

AgeNews

East Asia/Pacific

*Sharing information
to strengthen
HelpAge Network*

**Issue 16
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Mr Rosalito M. Casais and his water refilling station in Manila, the Philippines.
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**HelpAge
International**

global network

Editorial

Although death is part of the cycle of life, we never seem to be prepared to accept its inevitability. How could we have expected the departure of Fransis? He was young; a full life still ahead of him. Fransis was at the core of our Network. His roaring laughter, his powerful voice and his transparent approach will be missed in years to come. Fransis will accompany us, even with his absence.

These coming couple of months will see a flurry of activity in the Network. The National Council of Senior Citizens Organisations of Malaysia (NACSCOM) will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a conference in Kuala Lumpur, co-organised with HelpAge. A new Global Age Watch Index will be launched in early September and the course *Designing and Implementing Social Transfer Programmes* will start on 5 October. The World Bank will soon publish its East Asia ageing report and on 1 October the WHO will release an important World Report on Ageing and Health. October will also see the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics Asia/Oceania Congress to be held in Chiang Mai.

The community-based OPAs are becoming stronger in the region. One of the last conversations I had with Fransis was about the need to increase the number of older people's associations (OPAs), in the Philippines, as they are becoming a crucial component of the redesigned social fabric in the region. China has taken, last month, an important step by issuing new policy guidelines on OPAs, while innovation and standardisation of approaches in Vietnam are facilitating rapid replication. Meanwhile, network members like FOPDEV are finding ways to encourage OPAs to engage on climate change, as highlighted in a recent Rockefeller publication.

Finally, I would like to encourage all of you to visit the regional network website and contribute to it by sharing experiences and innovations. Your ideas are always welcome.

Eduardo Kliken

Regional Director, East Asia/Pacific
HelpAge International

Fransis

Inspirational leader and a tireless, passionate, talented and hugely effective advocate for the rights of older people.

Fransiskus Kupang, Executive Director of the Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE) in the Philippines passed away on 23 June 2015.

Fransis was born in Lembata in Eastern Indonesia on 19 January 1969. He was always full of life. Any initiative to improve the lives of the poor or disadvantaged found in him an enthusiastic supporter.

Fransis joined the Coalition of Services for the Elderly (COSE) in 1997. He initially led the Community Organising team for 3 years before becoming Director in 2009. He revitalized and transformed COSE from a small local organization into one that is very relevant to the country.

A charismatic personality and talented orator, Fransis always brought a strong sense of reality and reflection to all network events, ensuring that the perspective of older people was paramount.



He was a great enthusiast with an infectious sense of humour, and a great friend. Fransis was a regular presence in HelpAge regional conferences from 2005 and joined many of our regional events.

He is survived by his wife Jenny and their four children, Ina Lucy, Ina Rensa, Lodovic Ednyuhardi and Mathew Henri.

He was diagnosed with advanced gastroesophageal cancer on 10 June. Fransis undertook palliative treatment, but suffered organ complications and died aged 46.

He will be deeply missed by his colleagues in COSE. HelpAge International will be setting up an annual prize in the name of Fransis Kupang, to be awarded on 23 June each year, to a man or woman who has made an exceptional contribution to advancing the rights of older people.

Emergency response to flood victims in Myanmar

► Myanmar

Myanmar was badly affected in July by heavy wind and rain in every state/division of the country.

Many areas were flooded and four Western regions (Chin, Magway, Rakhine and Sagaing) were declared disaster zones by the president after heavy floods on Friday 31 July 2015. Incessant rain over several weeks led to flooding and landslides in many parts of the country. The government, UN, and the Department of Irrigation and Agriculture are taking emergency response actions to ensure resilience in the face of disaster, and to promote the recovery process with the collaboration of NGOs, CSOs, and private donors.

HelpAge in Myanmar decided to take the initiative of helping the most flood-damaged areas in Magway Division. The

team began the trip on 4 August and distributed food and family kits to the inundated villages in the region with support of over 50 volunteers from the Older People Self Help Groups (OPSHGs).

The team plans to contact other Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) consortium member organisations such as Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and *Action Contre La Faim* (ACF) to determine the appropriate disaster response actions in the relevant regions. The team has also played a role in supporting vulnerable groups, including older people, in the disaster-affected areas. Further updates will be given during the recovery process.

(PS)

Read more information, please visit our webpage <http://bit.ly/1Ex4tMz>

Network members at the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Ageing

► Global

The Sixth session of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Ageing was held from 14-16 July 2015 in New York.

