

MONTHLY UPDATES



The Philippine Red Cross's (PRC) role in the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out has been recognized in the Vaccination Program Law of 2021 enacted on 31st January 2021. The law clearly states that PRC can procure and administer vaccines as per the government's guidelines. PRC has set an ambitious target of vaccinating one million most vulnerable people. Picture Courtesy: Philippine Red Cross

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Welcome to our newsletter providing updates of Southeast Asia for March 2021.

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 <https://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/>

Updates from National Societies

Indonesia: Singing away the scourge of the pandemic



SIBAT team performing a Hadroh at Sirukem Village, Kalibening District, Indonesia. Photo: Indonesian Red Cross

As one year of the COVID-19 pandemic rolls over, the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI) is coming up with new ways to convey the prevention and precautionary measures for COVID-19 to the public. PMI's Community-Based Disaster Preparedness Volunteers (*Siaga Bencana Berbasis Masyarakat - SIBAT*) are dipping into the rich heritage of 'Hadroh' songs to share information on prevention measures that can reduce the spread of the virus. 'Hadroh' is a tambourine based musical art form rooted in Islamic culture that uses traditional Indonesian poetry made up of four-line stanzas.

The SIBAT teams have been able to lure in communities in rural areas by singing *hadroh* and playing the lute in public places. Their lyrics convey messages on health protocols and COVID-19 prevention measures, thus making sure that the public is not just entertained but also educated on managing the situation.

"Education and health promotion activities through such means can be an effective approach to reach the public, many of whom are now fatigued with the usual messages through posters and leaflets on preventing COVID-19." said Anto Waluyo, coordinator of the SIBAT Team in Sirukem Village, Kalibening District.

The next time you want to convey COVID-19 messages in a fun way to your audience - think of the PMI team's innovative idea.

Laos: Strengthening hygiene promotion in emergencies



Water purification technique being demonstrated at the hygiene promotion training. Photo: Lao Red Cross

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, Laos regularly faces natural disasters such as the floods that occurred a few months ago. Therefore, hygiene promotion and restoration of water and sanitation facilities is a key component of the Lao Red Cross's (LRC) emergency response operations. To strengthen the capacity of its staff and volunteers in preparedness and response for emergency water, sanitation and hygiene operations, LRC conducted a two-day training in March for 24 participants. Recently in January 2021, LRC completed implementation of a DREF operation in response to floods that occurred during October 2020. At least 20,013 people in the three worst affected provinces of Sekon, Salawan and Savannaket received kits that contained food, water, hygiene materials such as soap, sanitary napkins etc and jerry cans to store water safely. Hygiene promotion conducted among these communities highlighted the importance of handwashing, maintaining personal cleanliness and clean surroundings, methods for household treatment and prevention of common diseases such as dengue and malaria.

Singapore: Meet the women who gave something of themselves

Commemorating International Women's Day, the Singapore Red Cross chose to spotlight women who enhance community resilience amidst the pandemic by being blood donors. Meet:

Zarifah Mohmad Azhar, 28, a Communications Executive who shares her experience donating blood on the [website](#) and [Facebook](#).



Zarifah Mohmad Azhar



Faye Ting

Jessica Chiam, 61, shares her experience organising blood drives for Braddell Heights Community Club on the [website](#) and [Facebook](#).



Mdm Shamini Segaran



Jessica Chiam

Learn how Faye Ting, 44, Director of Operations of Gleneagles Hospital, has been organising blood-donation drives within the hospital's premises on the [website](#) and [Facebook](#).

Working mum Shamini Segaran, 55, started giving blood again after a long hiatus. Find out how she has been encouraging her family members to join her in the journey of giving blood on the [website](#) and [Facebook](#).

Thailand: Facilitating mobility



The Thai Red Cross teams handing over laser canes to patients of Parkinson's disease. Photo: Thai Red Cross Society

The Thai Red Cross Society's chapter at Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya provided laser canes and other daily necessities to eight patients with Parkinson's disease. This is a brain disorder that leads to shaking, stiffness, and difficulty with walking, balance, and coordination. The "Laser Cane" developed by the Center of Excellence for Parkinson's Disease & Related Disorders at the King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital improves walking and balancing abilities of patients with Parkinson's. Over a period of eight years, the model has been continually developed with the latest model featuring laser beams from the underside of the handle showing a straight green light on the ground. The light lets the users know if the path ahead is uneven. It also has a slightly curved-out design to prevent users from falling over. (More information on the Laser Cane is available [here](https://bit.ly/3wB6TMX) and more photos of the event are available at: <https://bit.ly/3wB6TMX>)

Viet Nam: Cash support to restore livelihoods

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, teams from the Viet Nam Red Cross have been working hard to help communities in the central provinces devastated by a series of storms that hit during October-November 2020. In March, the team held trainings for volunteers and community leaders on selecting people for assistance to be given in kind and in cash in the provinces of Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thein Hue and Quang Nam. Mr. Nguyen Cong Chon, one of the community leader's from Duy Xuyen district of Quang Nam province said "People were suffering from the floods. Therefore, we have to assist them carefully making sure that we support the right person who really needs it, in the most transparent and accountable way."



