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IFRC – ASEAN Engagement Quarterly Updates

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 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

ASEAN Highlights

ASEAN strives for strengthened resilience in disaster management



ASEAN Ministers and officials celebrated the annual 'ASEAN Day for Disaster Management' with the theme 'Bridging Disaster Recovery to Resilience' on 4th October 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The event is celebrated to raise regional awareness on the importance of building a more resilient ASEAN Community. The event was officiated by Vice President of Myanmar Henry van Thio and held in conjunction with the 7th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response. In this occasion, Ministers reiterated the need for enhanced cross-sectoral coordination and the adoption of holistic approach in their collective efforts in disaster management. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of ASEAN Dato Lim Jock Hoi stated that ASEAN has collectively achieved many milestones, yet much remains to be done to strengthen ASEAN resilience. Under the leadership of Dato Lim Jock

Hoi as ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, ASEAN is committed to assist its Member States in mitigating and reducing impacts of disasters and bring together aid and expertise from the international community to the region as well as strives to foster a culture of resilience and care for the environment to prevent disaster risks.

15th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution



Ministers responsible for the environment, for land, forest fires and haze, from ASEAN Member States (AMS), held their 15th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution on 8-9 October 2019 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The Ministers acknowledged the achievements and progress of regional environmental protection and cooperation on a number of environmental issues, in particular prioritised actions and

initiatives taken on environmental sustainability to further promote environmental cooperation in the region. The Ministers recognised that key cross-cutting and emerging environmental issues such as climate change and marine debris pollution remain a challenge which requires regional collective action. The Ministers looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan on Environment (ASPEN) 2025. Furthermore, the Ministers further recognised youth participation at the ASEAN Plus Three Youth Environment Forum (AYEF) 2019 held on 8-13 September 2019 in Phuket, Thailand, which provided an additional opportunity to promote and strengthen the role of youth as champions of the region in environmental protection and conservation. The Ministers also noted the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre's (ASMC's) assessment that the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), which was in its positive phase since mid-2019, has been a key driver that contributed to the significantly drier-than-normal weather over parts of the southern ASEAN region this year. ASEAN Member States pledged to remain vigilant and to monitor and step up their haze preventive efforts to minimise any possible occurrence of transboundary smoke haze during periods of drier weather.

ASEAN remains steadfast in responding to issues affecting the rights of women and children



Through the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN continues to act together to address emerging threats and challenges. During the 19th ACWC Meeting held on 7-8 October 2019 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, the ACWC Representatives finalised and endorsed the draft Declaration on the Protection of Children against All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN. Currently, ACWC agreed on a regional

public campaign on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the elimination of violence against women. ACWC has also agreed to integrate in its new five-year work plan initiatives to support the implementation of the *Regional Framework and Action Plan on Implementing the Declaration on the Promotion of Social Protection in ASEAN*, the *ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention*, as well as the implementation of the *ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

EU to support sustainable use of peatland and haze mitigation in ASEAN



To support ASEAN's endeavors in combating transboundary haze pollution and peatland fires, the European Union (EU) launched the civil society component of the EUR 24 million programme to support Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA). The overall programme is funded with EUR 20 million contributions from the EU and EUR 4 million from the German Government. This new initiative supports the objectives of the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy through collective actions and enhanced cooperation that improves sustainable peatland management, mitigates the impacts of climate change, manages the risk of wildfires and reduces trans-boundary regional haze. The initiative also supports and sustains local livelihoods while contributing to global environmental management. The EU's support to ASEAN's sustainable peatland management is composed of two mutually reinforcing main components, namely governmental approach and non-state actor approach. The governmental approach is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) while the non-state actor approach is implemented by World Resources Institute Indonesia in collaboration with Tropical Rainforest Conservation & Research Centre Malaysia and the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative. The two components will work collaboratively to support ASEAN in addressing the root causes of forest fires.

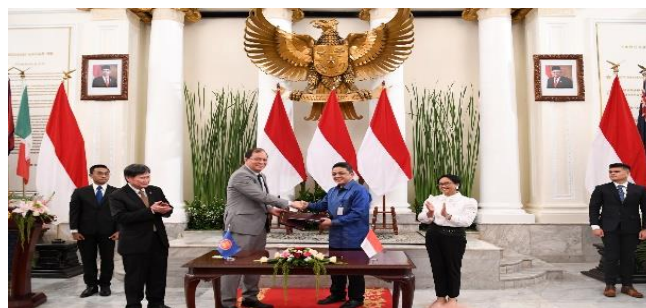
SUPA programme is another opportunity provided by the ASEAN-EU cooperation framework which will act as foundation of knowledge to help ASEAN Member States and relevant institutions in achieving enhanced capacity and regional coordination in sustainable management of forest and peatlands. The SUPA Programme also marks a significant milestone for the EU and ASEAN, as this is the first regional cooperation under the EU-ASEAN Multi-annual Indicative Programme in the area of climate change. This showcases that both regions are committed to tackle the root causes of peatland fires and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.