“Older people’s rights remain invisible in the international human rights system,” said Bridget Sleap, Senior Rights Advisor with HelpAge International.

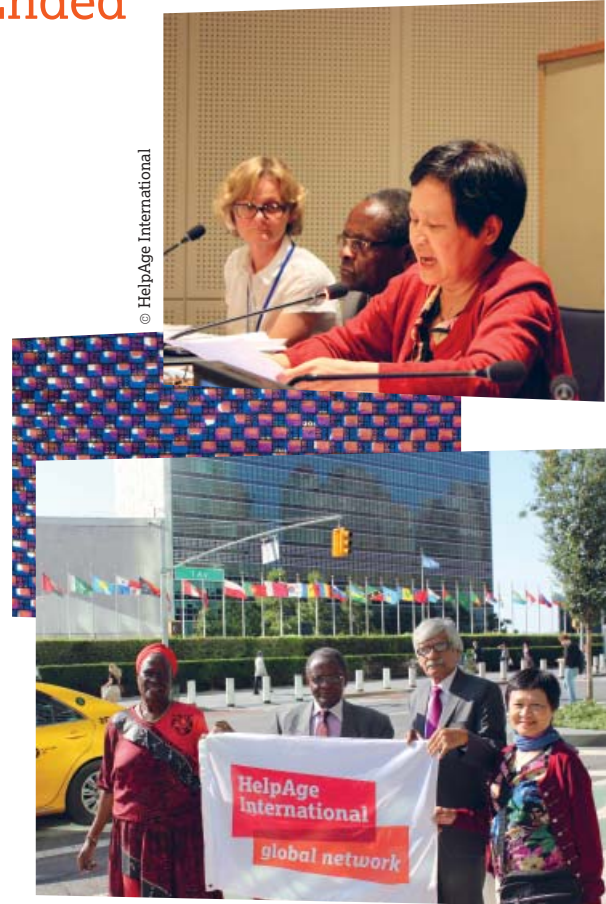
Four older activists from Vietnam, Pakistan, Kenya and Zambia attended the event. They made interventions and spoke on older people’s experiences of ageism and discrimination. They made powerful statements and gave a number of interviews to media including the BBC World Service and Radio France.

Our experienced colleague from the Philippines, Edward Gerlock, founding member of the Coalition of Services for the Elderly (COSE) was also invited to talk about emergencies for older persons arising out of humanitarian and disaster emergencies. Edward conveyed his usual enthusiasm. Those who know him recognise that he gets younger everyday!

Though the working group is not a decision making body, it is an important discussion forum that can make proposals and set the scene for decision-making at the UN General Assembly which takes place from September to December each year.

The next critical step for member states supporting an international convention is to negotiate a resolution at the UN General Assembly to change the format of the working group. We hope that the change in format will allow for a more explicit focus on the contents of an international convention.

To read statements from the Sixth Session, visit <http://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/sixthsession.shtml>



Representatives of older people in Southeast Asia bring “fire” and commitment



“An international convention on the rights of older people would provide a legal framework for member states to commit to and implement, meaning that the rights of older people will be much better protected.”

Pham Tuyet Nhung

Ms Pham Tuyet Nhung, 64, from the Vietnam Association of the Elderly (VAE), representing 8.4 million members, was among several older people meeting government representatives at the OEWG. Ms Le Minh Giang from the Vietnam National Committee on Aging (VNCA) accompanied her as a translator.

During the event, Ms Nhung made a very powerful (full of heart) contribution to the media interviews and the side event. Nhung’s statement to the OEWG was very good, in both delivery and content, which attracted great attention. She said a convention would make a huge difference to the lives of older people in Vietnam. Her contributions at the side event were also extremely powerful and had a major impact on the audience.

In addition, thanks to the VAE’s advocacy in the country before the event, the VNCA and Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs sent an official request to the Government to attend the meeting and support the convention on the rights of older people.

Assigned by the government, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs has worked with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other related agencies to collaborate on the input and to propose concrete measures for the drafting of the convention. The results were reported to the Prime Minister.

As a result, Mr Do Hung Viet, Deputy Representative of the Permanent Mission on behalf of the Government of Vietnam, also attended the event and made a strong statement supporting the convention.

The creativity of older people: examples of OPA innovations

OPA refers to older people's association.

► Regional

“When you get older, your capabilities decrease and you eventually become a burden to society”. This is a simplistic myth about ageing that is held by many people. This idea is reflected in the policies and practices of many organisations, and sometimes even in older people themselves.

However, this idea is no longer true, especially with recent advances in technology, health, nutrition and medicine as well as changes in lifestyle. Older people of today are not the same as they were in the past.

