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International Council on Social Welfare

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Working Together for a Better ICSW



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Dear ICSW members, friends, and interested readers,

Welcome to the October 2022 issue of our newsletter

One of our advantages is that we are a knowledge-based organization. Since 1928, working hand in hand with IASSW and IFSW, we have contributed rigorous and participatory inputs to social welfare debates. From the outset our debates and contributions have been global and local, as shown by the recent book on social welfare and digitization, which involved experts selected on the basis of the expertise of our regional presidents, whom we asked to contribute to this process in 2021 (López Peláez, A., Suh, S.M., Zelenev, S. (eds.). 2023. Digital Transformation and Social Well-Being. Promoting an inclusive society. London: Routledge).

One of the pillars of ICSW reflected in its Constitution that it is non-political and non-sectarian. First and foremost, we are concentrating on issues of social welfare, social justice, social work—they cover a very broad territory indeed. We should concentrate on the advantages and risks of people's well-being, including digital aspects. In this sense, in an organization with 100 years of history, we must remain alert to the immediate risks that affect us (Covid-19, food security, humanitarian aid and digitalization). But we must also analyze the challenges in the medium and long term.

In this month of October 2022, we can share two major results of our collective work. First, the world congress in Seoul, which is challenging our organization. Secondly, our global assembly, which will also be held during this congress, and which is a turning point to improve our internal cohesion, our organizational renewal and also becomes an occasion to discuss our present and future projects.

In this regard, I would like to thank all ICSW members who are working to contribute to the achievement of our objectives.

Finally, I would also like to thank the contributions of members from the South East Asia-Pacific region, which enrich our perspective on social welfare.

Thank you all for your commitment to ICSW.

Take care and stay healthy!

Social Protection Simulator

Discover the impact of social protection on poverty, inequality and consumption in Asia and the Pacific

ICSW focuses on Social Protection in order to reduce inequality, to create equality and life assurance for people throughout their lives. At the 2014 Joint World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development in Melbourne, the meeting announced the Melbourne Declaration on Social Protection. Currently, ESCAP has developed a Social Protection Simulator in the Asia-Pacific region, which is a very useful tool in driving this field.

The ESCAP Social Protection Simulator estimates the impact of introducing social protection scheme on poverty, inequality and consumption. The impact can be estimated for rural and urban households, as well as for different income groups and family configurations. It also computes the cost of simulated programmes, providing different illustrative options to expand fiscal space for social protection.

Users can design social protection schemes in a country by setting parameters related to eligibility criteria, coverage levels and benefit amounts. The Simulator allows the user to analyze one scheme at a time or to combine different schemes and build a customized social protection package.

In addition to simulating the impact in one country, users can compare social protection schemes of their choice within and across different countries.

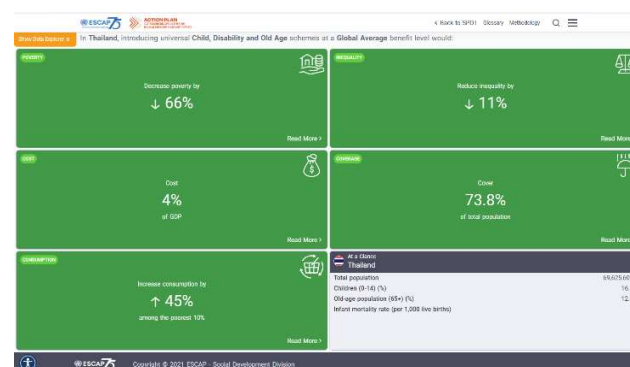
- Features child, disability and old age benefits (*The tool includes two types of schemes: inclusive programmes organised around the lifecycle (children, older persons, and persons with disabilities); and means-tested household programmes*)
- Includes 19 countries across Asia-Pacific (Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Türkiye, Viet Nam)
- Builds on Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (2015-2020)

The tool:

Would you like to explore the impact of universal social protection in your selected country?

Enter the dashboard for an overview of how a comprehensive and universal social protection package could improve lives.

Choose your country: Example Thailand



The tool:

Would you like to build a custom-made social protection package and explore its impact in your selected country?

Enter the simulator to build your customized package and explore an overview of how a comprehensive and universal social protection package could improve lives.

Choose your country:

For more details:

[Simulation Landing | Social Protection \(unescap.org\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oy7jn3aTSI0>



Comparative Study on the Social Welfare Law in ASEAN

The ICSW-SEAP was a consultant in the preparation of the Comparative Study on the Social Welfare Law in ASEAN. The information obtained from the study is useful for implementation of the promotion and development of social work and social welfare in the region in the future. The results of the study are summarized as follows:

Executive Summary

The Comparative Study on the Social Welfare Law in ASEAN Project was under financial support of the ASEAN-Japan Fund on Building Social Safety Nets. The Study was initiated under the cooperation of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand and the research team from the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, Thammasat University, Thailand. The project aimed to study principle and implementation of social welfare laws in the ASEAN Member States in order to learn and compare the laws; and to provide recommendations on the improvement of those social welfare laws to make them more efficient for the ASEAN Member States whereof one intention of the three ASEAN Communities which is to initiate ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community or ASCC among Member States.

