

Swiss Disaster Risk Reduction and Rapid Response Advisory Hub for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, in Bangkok

May 2019



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Humanitarian Aid and Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit

MANDATE & EXPERTISE

(Operation: since April 2013)

1. Mainstreaming DRR & CCA in SDC's programmes in Southeast Asia and the Pacific

- Spatial focus on Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vanuatu.
- Technical mainstreaming focus on food security and agriculture, water resources management, social infrastructure, and governance.
- Support targeted DRR interventions.

2. Monitor hazardous events and support Switzerland's emergency response in Southeast Asia and the Pacific

- Permanently monitor and report on hazardous events in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.
- Stand-by function to support deployments with Swiss Rapid Response Teams and Swiss Humanitarian Aid experts.
- Support Swiss Representations in the field of disaster management.

3. Policy dialogue and strengthen DRR capacities in the ASEAN region and the Pacific

- Contribute to ASEAN-Switzerland Sectoral Dialogue Partnership related to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Management (DM).
- Capacity development on DM with ASEC, and disaster preparedness and emergency response with AHA Centre.
- Expertise for high-level policy dialogue and capacity development on DRR, CCA and DM.

Expertise by two Regional DRR and Rapid Response Advisors:

- Identification, planning, implementation and monitoring of DRR & CCA activities and projects.
- Technical expertise: Integrated DRR/M from risk identification to preparedness and EWs. Integrated water resources management, applied geology and hydrogeology.
- Disaster management, emergency response & deployment. Advice to DM authorities.



In October 2018, a Swiss Rapid Response Team with support from the SDC Regional DRR and Rapid Response Advisors provided emergency support (shelter and WASH) to tsunami-affected population in Sulawesi, Indonesia. ©SDC

Swiss policy: Reducing disaster risks in Southeast Asia and the Pacific

With the Asia-Pacific being the most hazard-prone region in the world including high exposure and vulnerability to natural hazards and the increasing impacts of climate change, Switzerland in its *Message on International Cooperation 2017-2020* stipulates an increased commitment in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).

DRR figures as one of the priority themes of SDC Humanitarian Aid. With the goal to incorporate aspects of CCA, Environment and DRR in SDC programmes, the Swiss Humanitarian Aid of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) decided to strengthen its DRR and emergency response capacities in the regions of Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation

The regional DRR Advisory supports Swiss Cooperation Offices (SCOs) in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, to identify, implement and monitor DRR and CCA mainstreaming in their development and humanitarian programmes and projects.

This task is focused but not limited to SDC's projects in the *Agriculture and Food Security* domain. In addition, SCOs and Governments are supported in planning and implementing targeted DRR interventions, such as the expertise for Nationwide dam safety inspections in Laos PDR.

In the Pacific, interventions started in Vanuatu with an initial response to Cyclone Pam and the El Niño related drought in 2015-16. The assistance was transformed into an adaptation project to build disaster resilience through community gardens with diversified agriculture and water supply, combined with the establishment of the Risk and Resilience Unit in the Vanuatu's Ministry of Agriculture as a pillar for DRR, disaster preparedness and DM.

Stand-by for Emergency Response

With its regional presence in Bangkok, Switzerland through the SDC Humanitarian Aid can provide quick assistance in support of HQ efforts in case of disasters or humanitarian crises. Switzerland is committed to provide international humanitarian assistance, as well as expertise in DRR and DM.

Policy dialogue to strengthen regional capacities

Regional organizations, such as ASEAN or the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), gain an increasingly important role in the field of DM. Switzerland is supporting the ASEAN, both at strategic and operational levels. Strengthening DRR in the Pacific is equally a focus area.

Main Activities

Mainstreaming of DRR & CCA

The regional advisory acts as a demand-driven service provider to the Swiss Cooperation Offices mostly in Southeast Asia to support the mainstreaming of DRR and CCA into SDC's strategies, programmes and projects. This advisory consists of technical support on risk assessment & analysis, theoretical and practical training, identification of DRR and CCA measures in the following SDC-supported projects:

Cambodia (mainstreaming & targeted):

- Implementation of a DRR/CCA strategic and operational work plan supporting the implementation of the SDC Mekong Region Cooperation Strategy 2018-2021.
- Establishment of groundwater level monitoring and extension of 1294 Early Warning System in northern Cambodia with concerned line Ministries, Action Aid and People in Need (2017-2019) to support the SDC projects CHAIN (Cambodia Horticulture Advancing Income and Nutrition, 2014-2022) and PaFF (Partnership for Forestry and Fisheries, 2014-2021).

