

# REGIONAL COMMUNITY SAFETY AND RESILIENCE FORUM

Monthly Updates – **May 2020**



World Red Cross Red Crescent Day was observed on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020- the birthday of our founder- Henry Dunant. Here is a mosaic of our staff and volunteers and the lifesaving work they do, across Southeast Asia.

Welcome to our newsletter providing updates of Southeast Asia for May 2020. All photos used in this publication are from the respective Red Cross Red Crescent National Society or IFRC unless mentioned otherwise. In addition to these monthly updates, you can find Southeast Asia Red Cross Red Crescent's resources, tools, events and updates at the Resilience Library at <http://www.rcrc-resiliencesoutheastasia.org>.

# World Red Cross Red Crescent Day



The World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, is an opportunity to recognize the contribution and bravery of millions of volunteers and staff around the world. This year the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day has been special, as it was an occasion to feel especially proud of the work of the volunteers and staff around the globe supporting people and communities affected by COVID-19. [#KeepClapping](#) was the virtual means by which volunteers, colleagues and friends across the Movement family were appreciated and thanked for their life saving work. The RCRC National Societies in Southeast Asia observed the day in many different ways as described below.

In Thailand, the Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) observed the day along with colleagues from IFRC's Country Cluster Support Team and representatives from the ICRC Bangkok Regional Delegation. They showed their appreciation by [clapping hands to encourage staff](#), volunteers and blood donors at TRCS' National Blood Centre in Bangkok.

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC) produced a special series highlighting staff and volunteers: [Passion People - World Red Cross Day](#). Through their stories, SRC hopes to inspire more people to step forward as humanitarian advocates and agents of change.

Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) organized an [online celebration](#) under the leadership of MRCS President Dr. Maung Maung Myint. MRCS's social media campaign which included [videos](#) on [#KeepClapping](#) to mark the RCRC Day and promote the seven [fundamental principles](#) started on 01 May 2020 and continued until 8 May 2020.

While commemorating World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day on 8 May 2020, Indonesia Red Cross (PMI) appreciated and recognized its volunteers across Indonesia. The recording of the World Red Cross Day observation can be seen [here](#).



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"လက်ခုပ်တီးလို့ ဆက်လက်အားပေး ဂုဏ်ပြုကြပါစို့"

Keep Clapping



## Updates from National Societies

### Thailand : Mobile Kitchens delivering fresh hot meals

The Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) has established mobile kitchens to distribute hot meals for those who have been adversely affected by the restrictions put in place due to COVID-19. The kitchen staff wear hats, facemasks, aprons and gloves to maintain cleanliness and hygiene, in accordance with the norms for COVID-19 management. Currently there are four mobile kitchens operating in different parts of the country. Samut Sakhon province has more than 7,000 factories, many of which have shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving several thousand workers unemployed. TRCS's mobile kitchen provided 15,599 sets of hot meals to the local people and migrant workers from three districts of [Samut Sakhon](#) province during 8-17 May. Sa Kaeo province on the eastern border



province is an important gateway to Cambodia, and is home to several migrant workers and local communities that have lost their livelihoods due to the restrictions of COVID-19. The TRCS's Health Station No.6, [Sa Kaeo province](#) provided 17,823 sets of fresh hot meals during 20-29 May. Similarly, 28,781 sets of hot meals were distributed among residents of six districts of [Wat Hu Chang, Bang Kruai, Nonthaburi](#) province between 24 May to 2 June. In Bangkok, 22,902 sets were distributed among 20 communities in [Wat Pathum Wanaram](#), during 26 May to 4<sup>th</sup> June.

### Philippines: Early treatment and support to primary health care

Philippine Red Cross (PRC) was among the earliest National Societies' outside of China to ramp up their COVID-19 response after the country confirmed its first case of the virus on 30 January. From the outset, the organisation focused its resources on areas where it could create the most impact. A central part of their multi-faceted response has been supporting early treatment and primary healthcare providers. For more details click [here](#). To know more about the overall response of the Philippine Red Cross, click [here](#).



## Singapore : Caring for the elderly and migrant workers



To help seniors cope with the impact of COVID-19, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) delivered 1,000 care packages, specially customized for each elderly person's lifestyle and needs. Each package contains different combinations of essential food, medicines, hygiene and household items. [Read more](#). SRC also joined partners in a community initiative #FreeMaskSG - watch the [video](#). Another vulnerable population in Singapore are the migrant workers who come largely from South and Southeast Asia. To strengthen the health of the migrant worker community, SRC collaborated with various ground partners to distribute over 150,000 face masks, hand sanitisers and digital thermometers among dormitories where they live, from 1 May to 2 June. Watch the [video](#).