The study processes included collecting data on social welfare laws of each Member States by contacting coordinators of Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMS WD) or representative of ASEAN Member States (AMS) or other reliable secondary sources. Following the data analysis, the meeting among SOMS WD or AMS representatives were arranged

to verify information and gather feedback to be used as guidelines to improve efficacy of social welfare laws of Member States. The study reports were made in Thai and English version. The project implementation scope covered: - 1) content that was comparative study of social welfare laws in Member States; and 2) area which was the focus group meeting to learn more on the principle and implementation of social welfare of ASEAN Member which created more understanding of laws in multi dimensions and provided recommendation to improve social welfare laws of ASEAN Member States efficiently.

In the data collecting process, the study team sent out the survey form on social welfare law to 9 ASEAN Member States, excluding Thailand. There were 7 countries sent back the survey forms which were Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam. The study team then collected data of the missing countries as much as possible. After that, the workshop was arranged to fill in additional information, clarify some unclear points, and to brainstorm on the recommendation for improvement. The participants of the workshop were representatives of the 10 ASEAN Member States, included official from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand.

The study found that each of ASEAN Member States had different legal system due to background of history, religion and culture. Since the legal system was the foundation of legislation, thus, both the constitutional law and the primary law of social welfare of each Member States were studied. The data of social welfare laws were classified by categories and target groups. The comparative data among 10 countries were made in tables. The overview of the social welfare laws was listed below: -

- 1) Legal System
- 2) Constitutional Law
- 3) Primary Law
- 4) Social Welfare Laws classified by categories.
 - 4.1 Social welfare laws on education i.e. compulsory education law, compulsory religion education law for Muslim children, educational fund law, and education management law for people with disabilities
 - 4.2 Social welfare laws on healthcare i.e. health insurance law, mental health law, social security law.
 - 4.3 Social welfare laws on housing i.e. housing law, urban planning law, and housing development fund law.
 - 4.4 Social welfare laws on labor and employment i.e. labor protection law, employment law, and provident fund law.
 - 4.5 Social welfare laws on criminal justice i.e. child justice law, human trafficking prevention law, law of compensation for victim, compensation and expenses to defendants in criminal cases.
 - 4.6 Social welfare laws on other issues i.e. professional social worker law, social enterprise promotion law.
- 5) Social Welfare Laws classified by target group
 - 5.1 Social welfare law for child
 - 5.2 Social welfare law for youth
 - 5.3 Social welfare law for women
 - 5.4 Social welfare law for the disabled
 - 5.5 Social welfare law for the elderly
 - 5.6 Social welfare law for family
 - 5.7 Social welfare law for the beggar
 - 5.8 Social welfare law for human trafficking victims
 - 5.9 Social welfare law for LGBT groups
 - 5.10 Social welfare law for the poor and the destitute
 - 5.11 Social welfare law for disaster victims
 - 5.12 Social welfare law for minorities and ethnic groups i.e. law for protection of minorities and ethnic groups of Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Vietnam

- 5.13 Social welfare law for refugees
- 5.14 Social welfare law for migrants i.e. Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam had law to protect their labor working oversea
- 5.15 Social welfare law for other target groups i.e. Malaysian Care Centre Act to control emergency care centers of all group of people such as child, disabled, elderly and the poor; and Sexual Harassment Bill

The data analyzing covered overview, definitions, key contents of the law, responsible agencies, services, problems and obstacles in applying the law, and compliance with the rules, obligations and commitment to ASEAN i.e. ASEAN Human Rights Declaration – AHRD, Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN, Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community, the Brunei Declaration on Strengthening Family. Institutions: Caring for the Elderly, and Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children.

Recommendations from the study:

1. Constitution

- 1.1 There should be clear statement on welfare provision in constitutional law of each country to assure basic rights for people to receive services from the state. And, it should focus on both the target group and the emphasis on protecting rights thoroughly and fairly;
- 1.2 There should be the study of feasibility to have the ASEAN Constitution which being the central constitution under the ASEAN Charter. The ASEAN Constitution should only provide for civil justice as a fundamental right of citizen. There

should have the ASEAN Constitutional Court with the judges coming from each member country.

2. Primary Law or Fundamental Law on social welfare

Member States should be encouraged to develop primary laws or fundamental social welfare laws, especially for the systematic management of social welfare work.

3. Social welfare laws classified by categories should be reformed or amended, as followed:

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3.1 Social welfare law on education:

In order to reduce educational disparity, there should have the quality assurance law of compulsory school. The educational personnel both in rural and urban area should be equal. Scholarships should be allocated thoroughly for those who wish to pursue higher education.

3.2 Social welfare law on health care:

The ASEAN Member States should be encouraged to develop a basic public health system starting from developing a volunteer system. They should be able to create a universal health care system (UHC) that is a comprehensive health system which lead to the enactment of the Universal Health Care Act.

3.3 Social welfare law on housing:

Member States should be encouraged to develop land and housing for the poor and disadvantaged people to reduce other problems that would follow, for example, lack of suitable living environments for children and young people, living in slum area may lead to causing crime. Therefore, it was needed to have housing law for society as it is a fundamental of living.

