BACKGROUND

This document describes the work of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Asia Pacific Regional Office in its support of 38 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies. Based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the office provides technical assistance, quality control and innovation advice to humanitarian operations and longer-term resilience programmes. In order to achieve its objectives for 2020, the IFRC Regional Office seeks donor support of 4.6 million Swiss francs (CHF).

Regional profile

The overall economy of the Asia Pacific region is expanding rapidly, with financial gains and social benefits of growth that greatly vary. Many countries are ranked as ‘very high’ on the human development index, while others are quickly gaining the status of ‘middle-income’. But some nations are among the world’s poorest; and, even within high income contexts, many people live in poverty and experience great hardship. Natural disasters impact most areas on a regular basis—80 per cent of people affected by such disasters from
2008–2017 lived in the Asia Pacific region. With 60 per cent of the world, the diversity of languages, cultures and day-to-day experiences of its population cannot be captured easily. While the region pushes ambitiously to the future, the impacts of climate change and unregulated development are becoming more apparent. At this time of unprecedented growth across the Asia Pacific, it is critical that humanitarian organizations like IFRC and the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies stay focused on a key objective of the 2018 World Disasters Report by “leaving no one behind”; working tirelessly to respond to needs of Asia Pacific’s most vulnerable.

Almost half of the 281 disaster events worldwide in 2018 occurred in Asia and the Pacific. The most devastating were earthquakes and tsunamis. Average annual economic loss was 149 million USD which represents 54 per cent of global multi-hazard risk. The number and magnitude of weather-related disasters is increasing every year. Public health emergencies caused by emerging infectious diseases, the impacts of natural disasters and conflict, and unsafe food and water continually threaten health security. Outbreaks include those of avian influenza, dengue, Zika virus disease and yellow fever, polio, cholera, and most recently coronavirus. Animal and human populations live in ever-closer proximity in the Asia Pacific region, allowing cross-species transmission of viruses with pandemic potential.

13.4 million people were displaced across South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific according to the 2019 Global Report on Internal Displacement. 9.6 million new displacements (refugees and IDPs) were recorded in East Asia and the Pacific, and 3.8 million in South Asia, an overall increase compared with 2017. Three countries in Asia—the Philippines, China and India—accounted for approximately 60 per cent of all new disaster displacements globally, with almost four million new displacements occurring in both the Philippines and India in a single year. The protracted nature of these crises challenge donor resources as humanitarian needs expand. Climate-related hazards are also of substantial concern, especially along coasts where many Asian cities are located. Complex urban risks include impacts from a one-metre rise in sea level could displace 37 million people in Asia, while a three-metre rise would affect 90 million—along with the damage to the physical, economic and cultural capital of urban areas. This is also a major vulnerability for Pacific region Small Island Developing States/Large Ocean States.

Programs focus on major humanitarian issues: disaster, displacement, and disease. Through development of more than 100,000 local offices throughout the region, the RCRC network builds a platform for delivery of these key services. This “3D+1 approach” emphasizes programming in climate change; urbanization; gender, protection and inclusion; community engagement and accountability; pandemics; and youth and volunteering.
National society profile

IFRC’s Asia Pacific Office supports 38 National Societies in the region. Many of these National Societies are over a century old and very well established. The National Societies of Bhutan and the Marshall Islands (officially the Republic of the Marshall Islands) were welcomed as full members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 2019. As auxiliaries to governments, the National Societies are on the frontline of preparing for and responding to disaster. While there is great diversity in the work they do, core activities include the promotion of humanitarian values, family reunification, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and response, health promotion, first aid, blood services and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in society. Common challenges across the region include dealing with the impact of climate change, navigating an increasingly politicized landscape related to humanitarian work, and generating adequate resources to meet increasing needs. On 14 November 2018, National Societies of the region agreed to 22 commitments and 13 targets through The Manila Declaration—Engage Local Humanitarian Action in a Fast-Changing World. Role of the Regional Office

The IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office manages 13 country/cluster offices across the region with a focus on adapting to global trends and linking humanitarian response to enhanced longer-term gains through disaster preparedness, risk reduction and building community resilience. IFRC in the region aims to attain greater access to people in need or at risk, and work towards the proactive identification and alleviation of the causes of vulnerability through a community-centred approach. These are implemented through strengthening engagement with partners, branches and communities, as well as by participation in the international humanitarian and development systems.