Fortunately, more and more people in different sectors of society are opening their minds and starting to believe that older people can be a resource and can make a significant contribution to society, despite their age. Older people are still an active part of society and should be included in any political and socio-economic decisions to be made by the community. With time on their hands, older people are able to work actively in the community, and with their wisdom, they can help find solutions to problems.

These ideas are what HelpAge and our partners have tried to promote as they demonstrate the valuable and resourceful role of older people and older people's associations.

In the following paragraphs, we are proud to present examples of how much older people can do with their creativity and energy, both for themselves and their society. The results are even more impressive when they work together as a team.

We would like to present two innovations from the Philippines and Vietnam, which we hope will inspire you to innovate yourself!

(WR)



An innovative approach to livelihood diversification in the Philippines

Communal Garden: Planting for the benefit of the community

After the devastation of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, many people lost their home and their main source of income. Older people identified access to affordable food of good quality as one of their top priorities. As a result, they came up with the idea of producing their own food both for nutritional benefits and as a way of generating income.

With training provided by HelpAge-COSE in livelihood diversification techniques, the newly formed older people's organisation (OPO) in Mahayag village (*barangay*), in the municipality of Merida, West Leyte has created a garden where members can come to plant and harvest their produce.

The Mahayag OPO has leased a 500-square-metre plot of land for growing vegetables and fruit such as Chinese cabbages, peanuts, corn, chillies, tomatoes and cucumbers. These products are sold in the *barangay* and municipal markets. Members have to buy the products as well but at a discounted price. The income that they get from the sales are saved and used as revolving funds of the organisation.

The members of the OPO also found the garden to be an excellent place to socialise with each other and have fun together. Those members who are frail and can't work are invited to find a friend to work for them. As a result, this garden has become a focus of intergenerational activity where you can see youngsters and adults helping and working alongside the elderly. Some members said that they have also created a small-scale garden at home and have applied the techniques they learned from the communal garden.

When it was successfully implemented, this communal garden model was adopted by the municipal branch of the Department of Agriculture, the government agency responsible for the promotion of agricultural development, and a model farm was built in front of the OPO communal garden. The next step is to promote the concept of a communal garden to many other OPOs in the country.

The success of this communal garden is proof of the innovative ability of older people in the Philippines.

HelpAge-COSE is a collaborative emergency response programme between the Coalition of services of the Elderly (COSE) and HelpAge International to provide relief support to the community affected by Typhoon Haiyan.

An innovative approach to resource mobilisation
in Vietnam – Making OPAs sustainable

Golden Heart Book: An inexpensive tool for mutual assistance

HelpAge Vietnam Office works closely with many local organisations that focus on ageing issues to promote multi-functional and age-inclusive activities. As a result of this collaboration, traditional older people's organizations have become what we call 'Intergenerational Self-Help Clubs' (ISHCs).

One of their goals is to be sustainable so that the ISHC can run all activities on their own with minimal support from the government or institutions outside their area. Thus fund-raising is an important aspect of their activities.

How can an ISHC get support from community members? Given the fact that community members are a mix of rich and poor, advantaged and disadvantaged people, not everyone can provide financial support.

Firstly, the concept of a fund-raising tool was introduced. The clubs adopted this, and then creatively modified it into their local context. As a result, ISHCs have created the 'golden heart book'.

This is a book which lists disadvantaged people in the community and adds a description of their needs. The club leader presents the book to the community members, either in person or through various channels, in order to mobilize support. The community members can provide help depending on their choice and their capacity. The support could be money or goods; rice, eggs and even their unused possessions such as clothes or blankets.

The donator receives a thank-you letter and gift. He or she also receives a periodic status report on the recipient who they have helped.

This activity has been used by many currently active ISHCs and has proved to be very beneficial. The ISHCs can mobilise resources, support their community members and also improve the image of older people in the community. The authorities also acknowledge the contribution of older people.

Perhaps the best result of this innovation is that the golden heart book can raise awareness among younger people, showing that older people are creative, caring and can actively support their community.

"After just over one year since its implementation, our ISHC has raised 63 million VND, of which we used 40,100,000 VND to help 33 disadvantaged people in the community. The remaining 21,900,000 VND left in the golden heart book will be used for other disadvantaged people in the future."

Mr Đinh Cong Lai, Chairman of the club



Story from the field

Aunty Khel Khem, 63, is a member of an Older People's Association (OPA) in Bak Amrek village, Battambang province. She was elected by her OPA to be the leader of the disaster risk reduction and climate change subcommittee, formed to implement a HelpAge Cambodia climate change project funded by Cambodian Climate Change Alliance.

