of the G&D thematic Working Group, plus one member of staff from provincial level to key focal point positions. By 2016, PMI leadership had endorsed further FPs, bringing the total to nine (9) Focal Points from 9 provinces.

In 2015, PMI also began to develop G&D tools and guidelines to ensure that the NS’ programmes and project accounted for key G&D issues. This resulted in contextualized tools and guidelines being developed that integrated G&D requirements into relevant departmental trainings and programmes. PMI also began to account more carefully for community G&D needs, which resulted in a stronger G&D dimension/lens being applied during field assessments. This led to PMI providing more appropriate support and equipment to disaster affected individuals that required it, such as wheelchairs and portable latrines. Within the same period, PMI also started to develop G&D evidence-based publications and materials by compiling stories and case studies of good practices implemented during emergency responses, a process which has enabled PMI to communicate good G&D practices to internal staff and volunteers as well as external stakeholders.

As a means of strengthening programme quality within the period 2015-2016, PMI also developed a new framework (National Emergency Response Framework, Red Cross Characteristics and Values Framework) to be complimentary with its existing G&D strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which successfully contributed to helping incorporate G&D elements into the NS programme and project work. At the same time, a technical working - the Red Cross Characteristics and Values Working Group (RCCV-WG) – was established comprising PMI, IFRC, ICRC, CRC, ARC and the Japanese Red Cross (JRC), which had the aim of improving collaboration on cross-cutting issues including G&D, thus further ensuring that G&D issues were addressed in programming work along with other cross-cutting issues such as violence prevention and safer access etc.

Over the years, support from PMI leadership for G&D issues has continued to grow stronger. The PMI board member with responsibility for Disaster Management (DM) has become a G&D champion, who actively supports and advocates for the G&D Working Group. This has resulted in trainings and awareness raising activities which have increased understanding of G&D issues among PMI's staff, volunteers and board members at national, provincial and branch levels. The overall result has been greater G&D sensitization at all levels of the National Society.

Gender and Diversity within PMI in 2017

Today, PMI's nine (9) G&D FPs are an important part of the Red Cross Characteristic and Value Working Group and contribute to the NS engagement in the regional G&D Network. A significant G&D achievement in 2017 is PMI's participation in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) research initiative, carried out in two provinces of Indonesia. This participation has enabled PMI to enhance its own SGBV research capacity (with the NS seeing how research can improve its service and programming with communities in the future) as well as contributed to opening-up opportunities for the NS to interact with government and humanitarian actors on key G&D issues.

In 2017, PMI departments and divisions are noted for having a better understanding of G&D issues. The strong commitment and support from PMI's leadership as well as involvement of colleagues from service units such as DM has proven essential to mainstreaming G&D into relevant DM and DRR programmes and projects. PMI has also developed a G&D Code of Conduct for board members, staff and volunteers; and now regularly conducts G&D workshops and undertakes self-assessments to measure NS G&D capacity. The IFRC's Minimum Standard and Commitment (MSC) on G&D have been translated into Bahasa language and is available for deployed volunteers and staff.

Gender and Diversity has also been incorporated into PMI's *Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change* (YABC) training supported by the Regional Resilience Initiative, with some 12 volunteers receiving training to become SGBV data collectors. More recently, PMI has conducted a case study on Women affected by the Sinabung volcano eruption to obtain evidence-based story from the community related to G&D issues; and has also established a support centre to monitor and receive reports on gender-based violence.

Key Movement partners (IFRC, ICRC, CRC, ARC, JRC) are currently committed to implementing joint programmes with PMI that have a greater G&D dimension. For example, the ARC is currently working with PMI on disability inclusion in DRR in collaboration with Handicap International in Nusa Tenggara Timur Province (with a focus on women and disability inclusion, enabling the provision of portable latrines to accommodate the need of disaster affected people). The JRC is currently using the Ten-Step training approach to introduce GBV violence prevention in its Integrated Community Based Risk Reduction (ICBRR) project.

Philippine Red Cross Society – National Society Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the Philippine Red Cross prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2014, understanding of Gender and Diversity (G&D) issues within the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) including the themes thematic incorporation into disaster recovery and relief programming was relatively advanced. The National Society (NS) had held a Movement Summit in relation to the ongoing Typhoon Haiyan Operations that among other outcomes focused on social inclusion – i.e. relevant aspects of gender and diversity - in recovery plans. The NS had also hosted the Southeast Asian (SEA) Gender and Diversity Forum, and contributed towards developing its Terms of Reference. During this period PRC however did not possess the expertise to ensure that gender and diversity perspectives were integrated into programme delivery without Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement partner support; with PRC mostly relying on Movement partners to provide gender expertise through delegates guiding and advising Technical Working Groups related to Health, Education, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Shelter and Settlement, Water and Sanitation, and Livelihoods.

The support provided by Movement partners ensured that PRC was able to adopt a more diversity focused lens in its recovery operations, for example, providing wheelchair ramps, wider entrance doors to houses to accommodate wheelchair users, and disabled accessible latrines; as well as ensuring gender aspects were taken into consideration: for example, by engaging women in the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) training; involving women as well as men in the construction of shelters/houses. In the livelihood sector, PRC were also able to orientate cash transfer programming to enable women to have a better control over household livelihood opportunities, thus ensuring that women had better opportunities to suggest proposals with support from their husbands.

Despite the relatively progressive inclusion of G&D issues into PRC's recovery programming work, the NS did not have a dedicated G&D Focal Point (FP), and there were no G&D strategies to guide PRC's work beyond the recovery focus described earlier. A draft Gender and Development Policy had been on the table for a number of years, however, it had not been endorsed nor enacted by the National Society.

Changes experienced by the National Society during the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2015, PRC management took a significant step identifying and appointing a dedicated Gender and Diversity Focal Point for the National Society. This led to additional FPs being identified and appointed for the thematic areas of Child Protection, Disability, Aging Population, Indigenous People, and HIV/AIDS.

