

3rd ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety



3 -4 April 2019
Bangkok, Thailand

1. Background

Southeast Asia is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. More than 50 percent of the global disaster mortalities took place in ASEAN countries from 2004 to 2014 with about 354,000 fatalities, 191 million people temporarily displaced, and 193 million people affected or experienced different types of losses due to disasters.

Recognising the impacts of disasters on children and education sector, ASEAN has established the [ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative \(ASSI\)](#) which promotes a comprehensive integration of risk reduction in the Education Sector. This initiative is a priority of the [ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response \(AADMER\) Work Programme 2016-2020](#) (Priority Programme #2: Building Safe ASEAN Infrastructures and Essential Service) and the [ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020](#) (Priority Area 5.2: Promoting inclusion of disaster risk reduction in national curriculum through support to relevant sectors' initiatives).

To support the ASSI goals and Programme Strategy, ASSI, with the leadership of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and Seniors Official Meeting on Education (SOM-ED), **a biennial regional conference is held as a venue for advocacy, discussion, and learning exchange among stakeholders on DRR in Education.**

- [The 1st ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety / December 2015 in Phnom Penh](#)
The ASEAN Common Framework for Comprehensive School Safety was formally launched.
- [The 2nd ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety / February 2017 in Bangkok](#)
The ASEAN countries and other partners and stakeholders re-affirmed to continue their school safety efforts in alignment with the country commitments to contribute in accomplishing the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 and the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020 as well as the Sendai Framework for DRR 2016-2030 targets and the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- [The 3rd ASEAN Regional Conference on School Safety / April 2019 in Bangkok](#)
It focused on the assessment of the region's progress in school safety work and in shaping the discussions toward outlining the ASEAN regional perspectives, approaches, and strategies on school safety post- AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 and ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020.
A total of 139 participants attended the 3rd conference this year, including the representatives from the Ministries of Education and National Disaster Management Offices, ASEAN Secretariat, civil society organisations, UN Agencies, donors, academia, teachers, children and youth groups. The conference was hosted by the Government of Thailand and organized by the ASSI consortium partners (Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision, Mercy Malaysia).

IFRC being part of [Asia Pacific Coalition for School safety \(APCSS\)](#) and [Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector \(GADRRRES\)](#) has been invited to and engaged in the Conference together with Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in Southeast Asia since the 1st Conference in 2015, and contributing to the Conference both financially and technically through the RCRC expertise and experience in school-based activities.

2. RCRC Engagement

20 participants from 11 Southeast Asia NSs have attended which made RCRC Movement very visible during the Conference. ([participants list](#))

IFRC was engaged in the organising team comprised of ASSI consortium partners and supported admin and facilitation work for the whole 2 days, which was highly appreciated by the organising team.

RCRC delegation's engagement was made every single component of the Conference as below:

Plenary Session

Red Cross Red Crescent was requested to nominate a speaker representing “youth group” for the Plenary Session 2 “Sustaining School Safety Efforts in Post 2020 ASEAN” as the voice of children and youth is important to be heard during such a Conference.

Mr. Jaryll Ong Pang Sng, Malaysian Red Crescent representative, was identified as a speaker since he has long engagement in RCRC Movement both as youth volunteer (member of Red Crescent Youth) and NS staff who is in charge of promotion of youth engagement, while he himself is a “youth” in terms of age.

He presented “[Scaling-up School Safety through Youth Leadership](#)” and provided not only MRC's work based on the country context but also the existing and potential RCRC added-

value for school safety highlighting that RCRC NSs have various technical expertise (not only in DRR but also in Health, WASH, Violence Prevention, Climate Change Adaptation etc.) and strong relationship with Ministries of Education/National Disaster Management Offices building on our auxiliary roles, with local presence in schools and communities and global/regional RCRC networks. He also referred to the contribution to global and regional agenda such as SDGs, ASEAN's Culture of Prevention, AADMER's Work Programme 2016-2020.

He also underlined the importance of the roles children and youth in schools can and should play – when they are engaged, the ownership and leadership will be further nurtured, they will disseminate their knowledge and skills to their friends, families and communities in multiplying way, and stressed the effectiveness of the peer to peer approach – from youth to youth – that creates more impact than the traditional way in which teachers or adults tell students what to do.

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Thematic Session

1) IFRC-led session

IFRC has organised a session together with Thai RC, [Dow Group Thailand](#), [Prudence Foundation](#), Philippine RC and Department of Education Philippines under the theme of **multi-stakeholders' engagement in School Safety** “[Working together to scale-up our work and create more meaningful impact](#)”.



Mr Jaryll Ong Pang Sng, Malaysian RC

During the session, 3 different good examples were introduced.

