CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE ASEAN: Our Stories and Practices

Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

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Institute of Asian Studies
Chulalongkorn University

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CONTENTS

Section Two: Policy Advocacy

Section Three: Policy Engagement

Section Four: Synthesis

Appendices

Foreword

This volume, which shares and highlights common concerns and struggles towards building a just and sustainable society in Asia, is an indication in a number of ways that we have opened a new chapter to the mission at the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS) of Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. IAS, founded in 1967, is an inter-disciplinary research, teaching, and service organization. Its strategic vision has been to serve the Thai community and the Asian region as a source of knowledge and expertise for a broad range of subject areas in the region, including economic, social, political, and security concerns.

In 2017, IAS started to support under its umbrella, a regional project entitled *Transformative Learning towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community*. I am delighted that this regional project has paved a way to expand the IAS's areas of contribution through further networking and collaborative frameworks.

Our region is undergoing rapid economic integration and is increasingly faced with common challenges, which include the widening gaps between the economically privileged and underprivileged and the effects of environmental destruction and resource depletion on food security and psychological health. To respond to these challenges and work towards building a more just and sustainable society both nationally and through regional collaboration, well-informed civic engagement is crucial. Learning also plays a vital role. Institutionalized education alone, especially through conventional styles of passive learning, is not only insufficient, but also ineffective. To precipitate citizens' active participation in society-building, learning must be transformative. Guiding principles such as sustainability and justice must be widely and constantly debated to be meaningful.

This regional project closely looked at contributions of transformative learning in East and Southeast Asia by: analyzing existing cases of civic engagement in the region to find out to what extent each undertaking is transformative and what factors are enabling/dis-enabling transformation; enhancing collaboration among various stakeholders, in particular academics, civil society, and local communities, as a step towards creating a multi-stakeholder platform; and learning from educational programs where transformative learning has been incorporated into curricula and activities.

To achieve these objectives, IAS collaborated with its co-hosts and invited civil society leaders, community organizers, academics, teachers, and other practitioners to a regional workshop entitled

Civic Engagement for a Just and Sustainable ASEAN: Our Stories and Practices held between August 11 and 15, 2017 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. All the invitees had demonstrated strong leadership, professionalism, and accomplishment of regional relevance through innovation and creative methodology, aiming for policy impact and/or social transformation at large, at a national or regional level. In short, the participants had stories to share about their civic engagement experiences towards a just and sustainable society.

I am very happy to share with our readers, the synthesis of the exchanges and findings from these processes. And I hope each reader can come across a story or two to relate to in this report and come up with a story of your own to add to it.

Nualnoi Treerat, Ph.D.
Director, Institute of Asian Studies
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Acknowledgments

On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to express sincere appreciation to the keynote speakers, presenters, discussants, and all participants at the regional workshop *Civic Engagement for a Just and Sustainable ASEAN: Our Stories and Practices* for their invaluable contributions which comprise this publication. Thanks are especially due to the authors of the following chapters, who have submitted manuscripts and responded to the comments, inquiries, and suggestions made by the editorial team. I would also like to thank Ms. Jackie Imamura for her helpful inputs and technical editing to the earlier drafts of this volume. My thanks also go to Mr. Jeff Moynihan for proofread, design, and layout.

Publication of this volume and organization of the Yogyakarta regional workshop would not have been possible without a strong support from Chulalongkorn University and a partnership with Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS). I would especially like to thank Professor Surichai Wun'Gaeo, Director of Peace and Conflict Studies Center, and Dr. Nualnoi Treerat, Director of Institute of Asian Studies. Special appreciation also goes to the timely and generous funding from the Japan Foundation Asia Center (JFAC).

Toshiyuki Doi

Senior Advisor, Mekong Watch, Japan

Introduction

Toshiyuki Doi
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The Yogya Workshop

This volume is an output of the regional workshop *Civic Engagement for a Just and Sustainable ASEAN: Our Stories and Practices*, held from August 11 to 15, 2017 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (the Yogya Workshop).[1] It tries to capture and synthesize the stories and reports presented at the regional workshop and share them with a wider circle, especially those who are faced with similar concerns and challenges, and struggle towards building a just and sustainable society in the Asia region.

The Yogya Workshop was a first step in a larger regional project entitled *Transformative Learning towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community.*[2] The project attempted to identify and learn from existing cases of civic engagement and transformative learning in East and Southeast Asia (SEA) and set as its ultimate goal to create a multi-stakeholder platform to enhance collaboration among academics, civil society organization (CSO) workers, local community leaders, government officials, and private sector representatives to respond to common challenges and work towards building a more just and sustainable society in Asia. A group of leading academics and CSO activists based in Asia formed an ad-hoc steering team, which has been guiding the regional project. They have met occasionally in-person and on-line over the past three years to discuss, give advice, and take action as needed and mutually agreed upon.

The Yogya Workshop invited about 30 CSO leaders, community organizers, academics, and researchers who had demonstrated strong leadership, professionalism, and accomplishment of regional relevance through innovation and creative methodology, aiming for policy impact and/or social transformation at large, at a national or regional level. The countries represented were Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam from the SEA region and Japan and the USA from outside SEA. The workshop showcased civic engagement and transformative learning at practice and policy levels in Asia. Topics that were dis-

1 About the Workshop. http://civic-engage.ias.chula.ac.th/?p=aboutworkshop (Last accessed July 27, 2020).

2 Transformative Learning towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community. http://civic-engage.ias.chula.ac.th/ (Last accessed July 27, 2020).

cussed represented key justice and sustainability issues facing Asia and the world, and included disaster mitigation, labor migration, food security, community-based enterprise, indigenous knowledge and wisdom, and roles of beliefs and spirituality.

Six Key Questions

In order to achieve coherence throughout the Yogya Workshop, the presentations were grouped in three thematic categories of Community Empowerment, Policy Advocacy, and Policy Engagement. Two keynote addresses were featured to set and sustain the basic tone of the workshop. To ensure active but focused discussion, each session was facilitated by experienced Moderator and Discussant, the function of the latter was to provide linkages among the presentations and highlight points for more in-depth exchanges.

Furthermore, each case presenter was asked to address the following six questions:

1. What were the perceived problems/issues prioritized by your organization for civic engagement? How and why were they selected?
2. What were the key strategies and methods used for civic engagement? Who and what were primarily targeted? Why?
3. What were some of the internal and external factors and circumstances that helped to facilitate (and/or limit) these desired changes in the short and long term?
4. What and how were some of the desired attitudinal changes, social practices, and policy changes manifested in the target groups? How were these changes "measured" and assessed? What are their prospects of survival in the long term?
5. What were some unexpected and unintended negative consequences of your civic engagement with the target groups? How were they eventually addressed?
6. What are some of your visions and plans for regional collaboration based on your civic engagement experiences?

This publication retains the Yogya Workshop format and has grouped the keynote speeches and presentations into chapters on Community Empowerment (in Section One), Policy Advocacy (in Section Two), and Policy Engagement (in Section Three). Each chapter is organized in accordance with the six key questions above, with many using them as headings in the main text.

Synopsis of the Chapters

Section One: Community Empowerment

Section One is about Community Empowerment. In the opening chapter, originally given as the first keynote speech, Erna Witoelar lays out how the civil society has expanded its engagement in the development sector, singling out gender equality as a key drive to contribute to the expansion. While civic engagement under the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) was limited and limiting, the more recent SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) can provide everyone with much wider space. At the same time, Erna points out, to try to achieve the SDGs requires new styles of partnerships and leaderships for transformation, which, above all, must be well-grounded at the local level. As a case in point, she cites recent efforts deliberately made among religious-based philanthropy groups in Indonesia to try to shift their focus more from charity to development. This move in turn is leading them into building partnerships with groups of other religions and beliefs.

Following Erna Witoelar's overview of civic engagement, Antoinette G. Royo tells her experiences at the Samdhana Institute, which offers grants and technical supports, e.g., territory mapping, to indigenous and other economically and socially marginalized communities in SEA to defend their rights to access, manage, and utilize land and other natural resources. Samdhana's success, according to Nonette, at least partially comes from the institute's well-articulated vision to create "*[a] region where natural, cultural and spiritual diversity are valued and environmental conflicts are resolved peacefully, with justice and equity for all parties*." Samdhana also makes efforts to share this vision with all key stakeholders, including sometimes even government units and local law-makers who often violate land rights of local communities, for instance, by issuing licenses over land without adequately consulting with them.

The next three chapters are all stories about how to create sustainable livelihood systems in specific localities in SEA. Supa Yaimuang, through her work at an NGO, the Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Thailand (SAFT), helps mainly small-scale farmers and urban dwellers. In Thailand, as elsewhere, connectivity in the era of globalization, liberalization, and high technology is allowing dominance by large corporates in the agriculture sector and increasing alienation of both farmers and consumers from the food chain, for instance, in their access to varieties of seeds, ingredients, and retail stores. As

a first step to reverse the current situation, P'Supa and her team at SAFT have been encouraging small farmers and urban dwellers to co-analyze the problematic food chain structure through participatory action research. This promotes alternative and innovative ideas among them, including on-farm biodiversity and urban farming.

Khamphoui Saythala also works to achieve sustainable and just agriculture systems through knowledge cultivation. His main target, however, is youth living in rural communities of Lao PDR. In the country where rapid development is exacerbating unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and unequal distribution of wealth, the relevance and potentiality of civic engagement cannot be clearer to Khamphoui, who asserts, "*If we are truly committed to bringing about changes in communities, then we must be prepared to use a collective partnership in which engagement is inclusive for each partner, and in which each can participate with an equal voice.*" Forty years of experiences at Participatory Development Training Centre (PADETC) have convinced Khamphoui that Lao rural youth can lead desirable changes when they are trained to acquire technical knowledge, facilitation skills, and abilities to listen to others.

In Chandra Kirana Prijosusilo's assessment, rich knowledge held by indigenous communities in Indonesia on sustainable use of local biodiversity such as *tenun ikat*, traditional plant-based dyeing in East Sumba, can be utilized to manufacture products with both high artistic and economic value. Such high-value products enable the local communities to engage in the mainstream economy in more sustainable and just ways. To attain this goal, Chandra has tried to bridge a number of gaps between the local communities and the outside markets by, among other things, improving infrastructures, providing logistical supports, and overcoming language barriers. It is very illuminating, especially in the view of transformative learning, to hear that a critical step in her endeavor was to help the local communities realize how much their traditional products could contribute to the modern middle-class ways of life.

Theodore Mayer addresses transformative learning more directly in his chapter. The International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) Institute, where he works, offers several non-formal education programs. These programs flexibly intertwine classroom and field experiences to catalyze internal transformation of individual learners, mostly Asian youth, as a way to bring about societal transformation needed to respond to the challenges facing humankind, e.g., social inequality, violence, and climate crisis. Guided by a mod-

ern interpretation of Buddhist traditions, "Engaged Buddhism," Ted recognizes that the contemporary crises are so severe that a radical transformation must occur to our lifestyles, social structures, and worldviews and that "*[s]uch a transformation would require new forms of learning that could embrace broad social and ecological analysis while giving priority and respect to the experience of individuals.*"

Section Two: Policy Advocacy

A central theme in Section Two is Policy Advocacy. The first chapter is by Heng Monychenda, who originally gave it as the second keynote speech at the Yogya Workshop. Ajarn Monychenda, a Cambodian Buddhist, starts with his recollections of getting involved in peace-building processes for his country, which began in the 1980s in Indonesia, and speaks passionately about his continued commitment to peace. While not rejecting the popular definition of peace as simply "the absence of war," he sees that peace in the 21st century can be much more broadly re-defined as the state to ensure civic engagement and sustainable development, suggesting peace so re-conceptualized as a shared goal of the ASEAN community. To Ajarn Monychenda, one way to achieve this goal is to be true and faithful to the compatibility or common teachings of diverse beliefs, including religions, which are nurtured and held by all of us. One such teaching is the Middle Path.

The following four chapters report cases of civic initiatives on issues which cannot readily be addressed by state and/or corporate actors and thus suggest the gaps which need to be filled by new public policies and practices. Mariko Komatsu, a native of Hiroshima, Japan, became concerned about radiation impact on victims of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear explosion. While the government and responsible electric company conspire to downplay the impact, Mariko and her group have been trying to establish local stations to measure radiation levels to inform and involve the Fukushima survivors so that they can make active and wise decisions with regard to, among other things, food selection. Facing persistent resistance by both the state and corporate to publicly reveal what has happened and is happening in Fukushima, concerned CSOs, of which Mariko is part, are staying vocal about the disaster both inside and outside Japan by, for instance, publishing and distributing the multilingual booklet *10 Lessons from Fukushima*.

Hiroko Aihara was working in Tokyo, when her hometown Fukushima, Japan was hit by the deadly earthquake, tsunami, and explosion

at four nuclear reactors. She quit her job, has returned to Fukushima, and since then as a trained journalist has been reporting voices of ordinary Fukushima citizens, who are still encountering a number of difficulties after so many years, including radiation contamination. As the mass media and general public, especially outside Fukushima, are gradually and conveniently becoming indifferent to what has occurred and is occurring, Hiroko has seen the need to address lessons from Fukushima in much broader contexts. She takes note of experiences of all radiation victims, or *hibakusha*, all over the world, especially those living in or around Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, Chernobyl in Russia, Bikini in the Marshall Islands and other Pacific islands, and nuclear test sites in Nevada, the USA. She is now helping organize and run the Global *Hibakusha* Network.

Sompong Srakaew and Patima Tungpuchayakul have founded the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN), an NGO based in the coastal province of Samut Sakhon, Thailand. LPN is committed to protecting and improving the rights and lives of workers, especially those who migrate amass from the neighboring Burma/Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, as well as other Thai provinces, to Samut Sakhon in order to work in the flourishing local seafood industries. One of the initiatives at LPN has recently caught considerable media and public attention both inside and outside Thailand, i.e., their heroinic/heroic missions to locate and rescue victims of human trafficking in the Indonesian sea. Between 2014 and 2015, LPN collaborated with Seafarers Action Centre (SAC) and helped repatriate 2,250 fishermen, mostly Burmese, Lao, Cambodian, and Thai nationals. They had been forced to work on Thai vessels, run away to escape the harsh working conditions, and been left stranded since then on tiny Indonesian islands.

Tran Thi Lanh talks about her work at Vietnam-based network CSO, the Livelihood Sovereignty Alliance (LISO), which advocates for indigenous communities' livelihood sovereignty. The concept of livelihood sovereignty covers not only indigenous communities' rights to land but also their rights to culture, knowledge, and religion. Lanh argues that non-indigenous people, like many of us, should respect as well as adopt indigenous peoples' values and practices. This can also help us find alternatives and innovations to shift away from the current environmentally, socially, politically, and spiritually destructive mainstream development paradigm. Through community-based research, awareness-building, and advocacy, Lanh and her colleagues at LISO ensure that land use continues to be governed by indigenous customary laws. This way, indigenous values associated with the land are pre-

served as the guiding principles for land and other natural resource utilization. Since 1995, LISO has succeeded in helping allocate more than 60,000 hectares of forestland to indigenous groups in Vietnam and Laos.