By 2016 the G&D FP had received Master Facilitators Training and subsequently set about sensitizing all other appointed NS Focal Points. The G&D FP also conducted G&D sensitization training for PRC executive, management and technical staff. This process provided staff and volunteers with encouragement to engage others in the NS on G&D issues, and led to staff proactively making recommendations to enhance PRC services and structures through the meaningful inclusion of G&D into programmes and other aspects of PRC's work.

Over the years, PRC leadership and senior management have been very supportive in promoting G&D within the NS, to the extent that they are now considered Gender and Diversity champions. This senior level support led directly to leadership committing to mainstreaming G&D into the PRC's Strategic Direction for the period 2017-2021.

The National Society also formed a G&D Technical Working Group with the aim of supporting an effective roll-out of G&D implementation. This resulted in a number of unexpected outcomes, one of which included the identification and appointment of G&D FP champions from key PRC departments (Human Resources (HR); Health; Disaster Management Services (DMS); Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER), Red Cross Youth (RCY); Volunteer Services; Welfare; and Safety Services).

In 2016 the NS commenced a G&D Organisational Assessment at national and local levels, an initiative that paved the way for more structured undertakings of G&D, as well as identification of institutional strengthening needs and gaps related to human resources needs e.g. a review of PRC's Code of Conduct, inclusion of PSEA, and the development of anti-harassment guidelines). A further outcome of the G&D assessment was the standardization of all PRC departmental forms to include the gathering and reporting of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD).

2016 also saw the development and introduction of more G&D focused tools and guidelines, which included Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA) with a G&D focus, the IFRC's Minimum Standards of Commitment, and the IFRC Strategic Framework; and incorporation of G&D issues into all PRC's national and local trainings, thus raising the skill level, knowledge and awareness of both volunteers and staff. Importantly, the increased activity of the departmental G&D focal points and champions ensured key departments began to more systematically integrate G&D into programming work, and further increased G&D advocacy among and within internal PRC and external partner networks.

Gender and Diversity within PRCS in 2017

Today, the PRC G&D FP is the Chair of the Regional G&D Network. The National Society has considerably increased its G&D awareness and acceptance of the issue as multiple level, both from an internal organisational development/culture dimension as well as in key programming work. In addition to the national headquarters appointed G&D FP; eight (8) G&D departmental focal points/gender champions are in place. At local chapter level (in the regions of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao Chapters), fifteen (15) G&D FPs have been appointed.

A further significant G&D achievement for PRC in 2017 relates to its engagement in the ASEAN sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) research initiative, which has been carried out in two provinces with financial and technical support from the Regional Resilience Initiative. This engagement reflects the commitment of PRC leadership to G&D, and has ensured the ongoing training and sensitization of G&D related issues throughout the National Society at both headquarters and in select provinces.

Overall, through ongoing engagement in various G&D activities and initiatives, PRC has contributed to strengthened coordination, networking and exchange of resources with relevant government, international non-government organisations and stakeholders in relation to G&D, with the National Society increasingly engaging in G&D external trainings, workshops, and sharing of knowledge and skills with partners at both national and local levels.

Vietnam Red Cross – National Society Gender and Diversity Change Story

Gender and Diversity in the Vietnam Red Cross prior to the Regional Resilience Initiative

In 2014, the Vietnam Red Cross (VNRC) primarily equated the concept of Gender and Diversity (G&D) with women's empowerment, meaning that trainings and events about gender were mostly attended by women. Moreover, 'gender mainstreaming' was perceived as giving priority to women during implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) or Disaster Management (DM) activities; for example, by prioritising females for cash grants during disaster recovery operations, or setting a percentage of women/men for attending trainings and other events. Often, this 'women prioritizing' approach was only applied when requested by donors, with little attention being applied to gender mainstreaming at other times. In other aspects, G&D was only raised at special events such as International Women's Day or Vietnamese Women's Day, with the gender focus here primarily oriented to the appreciation of women's contributions to an organization and/or the family.

Before the intervention of the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI), diversity was a little understood term within the Vietnam Red Cross. Moreover, VNRC leadership did not consider gender as an important cross cutting issue, both within NS projects and for the National Society (NS) as an organisation itself. It was left to VNRC's Social Work Department to manage any gender issues within the NS, but there was no appointed G&D Focal Point (FP). Project specific G&D FPs were assigned to work on related projects on an ad-hoc basis, which usually meant appointing any available person at that given time and did little to ensure continuity of G&D knowledge or skills.

In 2014, the National Society had no G&D strategies/policies, and the only training available on gender issues related to basic concepts and mainstreaming in Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) activities under a French Red Cross (FRC) supported WATSAN Project that began in 2011; and while the NS had several other projects that supported people living with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS⁴⁹, outside of these projects little attention was paid to G&D issues among larger and more diverse beneficiary groups.

Changes experienced by the National Society during the Regional Resilience Initiative

Over the years, the perception and understanding of G&D within the VNRC has changed considerably. The main turning point was the appointment of the VNRC G&D Focal Point (FP) at the end of 2015 following the first meeting of the RRI G&D Network. This ensured that G&D progressively become more mainstreamed into the National Society's programmes, which has enabled the FP to actively disseminate G&D training and sensitization awareness raising at VNRC Headquarters, as well as in selected provincial and chapter branches: a process that has contributed to improved understanding of G&D issues throughout the National Society. The G&D FP's engagement with the RRI has contributed significantly to strengthening capacity and skills following the various trainings provided by the Initiative as well as having the opportunity to access shared learning opportunities through the G&D Network.

A key added value of the appointment of the G&D FP has related to reducing VNRC's and Partner National Society (PNS) programme and project costs. In the past, the VNRC's lack of G&D expertise meant bringing in external consultants to help mainstream G&D into project implementation (as well as to train relevant staff), which inevitably resulted in more expensive

⁴⁹ In 2014, there were four PNS projects that had a G&D dimension: FRC WATSAN Project 2011-2014; FRC Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Project 2014; Spanish Red Cross/Australian Red Cross Disability Project; and American Red Cross HIV/AIDS Project.

programmes and projects. However, increasingly, the G&D FP was able to act as a reference for G&D matters in the NS and was able to fill this much needed function, thus enabling the integration of G&D issues into NS and PNS supported projects and programmes without incurring unnecessary costs.

