



## **GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER** **October 2008**

**In this edition:**

**Empowering Civil Society Asia and the Pacific  
Latin America**

**New International Poverty Centre (IPC) Publications**

**New OECD Publication - Growing Unequal?**

**Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Highlights: October 2008**

**Argentina to nationalise pension funds**

**Civil Society Accountability in Commonwealth Countries**

**World Social Form 2009**

**Commission on the Status of Women 2009**

### **Empowering Civil Society Asia and the Pacific**

ICSW has conducted its third workshop to empower civil society to better engage with governments and regional groupings of governments. The ICSW South East Asia and Pacific Regional Training Programme on "Strengthening National Councils" was held in Kuala Lumpur. Our host was our member council in Malaysia - the National Council of Social Welfare and Social Development. The training was made possible through the sponsorship of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Subjects covered included: What is a national council? Why have national councils? Benefits of collaboration; Ingredients of a successful council; Building membership; Governance of national councils; Income generation for national councils; Building a value base and developing policy; Influencing governments to adopt budgets that focus on social and economic development; In the context of increasing governments commitment to a social agenda participants discussed at length the subjects of trafficking (slaving) and social protection. ICSW in the ASEAN region has prepared analyses of social protection and trafficking. The analyses are on the regional website - <http://www.icsw.org/region/seap.htm>

The specific subjects of trafficking and social protection form part of ICSW's work with ASEAN. Representatives of ICSW from throughout the region will meet with ASEAN officials in December in Manila. This has become an annual activity with intensive work on social policies with national governments between meetings.

The final stage of the Kuala Lumpur workshop was the development of individual country plans based on the training over the three days. The resulting plans developed by the participants from each country are circulated to all participants as part of the final report.

In addition to the work undertaken in Kuala Lumpur participants were hosted to a reception and dinner by the Honourable Dato' Dr. Ng Yen Yen, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development Malaysia. The Minister has taken a keen interest in the work of ICSW. She attended our conference in Tours France in mid 2008.

40 participants attended the training. The participants came from each of the ASEAN countries with the exception of Myanmar (Burma). Pacific country representatives came from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Zealand. The evaluation forms completed by the participants at the end of the workshop were overwhelmingly positive. 97% of the participants indicated that their expectations for the workshop were met.

From the evaluations ICSW concluded that participants wanted follow up work on national councils – national council governance, national council fundraising and national council strengthening. Also indicated was the need for more training on policy development.

### **Latin America**

The Latin American members of ICSW conducted a Brazilian Preparatory Pre-Conference Meeting before the 33<sup>rd</sup> Conference of ICSW held in France in July 2008. The report of the Pre Conference entitled “The Dynamics of Welfare in Globalization: Lessons from the Past, Challenges for Today and Tomorrow” is on the ICSW website in the Latin American and Caribbean Region. <http://www.icsw.org/region/la.htm>

### **New International Poverty Centre (IPC) Publications**

**Title:** What Do We Mean by “Feminization of Poverty”? Authors: Marcelo Medeiros and Joana Costa. Series: One Pager No. 58. Available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. The authors define the feminization of poverty as a change in poverty levels that is biased against women or female-headed households. This definition provides a simple but effective tool for conducting policy analysis.

Click [here](#) to download: <http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager58.pdf>

**Title:** Can we Accurately Project MDG Indicators? Author: Rafael Guerreiro Osorio. Series: One Pager # 68. The author argues that non-linear methods project MDG indicators more realistically than linear ones

Click [here](#) to download: <http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager68.pdf>

**Title:** Conditional Cash Transfers: Why Targeting and Conditionalities Could Fail  
Author: Guy Standing Series: One Pager No. 47 Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese

The author argues that targeting and conditionalities for cash transfers are both unnecessary and counter-productive. Instead, he prefers a universal, non-conditional income grant. He maintains that cash transfers are preferable to commodity-based assistance, such as food aid, because poor families have freedom in choosing how to spend the money. But targeting such transfers to poor families is difficult in low-income countries where household incomes are insecure and fluctuating. Attaching conditionalities to them, such as for health or education, assumes that poor families are either irrational or uninformed about their vital long-term interests.

Click [here](#) to download: <http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager47.pdf>

### **Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Highlights: October 2008**

The following are recent ODI activities. If you would like immediate alerts whenever new content is added to the ODI website, subscribe to the ODI [news feed](#).

#### **Millions at risk if the Millennium Development Goals are not updated**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) exclude millions of the poorest, most vulnerable and hardest to reach people on the planet, researchers from ODI and the Chronic Poverty Research Centre argued in New York last month. They marked the Call to Action on the MDGs with a number of new resources and a High Level UN side event calling for social protection to be included in the goals.