3.4 Social welfare law on labor and employment:

The possibility of amendments or improvements of the labor laws of the Member States should be considered with the intention to create a full-fledged ASEAN Community with all types of labor between ASEAN people. There should have a transparent and efficient supervisory system consistent with democratic principles. The law or unfair contract should be revised to cover employment among ASEAN Member States:

strengthened to enact women protection laws, or at least, there should be a state policy on the protection of women's rights in accordance with the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW and Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children. In addition, the Member States should be encouraged to take into account the protection of LGBTQ rights as well;

3.5 Social welfare law on criminal justice:

The Member States should be encouraged to take into account the justice process for children and youth, the improvement of the law to guard and protect the rights of the acquire and prisoners, and the laws to protect and heal crime victims;

4.4 Social welfare laws for the disabled

The Member States should be urged to enact laws for fundamental rights in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community. This would enable efficient emigration of the disabled between the Member States in the future;

4. Social welfare classified by target groups, the recommendations is as followed:

4.1 Social welfare laws for child

The Member States should be encouraged to recognize and consider the rights of the child under the Convention on the Rights of the Child – CRC and the Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN that might still be ignored. It had to be the state policy to enact or reform child protection laws as well as to promote processes for the enforcement and monitoring of the application of child protection laws:

4.5 Social welfare laws for the elderly

Long-term quality care for the elderly should be promoted, such as local assistance centers for the elderly, a pension system for the elderly in general, especially the poor elderly and the elderly with difficulties. The elderly who were still able to work should be encouraged to have a continuous job in accordance with the Brunei Declaration on Strengthening Family Institutions: Caring for the Elderly, and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN. In addition, it was important to take into account the possible dangers that might occur to the elderly, such as abuse and crimes against the elderly.

4.2 Social welfare laws for youth

It should be discussed among the Member States to clearly determine the age of children and young people to facilitate coordination of services or benefits. More laws should be enacted to focus on and promote young volunteers and entrepreneurs;

4.6 Social welfare laws for family

The practices of domestic violence prevention laws should be promoted. There should be immediate intervention from government officials in the presence of domestic violence. Being aware of content in the social media should be raised.

4.3 Social welfare laws for women

The cooperation among members should be

The new dimensions of family law, such as single parent welfare law of the Philippines, should be introduced;

4.7 Social welfare laws for the beggar

The Member States should be understood that the beggar including forced begging, and child beggar was not a surplus of society but a vulnerable group that was consequence of social problems and/or human trafficking. A separate law should be enacted in order to have clear control, help and aid processes.

4.8 Social welfare laws for human trafficking victims

The quality of law enforcement should be improved in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and ASEAN Declaration against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children. The main problem of human trafficking was child trafficking, forced labor, and sex trade. All ASEAN countries should focus on taking legal action seriously including specify policy problems, staff related issues, and international database management problems, etc.;

4.9 Social welfare laws for LGBT group

The understanding among the ASEAN Members States should be built on not only the protection of LGBTQ rights through humanitarian principles and human dignity but also respect religious beliefs and social values.

4.10 Social welfare laws for the poor and the destitute

The Member States should be promoted to have specific laws for the poor or the destitute to help all groups of people thoroughly. In the non-Islamic countries, law called Zagat should be promoted to help the poor Muslims. Thailand had proposed a draft Zagat Fund law in the past;

4.11 Social welfare laws for disaster victims

The law on aid and heal disaster victims should be promoted. Currently, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) was aimed to build cooperation among the Member States in the situation of disaster relief from the private sector and civil society, the amendments of laws of each country should be promoted.

4.12 Social welfare laws for minorities and ethnic groups

The awareness of ethnic minorities should be raised as it was one of the major problems in many countries. The ethnic minorities were often deprived of rights and discriminated against by states and majority nationalities in their respective countries. Thus, law to protect minorities or ethnic group should be pushed forward. The monitoring system and the enforcement of such laws should be periodically assessed from the national and central bodies of the ASEAN;

4.13 Social welfare laws for refugees

The ASEAN member States should be urged to sign the Convention on the Rights of Refugees B.E. 2494 to create ASEAN cooperation in helping refugees. Thailand, one of many countries facing this problem, should start out as the first country to sign the said Convention. And to comply with the Convention, Thailand should enact the law concerning the rights and status of refugees, increase friendly procedures in taking care of refugees. If the law was unable to be enacted at the present, other law or special order should be applied the same as Indonesian Foreign Relations Law which authorized the President to issue legislation to help refugees;

4.14 Social welfare laws for migrants

Currently, most of migrants are migrant labor. The organizing of migrants should be encouraged

under the ASEAN Consensus on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers 2017, for instance, create a green-line for migrant labor at the border for quick access, save cost and fair Comprehensive social and labor protection law should cover female and male migrants in every sector to ensure that migrant workers were paid and had fair working conditions. The labor and social protection law should be effective in all sectors of work, including domestic work, service work, and seasonal agriculture. The establishment of a legal aid center for migrant workers should be included. An example could be seen in the Philippines' Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995.