The G&D Focal Point has also worked closely with the VNRC DM Department on the adaptation and application of relevant G&D tools, such as ensuring that Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (VCA) guidance has the necessary G&D dimensions, and the translation of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Minimum Standard Commitments (MSC) into Vietnamese language (funded by the RRI), and the development of the Gender Intervention Framework alongside VNRC's Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRM) Framework. Based on these documents, a complete G&D training curriculum has been developed including a G&D concept and G&D mainstreaming in programmes and activities (notably G&D in emergency programmes). Along with the curriculum, a competent trainer team has been formed at national and provincial levels to provide G&D trainings⁵⁰ to programme implementers. Together, these steps facilitated the IFRC's Organisational Development (OD) Project's approach to developing VNRC's monitoring and evaluation system through the collection of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) and its more systematic use among the NS and by partners.

An added bonus of VNRC's G&D tool development was that they were adopted by the Vietnamese Government as part of the nation-wide CBDRM programme, which has also seen the NS joining a working group with UN Women, Oxfam and the Government's Ministry of Agriculture for incorporating gender aspects into national the Community Based Disaster Risk Management Programme. Acting as a key member of the other Gender and DRR/Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) working group together with *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*, CARE and UN Women, VNRC has significantly contributed in developing a guidance on gender inclusion in DRR and CCA⁵¹ that has been widely disseminated to all DRR/CCA stakeholders at national and local level. VNRC has also engaged in collaboration with UN Women and the Vietnamese Women's Union to mainstream G&D into DRR activities, an approach that has further helped strengthen VNRC's own gender and diversity lens when conducting projects.⁵²

Over the years VNRC has also improved its coordination with external partners to better promote G&D considerations in national Disaster Management fora. The NS has shared case studies and best practices with partners and other stakeholders; and promoted the importance of G&D through various communication channels. As a result, G&D issues have been progressively taken into consideration in VNRC's programmes, with VNRC increasingly being recognised as a strong advocate of gender and diversity mainstreaming in community-based disaster risk management activities.

Gender and Diversity within VNRC in 2017

Today, understanding of G&D issues within VNRC among both leadership and staff is much improved. There is a clear shift from thinking that G&D is just about 'women' to one that more

⁵⁰ Training on G&D Mainstreaming in Disaster Response for National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) (8/2016); Training on Gender Mainstreaming in Disaster Preparedness and Response for 11 Northern Provincial Chapters (11/2016); Training on G&D Mainstreaming – DRR Project funded by Norwegian Red Cross (8/2016); Training on G&D Mainstreaming in Emergencies for VNRC departments (10/2016); Training on G&D Mainstreaming in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) – Project DIPECHO9 (4/2015); Training on Gender Mainstreaming in Development projects - Mangrove Forests Project (11/2015); Training on G&D Mainstreaming in DRR Projects - DRR Project funded by Australian Red Cross (6/2016); Training on Inclusion of People Living with Disabilities for VNRC departments (10/2015); Training on G&D sensitive VCA for VCA core instructors (12/2017); and G&D training sessions integrated into many other trainings.

⁵¹ "Making it count – Gender Mainstreaming in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation" - 2016

⁵² And contributed to joint GIR proposal writing with UN Women.

holistically incorporates gender and diversity issues; with the NS now acknowledging that men have an equally important role in ensuring gender equality improvement. VNRC also has a more encompassing perspective about G&D, for example recognising through its VCA guidelines that the elderly, children, and the disabled are separate groups with different concerns and needs. Importantly, VNRC leaders and staff understand that G&D is not just a 'donor concept', but is a cross-cutting issue that helps improve the overall work and results of NS programmes and activities.

While VNRC today still does not have a formal G&D strategy or policy, it has an experienced G&D Focal Point who is supported by a capable G&D training team. The NS has training curriculums related to G&D basic concepts, and is able to mainstream G&D into emergencies and other VNRC programmes. VNRC is also a core member of the G&D and DRR working group together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, UN Women, Oxfam and other key partners.

IFRC and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations partnership – working together to promote resilience

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is a key partner to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and contributes to ASEAN's goal of reducing the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia through ongoing and emerging technical cooperation with its stakeholders and as a contributor to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management (AADMER).⁵³ The IFRC-ASEAN partnership operates at two key levels: (1) at a regional level where IFRC works with the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Committee on Disaster management (ACDM) technical working groups, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), and related key stakeholders; and (2) in ASEAN countries, where IFRC support Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies to engage with National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO) and other relevant authorities on development of policies, strategies and tools in efforts to reduce the impact of natural causes on vulnerable communities.

A key pillar of IFRC's work with ASEAN is its partnership with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) and its contribution to the *One ASEAN One Response*. The value IFRC brings to the ASEAN partnership is well understood by ASEAN Member States, and is strongly reflected in the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020, which recognises IFRC's contribution in 4 out of its 8 priority areas. A key added value of the RCRC is that it has the ability to operationalize AADMER through its wide network across ASEAN countries, and to scale-up initiatives and structured disaster response mechanisms that reinforce the AHA Centre's action. Another key pillar of IFRC's work is strengthening the skills and capacities of National Societies so they are able to advocate more effectively at national and regional levels for communities in disaster risk reduction. Strengthening cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat and building regional partnerships with other bodies working on the same issues complements this approach, with IFRC's support to ASEAN being strongly illustrated in the contributions it has made to the AADMER work programme 2016–2020.

The IFRC's partnership with the AHA Centre is a strong illustration of the productive partnership with ASEAN and how it supports the ASEAN 'RESPOND AS ONE' approach, for example, through National Societies who are part of the national response mechanisms led by the National Disaster Management Offices, and contribute to national contingency plans, provide response teams and develop standard operating procedures.

The Regional Resilience Initiative's (RRI) work with the AHA Centre dates back to October 2014, where IFRC and the AHA Centre for the first time developed an action plan for sharing, coordination and communication during emergencies.

