



GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

January 2008

In this edition:

Kenya

ASEAN GO-NGO Forum puts key issues on the agenda
Social Protection

OECD DAC Peer Review of Finland

New From UNRISD – Gender and Peace and Gender and Migration
New UN NGO Websites

2008 ICSW 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare

Kenya

This edition of Global Cooperation leads with the situation in Kenya. We have read and seen pictures of the terrible situation there. It reminds us that democracy is a fragile instrument that can be so easily subverted by corruption and megalomania. ICSW has been advocating to Northern donors that they should support our efforts to strengthen and consolidate the voice of civil society. It is distressing to see in Africa a civil society that was so much a part of the moves to independence now persecuted by the very regimes they helped to put in power. Donors continue to pour vast amounts of aid into the Global South. But scant resources are given to help the national voices of civil society to be a dynamic part of democracy. In the words of Thandika Mkandawire, Director of the UN Research Institute for Social Development the major obstacle to mobilising “democratic institutions for poverty alleviation are the organisational weaknesses of the poor themselves”.

Jackton Adera of the Kenya National Association of Social Workers has written to us since the crisis in Kenya began. Here are some extracts from his emails:

Greetings and best wishes to you and all at ICSW. I am Sorry for the delay in responding - I was struggling to reach some displaced persons in Nakuru town which is about 100 km from Nairobi.

The situation was bad the first few days after the announcement of the presidential results which were immediately disputed by some party supporters. The reaction took us all by surprise. This being a political problem, our leaders are now talking and we trust they will agree and find a political solution. As you may have noticed from the various leaders coming to Kenya, this is not only a national concern but is a regional as well as a global concern.

Our immediate concern as Social Workers is to concentrate on the healing and reconciliation process among the victims of the violence and to restore faith and trust among the various communities, Humanitarian aid is needed especially for those rescued in the various camps. The Red Cross, Government Departments, NGO's, Churches and well wishers are making this possible for the moment. However the demand is high and every possible assistance is welcome.

It may take time but I believe this is the way forward if we are to guarantee a better future for generations to come. As for those displaced, they need our immediate response towards their social problems which are mainly psychological, material, moral and even financial.

Meanwhile, I have no objection if you include my details in the January Newsletter. This is welcome since there could be those who may wish to assist the social workers to enable us to reach many parts of the country to offer our healing services. I append below our Bank details: - Kenya National Association of Social Workers, Account number 01501 906 03856, Equity Bank Limited, Mama Ngina Street Branch, Nairobi.

Be blessed.

Jackton

Also from Kenya is a very short extract of Shailja Patel's open letter to Samuel Kivuitu chair of the Electoral Commission of Kenya.

Mr. Kivuitu,

We've never met. It's unlikely we ever will. But, like every other Kenyan, I will remember you for the rest of my life. The nausea I feel at the mention of your name may recede. The bitterness and grief will not.

You had a mandate, Mr. Kivuitu to deliver a free, fair and transparent election to the people of Kenya. You and your commission had 5 years to prepare. You had a tremendous pool of resources, skills, technical support, to draw on, including the experience and advice of your peers in the field - leaders and experts in governance, human rights, electoral process and constitutional law. You had the trust of 37 million Kenyans.

On December 27th, a record 65% of registered Kenyan voters rose as early as 4am to vote, stood in lines for up to 10 hours, in the sun, without food, drink or toilet facilities. As the results came in, we cheered when minister after powerful minister lost their parliamentary seats.

You betrayed us. Perhaps we'll never know when, or why, you made that decision.

I wish you'd thought of our people, when you made the choice to betray them. I wish you'd drawn on their courage, their integrity, their clarity, when your own failed you. I wish you'd had the imagination to enter into the lives, the dreams, of 37 million Kenyans.

But, as you've probably guessed by now, Mr. Kivuitu, this isn't really a letter to you at all. This is an attempt to put words to what cannot be expressed in words. To mourn what is too immense to mourn. A clumsy groping for something beyond the word 'heartbreak'. A futile attempt to communicate what can only be lived, moment by moment. This is a howl of anguish and rage. This is a love letter to a nation.