Section Three: Policy Engagement

The four chapters in Section Three are on Policy Engagement, representing stories of civic engagement to achieve significant policy changes at different levels. To Ahmad Rifai, the author of the first chapter, civic engagement can be a means to help the local community create common values and spirits to defend themselves from unsustainable consumerism and individualism. This resonates well with the three strategies of pedagogy, awareness, and participation adopted by Kota Kita Foundation, which Rifai has co-founded. Kota Kita is an Indonesian urban sector CSO which operates at the grassroots level and city-wide scale, while conducting national and global advocacy for, for instance, the Right to the City. One epoch-making project Kota Kita has implemented is "the community mapping," a participatory process through which residents in the community collect detailed data on their own neighborhoods, e.g., water availability and children's school enrollment. The residents can then use the results as a knowledge resource to engage in the city's annual budget forum to improve their access to public services. The community mapping is being replicated elsewhere in Indonesia and regionally.

Ahmad Hezri Adnan talks about his experience making policy interventions on sustainable development through an approach quite distinctive from the others discussed in this volume. The approach, "policy entrepreneurship," is to work within the system, typically the government, by acting an adviser/knowledge broker to locate policy challenges and help policy-makers understand and deal with them. A policy entrepreneur can be contrasted with a public intellectual: The latter stays outside the system and works with a large audience, typically civil society, to set a policy agenda. Hezri has worked as a policy entrepreneur for decades in Malaysia, where conservation is not a political priority and environmental movements are not strong, and has successfully convinced the government into passing, among others, a national environmental policy and solid waste management bill. He summarizes his experiences, saying, "*[T]he effectiveness of a policy entrepreneur depends on the political resources that s/he commands.*"

Minamata "disease" is a misnomer, as it refers to the massive methylmercury contamination caused by the Chisso Corporation. In their

chapter, Yoichi Tani and Penchom Saetang go back in history, as far as 100 years before, to show that Japan's national decision to rapidly industrialize itself was at the root of the Minamata disaster. This analysis well explains consistent attempts by the company and government to downplay and refuse the responsibilities for the damages made to the environment and human health. Policy implications of the case are: When a disaster occurs, the impacts and causes must be thoroughly investigated; and that the responsible parties must be held fully accountable, the lessons all too familiar but yet to be learned seriously. Yoichi and Penchom thus sadly conclude, "*Minamata is not over.*" The second part of their chapter is about global civic movements, informed and alarmed by Minamata as well as other mercury pollution cases, which have actively engaged in international processes to develop a legally-binding instrument to regulate mercury. The efforts have contributed much to the materialization of the "Minamata Convention on Mercury," which entered into force in 2017, as well as its ratification by the Thai government the same year.

Penchom has also closely monitored industrial pollution in Thailand over decades as an NGO activist and observes that while Thailand's overall pollution is now much more intensified, it is affecting rich vs. poor and urban vs. poor people differentially, with the rural poor most severely impacted. In her analysis, this is not only due to the lack of scientific knowledge, e.g., dangers of toxic chemicals, but has more to do with political and socio-cultural factors. For instance, pollution experts in Thailand are usually stationed in cities. Rural residents' complaints are rarely taken seriously, as they are (wrongly) perceived as ignorant and uneducated. Government officials may respond and conduct field inspection, but rarely return to tell the affected community about the findings. To counter these challenges, Penchom and her team at Ecological Alert and Recovery – Thailand (EARTH) are adopting "citizen science" as a policy engagement tool, promoting locally-led pollution monitoring, data-gathering, inter-community networking, as well as evidence-based advocacy, to hold the government and corporate accountable for industrial pollution and to create meaningful changes at both policy and practice levels.

Section Four: Synthesis

The last section, Section Four: Synthesis, consists of two chapters, both of which were written soon after the Yogya Workshop. Maung Maung Yin, who was the Discussant at the thematic session on Community Empowerment, recounts the six case presentations in his session and tries to make connections with his own knowledge and experiences in Asia, in particular Myanmar, where he is from. For instance, recently an NGO has successfully brought a new piece of knowledge into the public discourse in Myanmar, i.e., 60 percent of the chili powder available to consumers is actually not chili and may be related to the increasing cancer rate. Based on the reported cases of community empowerment, Maung Maung urges, "*Let us continue to spread our stories and practices, dare to confront evil powers, and break the chain of malpractices and irresponsible acts.*"

Chheang Vannarith, also the Discussant at the session on Policy Engagement, very concisely summaries a wide range of issues brought up at the entire Yogya Workshop by closely following the set of six questions the workshop tried to answer. They were: priority problems, major strategies, enabling/disenabling factors, positive/negative consequences, and further plans for civic engagement in Asia. Vannarith puts in his words what the Yogya Workshop intended to and did assure, i.e., "*The sources of power for civil society to engage with policymakers are information and knowledge, networks and alliances, and innovation—providing innovative ideas to solve social and environmental issues. Other sources of power for civil society are the power of telling stories and listening to people's concerns. We need to strengthen the role of civil society in the region to engage with policymakers and other stakeholders, including the private sector and media.*"

The Yogya Workshop was deliberately kept small in size and allocated much time to plenary and breakout discussion sessions, as well as tea/snack and lunch breaks, so that the participants could readily get to know and interact with one another. Many conversations took place in hallways at the workshop venue. These interactions and exchanges were too spontaneous, nuanced, and context-bound to be recorded and reconstructed in full. However, the two chapters by Maung Maung and Vannarith, alongside the pictures on the front and back covers and in text, can help give a sense of how rich and lively they were. The reader may also find the concept note, program, and guidelines in the Appendices of much use to get a better grasp of the Yogya Workshop.

Developments after the Yogya Workshop

The Yogya Workshop affirmed the meaningfulness of regional-level exchange of ideas and experiences on civic engagement and transformative learning. It also marked the beginning of the regional project *Transformative Learning towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community*, the ultimate goal of which was to create a multi-stakeholder platform to work towards a more just and sustainable society in Asia. After the Yogya Workshop and up to the present, the steering team has tried to build upon the Yogya Workshop to achieve the goal of the regional project by initiating its own activities and joining force with other like-minded initiatives.

One such occasion was *the Bangkok Forum 2018: Integrating Knowledge for Social Sustainability*, co-hosted by Chulalongkorn University and Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies (KFAS) on October 24 and 25, 2018 (the Bangkok Forum).[3] The Bangkok Forum was launched as a flagship project of Chulalongkorn University. Its opening was graced by Her Royal Highness Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and the forum drew approximately 800 participants, including academics and researchers, students in higher education, experts from international organizations, CSO leaders, Thai government officials and representatives from embassies, and general public. The forum facilitated exchanges and discussions on social sustainability and technological innovation, especially among young professionals from regional educational institutions. About 15 participants from the Yogya Workshop, including some steering team members, joined the Bangkok Forum and played an active role by designing and running three concurrent panels on university-public engagement, transformative learning, and roles of faith and wisdom in social sustainability. The steering team also co-hosted the open seminar *Transformative Learning Toward a Sustainable Society: Principles and Practices* on August 14 and 15, 2018 at Chulalongkorn University as a pre-event to the Bangkok Forum. The seminar focused on transformative learning and provided the participants with opportunities to share ideas of transformative practices and enhance understanding of principles of transformative learning both in institutionalized and non-institutionalized educational settings.

The Bangkok Forum helped the steering team identify the following four theses to work towards launching a regional platform to discuss societal justice and sustainability in Asia:

3 Bangkok Forum. https://bkkforum.chula.ac.th/ (Last accessed July 27, 2020).

1. Justice and dignity need to be championed as core values in pursuit of sustainability. This is because sustainability cannot be achieved in economic terms alone; environmental, socio-cultural, and spiritual aspects are equally essential. In a sustainable society, everyone should enjoy their life while being equally and mutually respected as humans;
2. We need to recognize the key roles played by future leaders and actively engage the millennial generation in efforts to create a sustainable society;
3. Many of the themes discussed in previous years need to be addressed in urban contexts. More than 50 percent of the world's population live in urban spaces; this figure is expected to grow to more than 60 percent by 2030. As such, the benefits of city life, as well as its challenges—from poverty and inequality to climate-related disasters and the complex consequences of migration—are hyper-realized in urban areas. This reality must be urgently confronted with innovative and practical solutions in SEA/Asia; and
4. Civic engagement needs to keep pace with rapidly evolving technology. Civic engagement efforts should harness the power of modern information technology to promote more open and wider participation of citizens; they also need, however, to address the risks and challenges that information technology brings to us.

The steering team then integrated the four theses into the concept of the regional platform *Civic Engagement 4.0 (Four Point Zero) Dignity ~ Justice ~ Sustainability* (Civic Engagement 4.0).[4] Civic Engagement 4.0 was envisioned as a new stage of the regional project at which participants from different sectors could share, discuss, and develop ideas and plans to achieve dignity, justice, and sustainability in Asia in the era of urbanization and technological advancement. The steering team further developed a plan for an international forum in Indonesia in mid-2019 as a launching event of Civic Engagement 4.0. This event was named *The 2019 International Forum in Solo* or the Solo Forum.

The Solo Forum was held in Solo (Surakarta), Central Java, Indonesia from August 20 to 22, 2019.[5] It was co-organized by Chulalongkorn

4 Civic Engagement 4.0: Justice, Dignity, Sustainability. http://www.sustainability.chula.ac.th/report/504/ (Last accessed July 27, 2020).

5 Civic Engagement 4.0. https://civicengagementforum.net/solo/ (Last accessed July 27, 2020).

University, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), and Kota Kita Foundation in Indonesia. It was a public event, comprised of the public forum and the mayors' symposium, as well as an opening ceremony, an art exhibition, and thematic field visits. More than 400 participants attended, including academics and students, CSO workers, government officials, and general public, who came from the SEA countries and their partners such as Australia, Canada, Japan, and the USA. The forum's three co-organizers were also joined by a number of cooperating organizations and individuals from the region and beyond. About 40 youth volunteers, mostly from Indonesia, supported the preparations and administrations of the Solo Forum over a month.

The Solo Forum indicated a clear direction from the Yogya Workshop in several respects. One, the forum narrowed down its focus on urban issues. It did not ignore other issues, however. Urban focus was viewed to be an appropriate and convenient entry point to address a wide range of topics which are relevant to social just and sustainability, because both the benefits and challenges of our modern industrialized lifestyles are hyper-realized in cities. Two, opportunities and pitfalls brought about by information technology to civic engagement and transformation learning were set to be one of the central topics discussed at the Solo Forum. The forum participants were encouraged into critically assessing both the potential and dangers of various forms of digital technologies, while making use of on-line activism and virtual collaboration in fulfilling the promises of justice, sustainability, and dignity. Three, the Solo Forum was much more explicitly designed as a civil society-led, multi-stakeholder platform. The forum invited several progressive mayors from Indonesia and Thailand to present their experiences and efforts in working towards social justice and sustainability. The participants then had opportunities to dialogue with them to search for common visions and co-plan follow-up actions, materializing civic engagement and transformative learning towards a sustainable, just, and dignified Asia.

Besides these meetings, another project has been kick-started based on a draft copy of this volume. Most of the chapters included here are now being expanded and updated through separate rounds of peer review and professional editing. The chapters are then being compiled into a book-form publication. Several authors have been invited to write additional chapters on topics, e.g., climate crisis and gender, which were brought up but not always given due attention in discussion at the Yogya Workshop. The publication is titled *Civ-*

ic Engagement in Asia: Lessons from Transformative Learning in the Quest for a Sustainable Future and is scheduled to be forthcoming sometime in 2020. It is hoped to serve as an effective instrument to convey the messages delivered at the Yogya Workshop, and elsewhere in Asia, to a wider group of actors, in particular ASEAN policy-makers, to facilitate dialogues.

The idea to make the Yogya Workshop proceedings readily available in the public domain was developed and agreed upon much earlier at the steering team of the regional project. A number of incidents intervened, however, which has made the publication of this volume long overdue. It is, however, not outdated because most of the issues discussed at the Yogya Workshop, and thus encountered in the following pages, have yet to be seriously and carefully addressed. There is still much to learn from and get inspired by the innovative practices and memorable stories reported from various parts in Asia. The volume might even be timely because now that Civic Engagement 4.0, a regional platform on justice, sustainability, and dignity, has been launched, it is time to go back and see how it started, understand what is achieved and still missing, and plan where and how to proceed.

SECTION ONE: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The SDGs, Civic Engagement, and Transformative Learning

Erna Witoelar

Co-chair, Advisory Board of the Indonesian Philanthropy Association
Founder, KEHATI (Indonesian Biodiversity Conservation Trust Fund)
Former UN Special Ambassador for MDGs in Asia Pacific

I am very happy to be speaking here in front of people with such rich backgrounds and who are so committed to civic engagement, especially at the community and local levels, and who at the same time have managed to influence national and global policies. Today, I am merely adding some information to what you are already doing and experiencing.

I want to start with civic engagement at the global level, so you can see how your organizations, your ideas, commitments, and idealism are already out there and integrated into various platforms. Through what **process** do we relate to such platforms? I will then concentrate on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) themselves. How do the SDGs, as a **product**, influence what you are doing, and transformation more broadly? Finally, I will discuss the **challenges and opportunities** of civic engagement in the ASEAN context, focusing on partnerships and synergies.

First, I will discuss process. We all know that civic engagement on the global level has existed for many, many decades. I concentrate on the environment and sustainable development, but I know that many of you have been very involved in various dialogues and national conferences around other issues, such as gender, religious harmony, and indigenous peoples. These initiatives are now already making a significant difference. In the arena of the environment, the United Nations (UN) Summit on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 was a starting point, but it was government-oriented. It wasn't until the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 that we began to see more civic engagement. However, while NGOs were there, they were not participants and could not enter the summit. We were just standing in the lobby, and we were lucky if we could get our messages to one or two of the delegates to try to influence them. After the Rio summit, though, there was slowly more and more civic engagement at the global level, so that by the second Rio, Rio+20, and during the meetings afterwards, I was very much surprised and overwhelmed by the level of engagement. We could see a variety of civic actors, even young kids, who before had only been in the lobby, now presenting at the summit, inside the UN building, and talking to the UN heads of states.

So what has changed? Women. I remember, in all those conferences, stronger and stronger movements grew up around women and sustainable development, including women's issues in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Now, through the process of setting the SDGs, we see gender is in almost all the goals. So now, gender equality is not just one goal, and it is not just a problem for women: it is everybody's challenge. Whatever goal you are working on, whether you are working on job creation or any other issue, women are an important and integral part of the picture.

One important milestone in the journey was 1983, when the sustainable development concept was first conceived, and people moved away from viewing the environment in isolation to analyzing and linking the economic and social dimensions of environmental problems. Although this holistic approach is not fully successful yet, hopefully now with the SDGs, we can do better.

The MDGs were one step in reaching the goal, but civic engagement with the MDGs was very, very slow. Our governments in Asia were also very slow. The MDG process was considered as a project of the UN, and the UN published direct country reports on progress toward the goals. This created a feeling of decision-making being taken from us. All of this has increased the motivation for stronger civic engagement with the SDGs now.

The SDGs are for everybody. They are very strong on human rights, with particular emphasis on women, youth, and the elderly. The difficult challenge, however, is governance. With the MDGs, we could still work within each ministry, but with the integrated nature of the SDGs, people can do many things. We therefore need a new type of governance as the "glue," one that includes innovative and new partnerships.