## Myanmar: Raising resilience in Rakhine

Launched in January 2017, the 'Community Based Health and Resilience - Health in Emergencies (CBHR-HiE)' programme was designed to address some of the complex humanitarian, development, and peace issues in Rakhine State. CBHR-HiE was one of the first programmes of MRCS, supported by IFRC, to tackle longer term resilience goals in this fragile state. This [evaluation summary](#) of the program, prepared by the external evaluation team presents the key findings and lessons learnt from the programme.

**Raising resilience in Rakhine**  
Evaluation summary: Community Based Health and Resilience - Health in Emergencies Programme

Launched in January 2017, the Community Based Health and Resilience - Health in Emergencies (CBHR-HiE) programme was designed to address some of the complex humanitarian, development and peace issues in Rakhine State. Aiming to reduce vulnerability, it supported communities to strengthen their resilience against shocks and stresses.

CBHR-HiE was one of the first programmes of Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) to tackle longer term resilience goals in this fragile state. Supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), it supported communities in terms of health, water and sanitation, and disaster preparedness.

The CBHR-HiE team consisted of MRCS staff with significant experience in delivering community based health and Emergency Aid in other parts of Myanmar. On technical and management aspects, the team was supported by a Swiss-based IFRC health delegate and a full-time team as well as MRCS headquarters.

How can community resilience strengthen other fragile situations?  
This snapshot gives some ideas based on the lessons from a programme evaluation in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

## Indonesia: PMI provides insurance cover to its volunteers



As many as 2000 volunteers of PMI have insurance protection against accidents at work and life insurance by PMI with support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). PMI has lost three volunteers who passed away while on duty during COVID-19. Earlier PMI had lost volunteers due to accidents or disasters such as the earthquake in Lombok, two years ago. Since then, insurance coverage has been recognised as a volunteer's right and the relevant Red Cross Law as well as PMI's articles of association have been amended to make it a reality. The insurance coverage provides additional security to the volunteers who have been working with utmost dedication throughout all humanitarian crises in the country.

## Southeast Asia Youth Network (SEAYN) : Turning the lens on SGBV during COVID-19

In May 2020, the Southeast Asia Youth Network maintained its engagement with youth initiatives for prevention and response to COVID-19. Particular attention was dedicated to the topic of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and the impact of COVID-19 on SGBV. A webinar was organised in collaboration with IFRC Asia Pacific Regional SGBV Advisor in order to introduce the topic to SEAYN members. See the slides [here](#). To take it further, the SEAYN Communications Task Force developed a series of videos which explain the fundamentals of SGBV and the correlation with COVID-19, to young people. You can view the video [here](#).

The Southeast Asia Youth Network organised also an inter-regional webinar, hosting representatives from East Asia Youth Network (Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), Hong Kong Branch of RCSC, Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) and Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) to share experiences on COVID-19 prevention and response.



## Feature Story – Philippine Red Cross Society (PRC)

### PRC assists thousands of returning overseas workers

The COVID-19 pandemic has made overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) spread in different parts of the world vulnerable to discrimination, xenophobia, layoffs and worsening working conditions, and forced returns. On 6 May 2020, the Philippine government reported that 23,000 OFWs who lost their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic have been repatriated and another 45,000 are expected to return to the country by the end of June.

The Philippine Red Cross, with the support from the IFRC, is responding to aid repatriated OFWs cope with the stress of displacement brought about by the coronavirus pandemic and to safely reintegrate them in their communities. In coordination with the Department of Health, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, the Philippine Red Cross with its molecular laboratories for COVID-19 testing is assisting in ensuring that the returning workers are safe from coronavirus before going home to their families.

As of 4 June 2020, an initial of more than 41,000 OFWs were tested using the reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction or the RT-PCR machines, which is considered as the gold standard for COVID-19 testing. The Philippine Red Cross is committed to continue assisting in the testing of repatriated OFWs.



During this unprecedented time, stress and uncertainties could take a toll on the repatriated OFWs' mental health. This prompted the Philippine Red Cross volunteers and staff extended psychological first aid, provided life-saving information on positive coping, stress management activities, and counseling to abused workers while in quarantine.

“My worries and fears disappeared. I thank the Red Cross for the support that they have provided. I hope the Red Cross would be able to help more people and OFWs in need,” said Edna Maturan, one of the repatriated workers.