5. Other Social welfare laws such as laws related to organization and personnel in social welfare sector: -

The enactment of laws to control personnel working in the social welfare profession should be promoted i.e. Social Worker Licensing to enable social workers to work in a systematic manner with international standards. The social enterprise law should be promoted as well.

“Strengthening Partnerships towards the Betterment of ASEAN”

ICSW SEAP plays an important role in the initiative and pushing forward with the ASEAN to formulate recommendations. The Recommendations on “Strengthening Partnerships towards the Betterment of ASEAN” was endorsed at the 16th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and development on 15th December 2021

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The 16th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and Development was held on 15 December 2021, via video conference. The Forum was co-chaired by Miss Ramrung Worawat, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, as SOMSWD Co-Chair, and Professor Emeritus Dr. Chanita Rukspollmuang, National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand (NCSWT), as NGO Co-Chair. The Forum was attended by approximately 150 participants, which included SOMSWD Focal Points, Government representatives, representatives from national NGOs and CSOs, academe, representatives from Plus Three countries, representatives from the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), representatives from the organisations awarded with ASEAN Outstanding Social Welfare and Development Awards (AOSWADA) representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, representatives from international organisations and UN agencies, and other delegates from Thailand. The List of Participants is attached as ANNEX 1.

2. Guided by the theme “Strengthening Partnerships towards the Betterment of ASEAN”, the Forum served as a multi-stakeholder platform and venue for the ASEAN Member States, NGOs, CSOs, private sector, academe, and relevant stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences on measures and resources needed to advance social welfare and development in ASEAN, with particular focus on building a more inclusive and resilient post-pandemic world based on the notion of leaving no one behind. The Forum was also provided an opportunity to highlight and explore roles and contributions of NGOs/CSOs and the private sector to society, particularly to the social welfare and development sector, at regional and international levels; to showcase outstanding achievements and share information on the roles and contributions of the AOSWADA Awardees 2021 to social welfare and development in their respective Member State; and to identify actionable recommendations and ways forward to improve capacity and further enhance engagements of CSOs/NGOs and the private sector in social welfare and development at the national and regional levels. The Concept Note and Programme are attached as ANNEX 2.

3. The following are the key recommendations arising from the Forum:

CSOs/NGOs:

- a. Define a common definition of CSOs/NGOs in ASEAN and conduct a survey to develop a systematic database for following up the work of CSOs/NGOs dedicated to social welfare and development at both national and regional levels (at least biennially at the national level and triennially at the regional level);
 - i. Provide bio-data on a voluntary basis
 - ii. Arrangement of ease
 - iii. Finding expert trainers
- b. Explore possibilities to establish a CSO/NGO engagement mechanism in ASEAN whose membership is open to all national CSOs/NGOs working in the field of social welfare and development in each ASEAN Member State; and promote on bringing together CSOs/NGOs as a working network in various forms at all levels in terms of target group, issues, and mutual support. This can be done through utilising existing networks or reactivating networks within the region to address current issues in a more regular manner;
- c. Promote establishment of ASEAN CSOs/NGOs and ASEAN Volunteers Network;
- d. Promote and support academic work, development and transfer of knowledge and innovations, working standards and standard operating procedures, to develop and enhance performance capacities of CSOs/NGOs. Capacity- building programs may include trainings on social work and social welfare offered by the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW); provision of training by private and public universities, especially collaboration between institutions on thematic issues;
- e. Provide support and benefits to personnel of CSOs/NGOs in terms of remuneration and entitlements to welfare services;
- f. Compile a list of AOSWADA awardees to form

alumni to serve as mentors to aspire ASEAN CSOs and NGOs;

- g. Revisit, reactivate, and update plans and networks that existed during pre- COVID-19;
- h. Improve the capacity of CSOs/NGOs to articulate ground problems, challenges, issues, through training and sharing of experience and expertise for the purpose of service, and policy consideration;
- i. Initiate dialogue at appropriate levels and support the participation of CSOs and NGOs to consider how to employ new media strategies to engage millennials in tomorrow's virtual world;
- j.

The Private sector:

- a. Support establishment, development, implementation of programs and initiatives, capacity-building, networking, and empowerment of social enterprises (SE) in ASEAN;
- b. Support the work of the ASEAN CSR Network by mainstreaming the CSR principles into policies and plans of the private sector, and expanding the membership to all ASEAN Member States, and encouraging the members to represent and advocate for CSR in the business sector in their respective Member State;
- c. Increase awareness of CSR in ASEAN by convening an ASEAN CSR Workshop on a biennial basis;
- d. Establish an ASEAN CSR Fund to support the operations of ASEAN and CSOs/NGOs in ASEAN;
- e. Encourage multinational companies to have an action plan to support the operations of ASEAN;

SOMSWD:

