

APP-DRR Stakeholder Group Remarks [by IFRC]

I am pleased to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Red Cross Red Crescent Stakeholder Group in Asia Pacific.

While countries have been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, climate-related extreme and slow-onset events have not stopped. As front-line agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies have been busy supporting communities and governments across the region to prepare for and respond to all types of disasters and crises.

Through our front-line efforts and leadership on disaster law, we know first-hand the importance of good risk governance. As such, we are pleased to see the focus of this APP-DRR Forum and next year's APMCDRR on this critical issue. Ensuring that our laws, policies and systems are more **people centred, promote coherence** and provide the **enabling environment for local action** is key.

As such we would like to see a commitment in APMCDRR to overhaul formal governance systems in Asia Pacific to ensure that laws provide local actors the necessary mandates, further capacities and resources to take necessary measures/actions in their context to reach and engage those most at risk.

We are ready to work with all partners around this table to leverage our community networks, and our access to governments as auxiliaries - to ensure that the rights and needs of those most at risk are included in decision making at all levels.

COVID-19 has demonstrated that addressing multiple risks and impacts of – disasters, disease outbreaks and climate change – at once requires greater level of coordination across levels.

We hope that next year's APMCDRR and the process leading up to it, focuses on drawing in those actors who normally aren't around this table – the climate, health, finance and planning sectors. Without them we can't move to the risk-informed, integrated and holistic approach that is needed.

We are ready to play our part to convene and to advocate for greater national and local coherence with the key actors.

Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies are currently supporting over a third of governments in Asia Pacific to review and update their disaster laws. As part of this, we've seen many Asia Pacific countries using disaster risk management legal provisions to bolster their COVID-19 response. Besides good practices, we've also seen confusion and duplication between disaster management and health authorities in terms of mandates, coordination and activation of emergency procedures.

We've undertaken an initial analysis in Asia Pacific which finds that most disaster management laws lack the necessary detail or guidance in terms of public health emergency action or coordination. Similarly, our recently launched World Disaster Report also has found that only 16% of 104 disaster management laws analyzed globally contain elements related to climate change adaptation.

APMCDRR needs to capitalize on the heightened political awareness brought about by COVID-19 to review and strengthen emergency preparedness and response laws. We need to ensure that also these frameworks provide the enabling environment for effective risk-informed action, mandate inclusive approaches and support coherence.

In 2021, we will be releasing a checklist on law and public health emergencies, as well as updating guidance on how better integrate climate change adaptation into disaster laws. We look forward to working with partners around this table in any forthcoming legislative reviews.

In conclusion, Red Cross Red Crescent is committed to work alongside governments and all stakeholders as part of the APMCDRR process to ensure our risk management laws, policies and systems are more people centered, promote coherence and provide the enabling environment for local action.