ASEAN GO-NGO Forum puts key issues on the agenda

The second ASEAN GO-NGO Forum held in Ha Noi in December 2007 has put human trafficking, social protection and people with disabilities firmly on the agenda of both national NGOs and key ASEAN governments for the next 12 months.

The GO-NGO Forum examined two major consultation papers commissioned by ICSW for the Forum entitled:

- "Trafficking and related labour exploitation in the ASEAN region"; and
- "Social Protection in ASEAN: issues and challenges for ASEAN and its member countries".

In addition, the meeting heard reports, particularly from a number of Vietnamese NGOs working in the field of People with Disabilities (PWD) on the key national and regional challenges for policy development and implementation to provide better services and opportunities, within a rights based framework, for PWD.

Unanimous recommendations

The GO-NGO Forum endorsed the value of continuing the Forum on an annual basis. It also recognised the need to undertake a lot of national level government-NGO dialogue on the three major issues identified in the lead up to next year's Forum in Manila. The unanimously endorsed recommendations committed each ICSW National Council member and the relevant Social Welfare and Development Department in each ASEAN country to meet at least twice over the next eight months to prepare for the adoption of recommendations at the next Forum. Each of the consultation papers contains a chapter or section on the situation in each ASEAN country with a series of both national level and ASEAN regional level recommends to be considered. These chapters and recommendations are to be discussed

and checked at the national level for modification before, and consideration at, the 2008 Manila GO-NGO Forum.

Minister welcomes NGOs and their work

In welcoming delegates to Vietnam and the Forum, Minister Dam Huu Dac acknowledged the importance of the GO-NGO partnership in economic and social policy:

“Non-governmental organisations play an important role in developing and implementing social security and development programmes of a country, especially the ASEAN member countries. Without the assistance from non-governmental organisations in terms of both technical issues and resource mobilisation in several policies and social development programmes, many countries will meet with difficulties in providing social services for vulnerable groups.”

In the context of Vietnam, where there is still not a clear appreciation of the independence of, or understanding of the role of, NGOs these were particularly welcome comments.

ASEAN engagement with NGOs not robust – but progress

ICSW President for South East Asia and Pacific, Michael Raper noted that the GO-NGO Forum is a very important development. Over its 40 year history, ASEAN engagement with NGOs had not been regarded by civil society organisations as having been robust or free-flowing or structured on the basis of mutual respect. The GO-NGO Forum made a commitment to regular structured dialogue on human trafficking, people with disabilities and social protection over the next 12 months. More detail on the GO-NGO Forum can be found on the ICSW website at <http://www.icsw.org/region/seap.htm>

Social Protection

The introduction of minimum universal social security coverage is an urgent priority, but must be combined with the further development of existing social security schemes, the Secretary General of the International Social Security Association (ISSA), Mr. Hans-Horst Konkolewsky, told a meeting of Latin American social protection experts.

“The introduction of a basic package of universal social security benefits must complement existing social security programmes,” Mr. Konkolewsky stated.

“In countries with a long tradition of social security, for example in Latin America, any new reforms should be integrated with existing provisions as well as address the need for a universal minimum level of benefits,” he further emphasized.

Mr. Konkolewsky referred to recent ISSA studies that confirm the trend towards more integrated social security systems in Latin America and other regions. These reforms reinforce coverage by combining contributory and non-contributory pension schemes, strengthening preventive health care and promoting work insertion alongside compensation. Recognizing that Latin America has a century of social security experience, ISSA Secretary General welcomed a return to social security's “fundamental values” in several countries.

“We are convinced that the ideological shift in the Latin American region currently underway reinforces the concept of social security in all its dimensions,” Mr. Konkolewsky stated.

ISSA is working with its member organizations in the region to establish an Observatory to monitor social security reforms and their impact, as part of new efforts to promote knowledge transfer and the sharing of good practices among social security institutions.