Technical and support staff are based mostly in Kuala Lumpur. But in order to ensure better engagement with field offices, regional staff are also posted to Bangkok, Manila and Yangon. In addition to sectoral specialists in health, water and sanitation, livelihoods, DRR and first aid, programme quality and accountability is enhanced through staff functions in protection and gender as well as accountability to affected populations. Program hubs are located throughout the region, sponsored by the National Societies with technical expertise in the topic. For example, an Urban Hub has been created in Manila in collaboration with the Philippine Red Cross.

IFRC Asia Pacific prioritizes the management of evidence-based knowledge and developing, implementing and monitoring region-wide strategies based on peer-to-peer learning. Equally, it supports mechanisms for the organizational and programmatic enhancement of National Societies, fostering and facilitating a vibrant innovation and research culture that draws from experience and links it to that from outside the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In doing so, IFRC Asia Pacific aims to engage local humanitarian action in a fast-changing world.
IFRC Footprint

The Red Cross and Red Crescent network is made up of over 192 National Societies, IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In Asia Pacific there are 38 National Societies working within their own national territory to address humanitarian issues. As of 2017, there are over 123,000 branches or local units of the Asia Pacific National Societies. Their work is carried out by more than 21.8 million dedicated volunteers and youth members, and over 155,000 paid staff. The Secretariat of the National Societies is the IFRC. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it maintains five regional offices, including one in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia serving the Asia Pacific region. Thirteen IFRC country offices are located throughout the region to support Red Cross or Red Crescent National Societies, manage large humanitarian operations, coordinate the work of the National Societies based in-country, and conduct humanitarian diplomacy with governments, the United Nations (UN) and other humanitarian agencies. There are offices located in Bangkok, Beijing, Delhi, Dhaka, Islamabad, Jakarta, Kabul, Kathmandu, Manila, Port Moresby, Pyongyang, Suva, and Yangon. In many countries IFRC has sub-offices to manage humanitarian field operations. The ICRC has offices throughout the region with key operations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and the Philippines; responding quickly and efficiently to help people affected by armed conflict. IFRC works closely with the ICRC and the National Societies in-country, ensuring that the overall Movement addresses the humanitarian issues in any given context as efficiently as possible.
AREAS OF FOCUS

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)**

*3,300,000 people will be made more resilient against disasters.*

**SHELTER**

*113,000 people will benefit from shelter services region-wide.*

**LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS**

*330,000 people will receive livelihoods support region-wide.*

**HEALTH**

*8,300,000 people will have improved access to health services.*

**WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)**

*587,000 people will have improved access to clean water, sanitation and/or hygiene promotion.*

**PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION**

*920,000 people will benefit from gender-sensitive and inclusive programming.*

**MIGRATION**

*494,000 people to be reached region-wide via migration-based assistance.*
STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES
- ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT
- INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS
- ENSURE A STRONG IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Approximately 42 per cent of Asia Pacific countries feature in the list of ‘very high’ or ‘high’ exposure to hazards in the INFORM (Information for Risk Management) Global Risk Index 2019, including three (Afghanistan, Myanmar and the Philippines) in the list of top 12 countries with the highest values globally. Recognizing the increasing frequency, severity and uncertainty of weather events, IFRC will build on decades of experience in disaster and climate risk management to scale-up climate readiness and action in Asia Pacific. Three trends (climate, urban and social) and three threats (disasters, diseases and displacement) have been identified as Asia Pacific priorities.

In line with its Climate Change Adaptation and DRR Strategy for 2019–2020, IFRC will seek to mobilize a significant scale-up in community-led/managed DRR and climate activities by the end of 2020. This will result in an increased number of people supported and countries of operation as well as increased investment and partnerships at all levels. Emphasis will be placed on the implementation of IFRC’s Framework for Climate Action Towards 2020 that promotes climate-smart programming and increased levels of engagement in climate-related policies and partnerships. National Societies will be supported in their auxiliary role to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including through engaging in the development and implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans.
Building on the National Societies’ DRR and resilience strengthening initiatives and partnerships with governments and stakeholders—including the One Billion Coalition for Resilience—IFRC will support National Societies in rolling out the Roadmap to Community Resilience (R2R) and the Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA). Now aligned with the R2R, the EVCA is a way to further support scaling-up climate-smart, community-led urban and rural DRR action—including community contingency plans—and to strengthen National Society engagement in DRR and climate risk management platforms and strategies at local levels. IFRC will support National Societies to increase public awareness, campaigns and public education that enhances knowledge to reduce current and prevent future disaster risk.

