

## case study



Staff from the Youth Bureau provide training to ONIE teachers

# Training youth volunteers in cardiopulmonary resuscitation & choking first aid

## Thai Red Cross Society

### Introduction

Every year, millions of people are hurt or killed by injuries due to an inadequate response or lack of timely assistance. Yet taking immediate action and applying the appropriate techniques, while waiting for professional help, can considerably reduce deaths and injuries, and the impact of disasters and everyday emergencies. First aid is therefore a humanitarian act that should be accessible to all; with first aid skills volunteers and communities are empowered to save lives without discrimination.



Students learn how to perform CPR in an emergency

## 15 million

Approximate number of people trained in first aid by Red Cross and Red Crescent trainers in 2014<sup>1</sup>

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is one of the world's leading first aid providers. First aid is a central component of activities and programming for 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies including the Thai Red Cross Society.

### Context

In Thailand, statistics from the Thai Ministry of Public Health indicate that the number of deaths from choking and cardiac arrest are rising<sup>2</sup>.

To address the need for community preparedness, Thai Red Cross Society has introduced a policy requiring all volunteer groups to attend a two-day basic course, including a component on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and choking first aid. To reach young Thais – considered critical to the National Society's emergency preparedness goals – the Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau has been mandated with providing training to volunteers aged 15-25 years.

### About Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau

The Thai Red Cross Society works with youth volunteers aged 15-25 years from school, college, university, the Thai Ministry of Education's Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE) and special groups of young people (including youths from hill tribes, youths in detention centers and prisons, youth from sea gypsy communities, and youth groups living in community but out of the school system). In 2015, 18,732 young people were registered as volunteers with the Thai Red Cross Society's Youth Bureau. Each had completed the Bureau's 'Basic Life Support: First Aid' training.

<sup>1</sup> Page 16, IFRC's International First Aid and Resuscitation Guidelines 2016  
[http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/Health/First-Aid-2016-Guidelines\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/Health/First-Aid-2016-Guidelines_EN.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Thai Ministry of Public Health <http://eng.moph.go.th/index.php/health-situation-trend>



## Implementation

In 2014, after reviewing the national statistics of deaths from choking and cardiac arrest, the Red Cross Youth Bureau decided to organize CPR and choking trainings starting in the capital of Thailand, Bangkok. Working in partnership with the Thai Ministry of Education's Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE), the aim was to equip youth with the necessary first aid skills and confidence to help their families, communities and people in need during disasters and emergencies.

The goal: 5,000 young people (100 students per Bangkok's 50 districts) freshly trained in CPR and choking first aid, each passing a post-training test.

### Phase 1: teacher training (October 2014 to April 2015)

While a wide rollout of CPR and choking first aid trainings for ONIE students was scheduled for 2015, there were concerns around the lack of available certified, confident trainers<sup>3</sup>.

To address this gap, the Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau started by approaching the Bangkok provincial office of the ONIE, with the goal of training ONIE teachers in each of the 50 Bangkok districts. Once certified, these teachers would be able to transfer first aid knowledge to their students.

From October 2014 to April 2015, the Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau facilitated a series of intensive two-day workshops for 153 teachers across ONIE school districts.

The training focused on theory – including the basic human body system, vital signs, CPR, choking first aid, the recovery position and practicing on a dummy – and developing key teaching skills, including demonstration using a dummy, and preparing a teaching plan and materials.

### Phase 2: rolling out youth trainings (May to September 2015)

To formalize the initiative, and to ensure collaboration and resource-sharing among Bangkok's districts, the Thai Red Cross Society sought the support of the Director of Bangkok's ONIE and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU addressed the need to develop first aid capacity across Bangkok's districts, the approach of equipping school teachers to train and empower students, the objectives, activities and equipment.

*The Thai Red Cross Society has partnered for a number of years with the Thai Ministry of Education's Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE), a government office focused on serving people who lack opportunity in education. Partnering with ONIE allows the Thai Red Cross Society's Youth Bureau to reach disadvantaged youth, a key target group.*

With the MoU signed and all districts equipped with CPR dummies, the one-day CPR and choking first aid trainings were then conducted across Bangkok from May to September 2015. A total of 50 trainings, with 100 young participants each, were carried out.

To support the trainings, the Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau provided CPR dummies, training handbooks, certificates and a Thai Red Cross Society staff member certified in first aid for each session. In addition to supervising the trainings, the Thai Red Cross Society Youth Bureau provided ongoing support and monitoring outside the classroom.

Participating ONIE districts were responsible for the planning and organizing of the workshops (including budgets and administration), coordinating their own communication, and managing the sharing of resources with neighbouring districts, for example CPR dummies and other teaching materials.



Thai Red Cross Youth volunteers demonstrate chest compressions for 'unresponsive' casualties. The expectation of the trainings was not that participants would be experts on CPR and choking, but that they would have an enhanced spirit of volunteerism, know how to get help (by calling 1669) and how to provide correct information to the call center, while providing basic first aid and CPR in the event someone's breathing or heartbeat has stopped.

<sup>3</sup> In 2011, the need to increase the number of certified trainers was highlighted by teachers who participated in a first aid and healthcare training course. In the follow up surveys, the teachers expressed that while they were equipped with the theory and confidence to apply first aid themselves (such as stopping bleeding and preventing shock, dressing, bone and joint blessing, patient transfer, CPR and choking), they lacked the confidence to properly train their students. In the post-training surveys, a majority of teachers asked Thai Red Cross Society to organize more training, particularly in CPR and choking.