Read more on ISSA at www.issa.int

OECD

DAC Peer Review of Finland

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD has released its review of Finland's development aid. The DAC found Finland to be a committed development co-operation actor that works within the EU and with other like-minded groups. The committee appreciated that the new development policy (2007) maintains the over-arching goal of poverty reduction and commitment to the MDGs, while also prioritising sustainable economic, social and ecological development. [Announcement](http://www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3343,en_2649_33721_39760586_1_1_1_1,00.html)

http://www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3343,en_2649_33721_39760586_1_1_1_1,00.html

Development Aid at a Glance Makes Foreign Aid Information Easier to Understand and Includes StatLinks to Key Data: [Book on Online Bookshop](#)

Policy Coherence for Development 2007: Migration and Developing Countries: [Book on Online Bookshop](#)

DAC News, November 2007 issue features articles on aid effectiveness, aid for trade, civil society organisations, and the role agriculture plays in poverty reduction: [Newsletter](#)

Health Care is Improving in OECD Countries but Better Management of Chronic Diseases is Necessary -only half of diabetics get needed eye screening according to *Health at a Glance 2007*: [Press Release](#) | [Book Announcement](#)

New From UNRISD

Gendered Peace: Women's Struggles for Post-War Justice and Reconciliation

This volume, edited by Donna Pankhurst, contributes to the growing literature on women, conflict and peacebuilding by focusing on the moments after a peace accord, or some other official ending for a conflict, often denoted as "post-conflict" or "post-war".

<http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BF3C2/setLanguageCookie?OpenAgent&langcode=en&url=/80256B3C005BCCF9/search/B3DB4EA5C021BFC4C12573AD004E7B66?OpenDocument>

New Perspectives on Gender and Migration: Livelihood, Rights and Entitlements

This book, edited by Nicola Piper, discusses theoretical and empirical developments in international migration from a gender perspective. Its main objective is to analyse the diversification and stratification of gendered migratory streams with regard to skill level, labour market integration, and legal status.

<http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BF3C2/setLanguageCookie?OpenAgent&langcode=en&url=/80256B3C005BCCF9/search/8F874541B75E2B08C12573AD004B1675?OpenDocument>

New UN NGO Websites

The NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) has launched its new web site, focusing on information required by the NGOs with consultative status. Through the web site, NGOs can also access UN-NGO-IRENE, an informal regional network established to coordinate collaboration between the UN and NGOs.

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>

UN-NGO-IRENE: <http://www.unpan.org/NGO.asp>

AMR Innovation Fair:

<http://www.amrif2008.blogspot.com/>

2008 ICSW 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare

Date: 30th June to 4th July 2008

Venue: Tours, France

Contact Information: <http://www.icsw2008.org/> and comite.service.francais@wanadoo.fr

This will be the 80th Anniversary of ICSW. The theme of the conference is Social Work, Social Protection and Social Development: Where have we been? Where are we going?

The content of this Global Newsletter may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the policy of ICSW.

Newsletter Editor: Denys Correll – Executive Director
ICSW C/- MOVISIE Netherlands Centre for Social Development
PO Box 19129
3501 DC Utrecht
Netherlands
Email: icsw@icsw.org
Tel: +31 30 789 2226

GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

February 2008

In this edition:

UN meets on Full Employment and Decent Work
New from the UNDP International Poverty Centre
New from the UN Research Institute for Social Development
New from Center for Global Development
Second Announcement ICSW Global Conference 2008

UN meets on Full Employment and Decent Work

This issue of Global Cooperation highlights the 2008 meeting of the UN Commission for Social Development that worked on the theme of Full Employment and Decent Work. ICSW presented a statement to the Commission. It can be found at www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csocd2008/Statements/ngos.htm (4th paragraph).

In the introductory session Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said that close examination of the employment situation in developed and developing countries revealed “worrisome trends”, especially that, despite robust rates of economic growth, macroeconomic and social policies were failing to generate enough decent jobs. From 1996 to 2006, global gross domestic product (GDP) had grown by 3.8 per cent per year, but, during the same decade, the unemployment rate had remained unchanged at around 6 per cent.