A critical component is to increase capacity to act on extreme weather events, using information on shorter timescales—to reduce exposure, vulnerability and impact at community level. Forecast-based Financing (FbF) uses scientific data to improve the forecast reliability and provides impact-based forecasting to determine the most-at-risk populations ahead of an extreme weather event. Therefore, FbF addresses the uncertainty of extreme events as well as the exposure to and vulnerability of at-risk people, enabling early action to be taken that reduces the impact of extreme events. With its dedicated funding mechanism—Forecast-based Action from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)—FbF ensures that funds are allocated before a disaster occurs, allowing local-level disaster risk financing. This is in line with the Asia Pacific National Societies’ commitment in the Manila Declaration to enhance local community resilience by investing in community-based surveillance systems such as FbF.

Recognizing that Asia Pacific continues to urbanize fast and that distinct risks are faced in an urban context, IFRC will have a special emphasis on urban action. National Societies have a unique opportunity to work with urban communities to reduce disaster risks and adapt to a changing climate; contributing to city resilience and influencing so that community priorities receive city-level attention.
Increasingly frequent disasters, along with rapid, unplanned urbanization often results in sub-standard housing and infrastructure throughout the Asia Pacific region. The fact that most growth in cities occurs in developing countries of Asia and Africa presents an opportunity for humanitarian and development organizations to promote the safety, health and well-being of people most at risk, and to protect their assets. Shelter and settlements have an essential role in disaster response and long-term recovery plans in the region. Along with water, sanitation, healthcare and livelihoods, shelter is an essential survival need during an emergency and an opportunity for livelihood recovery; building community resilience and, ultimately, reducing vulnerability.

IFRC has a dual role in the shelter sector: ensuring quality shelter and settlement solutions in IFRC-supported and National Society operations, as well as co-leading the inter-agency shelter cluster in natural disasters.

National Societies across the Asia Pacific have different levels of experience and engagement in shelter and settlements, depending on context, capacity and mandate. Safer shelter awareness and capacity building is embedded into National Societies’ community-based preparedness and DRR activities, but further support—in terms of mentoring, training, programme planning and knowledge exchange—is required from the Asia Pacific Regional Office to the National Societies conducting community-based DRR programming. That way, they will be able to carry out risk awareness messaging, develop community action plans, raise awareness of housing safety and structural integrity and promote Build Back Safer interventions in disaster prone contexts.
As part of the global surge optimization process, the existing Asia Pacific roster of surge shelter personnel and country focal points within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will also be improved. Staff profiles will be screened against specific skills and experience in line with the final version of the surge core competency framework. This process will also help identify and address technical training needs, based on feedback from the roster members and respective National Societies.

Through the regional Urban Community Resilience Hub, in 2020 the Asia Pacific Regional Office will continue its commitment to coordinate and connect urban programmes across the region. We aim to enhance knowledge-sharing and peer exchange within and beyond Red Cross and Red Crescent networks and platforms, while operationalizing urban learning to date with a strong orientation towards partnerships and innovation for current and future initiatives.

**Regional support activities will focus on:**

1. Providing technical and operational support to shelter and settlement programming throughout the programme cycle (preparedness, response and recovery) through a technical review of country operational plans, contingency plans, sectoral strategies, emergency appeals and DREFs, and donor proposals etc., in collaboration with the technical shelter staff and/or the Disaster Management focal points.

2. Addressing shelter risks and vulnerabilities as part of preparedness and risk reduction activities using methodologies such as the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) and PASSA Youth.

3. Applying approaches to meeting shelter needs—from the provision of shelter solutions to the advancement of cash- and market-based interventions—in shelter programming.

4. Advancing protection and inclusion in shelter and settlements programming, such as in the area of housing, land and property rights.

5. Promoting Green Response approaches in shelter and settlements.

6. Building and improving technical guidance and supporting affected populations with the transfer of this knowledge to support their recovery.

**PEOPLE TO BE REACHED REGION-WIDE**

113,000
AREA OF FOCUS

LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

Conflict and instability have increased, becoming more intractable in parts of the Asia Pacific, leading to population displacement. Extreme weather events due to climate change are affecting agricultural productivity, food production and natural resources with resulting impacts on food systems and rural livelihoods. These factors contribute to food insecurity, malnutrition and health challenges.

The objective of IFRC’s livelihood work is to enhance the National Societies’ capacity to tackle emergency food insecurity and chronic hunger through relevant actions across four pillars: food availability, access, use/utilization and stability; while supporting individuals and households to protect, restore, strengthen and diversify their livelihoods during and after a disaster. This approach focuses on women as partners in economic development so that they are better prepared to cope with future shocks and stresses. This is critical to enhance community resilience to future shocks and reduce reliance on humanitarian assistance. Livelihoods programming must be context-specific, targeted per livelihoods group and framed around approaches using assessments/findings, capacity building and skills development, and access to capital/assets and markets. IFRC livelihood work is aligned with SDG 8, “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” as well as SDG 2, “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”.

