Development of the Matrix for Regional Collaboration on Disaster Health Management in the ASEAN Region

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Introduction: The ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Disaster Health Management (ALD on DHM) was adopted at the 31st Summit in Manila in 2017. The Plan of Action (POA) to implement the ALD on DHM was adopted by the ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting in 2019, with Regional Collaboration Committee on Disaster Health Management (RCCDHM) established as a primary implementing mechanism under the purview of ASEAN Health Cluster two and Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD) to operationalize the implementation of the POA with its priority areas and targets to be realized by 2025. The first RCCDHM Meeting was organized in-person in Bangkok in 2020. The RCCDHM is composed of two representatives from each ASEAN member state (AMS), one representative from the ASEAN Secretariat and one representative from AHA Centre, and the secretariat role for the RCCDHM is carried out by the Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The RCCDHM Meeting decided to develop the Matrix of Detailed Activities (MDA) addressing the five priority areas of the POA-ALD on DHM.

Method: The RCCDHM Meeting organized a core group consisting of the Philippines and Thailand to develop the MDA which identifies information on activities, expected outputs, indicators, lead country, source of support, and the timeline for achieving objectives of the POA. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online communication was applied to discuss and coordinate among the AMS.

Results: The core group developed the draft MDA in consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat/Health Division. After a series of discussions, the RCCDHM endorsed the MDA which confirms necessary activities and commitment of AMS.

Conclusion: The review and endorsement process for the MDA will be elevated to the higher level meetings in the ASEAN Health sector for final approval. The RCCDHM also confirmed to strengthen collaboration with other ASEAN initiatives, non-health ASEAN sectors, UN, or other international partners, and the ARCH Project.