IFRC strongly supports the ASEAN Leadership for Excellence and Innovation in Disaster Management, with the RRI being a key contributor to the AHA Centre's Executive (ACE) Programme, providing RCRC induction training, visits to community-based activities and peer-

⁵³ See: <http://agreement.asean.org/media/download/20140119170000.pdf>

to-peer learning with National Society members for ASEAN stakeholders.⁵⁴ In 2015, the IFRC-ASEAN partnership was deepened through IFRC's contribution to the ACE Programme, in which sixteen (16) NDMO staff (including three female) and nine National Society staff (including five female) were trained - a collaboration which continued into 2017 and is still ongoing. In other partnership examples with ASEAN and as a contribution to the AADMER work programme, IFRC has shared its logistics expertise as part of the *ACE Programme*, with National Societies as part of the IFRC Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) supporting each other in times of emergencies. Following the Myanmar floods in August 2015 and earthquake in Indonesia in December 2016, Indonesian Red Cross staff members were also deployed as ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) members.

Over the past three years, there has also been a more strategic engagement with the ASEAN Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division (DMHA) based on joint efforts related to fulfilling AADMER. The recent SGBV Research work also represented an excellent example of collaboration with DMHA, which is aimed at strengthening knowledge, awareness and evidence on gender and diversity issues and disasters. Recent agreements (for example the important ASEAN disaster law mapping), also demonstrates a real commitment and partnership between IFRC and DMHA to strengthen resilience at all levels. The disaster law mapping provides a strong evidence base for operationalising AADMER in domestic law and policy in ASEAN, and also provides a baseline and good practice examples for stakeholder engagement (including at the community level) across ASEAN, and is a powerful tool in furthering law and policy revision, while the utilisation of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Law checklist in recent ASEAN country law/policy provisions (as well as the aforementioned ASEAN Disaster Law Mapping and SGBV work) has resulted in a greater focus on gender and diversity in national and regional policy frameworks.

Acknowledging the role that IFRC and National Societies play in supporting ASEAN's vision of 'One ASEAN, One Response', in February 2016 the AHA Centre invited IFRC and all ten ASEAN-country NS (five participants, including three females) to a two-day workshop in Jakarta on the formulation of an ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP).

Today, IFRC continues to share its emergency operations updates with the AHA Centre to ensure the coordination of essential information, with all National Societies receiving AHA Centre disaster updates as part of the information and knowledge exchange.

Further examples of how IFRC supports the ASEAN 'RESPOND AS ONE' approach can be found in contributions to the 2014 Mentawai Megathrust Disaster Relief Exercise (MMDiReX)⁵⁵, in which PMI worked closely with the National Disaster Management Agency and supported the exercise through the provision of 190 Indonesian Red Cross staff and volunteers that provided specific support for mobile clinics, water and sanitation units, and community mobilization efforts. This was followed by the ASEAN Disaster Preparedness and Response Simulation Exercise, Myanmar (September 2014), in which the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and IFRC played a key role in the organisation and facilitation of the event, with MRCS successfully advocating for the inclusion of International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) and IDRL-related events during the exercise.

⁵⁴ IFRC also hosts the Knowledge and Information Management online library which showcases resources on disaster risk reduction, as well as health and cross-cutting issues such as gender and diversity, youth and volunteers, disaster law and migration from all ASEAN countries.

⁵⁵ Padang, Indonesia in March 2014.

Other response efforts include following the August 2015 Myanmar floods, in which one Indonesian Red Cross staff was deployed as an ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) member⁵⁶; support to the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiReX), Malaysia (May 2015), which was designed to facilitate disaster response coordination mechanisms between ASEAN and other states in Asia Pacific, as well as international humanitarian players. The Malaysian Red Crescent played an active role in the exercise with support from the Thailand Red Cross (2 staff), PMI (1 staff) and Lao Red Cross (1 staff) as a test of emergency regional cooperation. IFRC disaster law experts provided technical advice. In 2016, the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief was held in Myanmar, where the MRCS presented experiences and lessons learned from the 2015 flood operation, including deployment of an International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) expert from IFRC to support the national Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

IFRC is also engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the ASEAN Secretariat, in areas of disaster risk reduction and community resilience, disaster law, gender-based violence, youth engagement, the ASEAN Safe School Initiative (ASSI) and the post-2015 AADMER Work Programme. ASEAN increasingly recognises IFRC as a technical reference resource, with illustrative examples including: ASEAN and AHA Centre attending meetings/workshops hosted by the IFRC through the RRI, along with NS and government representatives from ASEAN countries, such as the annual Community Safety and Resilience (CSR) Forum in 2014 and 2015; the Pandemic Preparedness Workshop in November 2014; the Regional Resilience Workshop in February 2015; and the regional Disaster Law Forum in June 2015.

Significantly, an ASEAN representative attended IFRC's 2015 General Assembly in Geneva, conducting a side meeting with the leaders of the ten ASEAN-country National Societies. Select IFRC/NS tools have also been included in the 2015 ASEAN School Safety Toolkit of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization. In March 2016, the IFRC participated in a consultation workshop run by the ASEAN Secretariat on the development of the *ASEAN 5 Year Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020*. The potential of Red Cross Youth to help spread messages of risk reduction within communities is increasingly recognised, in particular with regards to ASSI. The IFRC and ASEAN-country National Societies have been invited to several ASEAN meetings including the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), AADMER Working Group meetings, ASSI technical workshops, and youth policy meetings – all made possible through support provided by the Regional Resilience Initiative.

Responses to a recent partner survey also help illustrate the fruitful extent of the IFRC-ASEAN partnership. ASEAN Secretariat informants in particular highlighted the ASEAN-IFRC Joint Study on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Disasters; the ASEAN Disaster Law Mapping Regional Synthesis Report; and the Peer Exchange on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management conducted in August 2017. The Joint Study on SGBV was noted for helping better understand how public authorities and humanitarian actors can prevent and better respond to gender-based violence during and after disasters through the mapping of available SGBV response services during disasters, and contributes to the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 Priority Programme 4.⁵⁷ ASEAN Secretariat informants also recorded satisfaction with IFRC's engagement/influence on Southeast Asian DRR policy matters/issues, noting the many successful programmes and initiatives convened in the region by IFRC, particularly the IFRC's 'One Billion Coalition for Resilience' and Youth as Agents of Behaviour Change (YABC) initiative. The AHA Centre noted the cross-capacity building work undertaken through the partnership, particularly the ACE Programme, Emergency Response & Assessment Team (ERAT), and currently the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) between the AHA Centre and IFRC.

