

Intervention by Mr. Chinchai Cheecharoen, President of ICSW-SEAP
15th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and Development
“Strengthening Family Resilience and Solidarity:
Braving the Adversity and Adapting to the New Normal”
21 September 2020

1. Crisis can transform to an opportunity. In 1929, the Great Depression was a severe worldwide economic downturn that took place in the United States. Hence, the Social Security law was enacted. In 1997, a Tom-yum-Kung crisis broke out in south East Asia, and the financial organization set a priority to Social Safety Nets. In 2019, the COVID- 19 pandemic, an ongoing crisis, affects vastly to economic, to employment, to tourist industry and others. However, it is good for the global environment. The situation allows members of families stay together at home. Anyhow, how to stay resilient and be able to fight against problems.

2. ICSW is concerned about the pandemic crisis and has written an article about it and also organized a seminar in different regions. The South East Asia and the Pacific region (SEAP) have organized a preparatory meeting among ICSW member organizations on Friday 18 September 2020. There are some interesting comments as follows:
 - 2.1 It is such a comfort that the infected rate and the death rate from the COVID-19 pandemic in this region of South East Asia is far less than other regions. One of the reasons is attributed to the culture of living and family institution in this region that they look after each other.

 - 2.2 The COVID-19 crisis has promoted the welfare development in many countries by providing more welfare to their citizens. Recognize the importance of Legal frameworks and the COVID response especially on Social Transfers, Social Protection and Social Assistance and guidelines for creating social welfare system including stable social protection measures to accommodate all groups of people in post COVID-19 era.

 - 2.3 Impact of COVID-19 affects many people into facing economic turmoil having lost or being at risk of losing their income and livelihoods. The impact on economic contributes greatly to anxiety, stress, mental health problems and suicidal including substance abuse, and crime. We must give special importance to child, person with disability, elderly, homeless and other vulnerable groups. Caring for people living in Institutional system and the role of community participation

2.4 The role of NGOs and the impact of COVID-19 to the NGO sector must be promoted and supported.

2.5 Support from the state for family's resilience by empowering families to be able to function. To prepare themselves, to build strong relationship and to join in family activities and to seek for useful tools, such as learning equipment, working at home, and free internet provider.

2.6 Family relationship among family members, arguing, misunderstanding, additional burden in caring children for learning at home, or even problem caused by people living around the house, such as domestic violence. Government must intervene and take care of such problem. Fund should be invested to help get the families through the situation and get even stronger in post COVID-19 situation

3. Lastly, the COVID-19 situation is challenging to ASEAN member states to build Characteristic and Elements of ASEAN Socio Culture Community Blueprint 2025 on Resilience to become true and provide ASEAN Strategic Framework on Social Welfare and Development 2021-2025 to support more family projects, not only in cash , but also in strengthening family role, and participation from civil society, NGOs as well as cooperation from various sectors. Trusting that many agencies will be interested in and give collaboration as a role model with good practice for other regions.

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