ICSW was unhappy that many countries have failed to provide full employment and decent work. However, ICSW was pleased to hear UN officials reflect the same concerns. Mr Sha said “There is greater economic insecurity for most workers”. He stressed that unemployment rates were still high in many developing countries, and that underemployment persisted worldwide as formal economies continued to shift into informal ones. Further, in an ever more globalised world, low-skilled, poorly educated workers were being especially hit by those trends. Social exclusion of certain groups subjected them to the “real-life consequences” of higher unemployment rates exacerbated by chronic underemployment. These groups included youth, women, older people, people with disabilities, indigenous people and migrants.

Carlos Tomada the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Protection in Argentina gave an outstanding keynote address. He urged “States to ensure that globalisation was underpinned by a “social project”: the establishment of a “society of work”, or market economy that fostered the creation of companies that promoted social responsibility. The society of work was fundamental to democratising the global economy. He supported a “controlled liberalization” of trade, and urged achieving a balance among the State, the market and society.

Argentina believes that policies should be implemented by all “social partners” and should be targeted to stimulate economic growth and job creation. He said that a political decision had been taken to forge and reconstruct social harmony with, rather than against, the workers, taking into account differences in opinion between workers and employers. The Government had worked hard to build trust between those two sides and that trust had helped the country “get back on its feet”. In supporting the Minister a representative of the union movement of Argentina said that during the 1990s Argentina had been considered a model neoliberal economy. But the resultant round of deregulation had plunged the economy into chaos. Unions, the business community and government had turned to social dialogue to find solutions to the crisis. The representative of the business sector said that cooperation between labour, civil society and the private sector was helping to close the skills gap and was helping in the fight against poverty.

The NGO Committee on Social Development was very active before and during the meeting of the Commission and the Chair of the Committee Joan Burke presented the views of civil society that were prepared at a civil society forum held the previous day. The concluding comments of the Civil Society Declaration said “We look forward to a strong resolution as an outcome of this session – a resolution which will engage the General Assembly or a strengthened Economic and Social Council with a clear well-defined mechanism for follow-up and accountability...We want to see Employment and Decent Work for All at the heart of the UN agenda as it is essential underpinning to the eradication of poverty. This will offer to all people of the world community a Decent Life and opportunity to develop their potential as contributing members of society”.

ICSW Executive Director Denys Correll spoke at the civil society forum held the day before the Commission meeting. His speech (www.icsw.org/doc/CSF_MakingCopenhagenWorkDC5Feb08.doc) addressed the theme of the civil society forum – *Making Copenhagen Work*. He asked, “Why talk of reclaiming Copenhagen” The first commitment of the Copenhagen Declaration puts social development clearly in the context of multiple influencing environments. 117 national leaders committed their countries to “creating an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development”. An increasing number of key thinkers and institutions are seeking to present an alternative to the neoliberal thinking that has dominated development for the last decades.

Rolph van der Hoeven Director, Policy Coherence Group, International Labour Organisation spoke at the civil society forum about policy coherence. Mr van der Hoeven noted that in the 1990s most income flows to the developing world were through the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). There has been a marked change in this century with a number of countries rejecting money from the WB and the IMF. These countries do not want the conditionalities imposed by the lenders. While there is acknowledgment of the imperative for decent work, bilateral trade negotiations between rich and poor countries have not been sensitive to decent work. Here there is a need for more policy coherence.

This year’s civil society forum had a higher involvement of trade union representatives. Rudi Dick of the Congress of South African Trade Unions spoke of “precarious employment” which captured the sequelae of neoliberal policies including negative employment practices such as the casualisation of the workforce. The International Trade Union Confederation drew “attention to the serious lack of

policy coherence between the international economic, financial and trading systems and the social institutions promoting decent work objectives”.

Returning to the Commission meeting, Johan Schölvink, Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, introduced the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.5/2008/4) which addressed a policy framework for achieving full employment and decent work by examining: macroeconomic policies; enterprise and rural development, education, training and skills; social protection; and regulatory policies.

There were many speeches by representatives of UN member governments. Representatives of the NGO Committee monitored the government statements. It was apparent that little, if any, attention was given to the “decent work” part of the theme. Little reference was made to the exploitation, including trafficking, of women and children. This was a serious omission. The ICSW submissions in 2007 and 2008 were very clear that the exploitation of women and children in particular is unacceptable and every government has a responsibility to tackle this serious problem.