670,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
The Asia Pacific Regional Office uses the services of IFRC’s Livelihoods Resource Centre, based in Madrid at the headquarters of the Spanish Red Cross, as a technical reference source. National Society capacity building work, such as online and face-to-face training, is provided in collaboration with the Regional Office. Partnerships also exist to deal with specific livelihoods issues, for example collaborating with World Animal Protection—an international non-profit animal welfare organization that focuses on protecting livestock during emergencies.

Our focus during the first months of 2020 will be on engaging with National Societies and IFRC offices to define a Livelihoods Roadmap for the Asia Pacific region. This roadmap will ensure that further work on livelihoods will be in accordance with the demands and needs of the National Societies.

Regional support will also aim to enhance the National Societies’ capacity to contribute to national coordination mechanisms in food security and livelihoods through engagement in preparedness clusters. National Societies will be supported to improve capacities in analyses and monitoring local, national and regional food insecurity trends and conducting needs assessments in slow and rapid onset emergencies.

As a flagship project, the Asia Pacific Regional Office coordinates Women’s Empowerment, which is funded by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society in four countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam. The project targets vulnerable women and girls with livelihood support, vocational training and capacity building to enhance their skills in business, including access to markets through product promotion. Where context permits, women are encouraged to organize themselves into self-help groups to pool efforts and share risks. The project aims to strengthen financial management skills and establish sustainable income that will strengthen the women’s economic situation.
AREA OF FOCUS

HEALTH

The Asia Pacific region faces three major health burdens: communicable diseases; non-communicable diseases associated with globalization, unhealthy lifestyles and ageing; and injuries as societies become more urbanized, motorized and industrialized. IFRC’s work at the regional level contributes directly to SDG 3, “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”. This work also supports the Universal Health Coverage Agenda; Global Health Security Agenda; Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases; ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda as well as its implementation mechanism for 2016–2020; Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; Grand Bargain—Localisation; Paris Agreement; Manila Call for Action in a Fast-Changing World and other regional health initiatives.

In 2020, IFRC work in the Asia Pacific region will focus on the following:

Community health: First aid will remain a key priority for the National Societies of the Asia Pacific region. The focus will be on harmonizing the first aid training curriculums offered by the National Societies to strengthen the quality and reliability of the training provided. In close collaboration with the Global First Aid Reference Centre hosted by the French Red Cross, clear guidance will be issued on the international first aid attestation process. Efforts will also focus on new country-level partnerships with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization and other multilateral partners in priority countries to compliment national immunization efforts. The Red Cross and Red Crescent immunization programme will focus on accessing hard to reach populations—indigenous people, urban poor and people living in areas in conflict.
Emergency health: In line with the Manila Call for Action, efforts will focus on preparing for, preventing and responding to outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics. The Community, Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness programme will be expanded into implementing National Societies region-wide. Emphasis will be placed on supporting the National Societies to develop first responders trained in Epidemic Control for Volunteers.

Advocacy and strategic guidance: Support will be provided to National Societies in setting the strategic direction of their engagement in health as auxiliaries to national health services, and to facilitate the adoption of the new strategic directions of Strategy 2030—The future Red Cross and Red Crescent. National Societies will be encouraged and supported to advocate effectively on health and care with a focus on ensuring access to quality health services for vulnerable and marginalized populations.

Evidence-based programmes and services: National Societies will be supported to document best practices and lessons learned in the form of case studies. The use of information technology and social media will be encouraged in health promotion and disease prevention activities. New data collection and analysis methodologies will be introduced in programme monitoring in close collaboration with leading universities and the private sector. Minimum standards will also be set and managed for protection, gender and inclusion in all health emergencies.

Inclusive health services: A regional strategy on healthy ageing will be developed further, with a view to mainstreaming ageing as a cross-cutting issue across all Red Cross and Red Crescent programmes, services and promotions. Equally, the aim is to make Red Cross and Red Crescent health services migrant-friendly and accessible for migrants and displaced populations.
AREA OF FOCUS

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Worldwide, 844 million people lack clean drinking water; of which 357 million live in the Asia Pacific region. It is estimated that 18 per cent of people, mostly in South Asia, practice open defecation. After disasters, water and sanitation are a high priority, with more than 80 per cent of IFRC’s active operations focusing on these issues.