Learning from the MDGs, we see that there is a wide-open space. Many people were involved, and there is leadership in the organization. This is the good news. Yet, with wider and more diverse issues and concerns of the SDGs, as well as the increased challenge of governance, partnership, and regional leadership, there must be transformative learning. How do we catalyze this transformation and make it really useful for the people we have been working for?

I am going to elaborate on this a little bit, because I work for an organization called Filantropi Indonesia (Philanthropy Indonesia). We work with multiple types of philanthropy: family, corporate, and religious-based philanthropy, as well as philanthropy for research, gender, and a host of others. Things are moving very fast in the field

of philanthropy. It is already on people's minds, and because people have started working on all these issues, we are promoting deeper engagement. In short, we encourage people to reach the SDGs from wherever they come from.

One very exciting work we have started at Filantropi Indonesia is to help move religious-based organizations from charity to development and—from there—to form partnerships with other religions. This is really good because all religions are teaching us to be generous. Many of the countries where you come from are noted for being generous countries. We are automatically giving every year, every month, to people close to us. So we are all philanthropists at different scales. Philanthropy organizations expand this to a much bigger scale. But we, individually, are giving. Now, in Indonesia, we are also giving in the religious context of Islam, and also within the Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu contexts. Our organization facilitates the movement of this giving to do something more. Because the SDGs are so wide and so noble in their aim to reach everybody, to leave no one behind, they have to be supported by different means of implementation and different sources of financing. And so Indonesia has been quite active in philanthropy and working with friends. It requires plenty of dialogue, and building partnerships based on those dialogues. It has started with inter-religious dialogues on the environment. Due to the presence of fundamentalism and other problems in our religions, there are more and more efforts to build solidarity within and across the religions. These aim to move people away from conflicts by giving them bigger missions to handle together. In this way, conflicts may be eased or forgotten. This is one realm that I would like to encourage you all to study and engage with in your work.

The processes to achieve the global pledges of the SDGs and other recent agreements are quite inclusive: They are built on stronger ownership and stronger commitments. And so, I am quite excited about the idea of everybody doing something to achieve the SDGs on whatever level they can.

In Indonesia, a presidential decree released just last month strongly recognizes the role of non-state organizations and civic engagement in the realization of SDGs. This decree provides a legal basis at the national level for our work, and we are working on also achieving this at the local level. It is not easy because not many local governments are under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It will take a long time to reach the local governments: We therefore bypass them by working with associations, city mayors, and others first, and develop their education.

Almost all of the SDGs are local goals. Whatever we want to achieve, if we don't work at the local level, we will not meet the SDGs. So it has to be at the local level. Whatever commitments, whatever tools, and whatever resources or technologies are involved, they often do not come down to the local level due to lack of information, access, and so on. That is why we need bridging from people like you, who know the local level very well, who know the resources that exist at the national and regional levels, and who can assure the communities who will use them.

The SDGs came out of the sustainable development concept, which—at the beginning—was promoted as including People (the society), Planet (the environment), and Profit (the economy). Profit was later changed to Prosperity, and by the time the SDGs were launched, a fourth and fifth element of Peace and Partnership were added. This completed the concept of sustainable development and is the basis of the present SDGs. This was a transformation from the singular goal-by-goal approach of the MDGs to an interdependent approach with the SDGs.

This interdependence is exciting. There are many things to study and to learn about linkages, as well as partnerships. Governments should be pushed to do proper reporting rather than simply provide data, and to integrate SDGs with local and national development. We have been advocating to start from whatever the priorities of the local governments are, because the priorities for the Archipelago of Maluku are totally different from priorities of the province of central Kalimantan. Priorities should not be decided from the national level, and we are happy that, slowly, some of the national officials are quite understanding of this concept, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which before often did things in a top-down way. In the past, ministers who had a military background led this ministry: But now, officials are gaining a better understanding.

It is important to deepen engagement. With whatever you are doing, there are many roads, many potential partners. Many potential transformations need to be developed and studied. Always start from the local level, which is your strength.

I would like to finish by discussing the challenges to arriving at a just and sustainable ASEAN. Changes are inevitable. So, transformation is not just a key word for your program: it is a key word for anyone wishing to achieve change. Leadership styles are also important: it is not easy to pull together diverse interests and actors, in diverse modes and environments, to build a national or regional team. We

need leadership to facilitate that. Some people call it "bridging leadership," or "facilitating leadership." We don't need to talk too much about the complicated elements of the SDGs to engage people who are already committed. It is a very exciting experience.

I would also like to link more within ASEAN, because this is an exciting time for ASEAN. We don't work in silence anymore: we try to work together. Within ASEAN we have been a family for some time, and like within a family, there are ups and downs sometimes. But the principles of the ASEAN Charter are relevant to whatever context we are working in, whether it is for religious solidarity, stronger gender equality, a better understanding of sustainable development, addressing climate change, or other goals. I think with this capital, we can do many, many things, whether it is across ASEAN or just between two or three countries. We have already done this, so we don't need to reinvent everything to expand our work.

Looking ahead, unlike the Paris agreement, which is binding for governments, SDGs are not. They are a set of concepts that, if applied, can bring us closer to what we need to reach. So try comprehending them, because both the processes and products of the SDGs are rich in knowledge, in commitment, and in materials for your next studies and for transformative learning. They offer a very clear and suitable way to move the people of ASEAN toward long lasting partnerships.

Thank you very much.

The Work of the Samdhana Institute

Antoinette G. Royo
Co-founder/Head of Networking and Fellowship,
The Samdhana Institute, The Philippines/Indonesia

The Samdhana Institute

The Samdhana Institute began as an association of individuals who dedicate themselves to strengthening the next generation of actors to support the land rights of indigenous peoples and local communities in the management of natural resources. The institute was set up to provide grants as well as facilitation and technical support to local guardians of natural resources. It responds to the following:

1. Long term and consistent support needs for natural resource management and human rights protection;
2. Urgent needs of indigenous peoples and local communities; and
3. Need to expand and share knowledge and skills of fellows to give back as development practitioners in conservation, rights, community empowerment, forestry, agriculture, and education.

Formed in 2003, Samdhana now operates in the Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, and other areas in the Mekong region. It provides backup assistance to over 80 local community partners and their civil society organization (CSO) supporters per year.

Issues Prioritized by Samdhana for Civic Engagement

Problems and issues prioritized for civic engagement by the Samdhana Institute are recognition of the land rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. This is consistent with Samdhana's vision: "A region where natural, cultural and spiritual diversity are valued and environmental conflicts are resolved peacefully, with justice and equity for all parties."

Land is life, and the lack of land rights is a violation of basic human rights. This violation has resulted in local and indigenous peoples' vulnerability, displacement, criminalization, poverty, and injustice. Lack of land rights has also eroded cultural and spiritual links between nature and humankind, resulting in excessive exploitation of forests and environments. Rights-based approaches in addressing environmental degradation are part of the core competence of the founders and fellows of the Samdhana Institute.

Key Strategies and Methods

Samdhana's strategies and methods for civic engagement include supporting local communities and indigenous groups, organizations, and alliances to organize themselves and develop a set of tools to push for recognition of their land claims and defend their rights. They include mapping of territory, negotiating and advocating with third parties through the use of maps, assisting in developing local regulations to recognize their roles/rights with governments at all levels, setting up local organizations and cooperatives for economic empowerment from local products, and strengthening indigenous forest and agroforest management systems.

Target groups include not only indigenous peoples and local communities, but also other parties who exploit and grab their land, for instance, government units that issue licenses over land/territory without consulting indigenous communities, and local decision-makers and lawmakers whose decisions and actions influence recognition processes. Thus, key strategies are to:

1. Offer opportunities and support to local community-based actors;
2. Enhance and enrich sustainable resource management;
3. Support efforts to resolve conflict over access to land and resources;
4. Facilitate individual and institutional learning and skill-sharing among actors; and
5. Provide small grants to implement key activities of these actors.

Internal & External Factors that Facilitate or Limit Desired Changes

Internal factors that have facilitated or helped achieve the desired changes include a good and shared vision and thought leadership, competent/good management systems, and secure funding. Those that have limited the desired changes include the lack of full participation of all members/fellows in the work to realize the vision: Only a handful organization members are very active.

External factors that have facilitated or helped achieve desired changes include good alliances with CSOs with shared principles and values, multi-stakeholder participation and buy-in, and good timing of actions and activities. Those that have limited desired changes include bad governance by government and CSO counterparts, passage of bad policies and laws, changing regulations, and turnover of good people who serve as counterparts in government, business, and CSOs.

Manifested Attitudinal Changes, Social Practices, and Policies

Manifested behavior changes, social practices, and policies are summarized below.

Table 1: Manifested behaviors, practices, and policies

Behavior	Social practice	Policy
Recognizing rights (a bundle of rights: Possession, control, exclusion, enjoyment, and disposition)	Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples and local communities who have long-term and cultural historical land rights/ claims	Passing regulations that recognize diversity of ethnicity and culture and rights of indigenous peoples/local communities
Access to opportunities	Making resources/ services accessible to indigenous peoples/local communities	Regulations not only to recognize rights, but also to provide resources/support for these rights to be realized
Control over territories	Technical capacity for mapping and determination of boundaries	Support system for registration of rights and tenure agreements granted
Enhanced wellbeing-ness	Festivals and celebrations of life and bounty	Institutions, product development and financing, and marketing support systems

These changes have been measured/assessed through combining results-based and asset (human, social, physical, and natural capital) based approaches, developing a set of indicators to use for joint monitoring, and using innovative tools such as Appreciative Inquiry.

Unexpected Negative Consequences

Unexpected negative consequences include dependency, erosion of trust when promises are not delivered, short-lived achievements, negative impact of new laws and regulations, and incompetent implementation or retraction of policies. We can address negative consequence by establishing systems for resource mobilization, accountability, adaptive management, and legal and policy development strategies for sustainable development.

Visions for Regional Collaboration

The Samdhana Institute's visions for regional collaboration are in the areas of community natural resources management to protect and enhance culture as well as nature-friendly and ethical practices, especially among indigenous women and youth in the region.

Power of Awareness: Changing Agriculture to Equality and Sustainability

Supa Yaimuang
Director, Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Thailand (SAFT)

Introduction

The Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Thailand (SAFT) works with small-scale farmers and city dwellers in Thailand. SAFT promotes sustainable agriculture systems and urban farming. SAFT's vision is to create an agricultural system that is ecologically sound and environmentally friendly, and that contributes to building a just economy and society that supports relationships among humans and between humans and nature.

SAFT was founded in 1998 with the cooperation of the Alternative Agricultural Network. The aim was to create an organization that would work in the knowledge sector and develop academic research in collaboration with farmers and communities, and to connect with other groups of people in society. SAFT's role is that of providing learning support and conducting advocacy campaigns. The organization's work strengthens farmers and rural communities in the realm of economy, food, and the environment through developing various sustainable agriculture systems and improving on-farm biodiversity based on the wisdom of farmers and communities. The development of knowledge happens simultaneously with action through participatory research and development, 1) responding to various movements in all areas and levels, including producing, processing, marketing, and mutual resource management, 2) creating cooperative societies both in urban and rural areas, and 3) making change at the policy level.

SAFT's academic role is to drive the development of knowledge through focusing on the development of ideas and innovations in sustainable agriculture with small farmer organizations. At the same time, we coordinate with the government sector, small enterprises, and academic institutions. SAFT also supports research and enhances learning processes and local wisdom in collaboration with farmers and community organizations. It promotes and develops knowledge and innovations in both rural and urban farming, helping to link food systems and alternative lifestyles concerned with nature, and creating a society that fosters relationships among urban people and between urban and rural people. SAFT develops public media and

campaigns about sustainable agriculture, urban farming, and food security, and promotes good relations between producers and consumers. We partner with organizations in both the government and public sectors to campaign on policies in sustainable agriculture and related areas. SAFT creates social spaces for farmers, farmer organizations, urban citizens, and other partners to advocate for sustainable agriculture to the wider public.

Thai Agricultural Sector and Farmers under Globalization

Thai farmers have faced various changes and challenges, from the Green Revolution of the 1950s and 1960s to the era of high technology and globalization. Under globalization, free market capitalist ideology drives the global economy. It also dominates patterns of international trade and investment as well as the development of technology used in agricultural production. Advances in information and communications technology have resulted in rapid connectivity throughout the world, spurring cross-border movement of capital, finance, people, and production sites, as well as news, information, and ideas. All this has contributed to the growth and increased bargaining power of large and transnational corporations. Trade and investment liberalization has forced the domestic agricultural sector into highly competitive global markets. In order to keep up, farmers have had to modernize their patterns of production and consumption, which has impacted their ways of life. Such changes have not only affected farmers, but also the entire agricultural sector, with serious implications for the food security and sovereignty of Thailand.

As the structure of food production and trade have changed, the entire food system has transformed, becoming more and more consolidated and dominated by monopolies. Small farmers find it difficult to participate in the food chain. They have limited access to production resources, even genetic materials. For example, 98 percent of corn and vegetable seed in Thailand is under the control of 20 companies.[6] This issue is related to intellectual property rights, which has changed the structure of agricultural production and converts common properties into individual properties. In the same way, access to agricultural technology, inputs, and equipment is limited for small farmers. They also find it difficult to access natural resources such as land and water.

At the same time, food safety and health problems have become seri-

6 Somporn Isvilanonda (2017). "Thailand Seed Industry: Status and Challenge." Paper presented at the National Seed Conference, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Ladkrabang Prince of Chumphon Campus, May 30, 2017.

ous issues for both farmers and consumers. A study of the effects of pesticide use on rice farmers in Kalasin Province found that 58 percent of farmers had unsafe levels of chemical residue in their blood and another 28 percent were at risk of having unsafe levels.[7] Similarly, nearly one-third of consumers had unsafe levels of chemical residue in their blood, and over 50 percent were at risk of having unsafe levels.[8]

While globalization has changed patterns of consumption, easy access to news and information has changed consumer behaviors. In Thailand, the consumption of industrially produced fast food has replaced that of local food, particularly among younger generations. This is reflected in the skyrocketing sales of fast food businesses, which rose in volume from approximately 14,000 million baht (approximately 462.5 million USD) in 2007 to nearly 117,946 million baht (approximately 3,266.5 million USD) in 2015.[9]

Such changes in consumption patterns reverberate throughout the agricultural production system. As fewer varieties of raw ingredients are consumed, the system in turn focuses on cultivating fewer varieties. The new food culture departs significantly from the traditional one, which was based on ingredients from local varieties grown by farmers in communities in accordance with the agro-ecosystem of each region. Food has become more of a commercial commodity than a necessity of life, and is consumed more in line with business promotion and advertisements than according to human needs. New health problems have also occurred which are linked to new eating habits.

Farmers' access to the marketplace has also become limited. The agro-food sector has expanded to include not only upstream agricultural inputs, but also downstream retail food outlets. Department stores, supermarkets, food stores, and convenience stores have rapidly replaced fresh markets and corner shops in urban communities during the past two decades, particularly after the 1997 financial crisis. With modern technologies and management efficiency, wholesale and retail stores have captured up to 50 percent of food sales in the country.