The African Union's statement contained some good material. “In most African countries social development does not include the majority of the population, especially the marginalised and vulnerable group”. The African Union is developing a Social Policy Framework for Africa. It will be presented to the First Conference on Social Development to be held in May 2008. In preparation for the May Conference the AU Commission is conducting a study on Social Protection.

As usual at Commission meetings there was a plethora of side events that were held during breaks in the Commission meeting. One side event focussed on the concept of a “Global Social Floor” consisting of a basic set of social security benefits for all citizens. The speakers argued that a social floor is a powerful tool to reduce poverty. While the benefits provided are modest, a basic social security scheme can reduce poverty by 35 to 50 per cent. A basic package consisting of non-contributory old age and disability pensions plus child benefits is estimated to cost from 2 to 5 percent of GDP as an average. Speakers argued that a social floor was affordable and essential even to the poorest countries in Africa. It is a myth that a country must reach a certain level of development before it can establish a social floor. The example of Europe was given where the social floor, now taken for granted, was established when many of the countries were poor.

The Commission's resolution on Full Employment and Decent Work had not been finalised at the time of writing of this edition of Global Cooperation. Details will be provided in the March issue. ICSW continues to push for the reclaiming of the Copenhagen commitments. This is also clearly the agenda for the Commission for Social Development. For the last two years the Commission has been reviewing Full Employment and Decent Work. Full employment was one of the three interrelated pillars of Copenhagen. The others were eradication of poverty and social integration. The Commission has adopted social integration as its theme for 2009 and 2010 and it is possible that poverty eradication will be the theme for 2011 and 2012.

New from the UNDP International Poverty Centre

Is Financial Liberalization a Flop? An Africa Assessment - One Pager # 48

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager48.pdf>

Is All Socioeconomic Inequality among Racial Groups in Brazil Caused by Racial Discrimination? - Working Paper # 43

<<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCWorkingPaper43.pdf>>

New from the UN Research Institute for Social Development

Commercialization and Globalization of Health Care: Lessons from UNRISD Research

Using market mechanisms in the provision of health services and seeing health care as a private good are approaches that have featured prominently in health sector reforms across the world. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) research on global and local experiences of health care commercialization challenges this framework. It calls for reclaiming public policies that promote the purposes that health systems are set up to serve: population health and the provision of care for all according to need.

<http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BF3C2/setLanguageCookie?OpenAgent&langcode=en&url=/80256B3C005BCCF9/search/7C04740AD2852A4AC12573E6002E24DC?OpenDocument>

New from Center for Global Development

Overhaul U.S. Foreign Assistance

http://www.join.cgdev.org/site/R?i=mHFLeGZmtzKJbzL5j_BBNA..

<http://www.join.cgdev.org/site/R?i=VCdMr24JthPMKbOVTuizYQ..>

Henrietta Fore, the recently appointed Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance, has announced ambitious plans to modernize U.S. foreign aid, rebuild the capacity of USAID (of which she is also the chief administrator), streamline budget and planning processes, increase aid levels, and restore U.S. intellectual leadership on foreign assistance. CGD senior policy analyst Sheila Herrling identifies the take-away messages and gives the new plan two thumbs up as a first step in the right direction.

Second Announcement 2008 ICSW 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare.

The second announcement for the Conference to be held in Tours France is now available and registration is now open at <http://www.icsw2008.org/>

Date: 30th June to 4th July 2008

Venue: Tours, France

Contact Information: globalconference@cnas-icsw.org

This will be the 80th Anniversary of ICSW. The theme of the conference is Social Work, Social Protection and Social Development: Where have we been? Where are we going?

The content of this Global Newsletter may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the policy of ICSW.

Newsletter Editor: Denys Correll – Executive Director
ICSW C/- MOVISIE Netherlands Centre for Social Development
PO Box 19129
3501 DC Utrecht
Netherlands
Email: icsw@icsw.org
Tel: +31 30 789 2226