ASEAN, UNICEF join forces to improve lives of all children

ASEAN and UNICEF launched in Bangkok a joint publication entitled “Children in ASEAN: 30 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child” that features achievements and actions for children’s rights in the region. The report was released during the ASEAN CRC30 commemorative event co-hosted by Thailand’s Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and UNICEF. The report looks at what the next 30 years might look like for children in ASEAN. It highlights 10 actionable recommendations which include reinforcing regional systems and cross-border collaboration; ensuring no child is left behind; strengthening laws and policies; increasing public finance and social investment; as well as strengthening data collection, analysis and use. Other suggestions are to ensure equal access to quality services; leverage innovation and technology; promote social and behaviour change; accelerate child-sensitive climate actions; and achieve gender equality. Thirty years ago, world leaders, including all ASEAN Member States, made a historic commitment to the world’s children by adopting the CRC. By 1995, all ASEAN Member States had ratified the CRC and since then ASEAN has been a leading voice and valuable partner in supporting its implementation. Progress has been made towards the achievement of children’s rights in all Member States since the 1990’s. Specifically, poverty was halved with dramatic increases in life expectancy. Women and children in ASEAN have

better access to health care and children in particular enjoys better educational services and access to internet as well as social media, which results in greater opportunities and a better prospect for the future. In addition, Member States have made significant progress in protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect, through increased investments in state institutions, interventions and services. Since the adoption of the CRC, the population in ASEAN living in urban areas has increased by more than 60%, with almost half of the region living in urban areas. Children are increasingly affected by the climate crisis, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and disparities. Voluntary or forced migration has also had a significant impact on children and their families. Across ASEAN, children’s access to internet creates opportunities and also raises important protection concerns about online safety for children, including exploitation and abuse as well as breaches of privacy.

Indonesia funds US\$500,000 to support ASEAN efforts in the repatriation of displaced persons in Myanmar



Representatives of the Indonesian government and the ASEAN Secretariat signed the ‘Agreement between the Government of Indonesia and ASEAN on the Implementation of the Grant for the Repatriation of Displaced Persons to Myanmar’. The grant, worth approximately US\$500,000 will be utilized to provide financial support to the establishment of an Ad-Hoc Support Team of the ASEAN Secretariat to assist the Myanmar government in implementing the recommendations of the Preliminary Needs Assessment. The funds reflected Indonesia’s commitment to support the Myanmar government in facilitating the repatriation process, in addition to recent contribution namely the Indonesian Aid Project Station Hospital in Myaung Bwe, Mrauk U, Rakhine State. The agreement is a significant milestone in ASEAN’s collective efforts to support the Government of Myanmar in facilitating the repatriation

process and promoting sustainable development in Rakhine State. The ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) conducted a Preliminary Needs Assessment in May 2019 to facilitate the repatriation of displaced persons in Rakhine State. The Preliminary Needs Assessment agreed on the following three recommendations which includes: (i) enhancing capacity of reception and transit centres; (ii) strengthening information and dissemination; and (iii) support to the provisions of basic services.

IFRC- ASEAN Engagement

ASEAN Senior Executive Program in Disaster Management (SEPDM)



The 5th Senior Executive Program in Disaster Management (SEPDM) 2019 under the theme “Strengthening Resiliency in Disaster Management” was held on 4-8 November 2019 in Singapore and hosted by the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) and co-organised by IFRC and ASEAN Secretariat. The SEPDM is a high-level training programme devoted to current and future policy makers in ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific Region. A total of 25 officials from ASEAN Member States and other Asia Pacific countries participated in the program particularly from National Disaster Management Authorities, Emergency Services and Civil Protection, the ASEAN Secretariat and the AHA Centre. The program aimed to cultivate common consensus and thinking on disaster management among ASEAN Member States for transnational interoperability. -SEPDM is designed to address the importance of effective leadership in disaster management at strategic and policy levels, focusing primarily on the preparedness and

response phase of the disaster management cycle. The Programme provided wide-ranging discourse on issues and challenges facing emergency authorities in disaster management, climate change adaptation for slow-onset disasters, both at the national and regional level. The Secretary General of Singapore Red Cross Society who were invited in the program presented lecture on the role of Non-Governmental Organisation in disaster management and the need to mobilise the world through 1BC strategy. Singapore has been organising SEDPM annually since 2015, to address the importance of effective leadership on disaster management at both strategic and policy levels.

