PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2021

WS103

LESSONS FOR PREPAREDNESS: IS THERE A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS?

| BACKGROUND

The global health community has been actively preparing for large-scale epidemics and pandemics for many years, often saying it was a “matter of when, not if.” The SARS epidemic, 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, and West Africa Ebola epidemic have served as reminders of this threat, resulting in global action and commitment to cooperation through high-level meetings and resolutions, including the 2018 Prince Mahidol Conference’s “A Call to Action on Making the World Safe from the Threats of Emerging Diseases.” The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that even with these preparedness efforts and investments, national responses can vary widely. Some countries were better able to leverage their previous preparedness efforts and investments and managed to rapidly implement successful public health response interventions and adapt existing systems. The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board has found that preparedness and subsequent resilience of societies can be broken down to five necessary and interconnected components, including responsible leadership, engaged citizens, agile systems, sustained financing and robust governance. The ongoing response to COVID-19 has provided a wealth of information and insight on how preparedness can be improved, recognizing that there will continue to be future threats of this nature.

Along the human dimension, preparedness requires both 1) responsive leadership that is based on transparent use of evolving evidence, a multisectoral, whole of society approach and a commitment to equity and social protection, and also 2) an engaged civil society that protect the vulnerable and keep leadership accountable. In addition, dependable and sustained financing (domestic and international) at the scale required for prevention and preparedness is critical to ensure the systems, human resources and commodities are planned and accessible when needed. Finally, preparedness requires having agile systems that can address the emergence of pathogens with pandemic potential; support open and transparent sharing of information on outbreaks and similar events; facilitate R&D and access to medical countermeasures; provide surge capacity for clinical and other essential supportive services; and provide social protection and safeguard the vulnerable.

The right metrics can help a country to track their progress and the gaps in its national preparedness systems and guide domestic and external investments. However, existing preparedness indices have failed to provide an accurate picture of national preparedness and to predict countries’ response capabilities and resilience to global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

This webinar will examine the lessons learned from COVID-19 to date with regards to preparedness and how these lessons can be applied by practitioners, policy makers, and community leaders.

| OBJECTIVES

This session will explore the following topics:

- How can leadership and governance structures for preparedness be transformed to facilitate early decisive action by leaders, ensure the transparent use of evidence, and promote a multisectoral, whole of society approach to health emergency preparedness and response?
- How can leadership be responsive to communities and promote trust and equity?
- How can financing for preparedness be reformed so that it is sustainable, responsive, reliable and is available on the scale necessary to ensure that the critical components of preparedness are in place, both at the national and global level?
- What measures can be taken to ensure systems are more agile and to promote better coordination at the national, regional and global levels so that we improve early alert and information sharing; facilitate research and development, manufacturing, deployment and allocation of countermeasures; and strengthen supply chains?
- How can we adequately measure progress on these dimensions of preparedness?



Panelist

HH Tunku Intan Safinaz

Chairwoman

Malaysian Red Crescent Society
Malaysia

Her Highness Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz

Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz was born to HRH the late Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Tuanku Bahiyah; the Sultan and Sultanah of Kedah, Malaysia. The Sultanate of Kedah is one of the nine hereditary royal houses in Malaysia, forming part of the constitutional monarchy in the country.

She is currently the elected Chairperson of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) and began her mandate in July 2018 and is also the first female to lead this humanitarian organisation. She has held the position as Chairperson of the Kedah branch of the society for the past 15 years. The Malaysian Red Crescent Society is a humanitarian organisation formed over 70 years ago and has been an affiliate member of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) since 1963. It is a voluntary organisation and an auxiliary to the public authority in Malaysia.

As a firm believer in community development and in strengthening the role of civil society, she left her position in Sime Darby, a Malaysian multinational to focus her attention on community-based programs in her home state of Kedah, Malaysia. She formed a charitable foundation in 1996, the Sultanah Bahiyah Foundation, named after her late mother the Sultanah of Kedah. As the Chairperson, the foundation aims to provide education, health, community development and entrepreneurship support to individuals and organisations within the state.

Tunku Puteri was commissioned as the commander of the Territorial Army regiment in Kedah in 2007 and holds the rank of Brigadier General. She is currently the commander of the regiment in Penang and is the first and only female in this position. Given her commitment to volunteerism in the military, she is the proud recipient of the honorary maroon beret and is also the first female to be thus honoured.

Tunku Puteri was appointed as Royal Fellow to the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development at the National University of Malaysia in 2007. She is also the royal patron on the committee of the Langkawi Geopark, a UNESCO accreditation for the unique geological and sustainable ecosystem of the islands of Langkawi in Kedah. This project is a collaboration between the state and federal government agencies with the National University of Malaysia.

Tunku Puteri graduated from the University of Sussex with a B.A. in Politics from the School of African and Asian Studies. Committed to the principles of humanitarian work and volunteerism, she has strived to contribute towards a more dynamic relationship between government, the private sector and civil society.