- [Visit 'ODI on... The Call to Action on the MDGs' for more >](#)
- [Download ODI Briefing Paper - 'Achieving the MDGs: The fundamentals' >](#)
- [Download the Chronic Poverty Report 2008 >](#)

#### **The MDGs are doing too little to address gender inequalities**

In ODI Briefing Paper 'Gender and the MDGs: A gender lens is vital for pro-poor results', Nicola Jones, Rebecca Holmes and Jessica Espey argue that much more attention needs to be paid to the gender inequalities that pervade all the MDGs to achieve poverty reduction and development goals.

- [Visit 'ODI on... The Call to Action on the MDGs' for more >](#)
- [Download ODI Briefing Paper - 'Gender and the MDGs' >](#)
- [Visit 'ODI Themes - Gender' for more on Gender >](#)

## **The MDGs are at risk: The EU should give them new momentum**

In his latest Blog post, ODI Director Simon Maxwell argues that the MDGs have been a force for good in the world, but that progress is uneven, too slow and threatened by the global economic slowdown. The European Union brings particular strengths to the MDG project.

- [Read and comment on Simon's Blog post >](#)
- [Download ODI Opinion - 'MDGs and the environment' >](#)
- [Download ODI Opinion - 'Sanitation and the MDGs: Making the politics work' >](#)

## **Soaring prices, rising hunger: What next in the global food crisis?**

After falling in real terms for more than 50 years, food prices have soared – condemning an additional 75 million people to hunger and raising the estimated number of undernourished people worldwide to 923 million in 2007.

- [Visit 'ODI Themes - Food' to find out more >](#)

## **New OECD Publication - Growing Unequal?**

Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries

This report provides evidence of a fairly generalised increase in income inequality over the past two decades across OECD countries. But the timing, intensity and causes of the increase differ from what is typically suggested in the media.

[Now available from the Online Bookshop.](#)

<http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?sf1=identifiers&st1=812008051P1&LANG=EN>

## **Argentina to nationalise pension funds**

Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez has signed a bill that will nationalise the country's 10 private pension funds. The move will put the government in control of almost USD30bn of investments and is aimed at protecting them from the global market turmoil.

Shares slumped amid fears of the move's impact. Critics accused the government of trying to grab the funds. Ms Fernandez said that Argentina needed to protect those with pensions amid falling stock prices around the world.

As the 10 private pension funds are the country's largest institutional investors, the announcement also hit the value of the peso and Argentine bonds.

Amado Boudou, head of the National Social Security Administration, which will take over the funds, said the "failed experiment" of private pensions was finished.

Union leaders have welcomed the nationalisation move. The commissions on the pensions and the lack of a guaranteed minimum pension have made the private system unpopular with many Argentines. Congress is controlled by Ms Fernandez's Front for Victory political grouping. Story BBC NEWS: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/business/7682877.stm>

## **UN General Assembly President sets up task force to review global financial system**

The President of the United Nations General Assembly has established a task force to review the global financial system, including major bodies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The President's move is in response to the current turmoil that is affecting all countries, large and small.

He has appointed economics Nobel Laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz to Chair the task force and as the principal advisor to the President for coordination of this process. The composition and terms of reference of the task force will be announced after the Interactive Panel on the Global Financial Crisis has met at the UN on 30 October 2008. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28643&Cr=financial%20crisis&Cr1=>

## **Civil Society Accountability in Commonwealth Countries**

The One World Trust has been working in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation to examine civil society accountability in Commonwealth countries. This project is being piloted in India, Belize, Uganda and the Pacific region.

The One World Trust's Civil Society Accountability in Commonwealth Countries Project addresses civil society accountability across different political, social, and economic

contexts. The project focuses on several key issues: principles of accountability, cultural understandings of accountability, highlighting good practice, and common challenges. The strength of this approach to CSO accountability is sensitivity to cultural understandings of accountability and a way to foster and identify universal, yet practical, principles within these cultural contexts.

This pilot project is due to be completed by the end of the year, with the development of the country-specific toolkits. Further information Deepti Sastry Projects Officer One World Trust. [dsastry@oneworldtrust.org](mailto:dsastry@oneworldtrust.org)

### **World Social Form 2009**

The World Social Form is to be held from 27th January to 1st February 2009 at Belem, Brazil. Registration for the World Social Forum 2009 Amazon is open. In this first stage, only organisations, agencies and groups of civil society organisations can register. The period of registration for organisations and activities is from 7<sup>th</sup> October to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Each organisation may propose up to four self activities. Self-managed activities on the official programme grid of the WSF 2009 and may be camping, workshops, seminars, conferences, testimonies, marches, among others, and are forums for exchange, reflection and preparation of proposals for the construction of another possible world. For more information, [click here](http://www.fsm2009amazonia.org.br/?set_language=en). [http://www.fsm2009amazonia.org.br/?set\\_language=en](http://www.fsm2009amazonia.org.br/?set_language=en)

### **Commission on the Status of Women 2009**

The Fifth-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held 2-13 March 2009, New York, USA. The focus of the session will be on "the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS." If your organisation has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), you are invited to participate in this session and to pre-register your designated representatives. For more information, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw)

The content of this Global Newsletter may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. Views do not necessarily represent policies of ICSW.