⁵⁶ An IFRC Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member, trained as ERAT in 2015 as part of the ACE programme.

⁵⁷ PROTECT - Component 6 on ensuring social protection and establishing social safety nets in the context of disasters.

The results of the partner survey also highlighted ASEAN stakeholders perspectives on IFRC's positive contributions to reducing vulnerability to natural disasters for vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia; IFRC's contribution to representation of ASEAN country community issues in national policies, laws, plans and programs; IFRC's increasing effectiveness of using Southeast Asian regional DRR cooperation mechanisms to address the needs of vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia; and IFRC's continuous improvement in increasing integration of gender equality into national and regional DRR policies and programmes.

IFRC's future strategy for working with ASEAN is detailed in the September 2017 *IFRC engagement Strategy with ASEAN*. The document outlines the importance of preparing for and strengthening resilience in the face of disasters in Southeast Asia; and how this remains a key priority for ASEAN member states, National Societies and IFRC. As reflected by ASEAN in its AADMER Work programme 2016-2020 - *One ASEAN One Response* - and for IFRC and National Societies, through its Asia Pacific Disaster Management Strategy 2016-2020, joined up and well- coordinated work is essential to contribute to safer and more resilient communities. IFRC engagement in Disaster Risk Management will be anchored across the eight priority areas of the AADMER Work Programme 2016 – 2020, and are essential to policy and practice divide and ensure that socially vulnerable groups, be they women, men, boys or girls, migrants or those residing in informal settlements are better prepared and resilient in times of disaster, including through climate change adaptation and mitigation approaches.

The added value of IFRC's investment in the Asian Ministerial Conferences on DRR 2014 and 2016 – advocating for those most affected by disaster

The Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR) is the most important forum on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia.⁵⁸ The Conference is an established regional mechanism for disaster risk reduction and has been instrumental in increasing political commitment and strengthening the disaster risk reduction agenda at all levels. Held every two-years, the AMCDRR brings together governments, humanitarian agencies and other stakeholders to discuss the way forward in reducing disaster risk in the Asia region. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is a primary stakeholder in the AMCDRR. Through its 2016 voluntary 'Statement of Action', IFRC committed to raise the voices of local actors and communities, and to multiply efforts in reaching the vulnerable and marginalized who are most at risk from disaster threats; calling on government partners, the private sector and civil society groups to join the growing 'One Billion Coalition for Resilience'. This study shows how IFRC through the 2014 and 2016 AMCDRR Conferences used its influence and voice to advocate on behalf of vulnerable and marginalized communities who are most at risk from disaster.

AMCDRR Conference 2014

The 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Thailand in 2014. The Conference provided opportunity for countries, organisations and practitioners to discuss the way forward in reducing disaster risk in the region. It was the final regional inter-governmental meeting in Asia before the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in 2015 and completion of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-15; and provided the opportunity for stakeholders to shape the post-2015 framework for DRR to be considered at the WCDRR and its Preparatory Committee meetings. IFRC had a strong presence at the Conference (through senior Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies (NS) representatives from across Asia, and with very strategic positioning of the Thai RC Society alongside its government as host of the Conference) and played a prominent role in the conference agenda, including leading on technical sessions related to *Enhancing Resilience at Local Level*, and co-leading special sessions on *School Safety and Children and Youth*. IFRC also convened side events on issues such as Disaster Law and the use of new technology for engaging at risk communities.

During the 2014 Conference, IFRC consistently advocated for greater promotion of inclusion and paying greater attention to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable groups in society who are disproportionately affected by disasters – including women, children and migrants. IFRC also called for greater support and investment in Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies which play a unique humanitarian role as auxiliaries to their governments. IFRC also encouraged governments and other stakeholders attending the Conference to increase their engagement with 'at-risk' communities, local leaders and civil society in efforts to reduce risks and strengthen resilience; and highlighted the critical link between disasters and poverty eradication, and the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development planning. Acknowledging that people's vulnerability to disasters, crises and shocks are increasingly caused by a set of inter-related risks, IFRC advocated for a future global framework for action on disaster risk reduction to address a broader 'community resilience' agenda that integrates disaster risk reduction together with public health, poverty reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. IFRC also drew attention to pledges made at previous Global Platforms

⁵⁸ Established in 2005, the AMCDRR is jointly organized by different Asian countries and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

for DRR (including AMCDRR) which have not been fully delivered⁵⁹, and argued for greater attention and investment to be paid to small and medium-scale disasters, which account for the vast majority of damage and losses in Asia and disproportionately affect vulnerable, but rarely attract sufficient government or donor assistance.

Extract from the Bangkok Declaration - AMCDRR outcome - endorsed on 26 June 2014) related to the technical lead with IFRC, led with critical financial and technical input from the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI):

On Enhancing Resilience at Local Levels: Encourage the institutionalization of integrated community resilience approaches into local development planning; promote comprehensive school safety; promote disaster resilient villages to serve as a strong basis for creating community based disaster risk reduction at the local level; promote inclusion and volunteer/community-based networks; strengthen the role of women as leaders in local level resilience building; develop community-local government and private sector partnerships and accountability, giving attention to meaningful participation and positive contribution of at-risk groups such as children and youth, the older persons, persons with disabilities, as well as other disadvantaged groups. Take advantage of traditional knowledge and communication scientific information in simple, accessible and understandable manner. Encourage the development of and the enforcement of laws and regulation to reduce exposure to risk. Recognizing the role of ecosystem based DRR and integrating livelihood resilience and natural resource management as a holistic approach to disaster resilient communities especially in coastal and mountain areas.