AHA Centre Strategic Thematic Forum on the Rethinking of the AHA Centre



“Thematic forum on the Rethinking of the AHA Centre” took place in Jakarta to commemorate the 8th anniversary of the AHA Centre. The Forum aimed to review the AHA Centre’s existing core activities and to get insights from key partners to the potential of expanding AHA Centre’s areas beyond its existing mandate of natural disasters. The insights also served as recommendations in the development of AHA Centre’s next strategy 2021-2025. The IFRC Regional Director, Xavier Castellanos highlighted in the forum the Best Practices in DRR and shared IFRC approach called as 3 D’s + 1 (Disasters, Diseases, Displacement + Development RCRC Network). He further emphasized the importance of maintaining trust, transparency and accountability in the partnership building and always making community as the “first mile” for effective disaster management including early action, preparedness, response and recovery. Participants of the forum coming from the NDMOs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ASEAN Member States, UN agencies, ASEAN Dialogue Partners countries and other ASEAN relevant bodies.

IFRC – AHA Centre Regional Workshop on the Management of International Assistance



On 20-21 November 2019, IFRC in collaboration with the AHA Centre organized a workshop “Management of International Assistance” for Southeast Asia governments and Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. The workshop aimed to strengthen the coordination and improve the capacity of ASEAN Member States and the AHA Centre in the management of incoming regional and international assistance during humanitarian emergency response. The workshop jointly officiated by the AHA Centre Executive Director and the Head of IFRC Country Office in Myanmar, Joy Singhal. In his remarks, Joy Singhal emphasized that “as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, Red Cross Red Crescent NS with the support of IFRC are on hand to support governments to strengthen national preparedness, and facilitate dialogue between international actors and national authorities on how to better prepare together.” This includes support on strengthening national legal preparedness of international humanitarian assistance. The workshop produced three recommendations at regional level, national level and operational, among them are : i) to develop ASEAN regional guidelines on coordination of International Humanitarian Assistance from INGOs; ii) to facilitate the expansion of regional logistic hubs and regional database on the incoming/ongoing international humanitarian assistance activities; iii) to strengthen the adoption of AADMER in the ASEAN national country legal framework; iv) explore partnerships between RCRC NS and related Ministries in discussing IDRL issues.

Completion the 6th batch AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Program



The 6th batch of the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme has been completed after conducting 5 intensive months training in Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and New Zealand. (ACE) Programme established as part of the AHA Centre’s ambition to build a disaster-resilient region and to develop the future leaders of ASEAN. It is an annual training program funded by the government of Japan and New Zealand and supported by the UN partners, RCRC, US Forest Service and academic institutions. In the program, IFRC together with PMI organized field visit to Central Sulawesi and delivered courses on resilience, PGI, Disaster Law and Advocacy and shared RCRC collaboration and operations in ASEAN as a key actor of the disaster management system at country and regional level. The program has increased understanding of RCRC among ACE Programme participants and reinforced the linkage between NS and NDMOs in the respective ASEAN countries.

Regional Learning Exchange Event: bringing in technology and innovative approaches to promote school safety in ASEAN

IFRC CCST Bangkok and Thai Red Cross Society were invited as speakers at Regional Learning Exchange event held on 29-30 October in Bangkok, Thailand. The event participated by more than 60 participants from Ministries of Education, National Disaster Management Offices, ASSI Consortium Partners etc. At its “Experiential and interactive learning: experiencing innovative tools” corner, the Virtual Reality system was showcased where people can learn different disaster scenarios and SAFE STEPS KIDS Programme which promotes easy emergency actions for children. The

participants expressed interests in introducing such innovative approaches of virtual reality system and usage of cartoon characters as ambassadors for children in delivering safety messages. Further discussion among stakeholders will take place to utilise these innovative approaches in implementation of school safety.

Webinar “Youth Activism in DRR and School Safety”

The Disaster Preparedness Programme Coordinator of Philippine Red Cross presented Youth-led Climate Action in the webinar session organised by ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI) and attended by 29 participants. In the session, the PRC’s Y-Adapt roll-out draw much attention and the presentation materials shared widely through regional and global eNewsletters issued by ASSI and GADRRES. Discussion with ASSI will be further conducted in order to have better understanding of ASSI’s 2020 program and to explore opportunities to further collaborate between two organisations.

Youth as Agent of Behavioral Change (YABC) Training of Peer Educator



A total of 12 youth from Cambodian Red Cross and 10 youth appointed by the Cambodia Ministry of Education Youth and Sport have successfully completed YABC training organised by the Cambodia Red Cross Society with the support of the IFRC and ASEAN. The training was part of the IFRC and ASEAN collaboration to enhance ethical leadership among the youth

by scaling up YABC across ASEAN countries. The combined of RC and non-RC youth participants in the training have improved mutual understanding and created new learning experiences of the RCRC fundamental principles and ASEAN values. Using this momentum, IFRC is currently working on the planning of a Road Safety educational programme to be delivered in Cambodian schools with the trained YABC peer educators acting as main facilitators.

Upcoming Events:

- ❖ ASEAN High-level Symposium on Disaster Management, 26 – 27 February, Jakarta, Indonesia

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