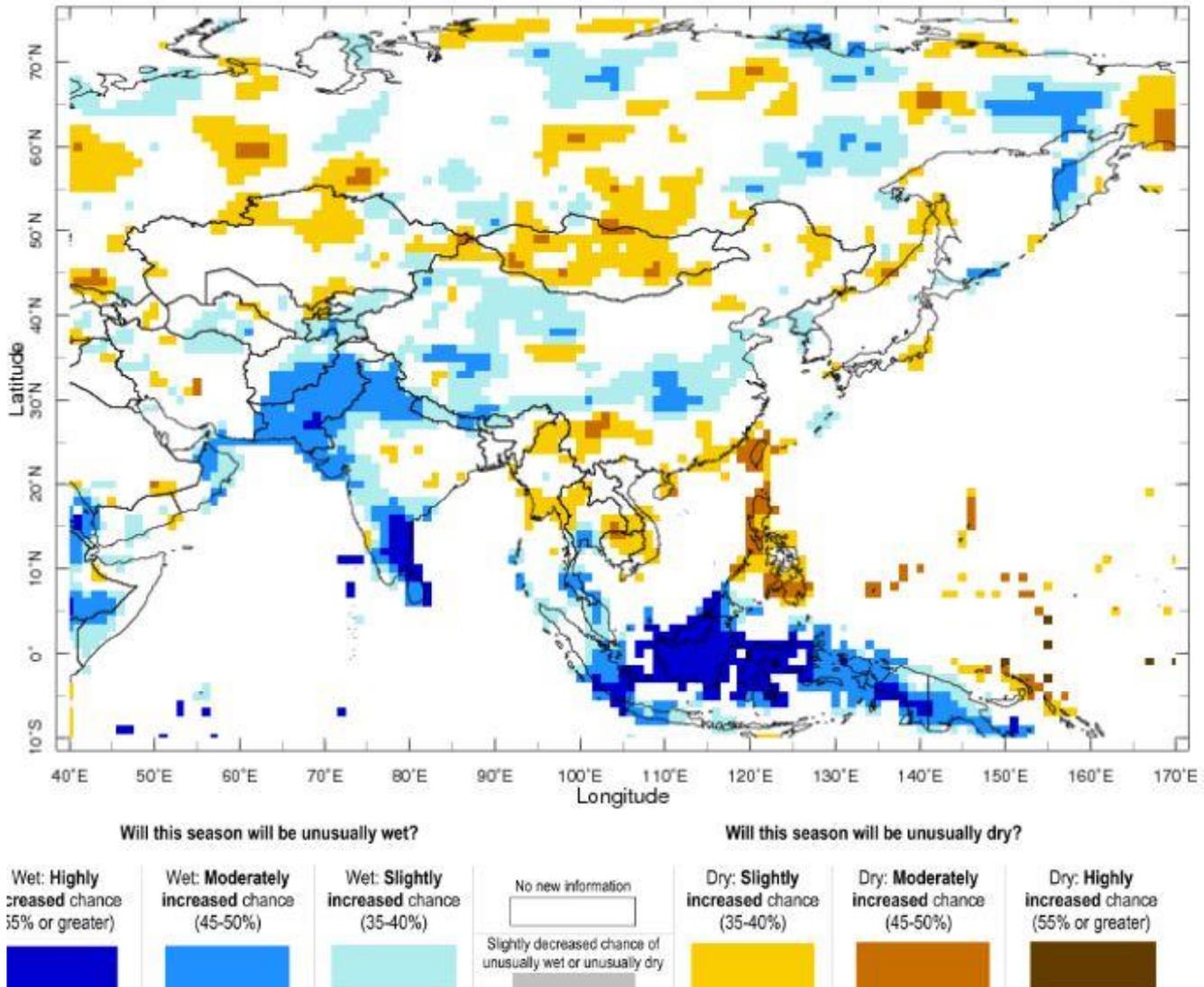
“To the Red Cross, thank you so much! You have helped a lot of us who are feeling stressed and depressed and trying to conceal it,” returning OFW Ricky Mendoza said. He adds, “through the Red Cross interventions, we were able to express those feelings. Many were encouraged to cope with the stress.”

The Philippine Red Cross has also established helpline 1158 to accept calls and offer psychosocial support for migrant workers. The Virtual Volunteer, a web-based platform was also used to promote and disseminate relevant information to Filipinos abroad about COVID-19.

# Seasonal Forecast

## June to August 2020

Forecast for Jun-Aug 2020, Forecast Issued May 2020



**For the interactive map from IFRC IRI, click [here](#)**

Meteorological agency in the respective Southeast Asian countries:

[Brunei Darussalam](#) | [Cambodia](#) | [Indonesia](#) | [Laos](#) | [Malaysia](#) | [Myanmar](#) | [Philippines](#) | [Singapore](#) | [Thailand](#) | [Timor-Leste](#) | [Viet Nam](#)