AMCDRR Conference 2016

This 7th Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction and the first after the Sendai Framework took place in India in November 2016. As a follow-up to the 2014 Conference and as a requirement of the Sendai Framework, the Conference provided an opportunity to shape the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework in Asia. The Conference also served as a forum for stakeholders to take a shared responsibility and make actionable commitments towards implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the Asia region through the exchange of experiences on successful practices and innovative approaches in reducing and managing disaster risk. IFRC again strongly supported the Conference objectives by acting on the commitment of governments and stakeholders made in Sendai during the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) into national and local action through its advocacy strategy and work with ASEAN-country National Societies.

Representatives from the RCRC Movement, including thirteen National Societies, joined senior-level government delegations and experts to exchange experience and chart the way forward to build resilience and reduce disaster risk across the Asia region. Throughout the 2016 Conference, IFRC repeated its call for greater investment in local actors and new partnerships to reduce disaster risk and increase community resilience. IFRC restated its commitment to building resilience from the bottom up, by putting communities in the driving seat, and renewed the call for individuals, organisations and governments to join the One Billion Coalition for Resilience. IFRC again advocated for greater support to local humanitarian and development actors, addressing issues around social inclusion and diversity in disaster risk reduction, establishing stronger laws and frameworks that reduce vulnerability to disasters, and elevating the role of young people as agents of behavioural change in their communities.

At the 2016 Conference, National Societies also contributed the voices of vulnerable communities by advocating for more resources to be directed to building resilience in hazard-

⁵⁹ Such commitments include the allocation of 10% of humanitarian relief funds to DRR and pledges to adopt stronger legal frameworks including disaster management laws that provide clear mandates and resources for national and local level institutions.

prone communities as a means of ensuring such communities are better placed to cope with and recover from future shocks and adversity; and as a means of promoting the 'power of youth', in that young people should be recognised as capable advocates and given lead roles in disaster education and community-driven processes related to disaster risk reduction.

As for 2014, aside from the profiling and positioning during the actual event, the technical advocacy actually started several months before. It was led by the IFRC regional team in Kuala Lumpur and RRI provided critical input in three areas:

- In terms of *Gender and Diversity*, the starting point was the Asia-Pacific (AP) Regional Conference on Gender and DRR hosted in Ha Noi (Viet Nam) organised by UN-Women in April 2016. IFRC's participation in event preparations allowed for an increased engagement with UN-Women in Bangkok as well as members of the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) working group (and bridged the gap with the work of the Gender Stakeholder Group of the AMCDRR). The Ha Noi Declaration⁶⁰ provides technical recommendations for policy-makers to increase attention to gender aspects throughout the four priority areas of the SFDRR and in particular the Asia Plan to be adopted at the following AMCDRR meeting. Subsequently, the GiHA Network issued the policy brief entitled: *LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: PLACING WOMEN AND GIRLS AT THE CENTRE OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION* (co-authored by IFRC G&D Officer, funded by RRI).
- In terms of *School Safety*, a policy brief⁶¹ was developed with IFRC/RRI input which places a great emphasis on the youth role in building school safety and community resilience.
- In terms of *communications* and profiling, the RRI team led the design of the IFRC booth, the overall social media engagement as well as the re-printing of the World Disaster Report which was launched on the side of the conference.

The highlights of RCRC engagement in the conference are summarized [here](#).

Looking forward - AMCDRR Conference 2018

As a means of illustrating IFRC's ongoing added-value to the AMCDRR Conferences and the way it tirelessly advocates for the most vulnerable communities affected by disaster, it is useful to reflect on the recent statement made by ASEAN in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)-ASIA Partnership Forum in Bangkok⁶² (a preparatory step to the 2018 AMCDRR in Mongolia), in which ASEAN identified DRR priorities (risk assessment and awareness; preparedness and response; prevention and mitigation; recovery; and knowledge and innovation management) and noted how regional level coordination and cooperation had been strengthened over the years particularly through the strategic partnership with the IFRC. It is also interesting to note from the ASEAN statement how the ASEAN/AADMER level and the AMCDRR levels are interlinked, which confirms the RRI strategy to engage at both levels to influence national policy-makers is the right approach.

In terms of other *statements*, the partnership among regional actors and IFRC has been referenced in several statements, including by: UN WOMEN on collaboration related to the gendered aspects of risks; the stakeholder group on youth and children related to school safety; and ASEAN. These statements are illustrative of RRI leading IFRC's technical cooperation engagement with partners in the past years. In terms of IFRC's commitments, at the AP level, key RRI developed messages and thematic areas over the years have been taken on board by IFRC management and regional technical teams (enabled through RRI expertise and input in the drafting of statements).

⁶⁰ <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/07/ha-noi-recommendations-for-action-on-gender-and-drr>

⁶¹ <https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/51084>

⁶² <https://www.preventionweb.net/events/view/55818?id=55818>

Illustrating RCRC effectiveness of Southeast Asia (SEA) DRR cooperation through the ASEAN Schools Safety Initiative (ASSI)

In May 2013, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) endorsed the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI) to be one of the flagship projects of ASEAN in the areas of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation. ASSI is implemented by the ASEAN Secretariat in close cooperation with civil society organisations (the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Plan, World Vision, Save the Children, and MERCY Malaysia) and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Partnership Group.⁶³ The Initiative is premised on broad multi-stakeholder collaboration to ensure a cross-sectoral approach in promoting school safety. Initial ASSI interventions began in January 2014, and were aimed at supporting governments and schools to make schools safer by applying and maintaining common standards to school buildings and facilities, teacher and student training, school management and planning for disasters.