- a. Develop an ASEAN declaration to strengthen roles and contributions of NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors dedicated to social welfare and development in ASEAN;
- b. Enact laws in order to regularise the status and to promote and support CSOs/NGOs in each ASEAN Member State;
- c. Provide concrete policy guidance for CSOs/NGOs to participate in programs and activities that are related to social welfare and development in their respective country;
- d. Establish a Satellite Account on Non-profit and Related Institutions and Volunteer Work in order to acknowledge that CSOs/NGOs are valuable contributors to social values;
- e. Acknowledge, honour, and recognise the roles and contributions of CSOs/NGOs awarded with the AOSWADA, and encourage them to continue their work and contributions to social welfare and development in their respective country;
- f. Provide funds and/or subsidies to support the operations of CSOs/NGOs at both national and regional levels including hiring of CSOs/NGOs to work as outsourced agency for the public sector;
- g. Promote fundraising activities and provide a tax exemption and deduction incentive for persons, general public and business companies which make a donation in cash, in kind and/or in services to support the work of CSOs/NGOs;
- h. Develop a national action plan for CSOs/NGOs and a multi-layer joint action plan between the public sector and private sector at national, regional, and international levels

in keeping up with each country's policies and programs, ASEAN Community Vision and Blueprints 2025, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

- i. Encourage CSOs/NGOs to be accredited as an entity associated with ASEAN;
- j. Promote organisation of GO-NGO Forums in various ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and encourage active participation of relevant networks and ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to all GO-NGO Forums;
- k. Promote and support development of capacities of NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors dedicated to social welfare and development in ASEAN;
- l. Explore innovative and appropriate ways to engage NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors. Such engagements should not be confined within the existing formal mechanisms and processes but other alternative configurations such as an interface with SOMSWD, a SOMSWD town hall meeting, as well as other appropriate arrangements should be considered;
- m. Explore possibilities to institutionalise "SOMSWD Think Tanks" in order to meaningfully engage institutes, network of institutes or group of experts, academic institutions, social enterprises and private sector in ASEAN;
- n. Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system under SOMSWD to follow-up recommendations of each annual ASEAN GO-NGO Forum, and track the progress of engagement with NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors;
- o. Provide greater recognition for initiatives

that are led by NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors through effective communication strategies and public outreach activities;

- p. Encourage the private sector and dialogue partners to engage, contribute, and support initiatives that are led by NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors in order to ease their resource burden to engage effectively with ASEAN;

ASEAN Secretariat:

- a. Facilitate greater engagements with NGOs/CSOs, the private sector by easing the complexity of the procedure and criteria attached to existing Guidelines on Accreditation of Entities Associated with ASEAN;
- b. Develop a compendium for ASEAN engagement with NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors;
- c. Maximise the benefits of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community by encouraging effective consultations and dialogues with NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and other actors by providing accessible information on ASEAN Socio-Cultural initiatives, and promoting more effective participation in ASEAN initiatives;
- d. The recommendations are endorsed by the 16th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and Development on the Fifteenth of December in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-One (2021) for submission to 17 th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD

ASEAN TRAINING CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE



TRAINING CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE (ATCSW) is established from the proposal of Thailand as the host of 35th ASEAN Summit 2019. ATCSW is aimed to develop relevant people in social work and social welfare fields with comprehensive knowledge and skills, including, strengthening close social work collaborations in ASEAN. According to the ASEAN Way, the regional purpose is to maintain the stability of ASEAN Member States by leaving no one behind.

Mission

1. Developing training courses and curricula
2. Promote skills enhancement and knowledge sharing
3. Enhance cooperation on social work in ASEAN

CURRICULA & KM Training

In progress

1. Global Social Work and Social Welfare This curriculum provides knowledge on Global Social Work and Social Welfare theories such as Social Change, New World Order, New Normal, and etc.
2. The Protection of Children in the context of Migration This curriculum provides knowledge on the situation of labor migration in the ASEAN region, childcare, and example of children migration management

3. Capacity-Building Course This curriculum provides specific knowledge for responding to trainee needs such as Critical Thinking, Capacity building for Social Worker in COVID-19 pandemic crisis, Mass-communication of public communication for social workers and social welfare, for instance.
4. Speaking Series This speaking series will invite experienced and interesting speakers to share knowledge and experience for the public via different platforms.

In consultation for partnerships

1. Social Protection Social protection curriculum provides knowledge on Social Protection such as Legal Frameworks, Selection and Identification, Administration and so forth.
2. Human Trafficking This curriculum provides knowledge on the situation of Human Trafficking in the ASEAN region.
3. Podcast ATCSW emphasizes on sharing knowledge whether about social work and social welfare and interdisciplinary, an integrated approach.

Completed

1. Half-day forum ATCSW conducted Forum: Social Work from Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Integrated Approaches (From policy to real practices).
2. International Symposium Over a hundred of participants from different organizations and agencies both on-site and online have gained knowledge, experience, connections, introduced to the new frontier of multi-disciplinary and welfares. Captured knowledge and experiences is shared via Linktree.
3. Disaster Preparedness and Sustainable Development: The International Seminar aims to network practitioners, researchers and educators in the social work and the field

of disaster risk reduction and management for sharing best practices in crisis and disaster management focusing on sustainability and covering topics such as: Climate Change, Green Social Work, Disaster Risk Reduction and Crisis Management. We co-hosted with IASSW and GISW.