7 p. 306 in Natawut Paipard, Somjit Supannatas, and Teerapat Suttiprapa (2014). *The Impact of Pesticide to the Rice Farmer's Health and to the Environment in Rongkham District, Kalasin Province*. Bangkok: Thai Research Fund. https://ag2.kku.ac.th/kaj/PDF.cfm?filename=05%20Natawut.pdf&id=1711&keeptrack=2 (Last accessed August 5, 2017).

8 ThaiPan (2015). "The Situation of Pesticide Residue in Blood." https://www.prachachat.net/news_detail.php?newsid=1434368613 (Last accessed August 1, 2017).

9 Food Intelligence Center Thailand (2016). https://positioningmag.com/32306 (Last accessed August 1, 2017).

In the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis, various food stores were sold to foreign shareholders. The foreign direct investment in the food and beverage sector increased due to the deregulation. Modern trade has been increasing the role of food sales. In 2013, there were 12,996 convenience stores in Thailand, but the number increased to 15,325 in 2016.[10] There also seems to be no limit to the expansion of department stores, which have now established branches in border areas. Special economic zones are also being developed in border areas under the government policy of liberalizing cross-border trade within the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

Ways to Solve the Problems: Changing Learning Processes

SAFT has been implementing solutions based on participatory processes with farmer organizations and networks. Fundamental to our activities is the learning process. We have a three-pronged strategy to realize an alternative development: 1) development of knowledge, 2) strengthening of farmer organizations, and 3) policy advocacy.

Development of Knowledge

The first strategy is the development of knowledge and innovation in relation to sustainable agriculture systems and local seeds. The learning process focuses on raising awareness of small-scale farmers through problem analysis. Analysis of food security in the community and the food chain structure can strengthen capacity for analytical thinking not only for farmers, but also for city dwellers. This has led to developing knowledge and innovation in organic farming, urban farming, and on-farm biodiversity, and providing organic, safe food products to consumers. Small farmers analyze their economic problems related to monoculture and investment costs at the household level, based on their own life experiences and knowledge. A timeline is used as a tool to review changes in their own life and in the community. Information on the history and development of Thai agriculture and trade policy under globalization is added to the analysis. Apart from economic challenges, problems related to environment and health, such as biodiversity loss and the impact of chemicals, are also analyzed.

10 p. 7 in Poolsuk Nilkijsaranont, and Piyanuch Stapongpukdee (2560/2017). "Modern Trade" *Business/Industry Trends 2560-2562/2017-2019*. https://www.krungsri.com/bank/getmedia/683cacb7-e02f-4bee-a3cc-17827b26c929/IO_Modern_Trade_2017_TH.aspx (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

Following critical analysis of the problems, solutions are developed. For example, agro-chemical systems are transformed to sustainable agriculture systems. The transformation process focuses on learning processes among small farmers at the household and group levels that identify solutions. This is an internal transformation process for farmers and farmer groups, including the process of learning from outside, such as through study trips and discussion among different groups. Some workshops and trainings on techniques are also organized for farmers who want to transform their farming systems through organic or sustainable methods.

Another important learning process is participatory action research and on-farm demonstration. The research may be conducted after a study visit or problem analysis. The goals and objectives of the research are set by farmer groups in order to solve problems facing individual farmers and the community at large. Research methodologies vary, including interviewing elderly farmers who hold local wisdom, conducting field experiments, and cooperating with NGOs, academics, and government agencies to collect information. Findings are summarized and analyzed together to build new efficient and sustainable farms. This creates farmer confidence in knowledge-generating processes that lead to changes in their attitudes and beliefs about the food system. Small-scale farmers tend to believe that unless they use chemicals and pesticides, they cannot gain good crop yields. After in-depth analysis and implementation of solutions, however, those beliefs and attitudes can change.

Thailand now produces many organic products, including rice, vegetables, fruits, herbs, tea, and coffee. The main product, however, is organic rice. Green Net Cooperative reports that the area under organic cultivation increased from 192,220 *rai* (30,755.2 ha) in 2009 to 284,918 *rai* (45,586.9 ha) in 2015. This represents a 21 percent increase from 2013. Sales from organic agriculture products rose from 609 million *baht* (approximately 15.6 million USD) in 2004 to 2,332 million *baht* (approximately 70.7 million USD) in 2014.[11]

The development of knowledge by farmer groups and communities in relation to the production system and genetic conservation has led to increasing on-farm biodiversity, demonstrating a concrete solution to the problem of decreasing biodiversity. Small farmers conserve, select, and improve local varieties of rice, fruits, and vegetables, safeguarding

11 Green Net (2017). "The Situations of Thai Organic Farming in 2559/2016." http://www.greennet.or.th/article/411 (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

genetic resources and enhancing breeding potential to produce new species, including through *in situ* practices. This is a shift from the post-Green Revolution paradigm of asserting that breeding and genetic improvement is the role of the academia, research institutes, and government agencies. Small-scale farmers are able to conserve hundreds of varieties of rice, fruits, and vegetables, enabling a variety in our nutritional intake and preserving an important resource base for present agricultural systems and those in the future.

Strengthening Farmer Organizations

The second strategy component is to strengthen farmer organizations to create a safe food production system. Farmer organizations, through mutual helping and sharing, are important in building capacity in critical thinking and in management, ultimately contributing to determining the direction of development. Farmers organize themselves into groups to manage members' products and marketing, including building relationships with consumers through farmer-owned markets, which allows farmers to directly share information about their production methods. Such communication with consumers creates learning opportunities and mutual understanding within the process of producing and consuming food. Farmers' markets have changed the producer-consumer relationship and can extend the learning process across many provinces.

Market management also builds farmers' management and sales skills. In the past, farmers did not have a strong role in this arena, usually selling their products through middlemen. By directly interacting with consumers, farmers can gain knowledge and understanding about consumer needs. Mutual exchange leads to improvements in the production system, such as providing more varieties of food. Farmers' or "green" markets are a participatory platform in the food chain that provide an alternative for farmers and consumers, and positively contribute to the economy of farmer households and communities.

Policy Advocacy

Finally, it is important to link the model of sustainable farming and farmers' marketing to policy. Farmer organizations campaign for policies that support farmers' rights, community rights, and sustainable agricultural systems. This results in the broader development of a sustainable agricultural system.

Market demands for safe food and shifts of farmers and communities into organic farming are influencing the adoption of new policies. Organic products are safe for household use and can be exported, contributing to the state economy. Due to these impact factors and policy campaigns of various organizations, the Thai government finally accepted a sustainable agriculture policy, setting the target of 5 million *rai* (800,000 ha) of farmland under sustainable agriculture production in the 12th National Social and Economic Plan 2017-2021. The 12th plan establishes committees composed of small farmers, academics, NGOs, and the government to achieve the target. Farmer organizations are also campaigning to amend the law on plant variety protection (PVP) and working on other policy issues such as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), intellectual property rights under the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants 1991, which has had serious impacts on farmers and local communities, and the free trade agreement and intellectual property rights under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

The learning process to create alternative solutions has led to changes in practices at the field and group management levels. These changes are in skills, knowledge, and beliefs, as well as in livelihoods. The paradigm of agriculture has changed to one that integrates economic with health and social dimensions. Awareness of farmers has created adaptation and change. Farmers are innovative both in their farming systems and social contexts. On the farm, they do not just change from chemical to organic techniques; they implement systemic innovations based on adapting both local and scientific knowledge and old and new technologies. Farmers save their own seeds and create ecologically sound farming systems to maintain food sovereignty. At the same time, farmers form groups to help each other in terms of funding, knowledge, and problem-solving, contributing to social innovation at the community level. Jointly managing markets among farmers also creates new relationships with consumers.

Challenges to Sustainability

Sustainable agriculture and small-scale farmers face several challenges. Climate change affects agriculture and ecosystems and increases disaster risks: Small-scale farmers need to develop their own knowledge to adapt themselves to climate change challenges. Sustainable agriculture or ecological farming is one of the strategies for adaptation. There is the policy on sustainable agriculture in Thailand's national plan. But in practice, strategies and action plans to encourage farmer groups to farm sustainably are still decided in a top-down manner. Participa-

tion by farmers and communities in policy-making remains weak, and they cannot access support from the government.

Several important government policies affect the agricultural sector, including those on special economic zones, land use, power plant development, and mining development. The dominant development paradigm is linked with the borderless economic framework in the region. The driving forces behind this paradigm and related policies focus on the economy rather than on farmers' and communities' livelihoods and the natural environment, despite trans-boundary threats that ecological and environmental changes pose to the agricultural sector. Regional cooperation is critical to address these changes. Any economic growth in the region needs to benefit farmers and local communities.

Collaboration of small farmers and networks across the country through the exchange and sharing of knowledge is needed to strengthen the economic, social, cultural, and environmental standing of farmers and communities. It is also important that ASEAN members encourage small-scale farmers to participate in policy formulation to strengthen social and economic justice in the region.

Creating an Enabling Environment for Lao Youth to Engage with the Community Development Process

Khamphoui Saythala

Executive Director, Participatory Development Training Centre (PADETC), Lao PDR

Introduction

The Participatory Development Training Centre (PADETC) has been operating since 1980 as a Lao community development organization promoting sustainable agriculture. It was officially established under the Department of Private Education of the Ministry of Education as an independent training center in 1996. PADETC uses a participatory development training model in helping Lao people solve their own problems in ways that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and just.

Issues Prioritized by PADETC for Civic Engagement

The Lao government aims to sustain the GDP growth rate at not less than 8 percent per year. The 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020 (NSEDP)[12] was developed almost entirely based on the growth of the monetized economy, which relies primarily on foreign direct investment (FDI). FDI funds in turn are heavily invested in natural resource exploitation.

With the 8th NSEDP, the Lao government continues to enjoy strong and steady support from international development and financial institutions. At the same time, however, concerns are being increasingly raised about the unsustainable use of natural resources that does not provide economically sound benefits for Lao people, in particular for those living in rural communities. If local communities do not fully participate in all levels of development processes, natural resources could be vulnerable to various types of exploitation.[13]

PADETC believes that engaging community members is not about inviting them to be foot soldiers for an already determined initiative,

12 *Vientiane Times* 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, and 90. http://www.savanpark.com/?p=638-670 (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

13 Arturo, Escobar (1991). "The Making and Marketing of Development Anthropology." *American Ethnologist* 18.4: 658-682.

but instead is about effectively including the people whose lives are or will be affected by an initiative in all decision-making.[14] If we are truly committed to bringing about changes in communities, then we must be prepared to use a collective partnership in which engagement is inclusive for each partner, and in which each can participate with an equal voice.

Lao rural communities have so far gained only limited benefits from the country's economic and social development. Many of the mega investment projects, led both by the state and the private sector, have in contrast led to new types of poverty, human trafficking, unemployment, and other socially destructive impacts. There has also been an increase in the income gap between rich and poor, as well as between rural and urban areas.

Nowadays, it is clear to many development partners that living conditions—particularly in rural communities—will not improve unless community members are more meaningfully involved throughout the development process. In this capacity, one of PADETC's key focus areas is to improve the community livelihood through active engagement of youth groups.

PADETC's Key Strategies and Methods for Civic Engagement

PADETC firmly believes that true engagement with youth must include both technical knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively with good listening. It is also important to create a space for youth to be part of co-developing solutions for better change and long-term success. PADETC co-implements a project called *Capacity Development for Citizen-Led Inclusive Development* (CD-CID) together with our development partners.[15] We apply the training tools called "development facilitation," "the most significant change," and "gender in action learning" for youth development and support continued youth engagement in community activities for livelihood improvements. We work in four target provinces, namely Champasack, Savannakhet, Khammuane, and Xiengkhuane.

14 Kabker, Q.E., and Collier, A.K. (2003). "Commentary: Inclusive Community Engagement: A Grounding Principle for Collaborative Problem Solving." *Journal of Urban Health* 80.1: 48-49.

15 Oxfam Laos with Cord, the Learning for Development Association (LDA), Maeying Houamjai Phatthana (MHP), and PADETC (nd.). "The Capacity Development for Citizen-Led Inclusive Development Project (CD-CID)." https://laos.oxfam.org/what-we-do-citizen-participation-and-civil-society-development/capacity-development-citizen-lead (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

As part of PADETC's advocacy mandate, we, in collaboration with development partners, provide facilitation skills to local communities that help them raise their voices and concerns in preserving and protecting community livelihoods. Out of this initiative, the story *Bye Bye Middle-Men, Hello Team Work and Profitability* about Mr. Songkao's family from the Khamu ethnic minority group in Beng district, Oudomxay, North Laos was published.[16] In it, Mr. Songkao testifies that:

> Together we are stronger and as a group we are able to engage in new activities and working as a group has also strengthened the relationships in the village, we trust each other and back each other when there are problems. The village as a whole has gained from this.

For the purpose of promoting community voices and empowering communities, Songkao's story demonstrates how collective power through community partnerships and teamwork can break the long existing cycle of trade dependence on middlemen.

As part of this empowerment, we think that policymakers can do their part to remove the legal and regulatory barriers that stand in the way of business innovation and investment. At the same time, PADETC and other CSOs can encourage the government to make more sustainable choices and provide community-based development models that combine the betterment of livelihoods for the poor with the protection of the non-human environment.[17] Again, we believe that successful community empowerment is essentially a collective engagement in which all stakeholders, local communities, CSOs, and government agencies, are equals that come together to transform the situation.

Hence, PADETC's approach is to bring about participatory community consultation processes that involve key stakeholders, in particular the government, communities, and civil society. Through these processes, community needs are identified and addressed by the communities themselves with close support from local government agencies, such as district and village authorities. In this respect, PADETC has seen an opportunity to empower target communities to cope with their situations, catalyze changes, and create a strong sense of engagement and ownership in shaping their own future through:

16 Cord. "Bye Bye Middle-Men, Hello Team Work and Profitability." https://www.cord.org.uk/news/bye-bye-middle-men-hello-team-work-and-profitabiilty [*sic*] (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

17 Campbell, Ben, and Paul Sallis (2012). "Low-Carbon Yak Cheese: Transition to Biogas in a Himalayan Socio-technical Niche." *Interface Focus* 3.1.

(1) providing relevant knowledge and skills with effective communication and good listening; and (2) bringing about participatory consultations involving key stakeholders as co-creators, co-workers, and co-implementers.

PADETC has continued to play an important role in empowering local community members by developing training skills to form strong community-based organizations (CBOs). These skills are in the area of leadership, facilitation, project cycle management, and community-led action research.

It is also important to note that PADETC has always put youth at the center of each activity as agents of change. We engage them in community livelihood improvement after trainings in life skills development, leadership and management skills, and field learning practices and exercises. By doing so, we enable youth to become re-engaged in society through these types of community services. In this respect, youth are PADETC's primary target group to be trained before they engage in the broader community, whose members are then the secondary target beneficiaries on the ground.

Internal & External Factors to Facilitate or Limit Desired Changes

PADETC's presence has been seen in rural areas throughout Laos for many decades. It is recognized as a local "champion" in terms of empowering community leaderships. This work resulted in PADETC's founder being awarded the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2005. Up to now, PADETC has continuously supported skills development for all civic groups such as youth groups, CBOs, CSOs, and non-profit associations (NPAs) to carry out community development. We have done this through the provision of regular training programs, the Small Grant Facility, and Direct Service Delivery.[18]

Unfortunately, since the disappearance of the PADETC founder in December 2012 until today, there are concerns about the government's perception and acceptance of Lao civil society. The government's position is not clear, and there is sometimes a view that civil society "disrupts harmony."[19] As a consequence, the four key areas of PADETC's programs have slowed down. In particular, the program on policy advocacy has almost completely stopped.

