

Raise awareness of disaster risk reduction practitioners in Vietnam on Red Cross contribution to disaster management

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Hue, Viet Nam. On 31 October 2015, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the German Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross, organized the regional workshops for Central and Highland provinces to introduce the draft regulation to implement the government community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) programme and the results of the amended vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA), and on enhancing the effectiveness of the provincial disaster response teams (PDRTs).

The workshops were attended by representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Red Cross Chapters, departments of Agriculture and Rural Development and committees for Disaster Prevention and Control and Search and Rescue of 18 Central and Highland provinces of Vietnam. The IFRC, German Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross and the Japan International Cooperation Agency also attended the event. The workshop was co-chaired by the Under-Secretary General of the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, Deputy Director of the Department of Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, and Deputy Director of the Disaster Management Centre, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

At the event, the Disaster Management Centre provided an overview of the five-year implementation of the CBDRM programme and the plan for the last phase of the project, 2016 to 2020. The Japanese International Cooperation Agency shared the CBDRM project which is implemented in collaboration with the Disaster Management Centre in four Central provinces of Vietnam. The Viet Nam Red Cross Society also provided an overview of its support to the government CBDRM programme and the amended VCA tools and guidelines. It also shared an overview of its disaster preparedness and response mechanism at the headquarters and branch levels, as well as the global mechanism of the IFRC.

“It is good to have government framework to guide disaster preparedness and response activities, however, community participation is essential,” said Marina Hovannesjan, country representative of the German Red Cross in Vietnam. “In the past few years, we have been trying to improve the implementation of the VCA, making it more inclusive to people living with disability, more gender sensitive, and incorporate climate change into the VCA.”

The workshop also provided the platform for representatives from relevant provincial authorities to share the disaster preparedness and response mechanism in their locality, particularly the Water Resources Department, Quang Binh province, and the Central branch of the Department of Natural Disaster Prevention and Control in Da Nang.

This is part of the 17-month project ending December 2015 called *Enhancing the capacities of disaster risk reduction practitioners in Viet Nam through the consolidation of best practices and lessons learnt for community based disaster risk management, VCA and disaster response mechanisms (DIPECHO 9)*, implemented by the Viet Nam Red Cross Society with support from the IFRC, the German Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross.

“The DIPECHO 9 project is very important in enhancing the collaboration among the different agencies in disaster risk management and developing relevant guidelines in Vietnam,” said Tran Quoc Hung, director of the disaster management department, Viet Nam Red Cross Society headquarters.

The project is made possible with financial support from European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) as part of its strategy to document the lessons learned and support the consolidation of capacity and systems for national, provincial and district level community-based disaster risk reduction action in Viet Nam.

The national CBDRM programme has been implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with support from relevant government agencies since 2009. The Viet Nam Red Cross Society has supported the Ministry since 2011 in the implementation of the project. Since then, it has implemented CBDRM activities in 555 communes and wards in 36 cities and provinces of Viet Nam. In 2014, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society also issued its own CBDRM Framework.

One of the main concerns among the implementing agencies is the lack of clear guidance on the implementation of the government CBRM programme. In addressing this, under DIPECHO 9, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society has been supporting the Disaster Management Centre to develop a regulation which would legitimize and provide guidance for the implementation of the national CBDRM project for all participating agencies.