Newsletter Editor: Denys Correll – Executive Director.

ICSW C/- MOVISIE Netherlands Centre for Social Development  
PO Box 19129  
3501 DC Utrecht  
Netherlands

Website [www.icsw.org](http://www.icsw.org) Email: [icsw@icsw.org](mailto:icsw@icsw.org)



## **GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER** **December 2008**

**In this edition:**

**Asia and Social Development**

**The First Black Sea NGO Forum**

**Japan - great statement on social development at the UN**

**International Social Security Review now on line**

### **Asia and Social Development**

On the 2nd December the Philippines daily newspaper, the Manila Bulletin, announced on its front page that the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Forum of Government Organisations and Non-Government Organisations would be meeting in Manila. The paper said the meeting (was) "attended by top ASEAN officials, including representatives of the National Council/National NGO Forum from member countries and the International Council on Social Welfare". The meeting was hosted by the Philippines Department of Social Welfare and Development.

ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, consists of ten countries – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

This meeting represented in so many ways what ICSW has been attempting to achieve in all regions of the world – a serious dialogue between governments and the organisations that represent the poorest and most disadvantaged members of their communities.

Over the few days of meetings the final recommendations were developed by the government officials and the ICSW representatives.

The ASEAN Charter contains a number of purposes and principles that are of significance to the Government – Non-Government Organisations Forum (GO-NGO Forum). They cover the alleviation of poverty, narrowing the development gap, strengthening democracy, enhancing good governance, promoting sustainable development and enhancing the well being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN. <http://www.aseansec.org/ASEAN-Charter.pdf>

The final recommendations dealt with the machinery to take forward the GO-NGO collaboration and three policy areas. These were social protection, trafficking in persons and climate change. To establish a position on social protection and trafficking ICSW published regional studies on both subjects a year ago and sought response from ASEAN member states. The position papers are on the ICSW website

<http://www.icsw.org/region/seap.htm>

On social protection there were three recommendations. The first was to "continue to review the present social protection systems in relation to the income security provisions with a view to identifying the policy changes necessary to implement better, multi-tier social security protection provisions in



each ASEAN Member State". The second advocated a coordinated approach towards developing social protection systems. The third was to increase research capability in ASEAN in the area of social security.

Trafficking in persons is of great concern in the region. ICSW's paper covered all forms of labour exploitation. The recommendations adopted at the ASEAN GO-NGO meeting included amongst other things, adopting an integrated approach to human trafficking; consider adopting a coordinated labour migration system; concerted action to reduce trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls who undertake domestic service; developing and implementing stronger victim support systems; joint programmes between governments and NGOs.

On climate change there was strong debate on the relevance of climate change to the social agenda. ICSW's lead representative, (Michael Raper, Regional President for South East Asia and the Pacific) argued strongly that climate change will have an adverse affect on socially vulnerable groups. The Forum agreed to put the social impact of climate change on the agenda. More work is to be done by ICSW and ASEAN to look at the impact of climate change on socially vulnerable groups.

Disability was introduced as a new subject on the GO-NGO agenda. ICSW consultant Dan Stubbs presented a paper "Closing the gap: Making the rights based approach real for people with disabilities in the ASEAN region". This paper is now submitted to the governments for a response that will be on the agenda of the next GO-NGO Forum in Singapore in 2009. The paper will soon be on the ICSW website.

ICSW is keen to see the model of a GO-NGO Forum adopted in other regions. ICSW's programme of national councils' training is focussed on increasing the skill level of national councils to engage effectively with governments and regional associations of governments. ICSW congratulates the ASEAN Secretariat, the government officials and the Philippines Department of Social Welfare and Development for an excellent meeting that will help to reduce poverty and in equality in the South East Asian region.

### **The First Black Sea NGO Forum**

"Civil society in the region is relatively new – no older than 20 years and this is one of the major reasons while NGOs in the region face many similar challenges. The "(re)birth of civil society" happened in the 1990s. In all of the post-communist countries it took place as a direct effect of the regime change" These are the opening words of the report of the Black Sea Forum.