18 PADETC Strategic Planning Document (2012-2017).
19 Ibid.

PADETC has a strong team that stays together, continues to be inspired, and has an effective communication and work styles. In the course of a recent review of PADETC's work,[20] our donors and partners have assured that they maintain a strategic partnership with us, not simply a donor-recipient relationship. The review has also confirmed that capacity development at the community level and for CSOs remains PADETC's strength.

Manifested Attitudinal Changes, Social Practices, and Policies

In recent years, the government is accepting that CSOs play an important role in supporting community development through service delivery and capacity building. In 2009, Decree 115 was issued and approximately 160 NPAs and CBOs were registered. This is an important window through which civic groups take on higher levels of responsibility and accountability vis-à-vis the Lao government's goal to implement the 8th National Growth and Poverty Eradication Support Program by 2020.

Despite some unintended attitudes from the government, today, PADETC has continuously carried out community empowerment through its Small Grant Facility program, the provision of skills training, and coaching and mentoring in four target provinces, namely Savannakhet, Khammuane, Xiengkhuane, and Vientiane. As a result, 25 community-based groups, including farmer groups, village development committees, village education committees, young journalists, and village women groups, have succeeded in their development objectives after being intensively trained and supported by young development facilitators and using PADETC small grants.[21] These groups are able to take the lead in sharing and presenting their concerns associated with development projects in their own localities. An example of this is the short film titled *Story from the Field* produced by PADETC's Thaiban Research Project. The community groups are also beginning to see themselves as capable of producing positive changes in their communities and are participating even more actively. One of the major contributions of community engagement is that it encourages local authorities to see civic groups as valuable, untapped resources rather than as a problematic and marginalized majority of the population.

20 Ibid.

21 Development Facilitator Training Module. https://www.cord.org.uk/laos (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

In the long run, PADETC strongly believes that with the range of civic engagement through various development activities currently available in Laos and elsewhere, opportunities exist for ASEAN to further develop collective civic engagement for creating a just and sustainable society.

Unexpected Negative Consequences

In many parts of Laos, the local government is the key actor of the development process. There is a need to get alternative views of development onto the poverty agenda. This will convince authorities that there are benefits to be gained by providing more opportunities to and engaging with local communities to determine their own future, and allow for diversity instead of imposing inappropriate solutions.

After a few years of close collaboration through project implementation, such as CD-CID, FLEGT/VPA, and Thaiban Research Project,[22] PADETC has successfully re-built trust with our government counterparts, especially at the provincial level. This has resulted in the signing of four MoUs with the governments of the four provinces of Champasak, Savannakhet, Khammouane, and Xiengkhouang. We believe that CSOs have a key role to play in helping the Lao government fulfill various international obligations and smoothly move towards good governance and poverty reduction by 2020.

Visions for Regional Collaboration

In Laos, multi-stakeholder partnerships in which responsibilities and accountabilities are well defined are much needed on the ground. These partnerships should form joint projects to stimulate civic engagement that will improve good governance and rule of law. It will be helpful to create a regional platform to share and learn about post-MDG conditions and strengthen common synergies to implement the SDGs. Chulalongkorn University, one of the hosting organizations of the Yogya Workshop, could play a key role in this regard. We should build a strong and effective network of collaboration among academic institutions, governments, and CSOs, focusing on knowledge building for the ASEAN community. Young people should be placed at the center.

22 FLEGT stands for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade. Thaiban Research is a community-led research project.

Creating Sustainable Economies Based on Biodiversity and Cultural Wealth in East Sumba

Chandra Kirana Prijosusilo
Founder/Chair, Yayasan Sekar Kawung, Indonesia

Introduction

Yayasan Sekar Kawung (the Sekar Kawung Foundation) works toward creating sustainable economies together with traditional communities, using their various cultural skills and local biodiversity as the basis for economic development. In East Sumba, eastern Indonesia we work to strengthen the practice of *tenun ikat*, or using traditional plant-based dyes in textiles. This means tree and plant stocks in the environment need to be maintained, and the age-old knowledge and skills related to weaving and natural dyes need to be strengthened. At the same time, the art of *tenun ikat* needs to be contextualized so products can fetch high prices and the art can continue to hold an important place in the contemporary/modern economy.

Through *tenun ikat* as the focus of our work, we have begun to build cultural immersion tours, improve the quality of *tenun ikat*, and build a local economy that is interrelated and can synergize with the art of *tenun ikat* making. By supporting *tenun ikat* and related products, we are changing practices to improve land cover, strengthening the culture so that it can become a strong part of the modern economy, and improving economic incomes.

Perceived Issues

Local and indigenous communities in Indonesia generally hold a wealth of knowledge pertaining to how biodiversity can be utilized in a sustainable way to add value to life as expressed through their rich cultures. Applied, this knowledge creates products, or has a great potential to create products of high economic value, which in turn can create just and sustainable economic prosperity for these communities. However, there is a gap between the communities and the market (national, regional, and global) mainly due to poor public infrastructure, supporting logistics (external), language barriers, and technological challenges (internal). The technological gaps include in energy technologies, manufacturing technologies, and information and communication technologies.

These issues were selected for priority action:

1. Assessment of existing livelihood programs and projects for biodiversity-dependent communities in Indonesia;
2. Close examination of how local/indigenous communities relate to the ecosystems they live in, especially how they thrive by independently creating most of the things they use in their homes and live from what is available in nature, often with minimum or no external output;
3. Close examination of how traditional products made by many local/indigenous communities would sell in contemporary/modern markets; and
4. Close examination of the gaps between communities and the market, and a study of the potential bridges to those gaps.

Key Strategies and Methods

The main thesis behind our work is that when a local or indigenous community still has a strong relationship with the land and the biodiversity held therein, and the ecosystem that they live in is still relatively intact, then they have a strong opportunity to create sustained economic wealth by nurturing their ecosystem and their cultural roots while reaching out to markets. This opportunity is enhanced by the following strategies:

1. **Connecting world views**: Facilitate a process for communities to understand what value their traditional products could contribute to making the world a better place;
2. **Inventorying local wealth**: Assess plant resources and ecosystem services, such as water, beautiful landscapes, and cultural wisdom, and creative know-how, including carving, weaving, cooking, building, and healing;
3. **Opening a window to the world**: Through internet research and reading books on lifestyles, museums, and architecture and design, discuss with local/indigenous communities how the world could benefit and is benefiting from products that are currently already being created by them. This process opens their mind to knowing how creative design and modern living can actually internalize indigenous/traditional local products at high value;
4. **Analyzing possibilities and envisioning how to achieve them**: Look again at what local/indigenous communities are already

making in their daily lives, and select what could be offered to the market. From here help them figure out what is needed to bridge their current reality to the market in an empowered way;

5. **Developing/marketing products, analyzing results, and following with innovation, production, and marketing again**: This creates a continuous cycle of production, marketing, sales, product renewal, and stable revenue flow for producers;
6. **Focusing on the entire value chain**: When developing products, consider everything from the plants used as raw materials to production and marketing processes; and
7. **Thinking holistically**: It is important to understand how different resources in the community can be synergized to create better opportunities. Therefore, we do not just focus on the value chains of individual products. The more product value chains interrelate, the more resilient the local nature- and culture-based economy will be.

What Helped to Facilitate Our Work in the Short Run

1. We begin from where the community is, and spend time to build a strong awareness and consciousness about the value of what they have. This provides a strong foundation of self-esteem and trust in their own abilities and power. Communities become aware of the potential wealth they have in their arts and crafts and traditional knowledge about food and healing, as well as of the potential of various local plants and fruits that they have not known to have economic value in the past;
2. The availability of the Internet, the use of high-quality coffee table books on culture and various cultural products, and creative facilitators;
3. Access to a broader market through Yayasan Sekar Kawung's gallery/shop; and
4. A small grant from the Samdhana Institute (approximately 20,000 USD) enabled the economic wheel to begin turning.

Challenges in the Long Run

1. Synchronizing the rhythm of indigenous/local life production cycles with the ability to create a stable source of financial income (i.e., synchronizing nature-based production cycles with markets);

2. Accessing capital, technology, and markets;
3. Navigating poor quality public facilities to enable the movement of goods;
4. Creating transparent management systems, especially for financial management; this is very important in building trust;
5. Navigating government policies, especially when it comes to production permits; and
6. Bridging the digital divide.

Desired Attitudinal Changes, Social Practices, and Policy Changes

1. Improved appreciation of the local natural dyes of *tenun ikat*;
2. Improved land cover with natural dye plants; and
3. Improved economies.

These changes were assessed through: 1) documenting innovations; 2) creating databases of tree and plant inventories; and 3) monitoring production and marketing and financial flows.

Prospects of Survival in the Long term

The prospect for survival is quite strong because:

1. The value of production and incomes is rising;
2. The art of *tenun ikat* making has been developed by the local bureau of education into a primary school curriculum; and
3. Trees continue to be planted and will continue to be nurtured for their economic value.

Unexpected Negative Consequences

Internal/horizontal conflicts among community members were eventually addressed through dialogue and open discussion.

Visions for Regional Collaboration

Yayasan Sekar Kawung[23] was founded in 2015. Prior to this it was a multi-year personal effort initiated by Chandra Kirana to explore

23 See more information at Sekar Kawung www.sekarkawung.com or the Facebook page Sekar Kawung (Last accessed July 29, 2020).

the possibilities of creating economic prosperity without imposing external negative social and environmental costs. Would this be possible? If so, how? What would be the best pathway for communities in Indonesia?

Thus Yayasan Sekar Kawung seeks to strengthen communities' links to the land and encourage conservation of trees and improve land cover. At the same time, we work to strengthen social integrity through culture as the basis for economic development. To date, Yayasan Sekar Kawung works with two communities in Indonesia, in East Sumba and in West Kalimantan. Yayasan Sekar Kawung would also like to develop an ASEAN textile artist community.

Post-Yogya Workshop Reflection on the Work of the INEB Institute

Ted Mayer

Academic Director, INEB (International Network of Engaged Buddhists) Institute, USA/Thailand

Transformative learning may be legitimately understood in its narrowest sense as something new and different that takes place within the sphere of the classroom and in educational institutions. The conveners of the Yogya Workshop, however, allowed for a much broader sense of transformative learning as something that takes place within civil society as a whole, as a kind of civil learning. The International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) Institute stands roughly in the middle of this range of worthy approaches. It seeks to design and create programs that move flexibly between the classroom and the "field" of civil society, and in this it follows the anthropological tradition. Unlike anthropology, however, its aim is to cultivate leadership that understands and can respond to the crises facing humanity at present. In this sense its aim is transformative at a very broad level. Put more precisely, it aims for deep transformation of individuals in small groups as a path to a broader transformation of civil society. This piece will help to clarify further what we mean by transformative learning.

Personal and Institutional Background

Education needs to be re-envisioned to include the cultivation of wisdom, as well as learning to live in society and overcoming oppression and exploitation. For education to be more effective, it has to be dialogical, inclusive, and compassionate, and needs to heal the rift between body and mind… Buddhist education begins with humanity's ultimate questions: What is the meaning of life? What is our own deepest nature? What is our responsibility to others? Buddhism does not separate life from education.[24]

Figure 1:
Sulak Sivaraksa on education

24 Sulak Sivaraksa (2009). *The Wisdom of Sustainability: Buddhist Economics for the 21st Century.*

My name is Theodore Mayer. I am an anthropologist who was born to missionary parents from the U.S. who were living and working in Tamil Nadu, south India. I lived for 11 years in enclaves of North American and European missionaries, but closely surrounded by the people and institutions of predominantly Hindu (and Dalit) India. By chance, our home was in an area densely populated by Muslims. This intensely multi-cultural living environment gave me a lifelong interest in religion, and in cultural difference. My parents' deep conviction that goodness was present in the world at all levels, and that this could be drawn upon, extended, and made manifest, rooted itself in me as well, and remains with me to this day. It is perhaps the source of a deep and abiding interest in what religious and other ethical traditions can bring about in the world.

My love for Asia and my anthropological research brought me from the U.S. to Thailand for the first time in 1993. Now, in 2017, I have been a *de facto* resident of Thailand for years. My research into the practices, ideals, and forms of social action of "socially engaged" Buddhists in Thailand allowed me to come to know and respect Thai Buddhists who, like my parents, were convinced that religion was not truly realized, or fully meaningful, unless it could make a difference in the world.

It was in 2014 that a renewed search for university level work brought me together once again with renowned Thai dissident, Sulak Sivaraksa, and the organization he helped found in 1989, the INEB. But this time we were to embark on a long-term working relationship. What Sulak and INEB asked me to do was to collaborate with them in designing transformative learning programs that would help to realize more fully their vision of holistic, spiritually grounded education.

By mid-2015, we had created the Institute for Transformative Learning of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, or "the INEB Institute." The perspectives presented in this brief paper reflect several years of experience designing and implementing programs for the INEB Institute. We begin by addressing the question of what problems and issues the INEB Institute was designed to be a solution for.

What Did We Perceive as Root Problems and Challenges?

Level one answer: There was a growing recognition in 2014, within INEB and certain circles around the world, of the severity of the crises facing humankind. While the crises were an outgrowth of problems that INEB had studied and addressed for many years, they were

becoming so deep and so vivid as to raise pressing concerns about how to bring about a rapid transformation of worldviews, perspectives, lifestyles, and social structures. Such a transformation would require new forms of learning that could embrace broad social and ecological analysis while giving priority and respect to the experience of individuals.

In their most concise form, we saw the crises as consisting of five elements:

1. **Climate change**: Geophysical changes, especially extreme weather patterns and large-scale loss of ice, have been progressing more rapidly than expected. The rate and level of increase in CO_2 concentrations and average global temperature is unprecedented, not only in terms of the timeframe of human civilization, but going back hundreds of thousands of years;
2. **Severe and increasing social inequality**: While uneven across the globe, this trend can be seen both within national contexts and internationally;
3. **Violence**: The increasing use of violence as policy, but also importantly the ongoing and largely unseen use of structural violence as a tool of oppression and to maintain the status quo;
4. **Lack of voice**: Lack of genuine opportunities for broad participation in decision-making processes, and the ongoing struggle to create truly democratic forms at many levels of social life; and
5. **Selfhood (integrity and capacities of the self) under stress**: No one stands fully outside structures of violence or oppression. The same forces that have created these crises structure our lives and thoughts, though in different ways depending on socio-cultural location. These forces may express themselves within individuals as oppressive attitudes and actions (around gender, ethnicity, class, age, or ability), racism, materialism, competition for rank or status, individualism, or as behaviors driven by fear, greed, or the survival and security needs of one's own group to the exclusion of others.