Linked closely to SDG 6, IFRC programmes seek to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. In addition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is closely linked to SDG 3, “Good health and well-being”. IFRC works closely with partners across the health sector in designing and implementing effective programmes. Its four technical focus areas are: WASH in Development, WASH in Emergencies, WASH in Public Health and WASH in an Urban Context.

The key priorities of the Asia Pacific Regional Office for 2020 are as follows:

1. Consolidate and strengthen the emergency WASH response capacities of the Asia Pacific National Societies by improving the training provided in line with the Global Response Tools Review and the Surge Optimization process. New technical areas will be included such as water supply technology (springs, boreholes, distribution networks), faecal sludge management, decommissioning and rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, and new technology. A ready-to-use IFRC WASH Competency Framework will also be produced. This essential toolkit was piloted at regional- and country-level during the 2019 Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT) training at the WASH Training Centre in Bandung, Indonesia. Capacity building and preparedness for WASH response in emergencies will continue in 2020 that includes training, equipment and technical support at branch- and regional-level (through RDRT) to benefit at least 15 National Societies in the region. Training will be conducted at the Humanitarian Field School in Kelantan, Malaysia on integrated themes (WASH and Logistics, WASH and Shelter, etc.) to provide field-like experiences to participants in the Asia Pacific region.
2. Guide Asia Pacific National Societies in setting the direction and improving the quality of their long-term WASH programmes through the development of a Global Water and Sanitation Initiative (GWSI) in ten National Societies. The aim is to strengthen peer-to-peer networking as well as relationships between the different National Societies involved in this approach. The region will also provide pedagogical and technical support for world events such as World Water Day (22 March 2020), Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May 2020), Global Handwashing Day (15 October 2020) and World Toilet Day (19 November 2020) that will give visibility to the National Societies involved in the WASH sector. Often, these activities involve schools too, benefiting a high number of students.

3. Guide Asia Pacific National Societies to make their WASH programmes more sustainable and evidence-based by strengthening existing working relationships with National Societies, Partner National Societies, ICRC and the corporate sector through the organization of regional coordination WASH meetings and thematic workshops. In addition, knowledge will be shared through e-learning platforms such as webinars on key WASH topics. Closer monitoring and in-depth reviews of GWSI and recovery programmes will also be undertaken.

4. Establish a new position of Urban WASH Focal Point for the region to chair the Urban WASH Working Group, lead reflection from the Urban WASH Hub in coordination with the existing Urban Hub in Manila, Philippines and develop WASH-related programmes in urban contexts.

5. Promote community engagement and empowerment to be central in WASH approaches and ensure the inclusion of protection, gender and diversity perspectives, ageing, migration and displacement within WASH programming. This will be done at national, regional and global levels.
Socio-economic and gender-, age- and diversity-based inequalities persist across the countries of the Asia Pacific region. This includes low rankings in the Gender Equality Index along with high rates of social exclusion among people with disabilities. Significant protection concerns such as gender-based violence and child protection issues continue to have a lasting effect on people’s daily lives, impacting their rights, dignity, access, participation and everyday safety. Our priorities for 2020 include the application of standards and best practices, establishing and strengthening networks as well as focused work on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (or Questioning) (LGBTIQ), Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and youth.

Key tools for mainstreaming dignity, access, participation and safety into all programming, especially during emergencies, are consistently applying the IFRC’s revised Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies as well as committing to the Standards in emergency programming. These tools have the full support of the National Societies of the Asia Pacific region, which aim to roll them out across all IFRC operations as stated in the Manila Declaration. The revised Minimum Standards will inform the development of surge competencies on PGI as part of the new PGI Competency Framework. The Asia Pacific Regional Office will help four National Societies adapt their systems to use the new IFRC Technical Note on Counting People Reached, ensuring common data on gender and age is gathered at branch level. The collection of gender, age and disability disaggregated data as well as on PGI mainstreaming will be strengthened in the revised Emergency Plan of Action and DREF guidelines.
Gender and Diversity Networks are critical. At the moment, every Country Office or Country Cluster Support Team of the IFRC employs someone to focus on this; while 34 National Societies have Gender and Diversity or PGI focal points, networked into sub-regional practitioner forums (South Asia, South East Asia, and the Pacific). These focal points and networks are effective forums for developing skills in PGI work. Some members have developed specialized projects that include improving equitable status (e.g., SGBV forums, Community-Based Health and First Aid Violence Prevention initiatives, increasing female volunteer representation, child protection initiatives etc.). Forming and sustaining an East Asia Gender and Diversity Network will be a priority in 2020.

In 2019, case studies and best practices were collected on LGBTIQ inclusion during disasters. In 2020, a deeper emphasis will be placed on addressing institutional and cultural barriers towards LGBTIQ inclusion in both disaster and non-disaster contexts using the PGI focal points to disseminate these lessons.