Those who know the region are amazed at how little people outside the region lack understanding of their problems in these relatively new states.

The report goes on to say: "Civil society in the region faces very similar challenges:

- Low citizen participation and involvement with CSOs, in most of the countries as a consequence of authoritarian regimes which have undermined social trust and the formation of social capital.
- Lack of genuine cooperation of public authorities. In most of the countries of the region there is a widespread perception of Governments' partisanship and exploitation of civil society for merely public image purposes. In some of the countries there is a noticeable tendency for Governments to create parallel NGOs (GONGOs), subordinated to their own interests and to feign consultation with civil society.

- Weakness in financial sustainability and donor dependency (with associated features such as project hunting behavior and competition for resources creating rivalry).
- The support from the private sector is generally weak and it is limited to charity.
- Due to the lack of constant and predictable resources, the organizational capacity remains weak.
- In many countries of the region the legal environment is not favorable for CSOs. There are examples of good practices in some of the countries (e.g. the EU new member states) however enforcement problems affect even states where the legal environment has been visibly improved.
- Most actively working NGOs are located in the capital cities and in major towns, while in large portions of the countries, particularly rural areas and less developed / de-industrialized regions, NGOs are less present.
- Generally media make general references to NGOs, with insufficient coverage of their ideas and activities.

The full and interesting report is at <http://www.blackseango.org/pagini/report.php>

ICSW is pleased to have supported now for about five years the International Union of Black Sea NGOs. Details of their activities can be found at <http://www.bsngon.com/>

### **Japan - great statement on social development at the UN**

Dr. Nobuko Kurosaki Alternate Representative of Japan made a superb statement on social development on 6<sup>th</sup> October at the UN. Here are some extracts: "Social development is a relatively new concept, one that arose from the need to set right the widening social inequity that has accompanied economic development. Recognizing the importance of social development, in 1995, the United Nations held the first World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. At the Summit, States reached the consensus that we must put people at the centre of development; in other words, that we must place "human security" at the heart of our development efforts. The Copenhagen Summit allowed a wide and comprehensive discussion of social development issues, with special attention to three priority areas: 1) the eradication of poverty; 2) the support of full and productive employment, and 3) the promotion of social integration. While the three fields each have distinctive significance and are interrelated, I will focus my statement on social integration because it is the priority theme of the Commission for Social Development for 2009 – 2010".

"ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) affirms that social integration policies should seek to reduce inequalities; promote access to basic social services, education for all and health care; and increase the participation and integration of social groups. Although more than 10 years have passed since the World Summit, social integration remains a challenge in many societies due to poverty. Without the support of the global community, it may be difficult for least developed countries to make advances in social integration. Japan has taken various actions domestically and internationally to enhance social integration.


To promote "society for all," in which all individuals and groups are able to contribute to society, we must consider the two points: 1) the inter-dependence of all members of society and 2) the life-long learning approach.

Japan has provided its Official Development Assistance keeping in mind social development issues, such as income disparity, sexual discrimination, human rights, democratization, and environmental considerations in each recipient

country. The basic policy of Japan's ODA emphasizes human security of each individual. Japan, therefore, contributes aid both bilaterally and also through the UN Human Security Fund in order to help protect the livelihood and dignity of individuals.

For example, the UN Human Security Fund has supported a project entitled, "Protection and Empowerment of Victims of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence in Moldova" that will be implemented by UNDP, UNFPA and IOM in cooperation with OSCE. This project focuses on individuals as the core of development, as it addresses full participation in society, enhancing social protection and reducing vulnerability. Each of these issues was specified in the Report of the 36th Social Development Committee as necessary for the promotion of social integration.

From the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen to the 24th Special Session to 2008 and beyond, Japan will continue to strive to meet the goals of the UN Millennium Declaration and the commitments of the World Summit.

Dr. Kurosaki's full statement can be found on the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/social/index.html> → [Related Information \(Social Development\)](#) or that of the Permanent Mission → [Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations Official Web Site](#) 

ICSW's statement on social integration can be found in Top News on the ICSW website [www.icsw.org](http://www.icsw.org)

### **[International Social Security Review now on line](#)**

The International Social Security Association has put its journal on line. This is a resource for people interested in social security and social protection. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118538866/home>

The content of this Global Newsletter may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. Views do not necessarily represent policies of ICSW.

Newsletter Editor: Denys Correll – Executive Director.

ICSW C/- MOVISIE Netherlands Centre for Social Development

PO Box 19129

3501 DC Utrecht

Netherlands

Website [www.icsw.org](http://www.icsw.org) Email: [icsw@icsw.org](mailto:icsw@icsw.org)