



REGIONAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER
South East Asia & the Pacific
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Letter from the Regional President

Dear members and partners,

We hope 2012 has kicked off to a good start for all of us.

We also hope that in 2012 this newsletter will become a better outreach tool to share practices, key initiatives, commentaries that will help to improve the lives of people.

In this newsletter, we feature brief highlights of key initiatives by some of our member organisations, like the New Zealand Council of Social Services and Social Development Partners, Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) and the National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT). I thank them for putting in the time to share their efforts and stories.

It was my honor to represent ICSW in January at the Civil Society Conference on on the work done by SEAP on the Social Protection Floor Initiative at the ASEAN GO-NGO. This Civil Society Conference was preparatory to the UN Committee on Social Development that sat in New York from Jan 30th to Feb 10th. More details are given in this newsletter.

This edition of the newsletter also features publications for the Asia-Pacific region and provides updates on upcoming conferences with regards to social welfare. As always, we welcome any articles or latest developments in social welfare from your respective countries and/or organisation for our next edition of the newsletter.

It is time for elections within ICSW and SEAP. We need those who are willing to serve to step up and be nominated for Regional President, Regional Vice-President and Treasurer's positions. A notice will be sent to fully paid members to be part of this process.

Once again thank you for the support, for staying with ICSW and most importantly for the work you did in 2011.

We look forward to hearing from you.

*Braema Mathiapparanam
Regional President (SEAP)*

Bridging the gap to poverty eradication – the SPFI

ICSW presented a statement focused on poverty eradication to the UN Commission for Social Development. The Commission examines a subject over a period of two years, with 2012 being the second year for poverty eradication. ICSW's statement can be found in all UN languages at this [link](#).

Braema Mathiapparanam, ICSW Regional president of Southeast Asia and Pacific, presented on "Bridging the gap to poverty eradication – the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPFI)" at the UN Commission for Social Development in New York earlier this month. To view her presentation, please click [here](#).

"Pathways to poverty eradication: Civil society perspective 2012" is a declaration put together by civil society representatives. Please click [this link](#) for further reading.

United Nations World Youth Report

2011 was the International Youth Year. This report was launched on 6th of February 2012 in New York by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). According to [the article](#) published on the event, "the report underlines the social impact of unemployment on youth which includes difficulty in securing independent housing and also accommodations in general, the delay in establishing a family and the lack of participation of young people in the life of society."

The report reveals that young people are worried about the quality and relevance of their education, as mentioned by Amadou, a 24-year-old man from Senegal: "Today it should be easier to find a job because our generation is the most educated but there is an inadequacy between the training offered and the needs of the labour market."

"Today we have the largest generation of young people the world has ever known," said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. "They are demanding their rights and a greater voice in economic and political life. We need to pull the UN system together like never before to support a new social contract of job-rich economic growth. Let us start with young people."

The report has been published in the form of an interactive website. To read the report, click [here](#).

Initiatives by members across the region

This segment covers brief highlights from our member organisations across the region namely, the New Zealand Council of Social Services and Social Development Partners, Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) and the National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT).

1) The NZ Council of Social Services and Social Development Partners

A message from Tina Reid,

It has become trite to say that the only constant is change, but that is very much how it feels in New Zealand community sector. The last year has been very demanding, with government funding cuts and reprioritisation creating a changing and challenging environment, and all other funding sources under increased pressure.

In this environment, our work as umbrella groups finding ways to connect, strengthen capacity and advocate for the sector is more important than ever. Based on our understanding that relationships and partnerships are the core of our work to achieve our goals, we are planning for a number of initiatives this year: Advocacy, conferences and events and social enterprises.

Advocacy: in co-operation with a number of other national organisations we developed a joint briefing paper for a new Government at the end of 2011. This calls on the Government to focus on:

- the role of community organisations as critical to delivery of social and community services*
- support for the sector's history of innovation*
- support for a strong funding environment for community organisations*

This will be followed up with meetings with new Ministers by up to four Chief Executives of national organisations. Our experience is that this collaborative approach to emphasise common messages about the community sector is very useful in establishing strong relationships, and clearly demonstrates our ability to work together across diverse organisations.

Conferences and events: Opportunities for community organisations to come together and share experiences, to learn from each other and external speakers are very valuable when there is so much change happening, and we will continue to co-operate in a number of conferences for the sector.

We are planning two conferences related to use of ICT in the sector: with Microsoft to host Connecting Communities in Christchurch and Wellington, and to repeat a ConnectingUp New Zealand conference in Auckland, both about increasing ICT capacity and capability in the sector. We are also promoting and supporting the not for profit sector conference in Wellington in February, aimed at managers and governance members.