We depicted the dimensions of these interlinked crises as follows:

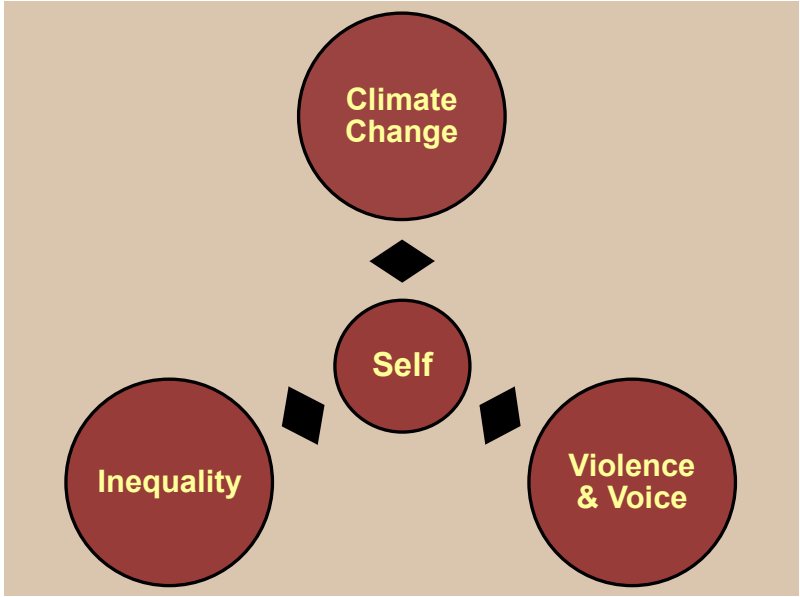

Figure 2: Graphic depiction of the dimensions of the crises

Level two answer: One tendency in the interpretation of Buddhist traditions in the modern period has linked the need for self-cultivation and social structural change so clearly that there is a widely used English term for it, namely "socially engaged Buddhism." Our articulation of the crises above reflects this tradition. INEB is a non-sectarian, face-to-face network within this tradition. Since its founding nearly 30 years ago, it has designed and carried out many kinds of trainings and short courses. The problem it sought to answer starting in August 2014 was: How could INEB develop its knowledge base, existing resources, and teaching capacities to create programs of higher learning that would cultivate the qualities and skills needed for men and women to become aware and thoughtful agents of change?

Level three answer: Mainstream systems of higher learning today are in general not responding to the severity of contemporary crises—or even to widespread suffering—as a focal or primary aim. Many behave as if their role were mainly to develop knowledge and skills sufficient to fill spaces in the existing economy. Universities, which have increasingly come under the sway of the neoliberal audit culture, tend to develop specialized knowledge within narrow disciplinary boundaries, and often find they must focus on competitive institutional and disciplinary survival. The INEB Institute argues that what is needed is cultivation of the intelligence and capacities of men and women in every social setting, of a kind that would allow them to develop not only analytical, but also broad synthetic and integrative skills. With these skills they could assess human needs and pri-

orities, become aware of the crises we jointly face, and be ready to foster the personal and social transformations necessitated by those crises. We also believe that a key aim of higher learning should be to enable human beings, regardless of their divergent backgrounds, to live lives of beauty and integrity, and that this remains possible even in chaotic and confusing times.

INEB Institute's Key Strategies for Civic Engagement and Transformative Learning

The INEB Institute has developed five project designs for its transformative learning programs.

English for Engaged Social Service (active): This is an English program for young adults who have made a commitment to work for personal and social transformation. The course works with a single group of students for a full three months, combining classroom work with field trips, workshops, and other activities. It seeks to empower young adults through a focus on English language skills. However, it does much more than that: it enables students to work effectively towards their own personal development, provide mutual support across cultural differences, and construct a deeper analysis of and response to questions of spirituality, social well-being, and sustainability.

Awakening Leadership Training [ALT]/Buddhist Leadership Training [BLT] (active): These programs are for people who have committed themselves to work for social reconstruction at all levels. Both ALT and BLT are designed to enhance participants' life quality and capacities at the spiritual, intellectual, and practical levels. People who aspire to heal and create just and sustainable societies need to see more clearly the complex structural violence that harms the lives of people and of the planet. At the same time, they need knowledge of the many alternative good practices available for meeting the multiple crises we face. ALT is a five-month program in a modular and integrated learning format focusing on self-inquiry and skills for personal and social transformation. The one-month BLT program takes a Buddhist approach to spiritual cultivation and engaged spirituality.

Master of Arts in Socially Engaged Buddhism (active in a modified form): This one-year master's program will study socially engaged Buddhism as one of the important ethical and spiritual traditions in the modern period. It will take students to meet with socially engaged Buddhist practitioners and scholars in Thailand, Taiwan, and India, allowing the students extensive contact with the three main Bud-

dhist traditions and with Ambedkarite Buddhism. The program is anthropological, field- and experience-oriented, and designed to enable mindful leadership in the face of looming crises. The program has been critiqued and refined, and needs only a university collaborator to provide accreditation.

Transformative Adult Education Focused on Events, Issues, or Signs of Hope (in preparation): These are courses of four to eight weeks, focusing on a specific field experience as inspiration and source of lessons for transformative leadership. Field experiences may be built around important events in the world of socially engaged Buddhism—such as Diksha Bhumi in Nagpur, or an INEB conference. They could be built around specific issues, such as nuclear energy, or around projects that constitute signs of hope, such as eco-temples. They may also combine these elements, while exploring their histories, contexts, and practical implications. The first two weeks of such courses would involve reading and online group learning, followed by two to six weeks on the ground.

With different focal points, each of these programs orchestrates pedagogical approaches that aim to:

1. Free up the individual's attention. We accomplish this through meditation and mindfulness training, helping students to see learning as the play of their own minds and intellectual capacities, and directing attention to concrete and benign phenomena within and outside the classroom;
2. Free up the individual's full, flexible intelligence. We share conclusions of research on the malleability of intelligence, deliberately remove fears of judgment and ranking, create conditions for relaxed learning, and provide for practice in critical thinking. We also offer support for students to develop the linguistic, interpretive, and research tools that give their thinking breadth and depth, an empirical groundwork, and clarity when articulated to others;
3. Free up the individual's capacity for closeness, trust, and mutual support. We train students to engage in listening practices that help build confidence and trust, raise awareness of oppression, and enhance their ability to think independently about how to support an interpersonal or group endeavor;
4. Make vivid what is possible in learning and life. We do this through exposure to leaders of integrity whose work and lives are also inspiring, transformative, and the source of lessons;

5. Make vivid and comprehensible the extent and nature of the current global crises. We create concise but empirically grounded study sequences to accomplish this goal, using many sources and media;
6. Make vivid and tangible the many signs of hope springing up around the world, whether these involve new forms of community and social action, innovations in the production and conservation of energy, experiments in ecovillage or permaculture design, or the results of new research into the nature of learning, intelligence, friendship, healthy living, and other areas; and
7. Free up the individual's capacity to act (alone or in concert with others) and to choose a life path and a form of leadership that replicates any or all of these seven dimensions in a way that is appropriate to his or her life trajectory. We encourage students to set goals and outline concrete action steps towards those goals, and to think about the areas of their life and society in which they could take on leadership.

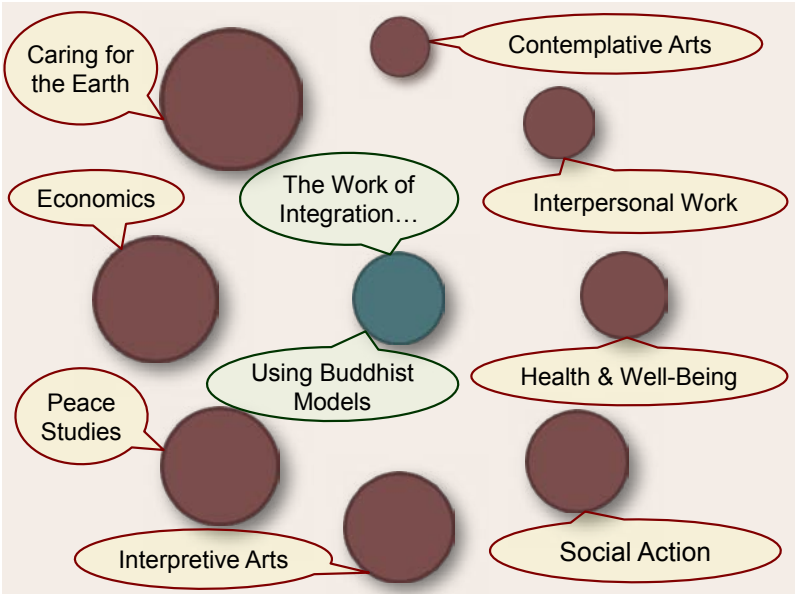

Figure 3: Graphic illustration of the INEB Institute's MA Curriculum

Two additional features are key to our curricula: 1) The need for the right kind of breadth and for an ethically integrating center, so as to cultivate students who are sufficiently aware of what they are doing when they take action in the world; and 2) that integration takes place mainly through animating the student's unique moral imagination or sense of possibility, rather than through moral injunctions, however illustrious their ancestry.

Facilitating/Limiting Factors

Internally, the very existence of INEB was crucial. It made it possible to envision programs that would take students into the field to study the work of diverse INEB members as models for thought, inspiration, and lessons. Furthermore, it provided for start-up support, access to students, cross-tradition trust, and comparative ease of organization and communication. The Thai-based institutional home for INEB, the Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, was able to invest in renovating Wongsanit Ashram, one of the first ecovillages in ASEAN, creating a desirable and attractive space for our residential courses. Some of the network members have sponsored students or provided scholarships. The INEB Institute was able to attract individuals with expertise in teaching listening, life, and leadership skills, as well as anthropology, field learning, and Buddhist studies. Externally, the worsening of crises has provided abundant evidence of the need for broad and deep transformation.

Perhaps the key limitation internally has been sources of funding. It is very important for us to be able to offer quality higher learning to young adults, especially from Asia, who would not otherwise have access to such opportunities. This means a high need to raise scholarship and operating funds. In spite of generosity from many groups and individuals, this remains a time-consuming challenge. Secondly, INEB has grown rather deliberately as an informal network of friends. As such it allows much room for individual initiative and flexibility. Negatively, however, it sometimes means that decision-making and lines of responsibility are not clear, and that systematic and long-term planning are relatively new elements within the network (INEB's recent 10-year strategy meetings testify to their presence, however). Externally, the key limitation has perhaps been that we must seek accreditation for our MA in Socially Engaged Buddhism ultimately from state-controlled certifying agencies who might understandably feel that our holistic and transformative programs are difficult to categorize within traditional disciplinary boundaries, and who may mistakenly conclude that they therefore lack substance or are too risky to support.

What Desired Changes did We Observe? What Challenges did We Encounter?

Our English course work team has observed that students are increasingly able to think for themselves, listen with empathy and respect, and form a cohesive, trusting group. We also see measurable

and sometimes remarkable improvement in English skills. Perhaps the most dramatic changes have been in awareness of climate change and in the decisions to teach others. Finally, we have seen strong goal setting as well as very good follow-through, at least in some cases. Many students express a new sense of confidence in their ability to direct their own life and to have a positive impact on the world.

We have managed to create an environment where students can develop independence by having the freedom to make decisions about their time and daily discipline. But we observed that with freedom, some students managed their time very poorly, and we had to learn to address this. Some of our students return from that environment of support to lives that may be constrained by exceedingly hard work and/or deep expectations about gender and other roles. We learned that we need to take these dynamics into account as we think about how to support our graduates. A further challenge was in a sense a welcome one: that with a very complex curriculum striving to meet multiple goals, finding the appropriate balance between different themes and activities, and especially between work and rest, became very crucial.

Visions and Plans for Regional Collaboration?

For me, the Yogya Workshop brought alive the vitality and creativity of grassroots leadership in Southeast Asia (and beyond). It was striking to hear the stories of very different kinds of initiatives and challenges. It gave me confidence that our goal of creating extraordinary leadership from among ordinary people was feasible and significant. Concretely, I was encouraged to imagine how any program of language acquisition (especially a language native to Southeast Asia) could become a source of transformation, and would meet an important need for intra-ASEAN communication. Relationships formed within the workshop were real and supportive. As a result of such relationships, we subsequently accepted our first Indonesian Muslim student into our next English course, and paired her with a young Buddhist woman from Myanmar in our first crowdfunding campaign. Both have a strong record of involvement with sustainability issues. I felt a special resonance with those who spoke of "spirituality and sustainability," and I look forward to possible collaborations in these areas, though it is too early to know the shape they might take. For me, the deepest significance of the workshop was being able to rise above the demanding daily work to see a broad and hopeful panorama of people working for change, animated by diverse ideals that remained capable of articulation in a common and welcoming forum.

SECTION TWO: POLICY ADVOCACY

Step by Step from Cambodia towards ASEAN

Heng Monychenda
Buddhism For Development (BFD), Cambodia

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to be here with the invitation from the organizers: the project team of *Transformative Learning towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community*, the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, and the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies. I was thrilled because 30 years ago, in July 1987, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee, successfully initiated the so-called "cocktail party," which later evolved into the three Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM I, JIM II, and JIM III respectively in 1988, 1989, and 1990). These gatherings sought to solve the issues relating to Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia,[25] and eventually led to the Paris Peace Accords in 1991. Allow me to say "Thank you Indonesians" for such a wonderful gift, peace in action, and to Cambodians, and the region of Indochina and ASEAN as a whole.

In JIM I, His Holiness Maha Ghosananda, a prominent monk from Cambodia, led contingents of Buddhist monks to the peace negotiations in Jakarta, Indonesia, proposing a compromise and reminding Cambodian leaders that: "Peace is our common goal. Peace is possible! Hatred never ceases by hatred in this world but by love alone is healed. This is the ancient and eternal law."[26] This precious advice by then had become his main focus in building an army of peace whose ammunition would be "bullets of loving kindness; an army absolutely without guns or partisan politics, an army of reconciliation with so much courage in using non-violent means to solve problems, an army dedicated wholly to peace and to the end of suffering."[27] I myself was fortunately able to come to Indonesia with Maha Ghosananda for JIM II in 1989, as the Secretary of the Cambodian Mission for Peace. Maha Ghosananda had established the Mission, and its members were willing to face the army of guns with love and compassion, to spread the message of reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace to end the suffering of Cambodian people.

25 From 1979 to 1991. Some observers called it the Third Indochina War http://countrystudies.us/indonesia/99.htm (Last accessed July 29, 2019).

26 *The Buddha of the Battlefields*. https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/5891791/the-buddha-of-the-battlefields-somdech-preah-maha-ghosananda (Last accessed July 29, 2020).

27 Ibid.

The Cambodian Mission for Peace later transformed into Dhammayatra, the Dharma Walk, a walk for reconciliation, peace and development, that continues until today. In March of this year we commemorated the 10th Anniversary of Maha Ghosananda's death with the 27th Dhammayatra to promote a peaceful heart and the Five Precepts among the people, especially among students of primary and high school age, including teaching awareness of HIV/AIDS transmission, prevention of the use of alcohol and drugs, and the need to work together to protect and preserve our environment.[28] His central message has been reiterated again and again every year to remind us not to forget to apply and to spread it to others:

- "Peace is our common goal. Peace is possible!"
- "We need to remember that our temple is always with us. Our temple is within us;"
- "All religions walk together, seeking peace of heart: one step at a time, one step at a time;"
- "Hatred never ceases by hatred in this world but by love alone is healed. This is the ancient and eternal law;"[29] and
- "The suffering of Cambodia has been deep. From this suffering comes great Compassion. Great compassion makes a peaceful heart. A peaceful heart makes a peaceful person. A peaceful person makes a peaceful family. A peaceful family makes a peaceful community. A peaceful community makes a peaceful nation. A peaceful nation makes a peaceful world."