Bak Amrek village has a river running through it and a great lake nearby, both of which regularly flood in the wet season (June to November). Through the OPA subcommittee, Khem and others learnt new farming techniques, including seed

Disaster resistant gardening in Battambang

selection and flood-safe gardening. They taught others in the village their new skills, resulting in more crops and less flood damage for the village as a whole.

Aunty Khem commented on what she learnt through the Community Resistance to Climate Change project:

"My farming practice has totally changed. Since I have been applying my new techniques for growing vegetables off the ground I can see the results. I have better yields with cucumbers, corn, long beans, broccoli and more. While the products from the garden are for my family, I often



have extra which I sell in the market. I use the money to buy meat or other important items. My family has a better income now."

Interview

Take 5 minutes with Datuk Dr Soon Ting Kueh, President of the National Council of Senior Citizens Organisations of Malaysia



Could you tell us briefly about yourself and your organization?

Established in 1990, the National Council of Senior Citizens Organisations Malaysia, or NACSCOM, is a not-for-profit federation of senior citizens organizations in Malaysia. Currently, there are 41 affiliates with close to 20,000 members from all over the country. We work closely with the Government, the corporate sector and civil society to promote and protect the well-being and welfare of senior citizens in Malaysia.

As for myself, I am a chemist by training and served in academia for more than 30 years. With interests in science and technology, I am a Fellow of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) and also sit on a number of academic programme committees in various Malaysian universities.

I was invited by the founding president, Datuk Lum Kin Tuck, to join NACSCOM. I have served on the NACSCOM Council as President since 2006. I was elected again in 2012, so this is my second term. My commitment is to ensure that our senior citizens enjoy the best quality of life and live enjoyable and happy golden years.

Referring to NACSCOM's vision, what do you mean by "older citizens driving socio-economic transformation"? Can you give an example of the transformation driven by the older people in Malaysia?

"Senior citizens driving socio-economic transformation" means that many senior citizens are still actively involved in the socio-economic development of the country. As Malaysia is aspiring to become a developed nation by 2020, its senior citizens have a major role to play in the country's economic advancement and social development. They can contribute in terms of their experience, expertise and wisdom. They also play a key role in guiding and transforming the economic development of the country.

What more can society do to maximize the involvement of older people?

Older people can still contribute in the workplace to provide guidance and expertise to the workforce. NACSCOM is planning to raise the retirement age to 60 and even 65 for certain categories* of workers. Senior citizens can also contribute to the community through their involvement in professional and welfare organisations as well as NGOs. NACSCOM is promoting greater participation among older persons so they can continue to live an active and enjoyable life.

Malaysia is not yet an ageing society but it will become one. Are you (and other Malaysians) prepared for this? How does NACSCOM plan to handle this exciting challenge?

Malaysia is indeed facing a rapidly ageing population, but I believe that none of us, including the government, is prepared for the kind of ageing society we will have in the 2030s. Many aspects, including income and social security, health and other infrastructures geared to older people, are not yet in place. NACSCOM is urging the Malaysian Government to look into this ageing issue seriously and urgently. All future economic and social programmes must have a component on ageing in their development plan.

Malaysia is chairing ASEAN this year. What do you think of ASEAN's policy on ageing in this region?

Malaysia is planning to present an ASEAN Declaration on the Social Protection of Older Persons. This ASEAN Declaration will cover all issues related to the welfare of older people and will also include a plan of action. NACSCOM is playing a key part in preparing this Declaration.

As 2015 is NACSCOM's 25th anniversary, will there be any special event to celebrate this important event?

Yes, we have planned a number of special activities for our Silver Jubilee Celebrations in 2015. The highlight will be the Silver Jubilee Fund Raising Banquet and the NACSCOM/HelpAge Regional Conference on 11th October 2015. There will also be a NACSCOM Silver Jubilee Commemorative Publication.



NACSCOM silver jubilee

To celebrate their 25th Anniversary or Silver Jubilee in 2015, NACSCOM has launched a series of events such as a design competition, an exhibition and meetings. Many other activities will be jointly organised with their affiliates, the government and like-minded institutions.

HelpAge will also take part in this significant occasion for NACSCOM by co-organising a regional symposium on 11 October 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The theme of the symposium is "Income Security of Older Persons in an Ever-Changing World". It proposes to look into the issues of financial security of older people in the region and examine various social security systems from other countries, especially the developed world. At the end of the symposium, a set of recommendations to the government of Malaysia is expected.