Scan for our gallery



Caring for Older Persons in Penang - Malaysia

The Penang, Malaysia model in aged care – sharing to promote International Day for Older Persons- 1 October, 2022 Theme –RESILIENCE OF OLDER PERSONS IN A CHANGING WORLD.

by Yeong Pey Jung



THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO) predicts that by 2050 the global population of those aged 60 years old and above will be approximately 2.1 billion, double of what it is today.

An accelerated and sizeable ageing population is

also an exigent issue for Malaysia. Figure 1 illustrates a projection of an approximate 2% increase every five years, where eventually, by 2040, those aged 60 and above would constitute 19.8% of the country's total population.

Penang's ageing population is estimated to grow at an even more alarming pace. Population estimates for 2021 show that Penang is one of the states in Malaysia that is most vulnerable to the effects of an ageing community, with 14% of its population aged 60 and above.[1] By 2040, they are projected to make up 26.2%, or more than a quarter, of the state's population.

An increasingly ageing population has consequences on a country's social and economic structures, among them, increased dependency ratios, increased pressures and burdens on the health, social and welfare systems, housing problems as well as other issues that affect the quality of life. The availability, accessibility and quality of healthcare and general care facilities, as well as optimal living arrangements for the ageing are matters of great importance in ensuring that older adults are best provided for.

In Penang, the welfare and wellbeing of older adults are seen as vital and are integrated into the Penang2030 vision, which aims to retain and develop Penang's reputation as an attractive home for the young and the old. One of its pillars, namely to increase live-ability to enhance the quality of life, inspires policies regarding the enhancement of welfare and care systems for older persons and the promotion of active ageing. The state also advocates for a sustainable active ageing policy that is primarily focused on addressing the issues of an ageing society, from improving care facilities to increasing the participation of older adults in their own community.

In an interview, Dr. Alan Ch'ng, a geriatrician who was trained in Singapore categorises older persons into three broad groups: those who are still able to work, travel and exercise are considered active or robust. There are also those who are vulnerable, frail and less mobile but still able to perform daily functions. Those who are bed-bound and immobile are considered dependent. These different groups require different services and levels of care, and he emphasises the importance of catering accordingly to the ageing community's varied needs.

Dr. Alan Ch'ng, a geriatrician. Aged care facilities in Penang are mostly privately operated or run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including religious bodies. It goes without saying that costs vary with each type of care and service. NGO and charity-run facilities such as the Penang Home for the Infirm and Aged as well as the Little Sisters of the Poor have very strict entry requirements and often only cater to those who are destitute and alone. The options of care and services available for older persons are categorised into nursing homes, retirement homes/living, day care centres and home-based care.

Nursing homes are staffed with health professionals such as nurses and physiotherapists, and are intended for those who do not need to be hospitalised but are unable to be cared for at home. Care is provided around the clock.

Retirement homes and retirement living services are aimed at the segment of older adults who are still relatively healthy, independent and mobile, are able to perform day-to-day tasks when it comes to their personal care. Food catering, recreational activities and access to healthcare

services are typically provided.

Congregate retirement homes are where older persons live and socialise together within the same building and premises. This newer concept of retirement living consists of a housing complex where both assisted care and independent living are provided within their own separate units.

Day care centres, as the name suggests, are non-residential and provide day care for older persons. It is regarded as a safe space for them while their family goes to work or attends to other vital chores. The social aspect is a big part of day care centres for older persons and offers structure to their activities in addition to keeping them physically and mentally active.

Home-based care is provided in one's own place of residence by health and caregiving professionals. This type of care allows older persons to primarily remain in the comfort of their own homes, and for those who are still mobile to maintain their independence with some assistance.

Challenges of the Aged Care Industry in Penang

As Penang's population continues to age, more health and care facilities targeting the ageing community will be needed. Is Penang's current aged care industry able to fulfil the ever-growing demand? Tan Soo Siang, the co-founder of Hope Geriatric Lodge, a premier facility that provides residential and nursing care for older adults, opines that the current demand is outweighing the supply.

"In the past, older people were often cared for by the women in the family. But as more and more women join the workforce, the demand for

caregivers is increasing." Tan also points out that aged care facilities are severely lacking in certain districts, for example, in Barat Daya. "There is a lot of room for the industry to grow," she expresses, "especially when it comes to day care centres for older persons."

Ong Li Ting, the founder of Avenue Medihome Care Centre, shares some differing thoughts. She feels that the current number of nursing homes in Penang is well-equipped to handle the needs of older people, and that the industry is fairly competitive. "As a matter of fact, I also feel that the quality of nursing and retirement homes is on the rise, which bodes well for the industry and the ageing population in Penang."



Avenue Medihome Care Centre.

However, she agrees with Tan that more day care centres are needed to cater to those who are still relatively healthy and mobile. She points out that not every older adult needs round-the-clock supervision and care, and she feels that day care centres are better for their mental psyche.

