

## **REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN ASEAN**

25 – 26 March 2015, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

A number of AMS remain vulnerable to natural disasters, which tend to disproportionately adversely affect the poor and the near poor or low income populace. Pollution and resource degradation are also increasingly serious problems in a number of AMSs. ASEAN is also among the most highly vulnerable regions to climate change and will need to find solutions to adapt to climate change in building a resilient ASEAN. The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of international Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reveals that regardless our current actions in combatting with climate change through mitigation; global community is facing the increased amount anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions as the main caused of climate change. IPCC also predicted that the temperature will be rising up from 1- 2.5°C, and the change would bring negative effects to the process of development, particularly on livelihood, food security and health.

As a region with long coastlines, high concentration of population and economic activity in coastal areas, and heavy reliance on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and other natural resources, Southeast Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to the impacts of climate change. Climate hazards such as temperature increase, erratic rainfall patterns, and extreme climatic events such as strong typhoons and severe droughts have adverse effects and impact on ecosystems livelihoods and on many other aspects of human societies. These impacts of climate change will be much greater on women and children, especially those who are in a lower segment of poor societies, where poverty issues in ASEAN region are widespread, and efforts in combatting and responding to climate change impacts are often less sensitive to the specific needs of women and children.

In realizing the overarching goals of an ASEAN Community 2025, the ASEAN Social Cultural Community (ASCC) is envisioned to move towards a more inclusive community and towards sustainable environment in light of social changes with regards to addressing the challenges of social climate change. The aim is to strive for an ASEAN Community that has equitable access to sustainable environment that can support its social development, and has the capacity to continue to work towards sustainable development. This would entail equal access and opportunity for all, and the promotion and protection of human rights while complementing the inclusive growth agenda of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). It is important to address the concerns of all peoples of ASEAN on matters related to social protection, gender equality, promotion and protection of human rights especially for the vulnerable groups, throughout their life cycle, equal access and opportunities, poverty eradication, health, decent work, education, and information.

The impact of climate change on women and children requires streamlined policies, coordinated efforts and actions. As such, United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and ASEAN Agreement on the Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) among others are addressing the challenges of climate change together with national framework action plans. It is also crucial to get the right assistance especially for women and children that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction which was held on 14-18 March 2015 in Sendai, Miyagi, Japan, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* was presented in which Heads of State and Government, ministers and delegates that participated agreed to achieve the following action in the next 15 years: “The substantial reduction of

disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries". The realization of this outcome requires the strong commitment and involvement of political leadership in every country at all levels in the implementation and follow-up of this Framework and in the creation of the necessary conducive and enabling environment.

Aiming to support the outcomes of that Conference, the Regional Conference on Social Impact of Climate Change on Women and Children was held on 25-26 March 2015 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia . The Conference was attended by ACWC representatives from nine AMS, UN agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and dialogue partners. The Conference unanimously agreed twenty one recommendations that are considered as crucial for AMS in facing the challenges of climate change and social impact of climate change on women and children.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **I. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION**

1. To mainstream climate change and concerns of women and children into national, subnational and sectoral planning and implementation, in line with national and international frameworks.
2. To promote women and children's participation at all levels (local, national, regional and international) in decision-making processes and implementation of policies, plans and programmes on climate change.
3. To ensure gender and child-sensitive approach<sup>1</sup> in climate change adaptation and mitigation, including disaster risk reduction and management through collaborative work among stakeholders.
4. To promote the understanding of social impacts of climate change on women and children in the AMS through the conduct of social impact analyses, and vulnerability and adaptation assessments.
5. To develop or strengthen development plans at all levels based on gender and child-sensitive social impact analyses, and vulnerability and adaptation assessments.
6. To strengthen the collaboration between AMS with relevant UN Agencies and Development Partners to implement policies and programs on climate change, women and children.
7. To develop Regional Guidelines for Implementing the Service Provision and Support to address the specific needs of women and children.
8. To include the impacts of climate change on women and children in the next ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate change, which is expected to be adopted by ASEAN Leaders in 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit.

### **II. PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING**

9. To encourage all stakeholders including social media to actively engage with public to educate and raise people's awareness of climate change issues and disasters in particular that of the youth.
10. To develop more effective alert and warning strategies to reach all affected including the unreachable (i.e. people in remote areas, people that do not have access to information, etc.)
11. To integrate climatic issues into curriculum from kindergarten to university and promote the implementation of Eco-School programmes, and Safe Schools Initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF Climate Change and Children Joint Policy

12. To promote capacity building on the social impacts of climate change and risk management at the grass-root level, particularly for women and children.
13. To increase the participation of local communities including that of women and children in the planning and drafting of programmes that mitigate the impact of climate change and to promote the cooperation of all sectors in responding to emergency needs and disasters.
14. To promote sharing of information, experiences and best practices among AMS.

### **III. RESOURCES MOBILIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

15. To allocate specific funds for women and children to respond to the social impact of climate change and establish financial mechanisms of resource mobilization.
16. To establish or appoint one specific agency to manage, mobilize and allocate resource to support the operations at sub-national/local level.
17. To Strengthen ASEAN Cooperation in human and institutional capacity building for fund management in relation to social impact of climate change.
18. Encourage ASEAN to improve data collection that can help mitigate the impact of climate change on women and children and, to generate comprehensive regional social data which include among others, sex disaggregation data, number of victims, location, and disaster situation.
19. To encourage donors to increase funding in the work towards addressing the issues of social impact of climate change on women and children

### **IV. SERVICE PROVISION AND SUPPORTS**

20. To provide public facilities such as markets, schools, government offices etc., for those who are affected by Climate change.
21. To promote access to livelihood, ownership of household assets, finance, technology particularly for women.