During the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) period, IFRC has played a key role in ASSI with National Societies (NS) actively cooperating with ASSI, taking part in consultative processes led by ASEAN Member States and interacting with key technical partners under the Asia-Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS); an engagement that led to co-sponsorship of the ASEAN Conference on School Safety in Bangkok in February 2017.⁶⁴ As a founding member of the APCSS, the RCRC has pledged to harmonise existing tools for school safety at the national and regional level. Through its support to ASSI, IFRC actively supports the BUILD SAFELY aspect of the AADMER work programme (Building Safe ASEAN Infrastructures and Essential Services). During the RRI, IFRC's contribution to ASSI over the years has focused on eight strategic areas.⁶⁵

1. Implementing joint activities with ASEAN Member States and partners, building on the auxiliary role of NS and the community-based network of youth and volunteers, to strengthen the School Safety Initiative in ASEAN.
2. Harmonizing RCRC school safety initiatives with guidelines established by ASEAN Member States; including the Comprehensive Framework for School Safety (CFSS) as well as the existing ASEAN guidelines for School Safety.
3. Promoting the Public Awareness Public Education (PAPE) guideline and messages to ASSI partners, enhancing joint learning processes, improved knowledge and information management as well increasing use of new technologies and innovative approaches, for example, in partnership with Save the Children in Thailand and Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR).
4. Participating in national and regional-level consultations to share experience and tools in promoting school safety, including active participation in ASSI-related technical meetings and workshops.
5. Supporting ASEAN Member States in the alignment process of the ASSI with the Sendai Framework for DRR as well as the future Sustainable Development Goals.
6. Promoting peer-to-peer collaboration among NS, public authorities and external partners.

⁶³ ASEAN Member States have committed to ensuring that all girls and boys and teachers at schools have safer teaching-learning facilities and are equipped with proper training and skills in disaster risk reduction.

⁶⁴ RRI also participated in the 1st conference in 2015.

⁶⁵ Source: IFRC. Engaging in the ASEAN school safety initiative September 2015.

7. Seeking funding from local and international partners to contribute to ASSI in collaboration with ASEAN Member States and technical partners.
8. Documenting RCRC contribution to school safety in ASEAN, periodically reporting on progress to the ASEAN Member States through the Prevention and Mitigation Working Group Mechanism.

Some notable ASSI regional activities in which RRI participated and/or supported in the past few years include: the official launch of the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative in Indonesia, November 2014; the Regional Stakeholders' Consultation Workshop for the ASEAN Common Framework for Comprehensive School Safety and the ASEAN School Disaster Management Guidelines, September 2015, Lao PDR; the ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety, Cambodia, December 2015; cumulating in the 2nd ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety, that was held in February 2017 in Thailand.⁶⁶

The 2nd ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety reaffirmed the importance of integrating disaster risk reduction in the education sector and recognised the significance of building capacities on school safety programming through knowledge sharing and exchanges. The conference also provided an opportunity to discuss new frameworks, strategies, goals and targets, including wider partnerships and stakeholders' engagement oriented to guiding ASEAN to a more unified approach towards a comprehensive school safety. At the conference, IFRC facilitated a thematic session titled *Enhancing the ASEAN youth engagement in School Safety*, which was led by youth representatives from National Societies from Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand and involved DRR practitioners from Brunei, Lao PDR, the Philippines and Vietnam; this was a unique opportunity to expand the focus beyond children to incorporate the important youth dimension. At the conference, IFRC made two commitments:

1. To strengthen and broaden the engagement of RCRC youth and volunteers and to scale-up school safety activities to more schools and more children at risk; and
2. To institutionalize the partnership around ASSI as an inclusive and long-term programme approach.

Through the Youth Agenda, IFRC are proposing a concrete option to ASEAN Member States in terms of sustainability and scalability of the school safety programming. As part of overall RCRC approach to supporting ASSI, and as an effort to document the overall contribution of RCRC to the ASSI across projects and sectors, IFRC/RRI supported in 2017 a series of ten (10)⁶⁷ ASEAN-country National Societies school safety snapshots. The collection highlights activities conducted by NSs in schools through their network of volunteers and active youth members. National Societies are also active in urban resilience initiatives, implementing innovative projects in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, and Vietnam.

⁶⁶ Attendees included ASEAN-country representatives of the Ministries of Education and the National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of the ASEAN Member States, as well as NGO and INGO partners and stakeholders on school safety in the region.

⁶⁷ 11 in total with Timor Lesté snapshot.

National Society contributions to the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF)

The following study illustrates collective National Society (NS) contributions to the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) over the past five years.⁶⁸ Importantly, and significantly for added value purposes, the fact that the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) did not fund NS CSSF efforts does not matter, what does is the fact that the RRI contributed to the ongoing enabling framework that allowed National Societies to make, and to continue to make, contributions to the Comprehensive School Safety Framework.

The [Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society \(BDRCS\)](#) works in schools through a range of ongoing campaigns of which are jointly conducted with relevant ministries e.g. Ministry of Health (first aid, blood donor recruitment, awareness on non-communicable disease) and the Ministry of Communication (road safety). BDRCS is also part of the Green Earth Project to promote initiatives such as planting trees and improving waste disposal behaviour among school children.

[Cambodian Red Cross](#) contributes to all three pillars of the CSSF. Over the years, Cambodian Red Cross Youth (RCY) and Red Cross branches have focused on particular areas of risk faced by school children: road accidents, lack of access to safe water in schools as well as poor sanitation and hygiene practices. Activities in schools contribute to the Cambodian National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018.

[Lao Red Cross \(LRC\)](#) partners with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Youth Union and contributes to awareness-raising activities for children and youth focusing on first aid, road safety, blood donations and youth exchange (peer-to-peer support with youth members from the Thai Red Cross). The LRC National Blood Centre has Youth Donor Clubs whose members donate blood and organise new blood donor recruitment events. LRC also implements water and sanitation interventions in schools and conducts simulation exercises in targeted schools.

In Indonesia, [the Indonesian Red Cross/PMI](#) contributes to all three pillars of the CSSF and has developed guidelines to support the implementation of activities together with Disaster Management and Education authorities. In-school activities are implemented through the Red Cross Youth Club and by PMI-trained school safety facilitators, with technical support from the district branches. PMI is in discussion with the Ministry of Education to formulate an implementation guideline for the Red Cross Youth Clubs to describe their functions and focus areas, which would include: first aid, blood donor recruitment, disaster risk reduction/school safety, peer-to-peer support or coaching among youth, and community engagement activities.

The [Malaysian Red Crescent](#) CSSF activities are carried out by volunteers organized under its subsidiary units, namely Red Crescent Links in primary schools, the Junior Red Crescent in secondary schools, and Voluntary Aid Detachments or Health and Social Services Groups for members above 18 years old. Activities implemented in schools through the youth units contribute to pillars 2 and 3 of the CSSF, which primarily consists of first aid trainings, health and environmental promotion activities, and organising events and trainings with and for teachers.