On the other hand, Dr. Ch'ng highlights the lack of care facilities specifically for dementia patients. "Most nursing and residential homes here are not equipped or trained to handle residents with dementia, as they may have behavioural changes that can be challenging to manage." He says that only a small number of care homes in Penang are willing to accept patients with dementia. Hope Geriatric Lodge and Avenue Medihome are two, but on the caveat that the patients do not suffer

from psychosis and are non-violent.

Another challenge faced by aged care facilities is the issue of licensing. At present, there are many agencies and departments involved in the process of obtaining a license for an aged care facility, and sometimes the communication is not as clear as it should be. Ong expresses some frustration in this regard, as it has been a three-year wait for Avenue Medihome to get its license. She is not the only operator who struggles with this. "If the process is easier, more players will enter the industry and it will be a good thing."

In the absence of available and/or suitable live-in facilities, some turn to the option of home care. Homage is a platform that focuses on providing home- and community-based care for older persons and those who need assistance with daily living. Jeffrey Leong, the Northern General Manager for Homage, disclosed that 75% of their customer base are older persons aged 75 years old and above. The care provided is tailored to suit their needs based on discussion and consultation between the client and Homage's care advisors.

Overall, Leong says, it is probably fair to say that an older person's first preference would be to continue staying where they are instead of in a nursing facility or retirement home. Home care then becomes a viable option for those who want to be cared for and rehabilitated in the comforts of their own home. It is also more convenient, as family members continue to live with them and do not have to carve out time for visits.



An employee of Homage with a client.

Another pressing issue confronted by Penang's aged care industry is a lack of professionally trained caregivers for older adults. On top of the shortage of certified caregivers, few are willing to accept professional training to work as caregivers.

"Avenue Medihome is willing to offer professional caregiving courses and training to those who are interested, but unfortunately, there are very few takers," Ong concurs. Most health professionals such as nurses and physiotherapists would not choose aged care or nursing homes as their first choice of employment as hospitals often offer higher pay and better benefits.

"The challenge is to make the career of caregiving more appealing," states Leong. Caregiving is a noble job, he says, and with the growing needs of the ageing community, it is an evergreen industry. Leong hopes that those with an interest and passion for caregiving will step forward to receive training.

Unfortunately, the role of a caregiver is not a job that is often highly regarded, as most see it as a difficult job that generates little satisfaction. Caregivers are sometimes belittled and disrespected, and have had to endure rude behaviours from the families of the older persons, which makes an already demanding job even more challenging.

Leong also sees this happening among Homage's care professionals, where there exists an unfortunate and unfair view of care professionals as domestic helpers. "This is an area that we really seek to improve with communication and education, and we have different initiatives planned."

Improving the Aged Care Industry in Penang

Ong hopes for a smoother and more straightforward process in terms of applications and licensing to set up aged care facilities. Though she admits that there have been ongoing sessions of discussions between the stakeholders and the government, she hopes that the government can play a bigger role to support the industry.

Meanwhile, Leong hopes to see more day care centres for older people. Currently, most of them are operated by NGOs with continuous engagement from the state government to establish more day care centres in each of the five districts in Penang and their respective constituencies. The state government is also pushing for more federally funded Senior Citizens' Activity Centres to be established in Penang.

Dr. Ch'ng advocates for a proper system to rehabilitate those who have suffered from deconditioning due to acute illness and hospitalisation. Deconditioning is a complex process of physiological change following a period of inactivity, bedrest or sedentary lifestyle which results in functional losses in such areas as mental status and activities of daily living. "In Malaysia, there is a dearth of hospital beds. When older patients complete their treatment, they are usually discharged straight home for recuperation." This means that the crucial step of rehabilitation is, more often than not, overlooked. Citing Singapore as an example, he continues that ideally, there should be several transitional care services between the hospital and home to ensure optimal rehabilitation and recovery for the patient. The aged care industry can fill in these gaps but it is still imperative for a proper and streamlined system to be in place, such as that illustrated in Fig2.

Figure 2: Optimal Steps for Rehabilitation and Recovery



When asked about the best practices of other countries, Tan thinks that Japan has an excellent system for providing and coordinating care for their aged community, although she acknowledges that it took years for the system to be implemented and perfected. Singapore’s Agency of Integrated Care, an agency that coordinates and supports care integration in addition to supplying information, is another model worth emulating.

Furthermore, synergy between all the stakeholders in the aged care industry as well as collaborative efforts between hospitals, nursing/residential homes and home care to create an ecosystem will strengthen the industry. Leong believes that the state government should take the lead in this respect. This is echoed by Dr. Ch’ng, who expresses the same wish for the state government to assume the role of the “conductor” in bringing all the players together and orchestrate the best ecosystem for aged care.

More Than Just Physical Care

While physical care is important, the mental health of older persons must not be neglected. Tan specifically spends time preparing her residents when they arrive at Hope Geriatric Lodge, making sure their transition goes as smoothly as possible. Ong does this by letting residents participate in simple decision-making such as choosing what they want to wear or eat. “This gives them a measurement of control and is beneficial towards their mental health.”