Social enterprise is an increasingly important agenda in our sector, and our experience with bringing TechSoup to New Zealand over the last three years has provided us very useful experience. This year we are actively involved in developing

a stronger agenda to develop opportunities to grow the social enterprise activities in New Zealand.

2) Malaysian Rehabilitation Council (MCR)

The MCR has three key programmes this year. First up is the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Rights' Awareness Roadshow. The objective of the roadshow is to raise the awareness on the rights of PWDs based on the *Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and *Persons with Disabilities Act 2008* across Malaysia. For details on dates of the roadshow, please refer to Annex A.

MCR is also organizing music therapy for PWDs in collaboration with Rotary Club Bandar Utama Dream Centre under the VSA programmes. The objectives of the programme include musical development of PWDs, public awareness of PWD talent through performances and overall community development. Programme details are also available in Annex A.

Lastly, MCR is improving PWD rights via the Abilympics Programme. The overall objective of the Abilympics programme is to improve vocational skills of PWDs. For more elaboration, please refer to Annex A.

3) National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT)

Recently, Thailand suffered from one of its worst flooding in decades. The NCSWT was busy with relief efforts for flood victims across Bangkok. The NCSWT was actively involved in relief efforts ranging from visiting and interacting with underprivileged elderly women to persons with disabilities. Financially supported by organisations such as United Way Worldwide, OMNOVA Foundation USA and Praxair Foundation, relief bags, daily necessities and food were distributed to victims affected by the floods in Bangkok.

The NCSWT also donated cash relief to flood victims in three provinces: Saraburi, Sukhothai, and Phitsanulok. Additionally, the NCSWT donated cash relief of 100,000 baht to Buddhist temples in 7 provinces in the central plain: Lop Buri, Nakhon Nayok, Chai Nat, Saraburi, Sing Buri, Suphan Buri and Uthai Thani province. 100,000 baht was also donated to provide meals for evacuees, to the rector of Thammasat University, which served as a temporary relief shelter. It also donated 90,000 baht to flood victims for 1,000 disaster relief bags in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province and another 112,500 baht was donated for 500 meals to flood victims on several days. NCSWT also gave 36,000 baht to male prisoners in Nakhon Ratchasima province for 400 disaster relief bags.

For a detailed report, please refer to Annex B.

Publications on the region

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, Population Policy Tracking and Monitoring (AFPPD) is a coordinating body of National Committees of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and Parliamentary Committees dealing with population and development issues working to generate support and perpetuate cooperation among Asian parliamentarians in the area of population and development, and related fields.

The Policy Tracking and Monitoring Unit of AFPPD maintains a database of population, and sexual and reproductive health policies in cooperation with UNFPA. It offers bi-monthly updates on the latest developments in this area within the Asia-Pacific region. For the latest update, click [here](#). To subscribe to their mailing list, please refer to the top right hand corner of the webpage, where your email address input will be required.

Human Development Reports - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has a useful online resource bank with country reports within different regions, such as the Asia Pacific. Recent reports are listed below.

The report on *Cambodia* focuses on climate change and its effects on the rural communities with regards to long term development objectives. Please find the country report on Cambodia [here](#).

The report on *Vietnam* provides an insightful reading into the factors behind human development. Please find the country report on Vietnam [here](#).

"New report on the status of the rights of older persons" by the United Nations, published in December 2011 is a publication that discusses the demographic, economic, social, civil and human rights of elderly globally. Click [here](#) to read the report.

[Pensions at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2011](#) is not available for free but it aims to inform debates on retirement-income systems with a special focus on countries in the Asia-Pacific region. This is relevant for organisations working and advocating for pension reforms.

Pensions are a major policy issue in developed and developing countries alike. However, pension reform is challenging and controversial because it involves long-term planning by governments faced with numerous short-term pressures. It often provokes heated ideological debates and, sometimes, street protests. Countries can learn valuable lessons from others' pension systems and their experiences of retirement-income reforms. However, national pension systems are very complicated, involving much institutional, technical, and legal detail. Consequently, international comparisons are very difficult to undertake, making it impossible to transfer policy lessons between countries. Hence, this publication aims to fill this gap, with a particular focus on countries in the Asia/Pacific regions

This study combines rigorous analysis with clear, easy-to-understand presentations of empirical results. It does not advocate any particular kind of pension system or type of reform. The goal is to inform debates on retirement-income systems.

[Society at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2011](#) is the second edition of Society at a Glance Asia-Pacific, the biennial OECD overview of social indicators. This report addresses the growing demand for quantitative evidence on social well-being and its trends. This report includes a special chapter on unpaid work. It also provides a guide to

help readers in understanding the structure of social indicators and a summary. Part II reports on social indicators, including chapters covering the general context, self-sufficiency, equity, health, and social cohesion.