For more information please contact NACSCOM Secretariat at admin@nacscom.org.my or visit <http://www.nacscom.org.my/>

*Website for minimum retirement age in Malaysia, <http://minretirementage.mohr.gov.my/>

Participants benefit from international exchange programme

► Thailand

The HelpAge network developed an exchange programme supported by Fredskorpset (FK) Norway. So far, 26 staff from the network have benefitted from these one-year exchanges.

Through the FK programme, staff of the HelpAge network in Asia receive financial support to complete exchanges with other network members. These opportunities strengthen the network and facilitate cross-cultural learning and sharing of skills and knowledge.

Ms Minh Phuc Dong, from the Vietnam Association of the Elderly (VAE) and Ms Boramy Hok, from HelpAge Cambodia, both participated in the FK exchange programme and recently completed their 12-month stay in Thailand. Hosted by the Foundation for Older Persons' Development (FOPDEV), they learned about disaster risk reduction (DRR) and communications, and visited many older people's groups. Boramy Hok said:

"I wanted to become a teller in the bank but I changed my mind. Now, I want to work with older people as a facilitator in disaster risk reduction."

Before returning to their home countries, Minh Phuc and Boramy led a workshop in Fang district, Chiang Mai Province on



Left - Boramy Hok
Right - Minh Phuc Dong

21-22 July 2015. This workshop provided older people with information on disaster issues and how to use media tools to advise others on disaster risk reduction. They also reported on what they learned in their year in Thailand, and shared information on the situation of older people in Vietnam and Cambodia with older people from three provinces of Thailand: Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai.

The attention and active participation of older people during the workshop



impressed them. They did not hesitate to ask about what they did not know and welcomed suggestions from others. Minh Phuc Dong said:

"Older people, with experience and knowledge accumulated over the years, have valuable ideas to convey to the next generation. If we provide new knowledge and techniques, they can adopt them very well. In this way they are a valuable resource for families, communities and society."

Boramy Hok added that she thought learning across borders is an important tool for development and helps to strengthen participants at both individual and organisational levels.

Learn more on Fredskorpset (FK) Norway, visit www.fredskorpset.no/en/



► Vietnam

From 18-22 May 2015, the Social Protection and Sustainable Livelihood (SPSL) project funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia, with support from the HelpAge Regional Office and Vietnam country office, conducted a study visit on social protection for 20 Lao government officials from different ministries and three provinces (Savannakhet, Champasak and

Lao delegation visits Vietnam and learns about social protection

Saravane). The objective of the visit was to increase participants' awareness and knowledge of social protection and to experience and gain understanding of how Vietnam has developed the provision of state-funded social protection.

The visit focused on the non-contributory programmes, including an overview of social protection in Vietnam, the role of government and civil society organizations in promoting and supporting social protection in an institutional setting, the legislation process, financing and the impact of social protection. The delegation met 10 relevant representatives from the government, development agencies and

academics, including a meeting with the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the UNDP and the World Bank. The participants also went into the field to visit active programmes.

At the end of the visit, the delegation discussed lessons learned and the way forward after returning to Laos. This included a plan for drafting a national social protection strategy.

The study visit received positive feedback from SPSL and the participants. The delegation found the trip useful for them for developing their policy on social protection.

Video workshop: two productive weeks for communications staff



► Thailand

The capacity to create quality and interesting media is very important in the competitive world of information and communications. This is the case for any industry, and civil society organisations (CSOs) are no exception. In order to produce such media, particular skills need to be developed. Thus a multimedia workshop was held in Chiang Mai on 15-26 June 2015.

The Foundation for Older Person's Development (FOPDEV), as the most experienced group in media production in the network, hosted a video workshop to share their expertise and develop the skills of participants.

Six participants from HelpAge Cambodia, HelpAge Vietnam country office, the Vietnam Association of the Elderly (VAE) and the Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE) from the Philippines, came to Chiang Mai, Thailand to join the workshop.

To improve their knowledge about the technology of media production, the participants learned about software for graphics, tools for photography and tactics for presentation in the first week. The second week focused on audio-visual techniques, including the thinking process, content development, production of video and broadcasting.

Individual assignments were presented on the last day of the workshop, followed by a discussion of how these skills can contribute to campaign work at the country and regional level.

Another result of the workshop was that a collaborative video project was agreed on and started. We are all eager to see the results of their work!

(WR)

This workshop is an activity under the EU-funded project "Strengthening the civil society network on ageing in Southeast Asia".