Nursing staff of Hope Geriatric Lodge led by Nurse Unit Manager or matron, Laya June. Compassion, patience, love and knowledge are some of the most important aspects when it comes to aged caregiving. “Caregiving, at its core, is not just a job,” Leong explains. “One must have the passion and the patience to go the extra mile in providing the best care for those who need it.” Tan agrees and says that profits should not be the reason one enters the aged care industry. “At the crux of it, this industry is not hugely profitable when compared to other sectors. If you don’t have the compassion and the love, you won’t be able to last in the industry.”

Active ageing is another important component in the wellbeing of Penang’s older persons. Encouraging them to keep active, both physically and mentally, and engage themselves in social interaction with others will help to ensure a healthier process of ageing. Aged care facilities must also ensure their residents are given opportunities to remain as active as possible, for both their physical and psychological wellbeing.



One of the rooms at Hope Geriatric Lodge.

Footnotes: [1] Discrepancies in the figures are due to the usage of different data sets; Figure 1 wholly peruses the data found in Revised Population Projections, published in 2016, while the 2021 population estimate was taken from Current Population Estimates, published in 2021.

(Source: Penang Institute September Newsletter – Penang Monthly magazine.)

Pacific Island Association for NGOs (PIANGO)



PIANGO

Pacific Islands Association of
Non-governmental Organisations | Association Des Ongs
Desiles Du Pacifique

The Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) is a regional network of NGO focal points or coordinating bodies known as National Liaison Units (NLUs) based in 22 Pacific Island countries and territories.

PIANGO was formally established in 1991 to assist NGOs in the Pacific to initiate action, give voice to their concerns and work collaboratively with other development actors for just and sustainable human development. PIANGO's primary role is to be a catalyst for collective action, to facilitate and support coalitions and alliances on issues of common concern, and to strengthen the influence and impact of NGO efforts in the region.

Our journey began officially at the first-ever PIANGO Council in Pago Pago, American Samoa in August 1991. The move to establish PIANGO however came out of conversations in the late 70s that highlighted the need to strengthen regional networking of NGOs across the Pacific. During the 80s the conversations carried on and culminated in the drafting of a constitution for a Pacific Islands Association of NGOs. PIANGO is now a regional secretariat to a network of umbrella organizations or platforms that are registered in 24 countries, territories, and states

across the Pacific region. We continue to serve the Pacific through strengthening and building the capacity of NGOs and the civil society sector through giving the sector a voice in policy formulation and strengthening its member umbrella organisations. As a regional network of NGO coordinating bodies known as National Liaison Units (NLUs) based in 25 Pacific Island countries and territories. PIANGO was formally established in 1991 to assist NGOs in the Pacific to initiate action, give voice to their concerns and work collaboratively with other development actors for just and sustainable human development.

With the primary role as a catalyst for collective action, to facilitate and support coalitions and alliances on issues of common concern, and to strengthen the influence and impact of NGO efforts in the region, our network of national umbrella organisations across the region continues to work towards supporting enabling environments and their membership at the national level.

PIANGO has taken significant steps to increase its profile and establish itself as an effective support organisation to NGOs throughout the Pacific. Activities over the past years have come under the following programme areas; Information Sharing, Capacity Building, Strengthening Key Relationships, and Ensuring Quality Performance.

With its membership network spread across the biggest ocean of the world, this has brought many challenges including the impacts of Covid-19, natural disasters, high cost of transportation, limited accessibility to communication systems and the weak interest by in development partners to support civil society work both at national and regional level.

PIANGO had developed its strategic framework incorporating all the learning from its journey to map out its future direction focusing on the following priority areas:

- **Governance/Leadership**
- **Voice**
- **Approaches**
- **Partnership:**

The 2020 –2030 Strategic Plan of PIANGO sets out a dynamic vigorous robust direction of development for Civil Society Sector grounded on understanding the Pacific context. This plan envisage that PIANGO will facilitate the building of Pacific Expert, Pacific ideas to find Pacific Solutions for Pacific Issues within Pacific Context for Civil Society exercising leadership for a just and peaceful Pacific community.

Vision: A United Pacific: Strengthening the Resilient Responsiveness of our Kainga for a Peaceful and Prosperous Vanua.

Mission: To support the creation of a secure enabling environment for strong, effective, accountable, and adaptive Institutions that provide an inclusive representation and common voice platforms and structured mechanisms for policy influencing which is rooted in our Pacific cultural practices and values; through sustainable equitable and genuine partnerships for resilient development.

More Activity at ICSW - Save the Date!

SWESD 2022

Title: Redefining Social Policy and Social Work Practice in a Post-Pandemic Society – Social Welfare Programs and Social Work Education at Crossroads

Date : 26th to 28th October 2022

Organized by IASSW, ICSW and KNCSW

[Register on the official website!](http://swesd2022.com/)
<http://swesd2022.com/>

Please save the dates for the Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development in October! It will be held from 26th to 28th October, 2022 in Seoul, Korea in a hybrid format of both online and offline sessions.

We look forward to everyone's interest and participation in SWESD 2022. For more information about SWESD 2022, please visit <http://swesd2022.com/>

And for any inquiry regarding SWESD 2022, please contact kyunji@icsw.org or swesd2022@gmail.com

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**Contributions to the newsletter are
welcome!**