More information can be found at the OECD [website](#).

The UNESCAP's [Early view of Asia-Pacific population journal, Vol 26 \(4\)](#) features a report on "mobility as development strategy: the case of Pacific islands" in its Dec 30th 2011 issue.

Upcoming conferences

(1) ASEAN Seminar on Unemployment Insurance, Income Security Measures and Active Labour Market Policies. Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, 20-22 March 2012

The Seminar will share experiences and knowledge, raise awareness, and build synergies between initiatives to promote UI, as well as other income security measures and active labour market policies (ALMPs) to support the unemployed and vulnerable workers in the ASEAN.

Ministries of Labour, Social Security Office, Workers' and Employers' Organizations of ASEAN member States will be invited to attend this Seminar.

It is expected that the meeting will stimulate the adoption of an ASEAN Declaration to promote and implement the Social Protection Floor (SPF), as well as feed the discussion regarding the possible adoption of recommendations on the SPF during the 2012 International Labour Conference.

(2) The Seventh Annual Social Work Network Conference (SWAN), 30 and 31 March 2012, Liverpool Hope University

For more details on the conference, please visit this [link](#).

Call for proposals: We would particularly welcome contributions that consider: "Whatever happened to anti-racist social work?", Transgendered issues in social work and social care, building alliances for resistance, social work and social movements, social work and women's oppression - and any other relevant social work or social care issue.

Proposals should be 300 words or less and should indicate the aims of the session, the style of presentation and the content. Please include a cover sheet with your name, email and contact details. Please submit your proposal to both Laura Penketh (penketl@hope.ac.uk) and Nigel Kelleher (nigel.kelleher@liv-coll.ac.uk).

(3) Inaugural AsiaEngage Event – Regional Conference on Higher Education-Industry-Community Engagement in Asia. Forging meaningful partnerships, 7th to 9th May 2012, The National University of Malaysia (UKM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Call for research/papers: Be a part of this important discussion on [Forging Meaningful Partnerships Across Asia](#), and submit to us the abstract to your latest paper or research on good practices in community engagement based on any of the following themes:

- Climate Change, Environment & Community Development
- Social Enterprise & Community Development
- Health & Community Development
- Education & Community Development
- Youth & Under-served Communities

Presenters may comprise academics, students or social responsibility practitioners from NGOs, foundations, industry & government agencies. Deadline: 1st of March 2012.

More information about the conference, submission of paper abstracts and registration for participation can be accessed at the conference [microsite](#).

(4) 4th International Consortium for Social Development-Asia Pacific (ICSD-AP), June 27-30 2012, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

These meetings aim to discuss "Social Development Strategies beyond the MDGs 2015." Information about the conference can be found in this [link](#). This meeting is co-organised by the Indonesian Council for Social Welfare.

Interested SEAP members, please send an email to dkaur@icsw.org with name, designation and organisation. Your registration will be forwarded to the organisers.

(5) Social Work Social Development 2012: Action and Impact, 8-12 July 2012, Stockholm Sweden

Please visit the conference [website](#) for more details.

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As always, we are keen to hear from our readers and welcome contributions. Best wishes, Braema Mathiapparanam, President, South East Asia & Pacific Region and Dilpreet Kaur, [dkaur@icsw.org](mailto:dkaur@icsw.org), Programme Officer, South East Asia & Pacific. Website: [www.icsw.org](http://www.icsw.org)

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Please distribute this newsletter as widely as possible.

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## **Annex A**

### **MALAYSIAN COUNCIL FOR REHABILITATION – 2012 PROGRAMMES**

#### **1. Persons with Disabilities Rights' Awareness Roadshow**

The objective of the roadshow is to raise the awareness of community on the rights of PWDs based on *convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and *Persons with Disabilities Act 2008*.

This roadshow will be organised via zones as follows:-

| <b>Zone</b>                                        | <b>Date</b>                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| East Coast - Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan          | 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2012    |
| Sabah                                              | 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2012      |
| Sarawak                                            | 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2012     |
| Central - Selangor, Kuala Lumpur & Negeri Sembilan | 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2012 |

The deliberation from these roadshows will be represented at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Rehabilitation International Congress, held in Incheon, Korea from 24<sup>th</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2012.

#### **2. The VSA Programmes**

MCR will collaborate with the Rotary Club Bandar Utama Dream Centre in organising the music therapy programme for the PWDs. The objectives of the programme are:-

- i. Musical development
  - To provide PWDs with musical guidance and hone their skills for self-sustaining and independent living.
- ii. Public awareness
  - To showcase PWDs talent through various performances to bring awareness to the public that the PWDs are gifted in many other talents.
- iii. Community development
  - To promote the awareness of the necessity to improve and extend facilities to PWDs in order to help and make our community a better place for them.

