



## DRR IN ACTION CASE STUDY

# Youth-led actions for more resilient schools and communities: Mapping of School Safety approaches and Youth in School Safety training for youth facilitators

### Theme of the Case Study

Community/local action for resilience

### Country

11 countries in Southeast Asia

### Case location

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam

## Background

Children and youth are always among those most affected by disasters. As there are up to 400,000 schools in Southeast Asia, making schools safer will protect millions of children and youth who are otherwise vulnerable during disasters.

Investing in comprehensive school safety has been a priority in Asia since 2006, and the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative was endorsed in 2013 aiming to make schools safer by applying common standards to school facilities, conducting training, and planning for disasters.

In the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement, National Societies (NS) have been implementing a wide range of school-based activities led by youth volunteers that cover disaster risk reduction (DRR), first aid, hygiene and health promotion, road safety, water and sanitation and youth empowerment. In 2015, a consultation was conducted among ASEAN Member States and key partners, where various stakeholders recognized the added values of NSs, such as their network of youth and volunteers and their specific relationship with National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO) and Ministries of Education (MoE). The consultation highlighted the potential role of RCRC to scale up school safety initiatives, with the need to capture the existing NSs' interventions in schools to further promote best practices.

With the long and rich experiences in schools, the expectations and the recognition by school safety partners, the NSs and the IFRC have made a commitment in 2016, under the IFRC Stakeholder Action Statement at the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in India, to ensure youth engagement by investing in the development of youth leadership in DRR and foster an enabling environment to facilitate youth-led initiatives to build resilient communities. The priority actions are:

1. Enhance the capacity of national and regional RCRC Youth Networks to foster information and knowledge sharing on youth-led initiatives for DRR, in order to capitalize innovative solutions; and,

*Photo: Students having discussions on risks at school during Youth in School Safety Programme in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia, August 2017. | Cambodian Red Cross*

Parent from Hlaing Thar Yar township, Myanmar:

*“When I was invited to participate in the school safety training, I didn’t really know what kind of training it would be. But after participating in all the activities, I found that it was very useful for our children. All the parents had to observe and participate in developing an ‘Action Plan’ for school safety. At first, some parents refused to participate because they thought they could not contribute to school safety, but the Red Cross Youth were really patient. They explained to us how important our role as a parent is.”*

2. Develop and test mechanisms and a youth-friendly toolkit to formalize volunteer and youth roles in DRR programmes as well as in comprehensive school safety programmes by 2018.

With this commitment, the RCRC Southeast Asia Youth Network (SEAYN) has been taking the lead in piloting the Youth in School Safety programme based on the guide developed by IFRC, conducting facilitators’ training in six countries which trained more than 150 youth volunteers over a period of 18 months. Subsequently, these facilitators have conducted countless school safety actions, and capturing various approaches in the form of School Safety mapping in all 11 countries in Southeast Asia.

## What did the action seek to change?

A shift from the traditional perception that “children and youth should be protected by parents, teachers and adults as they are vulnerable to disasters and risks in schools” to the new recognition that **“empowered youth can bring real and positive changes to schools and communities through their peer-to-peer approach”** and, showcasing the activities of RCRC volunteers on the ground by mapping out the comprehensive school safety actions.

## What were the key actions taken to achieve this change?

The initiative of implementing Youth in School Safety programme and the mapping was proactively taken by SEAYN youth members.

The Youth in School Safety programme was developed and enhanced by the expertise of RCRC not only in DRR, but also in youth leadership, social inclusion and community engagement, building on its rich experience in school-based activities.

The engagement with multi-stakeholders within NSs (governance, disaster management, health, water and sanitation, First Aid, Social Welfare etc.) and also with external partners such as NDMO and MoE has contributed to strengthening the initiative.

## What were the essential steps taken along the process to bring about this change?



School DRR Committee explaining risks at school in Angthong, Thailand, 2017. | Thai Red Cross

### Mapping of School Safety approaches

Step 1	Development of data collection tools and guidance note for NSs
Step 2	Discussion among youth network members with feedback from technical staff, and endorsement by NSs leadership
Step 3	Data collection and analysis within NSs and with stakeholders
Step 4	Compilation of the mapping of 11 countries as an advocacy tool, and dissemination to key stakeholders at both national and regional levels (ASEAN, AMCDRR, technical meetings, etc.)