A renewed focus on sexual and reproductive health services during emergencies will be piloted by one National Society, focusing on adolescent needs and Red Cross Red Crescent volunteer capacity to apply the Minimum Initial Service Package during disasters. This reflects IFRC’s partnership with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

The Asia Pacific region will continue the ASEAN-SGBV Community-Based Research Project in additional ASEAN countries as well as community-based programming centred on the research’s recommendations. SGBV in Emergencies capacity building through partnership with IPPF, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and Regional GBV Advisor will also be a priority.

Red Cross Red Crescent Youth volunteers have been playing a crucial role as agents of behavioural change, and making schools and communities safer and more resilient, by disseminating humanitarian values, delivering community services, and conducting both skill- and value-based activities through a peer-to-peer approach. It is essential to engage youth in the PGI and Education agenda. In 2020, the promotion and coordination of Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) Peer Educators training and school safety remain key activities in addition to a clear focus on youth-led climate action. These activities are consistent with the Asia Pacific region’s commitment to engage with Safer Schools initiatives and to ensure safe school access and inclusion of all groups, as stated in the Manila Declaration. The partnership with external stakeholders including ASEAN, Ministries of Education and the Prudence Foundation will be further strengthened.
AREA OF FOCUS

MIGRATION

Migration across the Asia Pacific region has helped to improve people's lives in both the country of origin and the host nation. It has supported millions of people, their families and communities in forging safe and meaningful lives. At the same time, many migrants in the region—and especially refugees and others that are forcibly displaced—face critical and unacceptable humanitarian needs and risks. The Asia Pacific region has a major influence on global migration and displacement trends, with the region hosting the largest number of migrants worldwide and with nearly 40 per cent of all migrants originating from the Asia Pacific. Large numbers of migrant workers also move within the region and along major migration routes to the Gulf and Middle East; with many migrant workers—especially those without documents—facing barriers to accessing essential services and facing the risk of human trafficking, bonded labour and other forms of exploitation.

In 2020 IFRC will continue and enhance support on migration issues to National Societies in the Asia Pacific region to strengthen their capacities and enhance their assistance, protection and advocacy programmes and interventions for migrants and displaced people, in both emergency and non-emergency settings. The IFRC Asia Pacific Migration and Displacement Framework for Action (2017–2022) will continue to guide the strategic approach of the IFRC. The Framework guides the work and focuses on five key priorities over a five-year timeframe: sensitization and awareness raising; mainstreaming migration and displacement into existing programmes; support for migration and displacement focused programming in emergency and non-emergency contexts; communications and humanitarian diplomacy; and partnerships. IFRC will also assist National Societies to meet its Manila Declaration target of integrating the needs of migrants, refugees and displaced people in the development of policies and strategies.
In operationalizing commitments in the IFRC Framework and Manila Declaration, the IFRC technical team on migration and displacement in the region will focus on the following initiatives in 2020:

1. **Guidance and thought leadership:** The IFRC technical team will ensure and deliver high-quality technical evidence-based research, analysis and advice in emerging and critical thematic areas related to migration and displacement. This will focus on key thematic areas, including: Migration and Health; Labour Migration and Trafficking; Climate Change, Disasters and Displacement; and Emergency Response.

2. **Capacity strengthening and empowerment:** The IFRC technical team will continue a dedicated programme of capacity building for the Asia Pacific National Societies in migration and displacement, including at regional level (through the Asia Pacific Migration Network and its dedicated thematic and regional Working Groups) as well as at national level. This will also include a programme of peer-to-peer support and exchange, in-person training and workshops on migration for staff and volunteers, and the facilitation and hosting of high-level strategic dialogues and national humanitarian summits on migration and displacement.

3. **Structured outreach:** In line with the Manila Call for Action, the IFRC technical team will continue a programme of support for advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy initiatives at the regional, national and global levels—especially in representing the voice of the Red Cross in key policy forums and with influential decision-makers. The IFRC technical team will also continue to focus on high-quality and effective communications that highlight the strong activities, initiatives and vital role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in supporting migrants and displaced people.

4. **Tailored support for operations and programmes:** the IFRC technical team will support the National Societies’ assistance and protection operations and programmes for migrants and displaced people. This will include a programme of technical advice, reviews and recommendations for alignment with the IFRC’s Policy on Migration and global best practice. This will also include the deployment of regional and global expertise to support operations and programmes, using the global surge tools, RDRT and the Asia Pacific Migration Network.