Lao PDR (mainstreaming):

- Implementation of DRR/CCA strategic and operational work plan supporting the implementation of the SDC Mekong Region Cooperation Strategy 2018-2021.
- Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), 2016-2020.
- Enhancing Nutrition of Upland Farming Families (ENUFF), 2016-2022.

Myanmar (mainstreaming):

- Community-Led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama, 2015-2021.
- Social infrastructure in Shan State (starting in 2019-2023).
- Strengthening Land Governance (One Map), 2017-2021.
- Rolling out the National Guidelines for the Construction of Safe and Child Friendly Schools (2018-2023).

Vanuatu (targeted):

- Enabling & Upscaling Climate Change Adaptation through Strengthened Food & Water Security, 2018-2019.

Emergency Response

The regional rapid response advisory in Bangkok has the role to support SDC HA HQ in monitoring potential disasters, report and stand-by for deployment as part of the Swiss Rapid Response Teams. Until now, the hub intervened in the following emergencies in the region:

- Indonesia, 2018: Deployment for Sulawesi tsunami.
- Philippines, 2018: Pre-emptive deployment for Typhoon Mangkhut to support Swiss Embassy in Manila.
- Cambodia, 2016: Response to El Niño related drought.
- Nepal, 2015: Deployment for earthquake.
- Philippines, 2013: Deployment for Typhoon Haiyan.
- In addition, humanitarian assistance was provided through IFRC and Red Cross movement to affected populations in Lao PDR due to dam failure and floods (2018) and in the aftermath of the Lombok earthquakes in Indonesia (2018).
- Currently, Switzerland provides expertise for the review of the Nationwide Dam Safety Inspection in cooperation with the government of Lao PDR (MEM), WB, and DPs.

Cooperation with ASEAN on DM policy dialogue and capacity development

Switzerland was conferred the status of ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner in July 2016 and agreed on Practical Cooperation Areas, amongst which SDC HA is contributing to "Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance" to support the implementation of the *ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response* (AADMER) and its work programme 2016-2020, as follows:

1. Policy dialogue and capacity development:

Three-year (2018-2020) technical and financial collaboration between Switzerland and ASEAN to hold every year:

- *ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM)*: 1-day high-level policy dialogue to sharpen ASEAN's policy direction, strategic engagements in DM.
- *ASEAN Senior Executive Programme on Disaster Management (SEPDM)*: 4-day course for policy makers of ASEAN countries to cultivate common consensus on DM.
- ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and any of its five Working Groups.

2. Operational component:

Switzerland supported the *AHA Centre (ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management)* financially and technically to plan, undertake and evaluate the *ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Exercises (ARDEX)* in 2016 and 2018 and to strengthen the role and capacity of the AHA Centre.

In 2019, Switzerland and AHA Centre are extending and strategising their cooperation in the fields of: i) strengthening emergency coordination, ii) standardisation and certification for experts in Disaster Management, iii) contribute to AHA Centre role as regional knowledge hub, iv) strengthening preparedness capacities, v) provision of expertise for ARDEX and ERAT Teams, vi) assist with expertise to respond to nature-induced and other type of disasters.

Regional contributions to achieve global agendas

Switzerland is committed to contributing to the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Agenda 2030 by promoting regional interfaces and frameworks on DRR/M and CC serving to establish the linkage between global and local levels.

To scale-up project results, promote intergovernmental cooperation and knowledge sharing, various national and regional partners will participate at the UNISDR Global Platform in Geneva, Switzerland from 13 to 17 May 2019, hosted and co-chaired by Switzerland.

At the country level, partners in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vanuatu continue showcasing DRR mainstreaming into SDC projects and building community resilience.

Contact

Embassy of Switzerland
SDC Humanitarian Aid Hub for Southeast Asia and Pacific
35, North Wireless Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Tel: +66 2 674 69 19