Theme of the Case Study
Gender and Inclusiveness

Country
3 countries in Southeast Asia

Case location
Leyte and Aklan in the Philippines, Bima and Aceh in Indonesia, Oudomxay and Sekong in Lao PDR

Background

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is an issue faced by all the communities. It is often life threatening and impacts a survivor’s daily life, dignity, rights, livelihood and health. SGBV during and after disaster situations and other emergencies is under-researched and largely ignored in policy circles. Studies conducted in Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States have found that the risks to SGBV increase during disasters.

However, few studies have focused on low-income, developing countries. Few go beyond researching the gendered effects of SGBV on women and girls.

Consequently, many humanitarian agencies not only overlook needs of women and girls, but also completely overlook men and boys and sexual minority groups as survivors of SGBV in their needs assessment, discussions with communities, during data collection and, follow-up community-based programming and humanitarian response programming.

Key findings in this collaborative research project between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management (ACDM) illustrate that the risks to SGBV are exacerbated during natural disaster situations in Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines, and that “disaster responders” and actors addressing needs of SGBV survivors are not working together adequately to reduce these risks. This research shows that this is a trend applicable to other disaster contexts.

What did the action seek to change?

- How data on SGBV is collected at the community level (make it more ethical and survivor-centred)
How communities prepare for SGBV prevention and response before a recurrent disaster strikes
How community voices on this issue are shared with the national level government and ASEAN disaster response actors

What were the key actions taken to achieve this change?
- Conduct research in Philippines, Indonesia and Laos on SGBV prevention and response during disasters
- Increase data literacy and SGBV awareness among Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) volunteers who were the data collectors
- Interview adult women, adult men, adolescent boys and girls on the changes they want to see within their communities to better prevent and respond to SGBV during disasters
- Design multi-sectoral, community-based programmes for select villages in data collection sites in order to improve service provision for survivors

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

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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Training of RCRC volunteers to collect data on SGBV during disasters in an ethical and survivor-centred way</td>
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<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Partnership with ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation, relevant in-country governmental and non-governmental organizations</td>
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<td>Step 3</td>
<td>Awareness raising at the community level on SGBV prevention and response, referral information and future follow-up in select data collection sites with multi-sectoral community-based programmes</td>
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What SFDRR principles were applicable to this change process?
- **Principle 1** Protection of persons and their assets while promoting and protecting all human rights including the right to development
- **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?
- **Increased awareness** on SGBV prevention and response among RCRC actors who are first responders during disasters
- **Advocacy based evidence** for the community, province, national and regional level
- **Impetus for increased coordination** among “disaster responders” and “SGBV prevention and response” actors in the participating countries

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1. 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 key Lessons Learnt?
- SGBV prevention and response during disasters is an often overlooked subject
- Disaster responders are failing to coordinate and adequately prepare on this issue
- It is difficult to collect data on such a sensitive issue
- As community-based services do not exist it is important to build capacity both for disaster responders and SGBV prevention and response actors
- There are missing links between disaster law frameworks and protection frameworks. If the linkages were strengthened, it would be a key intervention for SGBV prevention and response during disasters.

What were the Good Practices arising from this action?

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<tr>
<td>Good Practice 1</td>
<td>Involving disaster-affected communities in the data collection and design of future community-based programmes</td>
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<td>Good Practice 2</td>
<td>Linking disaster responders with SGBV prevention and response actors</td>
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<td>Good Practice 3</td>
<td>Understanding the connections better between disaster law frameworks and SGBV prevention and response laws</td>
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<td>Good Practice 4</td>
<td>Building capacity on how SGBV data should be collected in a safe and survivor-centred way.</td>
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Policy Relevance to DRR in Action
The research illustrating the risks to SGBV in natural disaster situations and the gaps to be addressed by disaster responders to ensure the needs of SGBV survivors is directly relevant to the priorities of the Sendai Framework, specifically: Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk; and Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Key Messages from this Case Study
- Advocate with national disaster management departments and ministries working on SGBV prevention and response for stronger legal frameworks which address needs of SGBV survivors during disasters and crisis.
- Ensure that at each assessment stage, sex, age and disability dis-aggregated data is collected to better understand the needs and vulnerabilities of the affected population.
- Prepare logistics stocks for dignity kits, clinical management of rape kits and post-exposure prophylaxis kits.
- In coordination with the Protection Cluster, relevant government ministries and UN and INGO stakeholders, create a referral services pathway for SGBV survivors.
- Follow the SPHERE standards for constructing safe shelters, which have separate spaces for women and men, separate toilets which can be locked and adequate lighting throughout the camp areas.
- Train front-line volunteers to give referral pathway information and on handling disclosures from SGBV survivors.
- Create sustainable partnerships with external organizations who have technical expertise in SGBV prevention and response during disasters and crisis.
Globally, this research project and its results are a contribution to the “Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.” Since the 2013 inception of this Call to Action, humanitarian stakeholders have implemented the roadmap and are advocating for more field level implementation. 

Regionally, the results of this research are seeking a more effective partnership with the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and other relevant ASEAN bodies, further involvement in the development and implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Social Protection in times of disasters and contribution towards the revised standing operating procedures of regional level disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

At the national level, this research project aims to advocate:

1. the strengthening of domestic disaster-related legislation, policies and procedures, including implementation and contingency planning to ensure continued function of existing legislation, institutions and services in times of disaster with regards to SGBV prevention and response;

2. coordination among governmental and non-governmental humanitarian actors on SGBV prevention and response during disasters; and,

3. stronger partnerships among humanitarian actors to better address the needs of survivors during disasters. In addition to its national advocacy asks, the case studies will be utilized for the same purposes globally, contributing to the body of research and corresponding advocacy on protection, gender and inclusion in disaster law.

At the province level of each country, this research project aims to strengthen capacities of the health, legal, psychosocial and security sectors to be able to respond to the needs of survivors, recognizing that both Indonesia and the Philippines already have strong legal frameworks both for disaster response and for addressing SGBV prevention and response.

Within the communities selected for data collection, the research results will contribute to stronger referral pathways and multi-sectoral programme services for survivors.

References for this Case Study

The IFRC SGBV Research Project Report: The Responsibility to Prevent and Respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Disasters and Crises, 2018 is pending finalization at the time of writing this case study.

1. IFRC, Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters, Global Study 2015.


7. Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies website: https://www.calltoactionGBV.com/