ADB-HelpAge collaboration on care services for older people in the Asia-Pacific

► Regional

It is widely recognised that there is a growing need for new care systems for older people in the Asia-Pacific region. This need is increasingly severe because of population ageing, the growing complexities of care needs, and strain on traditional family support systems. Rapid ageing of the population and social changes will have a significant impact on both the delivery and financing of care. Care is not just an individual or family issue, but one that also needs to be addressed by communities, planners, and governments. The future of care will demand more investment, more workers, and higher expectations that the final years of life must have as much meaning, purpose, and personal well-being as possible. Facing up to this challenge requires a comprehensive vision of care.

Over the last six months, HelpAge International and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have been collaborating to develop a training programme and

manual for policy makers and practitioners on 'Developing care services for older people in the Asia-Pacific region'. The training builds understanding and shares best practice on policy development, planning, implementation, development of human resources and financing options related to care services for older people.

As part of this process a two and half day training programme was piloted at ADB Headquarters in Manila, Philippines from 7-9 June 2015. The training session was opened by Mr Ayumi Konishi, Director General of the East Asia Section, ADB and was attended by over 15 participants drawn from ADB staff and representatives from governments of the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia. The training was presented by Meredith Wyse, HelpAge EAPRO with input from Mr Chris Baker, HelpAge research assistant, and with valuable input from resource persons, Ms Fong Yoke Hiong, Assistant Director of Nursing from our network member the Tsao Foundation and Dr Peter Chan, an



ADB Consultant. The topics included: the growing priorities for care services; concepts of and approaches to care; financing; care in the wider context; modeling and commonly used care tools; and who will deliver care?

(MW)

Following the training, the manual is currently being finalised and will be accessible by September. For further information on the training programme please contact Ms Meredith Wyse, Strategic Development Manager, Meredith@helpageasia.org

Successful completion of Community-Based Services for Older People project

► Cambodia

HelpAge Cambodia has brought together communities and regional service providers to give targeted health care and living assistance to vulnerable older people in Battambang Province.

Supported by the ASEAN-RoK Cooperation Fund, HelpAge Cambodia initiated the Community-Based Services for Older People project in January 2014 with the aim of expanding the capacity of regional health services and community-based Older People's Associations (OPAs) to care for vulnerable older people in 13 villages in Moug Roussei, a district of Battambang Province. The project concluded successfully in June 2015.

The project's beneficiaries were 85 elderly people who are in need of regular health care and living assistance, but who lack access to these services. The majority of beneficiaries were widowed women (Cambodia has a high proportion of older widows) with a partial or complete lack of IADL ability.

Twenty three assistants and volunteers, most of them middle-aged, were trained by the Provincial Health Department to provide living support or home care services, basic health assessment, and case management for beneficiaries. Village OPAs supervised the delivery and reporting of these services.



The project also provided housing repair and household items such as blankets and mosquito nets for a number of beneficiaries via OPA social funds, as well as free transport to health care facilities.

The project has seen a significant improvement in many indicators of mental and physical health, with a rise in beneficiaries who had:

- Accessed any health services (25 to 66 per cent)
- Accessed community-based health care services (45 to 78 per cent)
- Had a comprehensive medical checkup within the past two years (19 to 56 per cent)

- Participated in a health improvement program (39 to 62 per cent)

Twenty per cent of beneficiaries also reported an improvement in dietary habits. The project also had a positive impact on the mental health of beneficiaries, with a 20 per cent drop in those who reported being depressed. Beneficiaries also reported feeling less isolated from the greater community.

The success of this project has laid the groundwork for HelpAge Cambodia to establish more OPAs and to increase the government's capacity to provide for the health, emotional, and spiritual needs of older Cambodians.

(BV)

Learning and planning forward from RPMC Meeting

► Regional

On 23-24 July 2015, HelpAge EAPRO hosted the fifth Regional Project Management Committee (RPMC) meeting for the project on *Strengthening the civil society network on ageing in Southeast Asia* (so called AMCo). This programme is supported by the European Commission. The meeting was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand with 21 participants from Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Some of the main objectives for this meeting included sharing the achievements of different countries on the AMCo project and enabling discussion on the emerging themes related to the CSO Network on Ageing in Southeast Asia.

Each country reported their progress on recently implemented activities such as

- the Feasibility Study on the Social Pension program in Myanmar and the Philippines,
- the pilot Cash transfer programme for older people in Myanmar,
- capacity building for older people's associations (OPAs) in Vietnam and Indonesia,
- the ongoing process on Ageing Policy Review in Cambodia, and
- the National Universal Social Pension campaign in Thailand.