A) Thai Red Cross Society and Dow Group Thailand: *Enhance partnership for sustainability*

After the severe flood in 2011 and 2012 in Thailand, Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) and Dow Chemical Thailand have made agreement in 2012 to build capacity on producing clean water for the affected people by the flood and to improve schools' health system. While Dow Chemical provides financial and technical support for system installation and maintenance, TRCS mobilise staff and volunteers, and optimise their expertise on hygiene promotion(education part) so that the project comes as a package, not just delivering clean water but also disseminating knowledge and promoting people's health through the engagement of schools and communities.

To make the project more sustainable and to respond to the needs of the people in need, Dow Chemical and TRCS have decided to continue their collaboration, as their 2nd phase, to provide clean drinking water for remote schools, engaging more partners including other companies and technological college students.



Ms. Sukanya Supudomungmee, Thai RC

They highlighted the importance of engaging multi partners, by building on the respective strengths and experiences, to make the collaboration more effective and sustainable.

B) Prudence Foundation and IFRC: *Think big and collaborate for scaling-up*



Mr. Marc Fancy, Prudence Foundation

Prudence Foundation, the community investment arm of Prudential in Asia, has been addressing the key social needs in the areas of Education, Health and Safety, and has been implementing the Safe Schools programmes in partnership with Save the Children and Plan International. They have reached 160 schools in 5 countries in Southeast Asia. Putting more focuses on nation-wide impact to reach more schools and make them safer, they have also started working with the Department of Education Philippines, jointly developing the system to institutionalise the approach.

Another initiative is Safe Steps Kids, the campaign which will be soon launched to deliver safe messages on Disasters, Road Safety and First Aid to millions of children in Southeast Asia countries through cartoons.

He emphasised the need to upscale our efforts and work through partnerships since we do have different capacities (financial, technical, institutional resources) and mandates, and this should be optimised to reach more schools in more effective, efficient, impactful manner, as ensuring safety in schools are undoubtedly the common concerns to all.

C) Philippine RC and Department of Education: *Leverage youth power and expertise for impact*

Philippine Red Cross (PRC), as auxiliary to the Government, signed on Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Department of Education (which covers primary and secondary schools) and Commission on Higher Education (which covers colleges and universities) in 2018. The MoAs encourage the promotion of humanitarian values, volunteerism, and culture of safety and health through the establishment of Red Cross Youth councils and training of teachers as volunteer moderators.



MoA signing between PRC and DepEd

PRC, DepEd, and CHED shall work together to ensure resilience in education through trainings that equip students and teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to save more lives and inspire humanitarianism.

Ms. Joy Alampay introduced that the joint program starts from 2,101 schools that have school clinics where Red Cross Youth Health Corps (RCYHC) will be engaged to support health human resource and continue promoting First Aid. The program hopes to eventually benefit 47,025 primary and secondary schools nation-wide and more than 25 million students. She highlighted that it is critical to have aspirational and ambitious target to really make more impact throughout the country by jointly working, building on the competitive advantages respective actors have, where PRC can leverage the power of youth volunteers and the expertise on health.

D) Panel discussion with the speakers

Reflecting on the existing strong partnerships, it was discussed, moderated by Ms. Michaela Friberg-Storey, IFRC CCST Bangkok, how we can further collaborate to scale-up the reach and impact – by thinking beyond what we are currently/already doing - to make sure no children and youth are left behind. It was emphasised that no single organisation can make a difference alone, and thus this triangular cooperation (governments, civil societies, and corporate sector) is critical.

Dir. Ronilda, Department of Education Philippines, underlined that the various school safety work carried out by different actors should be known to each other through regular communication and reporting so that there will be no duplication and can be complimented each other according to their own strengths, and that the governments should institutionalise the collective initiatives to make a nation-wide reach and impact.



Speakers of the session (from right to left):

*Ms. Ronilda Co (Department of Education, Philippines), Ms Joy Alampay (Philippine RC), Ms. Duangruthye Srisarannon (Dow Group Thailand)
Ms. Sukanya Supudommungmee (Thai RC), Mr. Marc Fancy (Prudence Foundation) and Ms. Michaela Friberg-Storey (IFRC CCST Bangkok)*

2) ASSI-led session

In another thematic session under the theme of “emerging risks in school safety” led by ASSI, Vietnam RC was invited as one of the speakers, and Mr. Hoa presented “[Awareness Raising on Drowning Prevention in Vietnam](#)” which also won the School Safety Champion Award nominated by the NDMO Vietnam.

Partners’ Statement

Mr. Hung Ha Nguyen, Acting Head of IFRC CCST Bangkok, delivered IFRC’s statement on behalf of 11 SEA NSs at the closing session, which included 4 collective commitments below ([Statement](#)):

1. To strengthen and broaden the engagement of children and youth by mobilizing 3.6 million youth members in Southeast Asia.
2. To scale up our contribution for nation-wide impact by engaging with public authorities through result-based and structured partnerships building on existing best practices in the region.
3. To institutionalise partnerships around ASSI as an inclusive and long-term platform whereby we bring our results together and demonstrate our collective impact.
4. To facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration, with a specific call on the corporate sector, including innovative actors and start-ups, to more significantly engage in school safety as a cost-effective and societal contribution.