The [Myanmar Red Cross Society \(MRCS\)](#) through various activities contributes to the three

⁶⁸ Covering a five-year period beginning January 2012 up until the time of reporting to RRI in January 2017.

pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework. Activities in schools are embedded into general programmes implemented after emergencies or as development initiatives and covering various sectors such as disaster risk reduction, health, water and sanitation, livelihoods and youth empowerment. MRCS benefits from strong partnerships with the Relief and Resettlement Department (responsible for Disaster Management) and the Ministry of Education.

In the Philippines, School Safety initiatives are led by Red Cross Youth councils and the [Philippine Red Cross](#) chapters in close cooperation with the Department of Education. articular projects include:

- Support to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management institutionalization in schools
- Managing risk through Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCAs)
- Training of teachers and pupils
- Construction of small-scale mitigation measures following the assessments (e.g. repair of facilities, water and sanitation interventions, provision of basic response equipment)
- Extra-curricular activities (e.g. awareness campaigns, youth camps, simulation exercises, etc.)
- Advocacy on child protection and participation
- Ecosystem-based management and climate change adaptation

[Singapore Red Cross Society](#) engagement in the CSSF mostly focuses on School Disaster Management and Risk and Resilience Education. Small-scale school retrofitting activities are also undertaken where needed. Beyond the schools, youth members and children are empowered to lead risk reduction and resilience campaigns and other activities in their wider communities. In addition to the uniformed groups covering 79 schools in the country, Singapore Red Cross youth engagement programme includes 14 post-secondary institutions and communities to offer youth volunteers a seamless transition as they progress from student life into adulthood. In 2017 around 5,000 youths participated in such activities.

[Cruz Vermelha de Timor Lesté](#) (CVTL) implements a wide range of activities in schools related to the Comprehensive School Safety Framework, which include youth empowerment, health promotion and disaster risk reduction. Key areas of focus include delivering first aid training, awareness sessions on leading a healthy lifestyle, and conducting activities in schools such as competitions, simulation exercises and refurbishing water and sanitation facilities. CVTL also conducts training for teachers and has built facilities for children with disabilities in selected schools.

The [Thai Red Cross Society](#) (TRCS) focuses its CSSF activities on disaster preparedness, first aid, health and personal hygiene, as well as undertaking awareness campaigns, simulation exercises, and water and sanitation activities in partnership with the private sector. TRCS is a member of the Thailand Safe School Network (TSSN) led by World Vision which provides an opportunity for coordination, information-sharing and joint technical support to education authorities in the country. TRCS has also signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with nine ministries related to its Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) initiatives, which include school-based interventions.

[Viet Nam Red Cross Society](#) (VNRCS) contributes to the National Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) programme of the government which includes a school safety component. Trained students are encouraged to share basic disaster preparedness information with their parents, families, peers as well as others in their local community related to road safety, health and hygiene practices. VNRCS has introduced a 'Safe School' module

to help those in positions of school management including teachers and board members to better prepare for the event of a disaster, and regularly provides support to schools affected by disasters, which include recovery work as well as upgrading the water and sanitation facilities and other risk mitigation measures in schools.

Supporting ASEAN to address Climate Change through SEA National Societies

The vulnerability to and impact of climate change is a major concern to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. The region is highly vulnerable to climate change, with Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines ranked in the top twenty of the world's most vulnerable countries.⁶⁹ ASEAN plays an active and leadership role in addressing climate change in the global community.

ASEAN Heads of State and Government at the regional level have over the years issued various declarations and Statements related to climate change and have expressed ASEAN's common understanding/position and aspirations towards a global solution to the challenge of climate change and their resolve to achieve an ASEAN community resilient to climate change through national and regional actions. Much of this is embedded in enhancing cooperation to improve ASEAN's collective capacity to address climate change; and (ii) strengthening rapid response capacity to be more efficient and effective in the event of natural disasters through existing mechanisms under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

With some ten (10) million people annually in Southeast Asia (SEA) vulnerable to risks related to climate change and environmental disasters, the RRI has sought to reduce the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable communities by strengthening the capacity of eleven SEA National Societies (NS) and regional structures to better represent and communicate the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly women, boys and girls.

Using the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2009-2015⁷⁰ (which guided ASEAN's climate change response efforts and calls for the integration of a disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach) as its springboard, the Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) has supported SEA National Societies to mainstream DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into their own approaches and strategies, as well as their government's national development plans.

At the broad level, the RRI has supported SEA National Societies to identify community environmental concerns through the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) analysis process, and to incorporate environmental issues in DRR communications, including greater awareness of the importance of conducting environmental analysis when considering DRR initiatives. Key environmental messages (e.g. promotion of good environmental practises aimed at reducing risks) have been incorporated into communication and advocacy plans.

Importantly, the RRI's approach has built on global research findings related to law and DRR to ensure environmental concerns are reflected in individual country law (for example, in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) with the advent of the Climate Change Decree). A key aim of the RRI has been to develop a core group of environmental experts amongst SEA National Societies who are able to provide advice and technical support to NS to plan and implement climate-smart DRR project activities at national, sub-national and community levels.

In 2016, a range of CCA trainings were undertaken with National Societies with the specific aim of: ensuring a shared understanding among NS about CCA-related issues, policies and guidelines; and discussing opportunities to ensure climate change is mainstreamed within existing National Society resilience programming. This resulted in four key trainings taken place as follows: in Lao PDR, training on Climate Change Adaptation was undertaken in April

⁶⁹ Source: ASEAN Cooperation on Climate Change: <http://environment.asean.org/awgcc/>

⁷⁰ <http://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/archive/5187-19.pdf>

2016 for 58 people (17 Women) in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MoNRE) and the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology. In Vietnam training was undertaken for 22 staff from HQ and 16 Chapters in February 2016. In Cambodia, 29 representatives (8 females) from 25 Red Cross Branches were trained in April 2016; and a CCA Training of Trainers session held in Myanmar in March 2016.