Besides this, the Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE) from the Philippines shared their experience regarding

advocacy on Ageing at regional and international level. The Foundation for older persons' Development (FOPDEV) from Thailand also shared their experience on the national advocacy on the National Social Pension in Thailand. Not only did the participants gain better understanding of each country's action and results on ageing issues, but clear indications for the improvement of project monitoring and evaluation were also developed.

After this meeting, all partner countries could develop a clear work plan to advance the project for Strengthening the CSO Network on Ageing as a development partner in Southeast Asia.

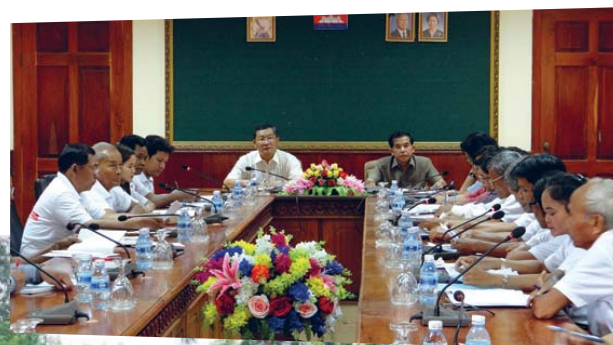
(TS)

Older people demand action on rights

On World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15), groups of older people from different countries across East Asia and the Pacific Region lobby their local and national governments on the issue that concerns them most, and this year, the focus of the campaign was to raise awareness of elder abuse and to advocate governments to endorse the need for a new UN convention on the rights of older people.

Older people's rights are human rights

On that day, the HelpAge network coordinated activities for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, organising a huge social media campaign as well as planning events to follow up with various governments to attend the Open-Ended Working Group on ageing in Cambodia, Fiji, the Philippines and Vietnam.



Vietnam

The Vietnam Association of the Elderly (VAE) held a public meeting in Hanoi with 200 participants including older people, media agencies, and representatives from the local Elderly Association on 9 June. This was to raise public and media awareness of the importance of having a legally binding international convention to protect the rights of older people.

On 15 June, VAE held a consultative workshop on "Input for the draft of a new convention on older people's rights". Around 50 representatives from government sectors, media agencies and older people attended the event to encourage the UN to endorse this new convention.

As a result of the workshop, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to send a delegate to attend the Open-Ended Working Group in New York and the government pledged to review Vietnamese laws relating to the elderly in order to meet older people's demands. Additionally, the Vietnamese Prime Minister approved the VAE proposal to organise "a month of action for older persons" in October.

Cambodia

HelpAge Cambodia organised three different Information and Consultative Meetings at provincial levels with government officials, local NGOs, partners and older people's associations on 12 and 15 June to convince the decision makers to attend the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing.

Fiji

The Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) worked with Communication Fiji Limited to broadcast the Age Demands Action campaign live on a radio talk show.

On the same day, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Children, Women and Poverty Alleviation, Dr Josefa Koroivueta, together with his team, met the FCOSS delegation. He made a pledge that a Cabinet paper would be drawn up and would be tabled in the next cabinet meeting. He also promised to follow up with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the government meeting on the Convention on the rights of older persons.

Philippines

The Coalition of the Services of the Elderly (COSE) and the Committee for Older Persons held a National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on 17-18 June. This event brought together the key stakeholders in the sector to work in partnership to lobby for the drafting, adoption and eventually bringing into effect the Convention for the Rights of Older Persons at the international level, and its signing and ratification at the domestic level. The key recommendations were delivered by the Mission at the 6th session of the Open-Ended Working Group in New York.

(PN)

Global AgeWatch Index 2015
launches on **9 September**

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Korean older activists hold meeting for Age Demands Action (ADA)



▶ Republic of Korea

On 23 July 2013, Korean older people, both leaders and activists, gathered to discuss the 'Age Demands Action' (ADA) campaign in Seoul.

HelpAge Korea hosted this annual meeting and invited 17 Older People's Self-Help Groups (OPSHGs) to participate in order to help them to be on the same page in terms of the ADA Campaign. About 50 leaders and 20 activists attended the meeting.

To open the meeting the leaders talked about the success of last year's ADA campaign conducted by their OPSHGs. After that, HelpAge Korea gave the leaders a training session with a workbook to help them have better understanding of the UN Convention on the rights of older people.

A group discussion followed the training with the theme of 'The World We Want to Bequeath to the Next Generation'. The leaders voiced a variety of wishes such as 'A world where there are no discriminations against older people' and 'A world where older people can live happily'.