By recalling the events of 30 years ago, I would like to give emphasis here to three venerable quotes of Maha Ghosananda that still resonate with many people today, although he passed away a decade ago. First, on the word peace, he, and we believe it is possible to make it our common goal. Second, the seeking of peace needs time and careful steps by all people in all walks of life (religions) to advance. Third, a responsible community's efforts towards peace make a peaceful nation: thus one day in the future, we—or most probably our children—will be living in a peaceful and sustainable ASEAN.

Peace is ASEAN's Common Goal, Peace is Possible: Issues and Hope

By the merits of the 1987 initiative of Indonesians, Cambodia

28 *27th Dhammayatra Report.*
29 Ibid.

obtained "peace," or at least now "the state of the absence of war," as Dr. Mahathir Mohammad once defined peace. Although the government of Cambodia is very proud of that definition, many groups do not fully agree with it. They feel that peace also requires rule of law, human rights, democracy, freedom, and, last but not least, sustainable development to make peace more meaningful for a country in the 21st century. The definition of peace as "the absence of war" has become a considerable topic of discussion in many countries, including Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and the Philippines. The struggle between governments and NGOs sometimes has polarized the two groups. Arguments over democracy vs. peace have led to new conflicts. Although it was first coined in 1819, a term recently spreading on social media in Cambodia might lead to a greater debate: "kleptocracy," or government by those who seek chiefly status and personal gain at the expense of the governed.

What we are afraid of is that peace of mind itself falls to pieces within one nation and spreads out among ASEAN—a greater "nation" that I am gradually falling in love with and want to be married to. Although ASEAN is still in the stage of the ASEAN Economic Community (remaining a fiancé due to economic reasons), a married life should be expected in the coming years, due to an obligation. In other words, "marriage" is the only way that ASEAN will survive and live with prosperity in order to achieve ASEAN: "one vision, one identity, one community."

In the larger picture, peace has been threatened across ASEAN due to internal and external factors. The endurance of peace is a question in the minds of people: How long will the Korean peninsula experience the absence of war, and how big of an impact would war there have on ASEAN? How far can the negotiations on the South China Sea last before "the absence of war" is broken? How much time and how many lives will each country need to spend on the war on drugs? Last but not least, how far can one go to stop provoking wars in the name of religion which cause much suffering to so many lives?

Nevertheless, all of us still believe that peace is possible and it is our common goal, like that of a football team. We need a *team*, not just a group: a skillful team with the best strategy to gain one point for peace and/or to prevent one point of peace from being lost. Both aspects are very important towards peace in each country as well as in ASEAN. We need strong teamwork to elicit participation of the people in erecting what is called the ASEAN Vision, ASEAN Identity, and the most important one, ASEAN Community, which so far are being dictated by politicians and business corporations. Peace is our common goal, not only that of politicians!

"All Religions Walk Together, Seeking Peace of Heart: One Step at a Time, One Step at a Time"

All religions walk and work together to seek and to promote peace of heart. In fact, I do not like to limit the walk and work only to those of religions, for that is too institutional. Hundreds of ethnic groups with different languages and beliefs must be included in seeking and promoting peace of heart. One of the main problems of people who follow one particular belief or are registered under one religion is the feeling they may hold towards other beliefs as alien, bad, or not good enough, and they may try to cultivate such feelings in their own children and future generations. Then they bond this feeling to nationalism, patriotism, territorialism, and colonialism. Buddhism, my own religion, is no exception to this.

There are a number of spiritual beliefs among indigenous groups in Cambodia. I find them more peaceful in heart than many Cambodian Buddhists, although their standard of living is considered quite low. We need to invite such indigenous peoples to talk, walk, and work together with people who follow the "major" religions to seek and promote peace for ASEAN people: one step at a time, one step at a time.

We are different in nationality and in institutional beliefs, but we are not different from animals in eating, sleeping, being fearful, and sexually reproducing. Nevertheless, all of us with a belief system or a religion have been taught to be a better person than animals with cultures of love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and justice. These cultures are aiming to achieve both physical and mental peace. Unfortunately, we are sometimes stained by the thought that "only my culture can bring peace to my community and the world." Therefore, it is time to acknowledge the compatibility of all beliefs, so that cultures can be adapted in various areas without problems. I imagine this like the new electrical adaptors that allow us to produce power according to each country's different plugs.

Peace is the common goal of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and other spiritual traditions in the world. A common vision of ASEAN would never forget peace. Yet the understanding of peace among various followers and politicians might not be compatible. Our scholars have found and agreed that a number of core teachings of each belief system are compatible and lead to the same peace. But these core teachings are rarely taught in schools to promote harmony, togetherness, and a sense of humanity among our children. Each school is afraid that by teaching other religious principles in school they might lose their own national identity.

The most compatible core teaching between Buddhism and Islam is the Majjhimapatipada, The Middle Path, and the Ummatan Wasatan, The Middle Nation. The quotes below show us the compatibility.

On Buddhism

> Oh monks! There are these two extremes that are not to be indulged in by one who has gone forth. Which two? That which is devoted to sensual pleasure with reference to sensual objects: base, vulgar, common, ignoble, unprofitable; and that which is devoted to self-affliction: painful, ignoble, unprofitable. Avoiding both of these extremes, the middle way realized by the Tathagata — producing vision, producing knowledge — leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding. And what is the middle way realized by the Tathagata that — producing vision, producing knowledge — leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding? Precisely this Noble Eightfold Path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This is the middle way realized by the Tathagata that — producing vision, producing knowledge — leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding.[30]

On Islam

> And thus have We willed you to be a community of the middle way, so that (with your lives) you might bear witness to the truth before all mankind.[31]

Ummatan Wasatan is a community that keeps an equitable balance between extremes and is realistic in its appreciation of man's nature and possibilities, rejecting both licentiousness and exaggerated asceticism.[32]

On Christianity

There is no exact word for middle way in the Bible, but there are

30 *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion.* http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn56/sn56.011.than.html (Last accessed July 29, 2019).

31 *Qur'ān* 2:143.

32 p. 384 in Imtiyaz Yusuf (2009). "Dialogue between Islam and Buddhism through the Concepts Ummatan Wasatan and Majjhima-Patipada." *Islamic Studies 48*:3.

many explanations of how the middle way is applied in Christianity. However, 30 years ago a paragraph from the Bible made me understand the middle way of Christianity from my own point of view as a Buddhist monk. I was impressed with:

> He humbled you, causing you to be hungry, yet he fed you with manna that neither you nor your ancestors had known, in order to teach you that human beings are not to live by food alone—instead human beings are to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.[33]

When the most compatible core of religions is defined and well accepted, it would be easier to use teachings as a means to end the suffering of humankind. It may be difficult, but it is possible: One step at a time, one step at a time, all religions can walk together, seeking and promoting peace.

Civic Engagement: A Peaceful Community Makes a Just and Sustainable Nation

All governments are pushing their people to engage in socio-economic development of the country. In Cambodia, civic education curricula have been produced for high school students in hopes that they would positively engage their knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards the values of human beings, the culture of peace, and socio-economic development. However, the subject is not considered a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subject, which makes it less interesting to the children and teachers. The "pushing approach" has been minimized on the part of the government, although there are a number of CSOs, including Buddhism for Development (BFD), that encourage parts of the curricula, especially those concerning people's participation in democratization of the country and the culture of peace. Most see human values simply as the domain of the spiritual sector, and feel such teaching should be relegated to the work of religions. Participation in democratization very often leads to suspicion by the government, since there are sensitive subjects such as human rights, corruption, accountability, distribution of power, and so on, that might lead to weakening the government's agenda.

BFD is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, non-political, and non-partisan community development organization founded in May 1990 at Prasat Serey Monastery, Refugee Camp Site 2 by Buddhist monks under

33 Deuteronomy 8: 2-3 *The Bible* (King James Version).

the leadership of Indapanno Bhikkhu, who sees the value of Buddhism as tool for peace restoration and national reintegration, economic and social development, mental and wisdom development, human rights recovery, democratic building, and sustaining the balance of individual, society, and nature.[34] BFD's civic engagement can be seen in some of its activities carried out through the following perspectives.

The indigenous culture: As a young monk with tiny experience in worldly issues, I found it difficult to start my engagement with local people when I returned from displaced peoples' camp along the Cambodian-Thai border in 1992. Despite being a monk, and my father being a former commune chief, my status as a newcomer in my own native village made gaining the support of the people difficult. Then I recalled a Khmer proverb: "Love the daughter to take care of the mother; love the mother to protect the daughter." This led to the first project of BFD, Kindergarten of Reconciliation, which selected children from poor families, disabled parents, and orphans from all conflicting political groups in Cambodia. The children were happy, the parents were happy, and we continued with other projects to take care of the parents and the families. Today the scholarship program is still going on in six provinces in northwest Cambodia. The Khmer proverb has helped me to achieve two key points in my philosophy for civic engagement, i.e., reconciliation of the nation and its development.

The Middle Path: The success of BFD in development comes along with the suspicion of officials who live with the extreme attitude of "those who are not my friends are (or may be) my enemies." They do not believe in the Middle Path or neutrality in daily life. In 1997 when I returned from studies in Boston during a fall break, I encountered a very direct challenging question. A high officer from a long-time party cadre who was in power approached me only one day after I had arrived at my office in Battambang. He asked me, "Since you left the monkhood, what stand are you going to take?" It was odd, wasn't it? My quick answer was "I was a monk for a long time. When I went to get food in the morning, I never asked whether the owners of the food came from any political party. I was grateful to them all. Buddhist monks are not allowed to take sides in political affairs (or royal affairs in the Buddha's time). Although I am no longer a monk, the idea of not being involved in political affairs is still in my mind. Most of all, my father told me, before I became a monk, not to get involved in politics. Lastly, BFD is an NGO, and an NGO has its own status as a non-partisan entity by law." The man left me with a short response

34 1st By-law of Buddhism for Development.

"Thank you, I got what I want." My story is just to illustrate that the Middle Path is not easy to implement and difficult to be understood by most people. We have to be aware of the use of the Middle Path or the Ummatan Wasatan in a world with strong polarization.

Basic humanity: During the Communist Khmer Rouge, I and others were warned to remember four dictates: Do not see, do not hear, do not know, and do not talk—or risk death. The oppressive slogan still produces negative impacts even until today, although the situation has improved during the last 10 years. BFD promotes five positive keywords as cross-cutting themes to reverse these impacts through all its activities: Observe, listen, learn, complain, and demand. The reverse works through a bottom-up approach, but it can also create unfriendly reactions from those who have been addicted to power too long. Besides, the eyes, the ears, the mouth, and the brain belong to the people who are willing to challenge the rights of a few to own those wonderful organs and willing to properly use them for the happiness of their families and communities. We cannot be any better than other creatures if our basic humanity is taken away!

Volunteerism: Life is moving forward. It can be a development or a decadence. The next generation must discuss various topics, making sure that our descendants are in the readiness position for any unexpected situations. For the last decade, BFD has provided opportunities for approximately 1,500 university and senior-high school students to voluntarily work in the sub-national and local administrations. These opportunities enable them to understand more of the real life of governments and their constituencies, to learn to give away what one has in order to fulfill the needs of others, and to be ready to continue their mission for a just and sustainable Cambodia.

Between 1999 and 2011, when some parts of Cambodia were in the fragile state of the absence of war, volunteerism helped harmonize people from different ideological backgrounds—socialism, royalism, Khmer Rouge-ism, and liberalism—in order to be able to reintegrate their emotional and physical lives in 110 communes of the seven provinces in the north and west of Cambodia. Each village was encouraged to elect one volunteer, called a Peace and Development Volunteer (PDV), to be trained by BFD to go from one house to another to discuss the issue of "trust" among their communities. As an agent of change, PDVs also acted as a facilitator for alternative dispute resolution in the village. At the commune level, volunteers from the villages were included in the formation of Commune Committees to Prevent and Manage Human Rights Violations (CPMHRV),

together with the members of commune councils and other respected community leaders. Networks to prevent human rights violations at the district level were also established with the recognition of the district authority.

Access to health has always been a major problem in Cambodia. Village health volunteers were initiated in the BFD health program in 1995 to disseminate health information and provide basic advice on health care issues. In 1997 the model, along with others, was studied by the Ministry of Health, and a national policy on health volunteers was established. Today, 47 volunteers, who are People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV), are working to serve 2,700 PLHIV in 11 districts of Battambang province.

My belief in volunteerism is that every one of us can be an agent of change in our community, wherever we live. The impact is great and the expense is minimal, because those who encounter the problems help to solve the problems among themselves. They own the responsibility. Thus they engage with their heart to sustain the goodness they have done.

The Malaria Model: I suffered from malaria when the Khmer Rouge ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1978. I remember how fast the disease spread in our body with only one bite of the agent-mosquito. I learned later that *Plasmodium falciparum* multiplies eight times. This drove me to the idea that in development we cannot multiply a successful activity at a fast speed. But if others see the goodness of our activity for their communities, they can multiply such an activity at a faster speed than if I do it alone.

Most of the projects initiated by BFD always consider a multiplication effect in the future and in other areas according to their own situation. For example, in 2007, BFD introduced a live radio program for the first time in Battambang province, called *Buddhism for Khmer Society*, which encourages various ways that Buddhists can engage to improve the quality of life. BFD then provided training and capacity building programs for monks in a number of provinces but for only three years. Ten years later, there are now hundreds of FM radio programs produced by Buddhist monks and lay Buddhists in all 25 provinces of Cambodia. Ten years later, radio programs multiplied, *Buddhism and Peace, Buddhism and Harmony, Buddhism and Khmer Literature, Buddhism and Quality of Life*, and so on. In Battambang alone, there are 35 civic engagement programs on a dozen FM stations. They are all financially self-sustaining due to contributions from listeners (Buddhists). They can even raise money

and create materials to support poor children or families, and meet emergency needs.

The Malaria Model needs quality projects, support from target groups, and to offer socially oriented benefits. Multiplication is not replica. It needs to be adapted and adopted by the communities according to their socio-economic and cultural needs.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe my contribution to my country through BFD does have a positive impact on ASEAN in one way or another. It is small, but together with other civilians in Cambodia, I believe we can make a change for a better, just and sustainable Cambodia. This, for sure, contributes to the progress of ASEAN. It is my dream that ASEAN would become a borderless, peaceful community with a small income gap among all the nations, but with harmony among the diversity of ethnicities and religions.

Civic engagement for a just and sustainable ASEAN or Cambodia is not yet in a stage of smoothness and is still a rather bumpy ride. The power of social media, especially Facebook, on the one hand allows better understanding of works of the government and its constituencies. On the other hand, the dark side of the government has been exposed in public, with thousands of comments and shared criticisms, blaming and defaming of the government for many reasons. National security, color revolutions, and the cost of gaining and maintaining peace have all been used as reasons to reduce the engagement of civil societies. The exercise of freedom of speech in public and in social media leads to the question of freedom *after* speech in many ASEAN countries. Social media is no longer much of a problem, but ethics and morality are the primary concerns for both government and non-governmental organizations.