A training session on assisting flood affected people. Photo: Viet Nam Red Cross Society

Keeping an ear to the ground through Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) initiatives



A focus group discussion with migrant workers in progress at Ranong. Photo: Thai Red Cross Society

Migrant workers have been among the most marginalized populations affected by the pandemic. In a bid to understand their concerns and support them, the Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) with support from the IFRC's community engagement and accountability team conducted focus group discussions in different parts of Thailand. The feedback collected from 117 migrant workers from Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar who live in Thailand shows that they worry most about the economic impact of the pandemic on themselves and others, and the impact on education through school lockdowns. For more details on the views of migrant workers in Thailand, please see the [full report](#) of the discussions. One of the key issues that emerged was the need to diversify channels and languages in order to respond to the needs of the migrant workers from different countries. They also expressed keen interest in learning more about COVID-19 prevention and response and finding solutions to support their community.

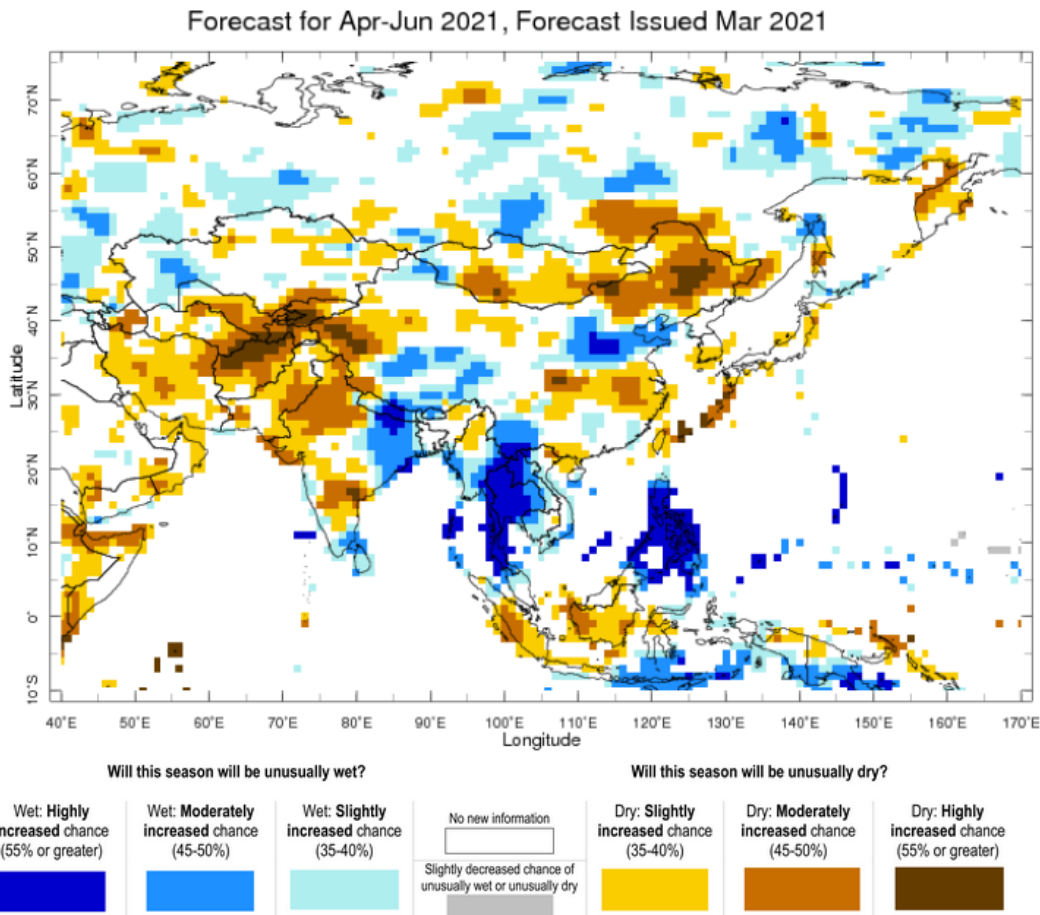
In Pictures: COVID-19 awareness raising in Cambodia

As the number of COVID—19 cases show an upward trend in Cambodian Red Cross volunteers are out in the streets, among the community educating people on prevention methods and protecting themselves during the pandemic. Thank you volunteers!



Seasonal Forecast

April to June 2021



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](#)



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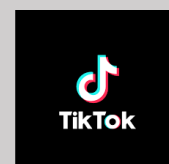
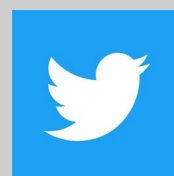
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