For the next two months, the leaders will continue to train members in their OPSHGs using the workbook. For their part, the OPSHGs are planning various activities for this year's ADA campaign, including a performance that represents the world older people want to leave for the future generation and a petition to gather support for the convention among people of all ages.

(JK)

New OPA policy in China

On 6 May 2015, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the China National Committee on Aging (CNCA) issued a policy document aimed at strengthening the older people's associations (OPAs) in urban and rural China. This follows the 12th national plan on ageing, which sets a target of expanded OPA coverage to 95% in urban and 80% in rural areas.

The new policy focuses on expanding the number and reach of OPAs, providing support in terms of registration, management and funding, as well as encouraging the social involvement and building capacity of OPAs.

This is a significant and influential step, recognising OPAs as a relevant way to promote social harmony, care for the disadvantaged and be a tool for development in less developed regions.

(DX)

Recognition of good practice in resilience building in Thailand

The Foundation for Older Persons' Development (FOPDEV) partnered with the Prudence Foundation to implement a programme on disaster response in four provinces of Thailand.

Since 2005, the programme has provided senior citizens with the capacity to teach others about disaster preparedness. In addition to building knowledge, they also develop skills to advocate for greater support from government toward longer-term resilience-building.

Their work is featured in a recent report prepared by BSR and supported by the Rockefeller Foundation: "Climate Resilience and the Role of the Private Sector in Thailand: Case Studies on Building Resilience and Adaptive Capacity". Congratulations to FOPDEV.

(WR)



Welcome to the new Executive Director of HelpAge Cambodia (HAC)

HelpAge is delighted to welcome Dr. Michael S. Nhim as the new Executive Director of HelpAge Cambodia, appointed by the Board of Trustee of HAC.

Before joining HelpAge Cambodia, Dr. Nhim worked in a number of roles in different countries including Project Manager for Oxfam in Cambodia and the Philippines, Regional Coordinator of Goal Asia based in Thailand, Consultant and Specialist with the Asia-Pacific Network based in Australia, and Country Director of SIDO based in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Regional event on community-based services for older persons in Cambodia

HelpAge Korea in partnership with HelpAge International and HelpAge Cambodia held a regional conference on Community-based Services for Older Persons on 26-29 May 2015 in Battambang, Cambodia. The conference marked the completion of the regional project ROK-ASEAN Community-based services for Older Persons in CLMV countries. It provided a forum for key stakeholders to share the outcomes and project experiences and to develop policy recommendations on community-based age care in the region. Over 40 participants from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Public Health and NGOs including local participants attended. The policy recommendations produced by the participants were shared as input for the development of the ASEAN Declaration on the Elderly, which is being led by Malaysian government. It will also be used to feed into the next ASEAN Strategic Framework on Social Welfare and Development (2016-2020).

Resources

Publications



Why ageing should be a concern for the World Humanitarian Summit
HelpAge International



We can also make change
HelpAge International



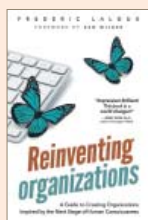
Policy Mapping on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific: Analytical Report
HelpAge East Asia/ Pacific



Data Mapping on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific
HelpAge East Asia/ Pacific

Cambodia's Approach to Community-Based Services: A Practical Manual, HelpAge Cambodia
Community-Based Services for Older People: Key Results and Lessons Learned, HelpAge Cambodia
A short guide to Intergenerational self-help clubs in Vietnam, HelpAge Vietnam Country Office
Why join us?, HelpAge Vietnam Country Office

Other sources



Reinventing organisations
Federic Laloux (author)

“The way we manage our organisations seems increasingly out-of-date...”
The book explores traits of more effective and purposeful organisations, adapted to the needs of the 21st century.

Video

Time of care (https://youtu.be/BHeTvi7_kuM)

Blogs

Mapping policy data in East Asia and the Pacific (<http://bit.ly/1EgTXPa>)
Camilla Williamson

Mapping ageing data in Asia and the Pacific (<http://bit.ly/1IW3vh1>)
Catherine Frances

Older activists tell us why they fight for change (<http://bit.ly/1MwTDOO>)
Jemma Stovell

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In addition, we welcome articles for consideration. Please send articles at any time to:

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HelpAge International helps older people claim their rights, challenge discrimination and overcome poverty, so that they can lead dignified, secure, active and healthy lives.

AgeNews East Asia/Pacific aims to highlight issues of ageing and the rights of older people in East Asia/Pacific as well as share experiences of working with and for older people.

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