Cooperation with the ICRC will continue on Restoring Family Links as well as on joint technical capacity building and positioning, including on regional and global policy agendas and advocacy.
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

The Asia Pacific region supports National Societies through organizational and performance development, capacity building and volunteer and youth engagement. Long-term organizational strengthening is achieved in emergency and development settings with tailor-made support to National Societies preparing them to respond, particularly in fragile contexts or for national societies newly admitted to the IFRC. The Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification process looks at key governance, management and programme factors; while the Branch Organizational Capacity Assessment is a similar process for National Societies’ branches.

Additionally, the Digital Divide Initiative—that reviews National Societies’ information and communication technology capacity—will be enhanced to better support the delivery of programmes and efficient operations. The Regional IT team will coordinate and facilitate a process to create a Data Hub in 2021, which will help develop sustainable and relevant connectivity technologies, according to the context. The Digital Divide Initiative is an important step in fulfilling the Manila Declaration, which commits to attract and retain volunteers in order to revitalize volunteerism and youth mobilization in an increasingly competitive landscape, particularly in urban settings.
More than half of the 14 million Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers are under the age of 30. The Youth Programme aims to educate, empower and provide an enabling environment for youth to contribute to building community resilience and shape a better future. As mentioned in the Manila Declaration, Asia Pacific National Societies are committed to increasing diverse representation (particularly youth) at decision-making levels, such as in leadership and governance. This involves enhancing young volunteers’ skills and capacities and engaging their talents through technology and social media. In order to ensure safety and wellbeing, volunteer training with a focus on volunteering in dangerous situations is given. Volunteers are also engaged through a focused community development approach in the Volunteers on Wheels programme, leading to an effective coordination of volunteers as well as the management of spontaneous volunteers.

The Partnership and Resource Development team will continue supporting skill development in partnerships and fundraising. Their objective is to enhance advocacy on the localization of aid with a view to facilitating greater access to international and domestic funding. This will be achieved through appropriate vehicles, including the Asia Pacific Fundraising Network, in order to help National Societies to improve their self-sustainability through the promotion of the National Society Financial Sustainability Framework and encourage and facilitate peer-to-peer support among the Network members. This is in line with the Manila Declaration’s commitment to decentralize the management and allocation of resources by National Societies.

National Societies will also be supported to improve data literacy as well as their collation of disaggregated data. Capacity building support will also be provided to National Societies on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting processes as well as implementation.

The Disaster and Crisis Prevention, Response and Recovery (DCPRR) team will support the National Societies in carrying out Preparedness for Effective Response assessments as well as technical support to action the results of these assessments. The team will also raise awareness of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear events, and provide technical support to build the response capacity of the National Societies in this area. The IFRC’s Minimum Standard for National Disaster Response Teams will be further disseminated, and support will be provided to the National Societies to align training curriculums to the Minimum Standard. Community engagement and accountability measures will be integrated into all IFRC long-term programmes. National Societies will be supported to improve cash preparedness and institutionalize relations with their local militaries. As stated in the Manila Call for Action, the region’s target is to have at least 60 per cent of National Societies cash ready by 2022. The DCPRR team will also coordinate support to the National Societies by linking them with reference centres and hubs for technical support, learning, innovation and knowledge brokering.
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Seven out of ten of the world’s most disaster-affected countries are in the Asia Pacific region. Countries positioned on the Pacific ‘Ring of Fire’ are prone to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis, while a significant number are affected by tropical cyclones, monsoon rains and flooding with coastal areas also at risk from storm surges. Human-induced and technological disasters, including conflict-related displacement, and epidemics also continue to affect communities in rural and urban areas. Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events while a high urbanization rate is creating new risks and forcing hundreds of millions of people to settle in disaster-prone areas. In Asia Pacific, the strength of national and local governments is increasing, as is the influence of the military and private sector in the humanitarian response.
In this fast-changing world, IFRC invests in strengthening the position of the National Societies as effective and capable first responders in their own countries and within the region. Before and after a disaster strikes, IFRC has three key roles:

1. Connecting and coordinating the global Red Cross Red Crescent network to meet the needs of people affected by disasters and crises; mobilizing the right people in the right place at the right time to take the right action; enhancing global and local ability to reach people in need during emergencies; and empowering communities to anticipate, prevent and reduce risks. The regional office tracks disasters in the region, provides support to the National Societies, manages rosters and deploys human resources as required. It also coordinates the assets of the Red Cross and Red Crescent throughout the world (such as emergency response units like hospitals, clinics, water units and relief items) and manages a regional warehouse in Malaysia with relief supplies.

