

GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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Japan's earthquake and tsunami

The terrible and destructive events in Japan have both an immediate and long term impact on the people of Japan. Christian Rollet, ICSW President has been in contact with Mr Chikashi Matsuju Executive Director of our member in Japan – the Japanese National Committee of ICSW. ICSW joins with so many others who have expressed their support and sympathy for the losses that have hit so many.

South Asia UNESCO Forum on social protection



From left: Ms Bindra Hada Member Secretary National Planning Commission Nepal; Hon Mr Felix Perera Minister of Social Service, Sri Lanka; Ms Elizabeth Longworth, UNESCO Deputy Assistant Director General for Social and Human Sciences and Director of Social Research Policy

ICSW was well represented at the UNESCO Forum of South Asia Ministers in charge of Social Development held in February 2011. The topic was social protection policies in South Asia. A S Shenoy, ICSW Regional President for South Asia presented in a session on a social protection floor for South Asia. The Forum was hosted by Mr Felix Perera, Minister of Social Services, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The ministers in their declaration arising from the meeting recognised they were “Driven by the urgency to counteract the devastating impact of the global financial and economic crisis, including the food crisis, especially on the poor population of our countries” In their commitment to action the ministers agreed to inter alia:

- “Commit to adopt a comprehensive approach to social protection, encompassing preventative, protective and promotional measures that address both individual and community risks and deprivations, while not disregarding traditional systems of social assistance;
- Recognise the need for expanding the scope and benefits of social protection to the most neglected and vulnerable sections of society such as, informal workers, migrants, persons with disabilities, the urban poor and other marginalised groups facing discrimination and exclusion;
- Emphasise child-sensitive social protection initiatives as an effective strategy to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and reduce socio-economic disparities;
- Build institutional and governance capacities and preparedness in delivery of social protection programmes, and ensure their regular monitoring and evaluation;
- Prioritise financing for social protection measures in national expenditure plans;
- Strive to move towards a universalised, rights-based, gender sensitive approach in the extension of social protection, providing dignity and voice to the poor and vulnerable and fostering equity, inclusion and citizenship;
- Advance the agenda for a social protection floor, ensuring universal access to essential social transfers and services, adapted to specific country contexts;
- Strengthen regional cooperation among our countries in enriching the field of social protection research and outreach...”(Note these are only some of the recommendations and actions. For the full declaration go to <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001914/191402e.pdf>)



Left - Ms Marina Faetanini UNESCO Programme Specialist Social and Human Sciences based in Delhi and responsible for organising the ministers’ forum.

Right – AS Shenoy ICSW Regional President for South Asia

UNICEF e-learning programme – social-economic policies for child rights

UNICEF and the Economic Research Foundation (ERF) invites interested people to participate in a new e-learning programme focusing on socio-economic policies for child rights with equity. This free, self-paced online course is available to all development partners at UN agencies, governments, universities and civil society organizations.

Course description: The programme is a foundational course on economic and social policies to promote equity and child rights. The topics include: the human rights-based approach to development; socially-responsive macroeconomic policies including fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies; equitable sector policies; public finance and social budgeting; multidimensional poverty; social protection, migration and climate change. The e-course aims to provide evidence-based arguments and advocacy skills needed to promote equity and children's rights in public policy in the context of recent economic crises and other developments including high food prices.

Course duration: The course is self-directed and may be completed at an individual's own pace.

Registration: Free of charge to ensure maximum outreach. Upon completion of each module, a test is administered. A certificate will be issued to all who reach successful completion.

Visit policyforchildrights.org to get started.

The course was designed by ERF team led by Jayati Ghosh, Director of the Economic Research Foundation, and UNICEF team led by Isabel Ortiz, Associate Director of Policy and Practice.

Food crisis continues - UNICEF analysis

UNICEF calls attention to the new food price spike. In January 2011, the international food price index surpassed levels reached during the 2007-08 food crisis. Extreme price movements of agricultural commodities not only threaten the food security of millions of people but also the economic recovery and social stability of developing countries. UNICEF's working paper, "[Escalating Food Prices](#)," addresses these challenges. The paper (i) briefly reviews possible causes of the food price spike that began in mid-2010; (ii) examines recent local food price movements in 58 developing countries during 2010; (iii) discusses the adverse impacts of food price increases on households; (iv) presents a rapid desk review of international and domestic policy responses in 98 developing countries under a three-pillar policy framework—supporting consumption, boosting production and regulating/managing food markets; and (v) calls on national governments and the international community for urgent and coordinated policy actions.

The paper finds local food price increases in more than two-thirds of developing countries in their sample during the latter half of 2010, closely trailing those in global food markets, at a slower but still substantial rate of increase. More importantly, on the aggregate domestic food price levels have remained alarmingly high compared to pre-2007-08 crisis levels (about 55 percent higher, on average, in November 2010 compared to May 2007), implying that poor and vulnerable populations in many developing countries have been relentlessly coping with high food costs.

http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_57549.html

From UNRISD

Caring for the Care Workers: State Must Play a Role

Changes in economic, social and demographic structures have spurred the growth of care employment in recent decades. In both North and South, care workers now comprise a large and growing segment of the labour force. The vulnerability and exploitation of particular categories of care workers (such as migrant domestic workers, nursing aides and providers of elder care) have also increased. These worrying trends can be attributed to

cost-cutting measures within the public sector and pervasive labour market informality, along with the continued devaluation of both women's work and care work.

<http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BF3C2/setLanguageCookie?OpenAgent&langcode=en&url=/80256B3C005BE6B5/search/58E1D52E263E1FAEC12578490045925F?OpenDocument>

The Financial Transaction Tax: A means to aid reform and universal social protection?

The history of aid shows an inverse relationship between aid on the one hand and the policy space and the level of economic growth of recipient governments on the other. That is, when aid levels rise, there are more policy conditions imposed on recipient governments by donors, which reduces "policy space" or the autonomy of governments to design policies and respond to the policy priorities of citizens.

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First Global Poverty Summit examines strategies in poverty reduction

UNRISD Research Coordinator Yusuf Bangura spoke at the first Global Poverty Summit held in January in Johannesburg. The meeting was organized by Brooks World Poverty Institute, the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies at The City University of New York Graduate Centre, and the CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics and Environment (CITEE). The principal aim was to critically assess the role of global institutions in poverty reduction.

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28th Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations

The 28th Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations was held on 28th March 2011. The theme was "Promoting Human Rights through Social Work and Social Welfare." Prior to the UN Day a [Global Social Work Student Conference](#) was held. Social Work Day at the UN is a gathering place for people around the world who are working to make a difference. For 27 years students, practitioners, and educators have been convening at the UN to learn more about the UN, innovative projects and issues related to International Social Work and the critical role Social Work plays in the international arena.

<http://bluehawk.monmouth.edu/swork/UN/>

Free 'How to' guides by KnowHowProfit

A newly launched 'wiki' micro volunteering platform calls on anyone working in the sector to share something that they know by writing or editing a How-to guide.

<http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/>

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