### Youth in School Safety training for youth facilitators

Step 1	Coordination within NSs involving related technical departments (Youth, DM, Health) and Branches, with schools and education authorities (Ministry of Education)
Step 2	Pre-risk assessment by lead facilitators and preparation of training with school teachers and RCRC youth volunteers
Step 3	Training of youth facilitators (two days for preparation, one day for demonstration at schools, and one day for Action Plan development)
Step 4	Implementation of Action Plan by each trained youth facilitator in communities and schools



## What SFDRR principles<sup>1</sup> were applicable to this change process?

- Principle 1 Engagement from all of society
- Principle 2 Empowerment of local authorities and communities through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities as appropriate
- Principle 3 Addressing underlying risk factors cost-effectively through investment versus relying primarily on post-disaster response and recovery

## What were the Achievements and the Impacts?

The school safety mapping showcases the collective RCRC school safety approaches in the entire Southeast Asia region which clearly and successfully captured the comprehensive strength and potential of RCRC NSs in the area of school safety.

The youth facilitators trained in the Youth in School Safety programme are promoting school safety actions in schools and communities involving teachers, parents and adults, further widening the circle of peers who follow the good examples promoted by the programme.

The youth-led initiative is recognized and appreciated not only within NSs but also by local authorities and external partners.

Red Cross Youth from  
Vientiane-Ho Chi Minh  
Friendship High School,  
Lao PDR:

*"During the Youth in School Safety facilitators' training, I was one of the youth facilitators and conducted a school safety activity in my school. I shared my knowledge about disasters, risks and vulnerabilities and also the three pillars of the comprehensive school safety framework. In a group, we discussed how to make our school safe. All of us decided to learn more about school safety and agreed that one factor for the school safety is to have the clean surroundings."*

## What were the key Lessons Learnt?

### Key factors:

- The engagement of multi-stakeholders provided various aspects (leadership endorsement, technical advice, external partners' support) to make the initiative successful.
- Youth-led, youth-owned programme and initiative keeps them motivated to further expand the activities and complete the mapping.
- The commitment and support from the leadership made it easier for youth to work on the mapping and implement school safety programmes.

### Challenges:

- Collecting information and data from different sources took time.
- Updating the map country by country needs to be done annually by NSs.
- Monitoring and evaluation of youth facilitators' action plans after School Safety training needs to be ensured for implementation as planned.
- Sustainability of the RCRC school-based activities requires a strong commitment from education authorities at every level.

### Replication:

- With the established process to carry out the mapping exercise, and the developed pilot guideline to conduct training for youth facilitators, it is easy for other NSs and other regions to replicate.



Youth presenting Action Plan based on discussion among students, teachers and parents during Youth in School Safety Training of Facilitators in Vientiane, Lao PDR, July 2017.  
| Lao Red Cross

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Primary responsibility of the State, Shared responsibility, Protection, All-of-society-engagement, coordination mechanism, empowering local-decision makers, Multi-hazard approach and inclusive risk-informed decision-making, Sustainable development, Local and specific risks.

## What were the Good Practices arising from this action?

Good Practice 1	Youth-led, youth-owned initiative/approach leveraging the youth network
Good Practice 2	Engagement of multi-stakeholders in planning, programme-designing, data-collection, and implementation

## Policy Relevance to DRR in Action

By engaging children and youth in DRR through school safety actions, it meets the action of Priority 3, and contributes to the Sendai Framework overall goal to “Prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive educational measures which strengthen resilience”.

By ensuring youth engagement on DRR and promoting comprehensive school safety which also includes social inclusion and community engagement components, it contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), and 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

## Key Messages from this Case Study

- When children and youth have an opportunity to learn about disasters and risks at schools, they take the lead and initiate actions to make their school safer; their peers will follow their good actions, awareness will be raised, and the collective action will make a difference in bringing positive changes in schools and in communities.
- School safety can be realized and sustainable only when all stakeholders, children and youth, teachers, parents, communities and governments plan and work together.

With the mapping and training module (facilitators' guide) developed in Southeast Asia, other regions can easily learn how to apply these to their own region, as school safety is important everywhere, not only in Southeast Asia.

School safety activities could also provide opportunities for RCRC to further engage with and strengthen relationships with governments, local authorities, other partners, and schools; thus this initiative should be shared and further considered how best to scale up.

## References for this Case Study

1. [Red Cross Red Crescent Youth in School Safety programme Facilitators Guide](#), 2016, IFRC.
2. [Comprehensive School Safety](#), 2017, UNISDR.
3. [National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies Working Toward School Safety – Mapping Initiative](#), 2018, IFRC CCST Bangkok.

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