2. Representing the Red Cross and Red Crescent as a voice for stronger humanitarian outcomes. This includes the Global Shelter Cluster co-convening role of IFRC as part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination mechanism that contributes to ensuring that people affected by disasters crises live in safe, dignified and appropriate shelter.

3. Connecting National Societies to combine experiences, knowledge and resources for stronger local action.

Learning will be emphasized about good program practices of national societies in fragile context and how RCRC leadership should address issues in these contexts. This will be done through a series of think tank discussions that will lead to new guidance, policies and expertise. IFRC Asia Pacific commits to continue its work towards a gender sensitive IFRC Secretariat and will encourage national societies to take similar measures. It will also promote a greater number of initiatives on women empowerment at community level and women leadership with the RCRC system. Additionally, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, in cooperation with IFRC, is creating a Humanitarian Field School where humanitarian practitioners from both inside and outside the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement can participate in practical, field-based training.

Outcome

EFFECTIVE AND COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE IN ASIA PACIFIC IS ENSURED
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

IFRC works with its Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners throughout the region to address critical humanitarian issues affecting people today, as well as addressing trends that will impact people’s lives in the future. The Federation works closely with partners from government, civil society, academia and the private sector.

IFRC Asia Pacific guides the National Societies to support their authorities in developing and applying state-of-the-art disaster-related legislation, policies and procedures. The result is safer communities, timely and effective humanitarian relief and the better protection of those most vulnerable to crises. Disaster law efforts focus on five main aspects: domestic preparedness and response; disasters and climate laws that leave no one behind; the auxiliary role of National Societies; law and disaster risk reduction; and legal preparedness for international disaster assistance.
The Asia Pacific regional office will continue engaging and strengthening its relationship with various regional and international platforms such as the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, ASEAN, AHA Centre (ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Secretariat of the Pacific Community and Tata Consultancy Services on behalf or in support of the National Societies. It will enhance its engagement with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific as well as humanitarian organizations in Bangkok, Thailand, along with other regional inter-governmental bodies. These relationships will be nurtured based on the value they bring to the National Societies in positioning them alongside their respective governments at regional forums as well as with other stakeholder groups in the region.

The engagement of domestic and international militaries in disaster response is increasing, particularly within the Asia Pacific region. Here, militaries are often the first responders to a disaster, undertaking tasks ranging from infrastructure and logistical support to direct assistance to affected populations. To address this emerging trend, there is a need to further develop the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s position on Civil Military Relations (CMR) and to establish a clear framework for this relationship. In 2020, IFRC will continue rolling out the Asia Pacific Movement Civil Military Action Plan focusing on Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines and the Pacific, embracing a Movement-wide approach. Effort to professionalize CMR within the Movement—and to contribute to evolving civil military coordination norms and standards—will continue with the aim of developing better coordination with military actors regionally.

In line with the commitments that national societies in the region made in the Manila Call for Action, IFRC will “engage local humanitarian action in a fast-changing world”. Amongst other commitments, it will emphasize women’s leadership, engage communities and volunteers, address potential epidemics and pandemics, and strengthen engagement with urban coalitions. In 2020, it will be more involved in policy issues related to the impact of climate change on coastal cities, migration and displacement, protracted crises, first aid, and school safety.

In collaboration with the National Societies in each country, the region will also be formulating a long-term strategy for IFRC engagement in China and India—countries with global influence in many areas affecting humanitarian work. Also, with the One Billion Coalition for Resilience campaign, IFRC Asia Pacific will support National Societies—via IFRC offices—to pursue greater partnerships with other organizations to promote community preparedness and resilience.
OUTCOME

IFRC ENHANCES ITS EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN ASIA PACIFIC

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

The Asia Pacific Regional Office provides oversight of the 13 IFRC offices throughout the region. Stewardship of financial and human resources as well as ensuring programme quality are major roles of the Office.

The office manages an average of 400 grants and pledges per year from generous donors from around the world, totalling 68 million Swiss francs. Over 560 donor reports were generated in 2019 on time and according to contractual agreements. To ensure transparency with stakeholders and to provide information to the broader humanitarian system, IFRC maintains platforms such as IFRC Go https://go.ifrc.org/ which aims to make all disaster information universally accessible and useful for better decision-making.

The IFRC-wide Data Bank and Reporting System http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs provides a snapshot of National Societies throughout the world. Emergency appeals, emergency plans of action and publicly available reports are also readily available online https://www.ifrc.org/appeals or by request from the Regional Office. There is a communications department that disseminates information and communicates with various constituencies about humanitarian work through traditional and social media. Internal audit functions for the region are also based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

3,370,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT

FUNDING
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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