It will include the following skills in the programme teaching:-

- a. Instrument playing
- b. Lyric/song writing
- c. Singing/vocalizing
- d. Composition
- e. Music and movement

- f. Performance
- g. Music imagery
- h. Musically assisted counseling

### **3. The Abilympics Programme**

The objective of the Abilympics programme is to improve the vocational skills of PWDs:-

- i. To establish skills training programmes/centres/workshops based on the Abilympics contest skills category on the social partnership approach between institutions – including the Social Welfare Department, government agencies and educational institutions which offer vocational school etc. It aims to provide PWDs with the vocational and social skills or refresh previously acquired skills.
- ii. To collaborate and to get a recognition from **Department of Skills Development** (Ministry of Human Resources) in developing the above-mentioned skills training.
- iii. Use specialised educational tools to help PWDs to gain work skills and practical experience to integrate into the labour market. The Cultural Center, University of Malaya had already offered their expertise and the specialist would like to conduct short/long time courses for silk painting skill.
- iv. To organise an art exhibition to showcase the PWDs talent in art related skills with various art institutions.

## **Annex B**

### **NCSWT Relief Program for Flood Victims**

Thailand is currently suffering its worst flooding in decades. The tropical storm “Nock-ten” caused heavy rainfall in North and North-eastern Thailand and flash flooding in many provinces beginning in late part of July. The flooding started in the north of the country and became more serious as the flood waters moved through the central plains of Thailand towards Bangkok. Almost all central provinces are now affected by the flood. The flood had devastating effects on millions of people and households across the country.

The National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT) plays a significant role in helping to provide relief to the flood victims as follows:

On Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> December 2011, NCSWT President, Col. Khunying Asanee Saovapap, together with Board members and staff went to visit the Home for the Elderly for disadvantaged women at Bang Khae District in Bangkok to welcome them back to the Home after being sent away to relief shelter during the flood. Through the kindness of United Way Worldwide and OMNOVA Foundation, USA in supporting the fund, we distributed relief bags to 127 elderly women and provided them hot lunch and entertained them with songs and games.



On 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2011, NCSWT President, Board Members and staff went to the disabled flood victims’ shelter and distributed 150 relief bags containing canned food, medicine, drinking water and daily living necessities for 150 disabled people and their families at Father Ray Foundation in Redemptorist Vocational School for people with disabilities in Pattaya, Chon Buri province. The Foundation staff and the flood victims showed their appreciation since only a few visitors came to donate food and relief packages. Thanks to OMNOVA Foundation for their valuable contributions of US\$ 10,000.



On 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2011, NCSWT President and Board Members including staff took a truck load of food, drinking water, rice bags, necessary items and blankets to

Wat Yom village in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province, 90 kilometres from Bangkok. 897 people from 700 households affected by the flood came to receive relief bags. We also provided hot meals for lunch on the same afternoon to everyone. We are thankful for the kindness of the United Way Worldwide and Praxair Foundation, USA in providing the financial support to assist flood victims.



On 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT donated cash relief of 300,000 baht to flood victims in 3 provinces: Saraburi, Sukhothai, and Phitsanulok province.

On 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT donated cash relief of 100,000 baht to Buddhist temples in 7 provinces in the central plain: Lop Buri, Nakhon Nayok, Chai Nat, Saraburi, Sing Buri, Suphan Buri and Uthai Thani province.



On 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT gave 100,000 baht to the rector of Thammasat University, temporary relief shelter, for meals to evacuees.



On 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT donated 90,000 baht to flood victims for 1,000 disaster relief bags, in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province and also gave 112,500 baht for 500 meals to flood victims on 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of October.



On 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT gave 36,000 baht to male prisoners in Nakhon Ratchasima province for 400 disaster relief bags.



On 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT contributed cash relief support of 80,000 baht to 4 Buddhist temples at 20,000 baht per temple in Amphoe Mueang, Pathum Thani province.

On 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2011, NCSWT provided support to families suffered from disaster with the amount of 36,000 baht to 24 families at 1,500 per family in Rayong province.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2011, NCSWT gave flood victims in 2 districts in Phichit province the amount of 180,000 baht for 750 disaster relief bags.

On 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2011, National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT) provided cash relief of 330,000 baht to support flood victims in 11 provinces at 30,000 baht per province: 6 provinces in the North Region, Nakhon Sawan, Nan, Phrae, Lamphun, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son; 3 provinces in the Northeastern Region, Nong Khai, Udon Thani and Nakhon Phanom; 2 provinces in the Central Plain Region, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya and Ang Thong.

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