Mr Hung Ha Nguyen, IFRC CCST Bangkok



Mr Nguyen Vinh Hoa, Vietnam RC

School Safety Champion

To recognise the outstanding school safety works in Southeast Asian countries, ASSI organised a platform for the ASEAN Governments (Ministry of Education and National Disaster Management Office) to nominate their ASEAN School Safety Champions under three categories: schools, local organisations, and individuals. The nominees were reviewed before the Conference and the awarding ceremony was held during the Opening Ceremony.

Vietnam Red Cross received the School Safety Champion Award under the institutional category in Vietnam, commended in their work on the prevention of drowning. Their work was also introduced during one of the thematic sessions.

Exhibition booth

IFRC was allocated a dedicated booth to distribute its publications and IEC materials, whereby SEA NSs joined their own country's booth.



3. Achievements

In addition to the above-mentioned contributions to the respective sessions, the RCRC Delegation has made below collective achievements.

- RCRC school safety works including youth and multi-stakeholders' engagement was recognized and appreciated by ASEAN and School Safety actors in Southeast Asia.
- More partnership opportunities were explored through dialogues among SEA NSs participants and their respective government officials from Ministries of Education and/or National Disaster Management Offices and other INGOs.
- RCRC youth voice was raised, heard and appreciated as it was only RCRC Delegation who brought youth leaders to the Conference while “the engagement of children and youth” was referred as a key in school safety work by some sessions including plenary session by the speaker from UNISDR.
- The key message on the importance of scaling-up school safety work through enhanced partnership was strongly emphasized and framed up the discussion on widening collaboration opportunities through concrete examples (Safe Steps Kids campaign, MoU and implementation plan in Philippines) and SEA NSs engagement.
- The work and the voice of the participants were shared widely through IFRC's social media and [the video clip](#) during the Conference.
- The relationship with ASSI was further strengthened through IFRC's cooperation and contribution not only financial support but also substantial and human resource support on the contents/programmes of the Conference.

4. Recommendations

Not to lose the momentum and to seize the opportunity, the most important thing is to take further actions from here, by building on the success of the Conference.

- The strong engagement of NSs leadership and joint work by various units

The engagement of the leadership of Southeast Asia National Societies is vital to explore, develop and expand partnerships, internally and externally, while making sure that the existing works

carried out by technical teams of the NSs are recognised, supported and continued. It is also essential that school safety work to be delivered collectively by various units – DRR/DM, Health, WASH, Youth Departments in the NSs –, and it cannot be done in silo as the work will be more comprehensive, inclusive and meaningful when it is conducted jointly optimising the wide range of expertise that no other actors can offer. The humanitarian value RCRC NSs carry along also makes our school safety work unique and strong that contributes to promoting the culture of non-violence and peace.

➤ Facilitation of learning and partnership/agreement

It is also important that existing good examples to be captured and shared among the Southeast Asia NSs and beyond, so that they can learn from each other, apply the similar modality while reflecting the country context, and potentially replicate the work. IFRC Secretariat should play a role to facilitate developing case studies, peer to peer learning opportunities, and agreement/partnership with governments, corporate sector, academia to create nation-wide impact.

The Southeast Asia NSs are highly encouraged to initiate and/or continue the dialogue with their respective governments (relevant Ministries such as Ministries of Education and National Disaster Management Offices), academia and corporate sector to seek any potential collaboration. School Safety has been identified as one of the key components under the “Collaboration on Youth Leadership Development through leveraging Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change Initiative and Youth in School Safety Programme” which was endorsed by ASEAN Senior Officers Meeting on Youth in May 2018, IFRC Engagement Strategy with ASEAN, and ASEAN Coalition for Resilience.

➤ Linkage with global and regional agenda/initiatives

While Southeast Asia is one of the School Safety Champion regions and their great work building on the platform that ASEAN/ASSI provides should be widely showcased, since IFRC is part of global and regional Safe School Initiatives (GADRRRES, APCSS), it is also important to link up with other regions’ initiatives and good examples that contribute to global and regional agenda such as SDGs, Sendai Framework. How school safety work and (humanitarian) education agenda can be framed, which is currently led by IFRC Geneva, is something which needs to be further discussed.

➤ Collective RCRC work

To leverage the strength and resources of the RCRC network, the next step will be inviting and engaging (Partner) National Societies and Reference Centres (Global Disaster Preparedness Centre, Asia Pacific Disaster Resilience Centre, Climate Centre) to make more impact and to tap on the potential of scaling-up school safety work collectively.