Certified trainers show how to mark the point under their diaphragms for conducting the Heimlich maneuver. Each training required 5-10 teachers (based on the effective teaching ratio of 1 teacher to 10 students)

## Results

- 153 teachers, from ONIE schools across Bangkok's 50 districts, newly certified in CPR and choking first aid (as well as several participants from the provincial office).
- More than 5,000 youth volunteers trained in CPR and choking first aid (representing a doubling of the original target of 50 youth in each of the 50 districts).
- A strengthened relationship between the Thai Red Cross Society and Bangkok's ONIE network.
- A strengthened network between Thai Red Cross Society's Youth Bureau and youth volunteers from Bangkok's ONIE schools.
- Enhanced relationships between teachers from across Bangkok ONIE schools.
- Greater knowledge, skills and confidence of certified trainers in conducting CPR and choking first aid training.
- Official recognition: On 27 January 2015, approximately 600 Bangkok ONIE youth volunteers (from the total 5,375 who completed the CPR and choking training) represented the Bangkok ONIE districts in Red Cross Youth Founding Day, demonstrating CPR in front of Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsawali.

*"Please organize more trainings like this"*

Teacher training participant

*"Thank you for a good training program!"*

Teacher training participant

*"I'm glad to have more knowledge on CPR and choking first aid, so that I can assist in an emergency. I have shared what I learned with my co-workers as well."*

Youth volunteer



On the evening of 17 August 2015, a bombing at Bangkok's Erawan shrine killed 20 persons and injured over 125 others. A report noted that a ONIE student from Bangsue district, who was recently trained on CPR and choking first aid, was at the scene and, together with the professional rescue team, helped an injured victim. The injured victim he assisted survived.



Youth volunteers demonstrate CPR techniques in front of Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsawali at Red Cross Youth Founding Day

## Challenges

- **Securing participation:** Taking part in the trainings diverted teachers from their everyday work and also put a burden on ONIE schools, which were required to use their own budget to cover the cost of involvement. It was a challenge to convince some school directors to agree and nominate teachers to participate.
- **Teacher turnover:** Teachers (certified trainers) who led the CPR and choking first aid trainings had other responsibilities and, as a result of being over-stretched, some discontinued participation.
- **Monitoring:** It was necessary to set up a system to follow whether participating teachers carried out training with students and also whether they required any support.
- **Limited resources:** A small number of districts did not have a sufficient number of trained teachers and/or practice dummies. This presented a challenge; however, to address issue the Youth Bureau trained additional local teachers to support the certified trainers and also lent out CPR dummies.

## Lessons Learned & Recommendations

The Thai Red Cross Society identified the following key lessons that may inform National Societies wishing to conduct similar programs:

- It is very important to provide ongoing support to participating teachers, from curriculum planning, to selecting and booking a venue, to completing a training evaluation. In this case, the Thai Red Cross Society's Youth Bureau provided assistance to resolve any problems which arose throughout the training period and invested effort in mentoring and coaching, enhancing teamwork and staff engagement.
- A monitoring and evaluation process is a key element in ensuring teachers have the support they need, but also to check that trainings are carried out as intended. Furthermore, an evaluation system is beneficial for those monitoring the trainings to share their experiences, learnings, challenges/problems and solutions with the Thai Red Cross Society team. This contributes to continuous improvement of the master trainer team and first aid programming.
- The skills and confidence of certified trainers may be greatly increased by giving individuals the opportunity to conduct training more than once in their own district, in addition to helping out in other districts.
- An experienced trainer should accompany a new trainer for the first few workshops, before letting the trainer conduct a training by himself/ herself.
- Social media, such as Facebook, is useful to connect participating teachers and students, as well as to communicate with the public. The Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau team posted to their [Facebook page](#) and also encouraged participating ONIE school districts to update and promote their activities through Facebook, to inspire other districts to implement the roll-out<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> The Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau's Facebook page posted updates during the roll out of trainings: <https://www.facebook.com/TRCYVolunteer/>

<sup>5</sup> During the project, teachers suggested organizing CPR and choking first aid training annually, and also designing and conducting trainings with senior citizen groups (including ONIE students who are senior citizens and also senior citizens living in communities with a contact point via the village chief and/or village health volunteer).

- It is important to secure agreement and commitment from the main stakeholders – establishing clear responsibilities and expectations – at the outset of the project. An MoU with the key decision-maker (in this case, the Director of Bangkok's ONIE districts), and parties is key.
- It is vital to forge strong, cooperative relationships between and within the main stakeholder groups (in this case, within the network of ONIE districts and between the Thai Red Cross Society and the ONIE network). This will ensure clear lines of communication and sharing of information, but also, the support structure will also help mitigate teacher turnover (teaches discontinuing their participation due to difficulty of managing workload).

## Looking Ahead

Following the success of the project in 2015, the Director of Bangkok ONIE endorsed further CPR and choking first aid training in 2016, encouraging the districts to roll out the training to other student groups, including senior citizens<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, the Thai Red Cross Society's Youth Bureau is continuing to regularly organize sessions to train and update the skills and knowledge of the Thai Red Cross Society youth volunteer network. In 2016, the Youth Bureau plans to approach all Institute of Physical Education and Sport schools in Thailand to run CPR & choking first aid training, using a similar model.

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 Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/trcy.volunteer/>



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