Civic engagement is a good term. But it needs action. It is time-consuming. It is a slow process, a bottom-up approach, and a consensus-building, decision-making, non-violent approach. It goes against the authoritarian approach. A civic engagement movement should be the next step on a larger scale within ASEAN. We have to invite all types of groups to encourage them to be compatible in the Middle Way with the leaders of ASEAN. Actually, I am establishing now, just at an early stage, "the Middle Way Movement"[35] first by using social media. I wish to work with any like-minded country in the Middle Way of Buddhism, the Ummatan Wasatan of Islam, or the middle

35 The Ariyasacca Path. https://www.facebook.com/វិថីអរិយសច្ច-The-Ariyasacca-Path-1352130834826609 (Last accessed July 19, 2020).

way of Christianity. The rise of extremism both on the left and right, which usually involves real armed violence, has led me to set up this civic movement across ASEAN. It may take time, but I have already started the first step. Maha Ghosananda said "one step at a time, one step at a time." We can achieve peace within the heart of ASEAN. "Put down the gun, take up the Dharma (the Middle Way)" is the motto I have believed in for the past 30 years.

"*Natthi santi param sukham*"—There is no greater happiness than peace.

Citizens' Initiatives in the Fukushima Radiation Disaster: Measuring and Sharing Fukushima

Mariko Komatsu
Fukushima Project Leader, Japan-Iraq Medical Network
Member, Fukushima Booklet Committee, Japan

Introduction

The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) disaster, triggered by a massive earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011 released a large volume of radioactive material and spread invisible radiation via wind, rain, and snowfall across a wide area of eastern Japan, including Fukushima prefecture. People were suddenly forced to make changes and necessary life decisions with little, if any, knowledge of radiation and its risks or safety: whether to stay or evacuate, and whether to continue farming and consuming local agricultural products.

The critical tool for such decision-making was knowledge of the level of contamination in their surroundings and food. The government, however, was unable to provide—and in some cases concealed—the required information. Measuring radiation requires special devices and techniques: these were not readily available, as the radiation disaster at such a scale was "unforeseen." This was despite the government having long initiated the construction of nuclear power stations around the nation. In and outside of Fukushima, citizens immediately started to measure radiation in their environment and food.

Fukushima Project with Citizen Radiation Measuring Stations

Who we are

The Japan-Iraq Medical Network (JIM-NET)[36] is a Japanese NGO, with the primary mission of supporting vulnerable Iraqi children with cancer. From the onset of the Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami, JIM-NET also worked to support disaster-affected people—especially of Fukushima—based on the following three principles: (1) support Fukushima citizens making informed decisions for their own future; (2) raise awareness to build connections with Fukushima; and 3) connect Fukushima to the world to share lessons learned from the disaster.

36 JIM-NET. http://www.jim-net.org (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

Background

For Fukushima citizens to gain first-hand information about the level of radiation contamination in their everyday contexts, citizen radiation measuring stations have been in high demand since March 11. In some cases, scientists and experts in radiation science took initial leads to set up the stations and as "citizen scientists" worked with local residents to measure radiation and disseminate the findings through social media. In other cases, ordinary citizens wished to gain access to the methods and information, with no previous knowledge or expertise. By the beginning of April 2012, there were about 25 initiatives to measure radiation, especially in foodstuffs in Fukushima prefecture. With the help of a networking NGO,[37] JIM-NET incorporated its Fukushima Project to provide various kinds of support to citizen radiation measuring stations from April 2012 to the present.

Strategies and Outcomes

All the above-mentioned initiatives had their own unique context that precipitated their start up. Geographically, they were quite scattered across three areas in Fukushima prefecture. In our preliminary interviews, citizens requested the chance to learn specialized knowledge about radiation from experts. People also discussed their unsettling feelings around the issue of radiation as they discussed how to organize measuring schemes. As a result, a study-group was organized to accommodate both radiation measuring and networking. The citizen radiation measuring stations were expected to disseminate scientific knowledge of radiation and everyday know-how of radiation safety among local residents.

As every participant was highly motivated to learn, the study-group approach achieved its mission quite quickly with each measuring station equipped with the proper facilities, knowledgeable staff, and advisors. Networking was maintained for a good 12 months, and a study group served as a platform to exchange information with other groups, and sometimes with experts. The topics for discussion included techniques of measurement, how to interpret acquired data, or ways to explain data to laypeople. Much was discussed around the issue of management, and especially about funding for that purpose. One network in the Iwaki area of the southern coastal Fukushima, collaboratively planned a public dialogue event three times to discuss the situation of "local agricultural/marine products" with farmers, supermarket owners, scholars, consumers, and mothers.

37 Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC). http://www.janic.org (Last accessed January 19, 2019).

Challenges

Funding was not much of a problem at all between 2011 and 2012, as many donors in and outside of Japan were willing to support citizens' initiatives. This allowed for the purchase of quite expensive measuring devices from the beginning. Human resources and running costs of the measuring activities, however, were often not covered by such funds. Each organization had to take responsibility.

Now six years have passed since the initial radiation fall-out. Public measurement of radiation in foodstuff is now well incorporated in the system, and analysis of that accumulated data has allowed us to focus less on measurement than before. Some stations have become even more specialized to include other types of radiation measurement, such as Hot Spots and Beta rays, which official institutional entities ignore. Many other groups have moved on or returned to more pressing issues which are specific to each group's focus.[38] The radiation measurement initiative is just one response to various aspects caused by the Fukushima radiation disaster.

The Makings of a "Fukushima Booklet" and Advocacy

The lessons of Fukushima need to be shared with the world, as there are many more nuclear power plants out there, without even minimum disaster preparedness information shared with the surrounding localities. Industries and governments have not shown any remorse and keep promoting and selling new NPPs to developing countries.

In March 2015, the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) was held in Sendai, just north of Fukushima. In the initial agenda released in the preparation committee for the conference, nuclear disaster was not included as a key topic.[39] Protesting parties formed a coalition—the Japan CSO Coalition for 2015 WCDRR (JCC2015)—and demanded and later succeeded to include the lessons of nuclear disaster in the conference's agenda.

38 As the Fukushima initiatives evolved, many citizen measuring stations were established across Japan. What is happening in Fukushima may not completely apply outside of Fukushima, but there are little communications between these stations and Fukushima initiatives.

39 The committee's explanation for the omission was that "the nuclear disaster is not a natural disaster that we focus on in the conference; if such human-inflicted disasters were to be included, then we would have to consider wars and conflicts as well."

Who we are

In order to share the Fukushima lessons to the world, the Fukushima Booklet Committee grew out of the JCC2015, and compiled a booklet titled *10 Lessons from Fukushima: Reducing Risks and Protecting Communities from Nuclear Disasters* ("*10 Lessons*").[40] The booklet is based upon the experiences of the Fukushima nuclear disaster and testimony of local people, and is free to download online as well. With the enthusiastic help of many volunteers, *10 Lessons* has been translated into 14 languages, uploaded to the Internet, and printed and published at the end of 2017.

Strategies

In 2017, the Fukushima Booklet Committee moved on to Phase II, with proper updates and further implementation of *10 Lessons* in mind. The committee consulted with a number of collaborators in Fukushima and discussed many issues to be introduced according to the existing framework of the booklet.

Although *10 Lessons* has become available in various languages and countries, it remains unknown to what extent the booklet has been read and used to meet local needs. The lessons from Fukushima are meant to capture the myriad of complicated issues observed before, during, and after the Fukushima Daiichi NPP disaster, which require readers to focus and digest. For *10 Lessons* to effectively reach and be read by a wider population and multiple stakeholders, the proper updates in detail must follow, and various supplemental materials catering to different target audience need to be developed.

In January 2018, the Fukushima Booklet Committee appointed Fukushima Booklet implementation advisors in seven countries and invited them to participate in strategic meetings held in Fukushima and Tokyo. Upon the advisors' arrival, a field trip was organized to observe the current situation in Fukushima, seven years after the disaster. The advisors were selected from a range of backgrounds for their willingness to incorporate Fukushima issues in their activities and having active ties with some individuals and groups with whom they could potentially conduct workshops using *10 Lessons*. They included school teachers, anti-nuclear/pro-renewable energy activists, and NGO workers. With a variety of specific targeted audiences

40 Fukushima Booklet Publication Committee (2015). *10 Lessons from Fukushima: Reducing Risks and Protecting Communities from Nuclear Disasters* (Japanese original). http://fukushimalessons.jp (Last accessed January 18, 2019).

in mind, the Fukushima Booklet Committee asked for expert advice for future development of supplemental materials of *10 Lessons*. The group of international advisors have shared their opinions with clear distinctions between the target, aim, content, and methods to effectively convey the Fukushima lessons.

The Way Ahead

In the upcoming two-year plan, the Fukushima Booklet Committee will select one or two countries per year to focus on and, together with local advisors, develop supplemental materials to conduct workshops with the target groups. Those informative materials will be archived to make them available in various locations. These bitter yet precious lessons from Fukushima need to be shared with the world through further empowerment of the local initiatives.

Global *Hibakusha's* Deliberative Democracy: What We Discuss, Describe, and Archive after the Human-made Nuclear Disaster in Fukushima

Hiroko Aihara

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Introduction

I am a native of Fukushima prefecture. I write a weekly online column "The Viewpoint from Fukushima" that covers the latest from the region for *The Nikkei Online*. I discuss the current situation in Fukushima in weekly segments on *Videonews.com* in Japan, and I regularly contribute pieces on the tsunami and nuclear disaster to the media outlets *The Big Issue Japan*, *Fujin no Tomo* ("*Friends of Women*"), and *Shukan Kinyobi* ("*Weekly Friday*").

On the day of the disaster, March 11, 2011, now known as "3.11" or *san ichi ichi* ("Three One One") in Japanese, I was working in Tokyo as the Research Administrative Secretary for members of the House of Councilors, the upper house of Japan's national Diet. While most people were evacuating Fukushima, I went in the opposite direction: I quit my job and returned to my hometown, Fukushima City, which was blanketed with radiation despite being some 60 kilometers away from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (NPP). I furiously began reporting on the situation, resulting in the production of more than 35 video reports, 25 online articles, and 20 magazine articles in the first year after the disaster.

Before I worked as Research Administrative Secretary, I was a reporter for over 20 years for *The Fukushima Minyu* ("*Fukushima Friends of People*"), a major daily newspaper in Fukushima. Between 2008 and 2009, as an API (Asian Public Intellectuals) Fellow of The Nippon Foundation, I studied and researched illegal organ selling and buying in the Philippines. During that research, I came to the deeper understanding that social problems are built by structures that include legislation, social systems, ethics, human relations, communities, and geography. I also became aware of the diversity, dynamism, and uniqueness of ASEAN countries and their peoples.

Current Situation in Fukushima

A chain of explosions of four nuclear reactors caused by a power outage of the cooling systems at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP created a nuclear disaster of the same magnitude—"Level 7"—as Chernobyl. It destroyed our local daily life. In 2017, as of this writing, many residents, including my friends, my family, and I continue to live in a state of "damage" and "disaster" in Fukushima. As of 2017, the number of people killed or missing due to the disaster—earthquakes, tsunami, and evacuation—amounted to 22,000. In 2011, the central government of Japan set up a budget of 32 trillion JPY (approximately 386 billion USD) for recovery of the disaster area. However, efforts of the national government have progressed slowly, and recovery remains a challenge in Fukushima.

Currently, I mainly live in my hometown of Fukushima City. I have been reporting on the situation since March 11. Through my work, I focus on public dialogue under the catastrophic situation. I try to communicate local people's opinions, conversations, and feelings. During the emergency situation of March 2011, I uncovered facts by interviewing native citizens. I found that they raised such philosophical questions as "What is my/our happiness?" "What is life?" "How can we make a peaceful society?" "Are we victims or survivors?" and "How can we build a bright future?" These questions raise very simple but primordial issues. Thus, I focus on very ordinary people's voices in reporting to describe people's precious inquiring minds.

Let me highlight below a few key issues facing ordinary citizens who have been affected by the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Radiation contamination

After the disaster, soil, rivers, sea, and human bodies were contaminated due to the explosions at Fukushima Daiichi NPP. Vegetables and fruits were contaminated with radioactivity levels—in particular Cesium 137—above government regulated levels and could not be sold.

Decontamination operation

Decontamination operations were carried out only in residential areas and public sites, but not for mountains, rivers, lakes, or the ocean. Radioactive waste from the operations is still kept piled up in many places. In Fukushima City, where my house is, huge black plastic bags filled with radioactive waste after decontamination operations, were

buried under residential gardens due to a lack of space and interim storage facilities at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP. From an environmental justice perspective, this situation should be exposed and rectified.

Figure 4:
Black plastic bags packed with radiation-contaminated soil piled up on the former-rice fields in Iitate Village, Fukushima (picture taken by the author in 2015)

"Nuclear refugees"

In July 2017, the Japan Reconstruction Agency announced that there were approximately 90,000 remaining evacuees (26,000 fewer than at the peak time), and that 35,000 people were living in temporary houses (11,000 fewer than the peak). Voluntary evacuees, i.e., those from outside mandatory evacuation zones were: 35,000 from Fukushima prefecture, 5,200 from Miyagi prefecture, and 1,200 from Iwate prefecture.

During March and April 2017, most evacuation zones were cleared, excluding severely contaminated areas. At the same time, the government announced that housing allowances for evacuees would be stopped in 2019. To date, however, only eight percent of evacuees have returned to their own homes due to radiation contamination and a lack of social capital and infrastructure, such as transportation, supermarkets, hospitals, schools, and community facilities.

Invisibility of radiation—Discrimination and violence due to ignorance of affected people's loss and damage

The damage to human beings from radiation is difficult to estimate precisely. In 2011, the Fukushima prefectural government began a huge cohort study with funds from the central government's resil-

iency budget. Today, only about 25 percent of the population has committed to the study, with the remaining 75 percent providing no response. This reflects local people's mistrust towards the national and local governments and the "specialists" they hire. After the disaster, the government started thyroid cancer research on children under 18 years old in Fukushima. As of this writing, 194 children had or were suspected of having thyroid cancer. The government has denied any relation between radiation from the nuclear plants and the cancer cases. Some patients have received or will receive free operations until their children reach 15; some patients have not received any governmental support.

Strategy and Methodology: Towards a Global *Hibakusha* Network

Almost seven years have passed since March 2011. The situation in Fukushima is a "glocal" (global as well as local) issue in the nuclear age. As a disaster frontline journalist in Fukushima, I would like to share the lessons I learned from the man-made Fukushima disaster. In the nuclear age, more nuclear disasters will occur throughout the world, and our desperate experiences will be useful for survivors and victims, and for everyone who would like to create a peaceful planet.

Unfortunately, year by year, fewer and fewer journalists have been reporting on Fukushima. This is due to ignorance and lack of awareness on the part of the mass media. In order to overcome this challenge, we need to present new perspectives for the future from all nuclear-affected persons or *hibakusha*. We can communicate and open discussions with those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan; Chernobyl, Russia; and Bikini, the Marshall Islands, as well as test site downwinders in Nevada, US to form a global network of *hibakusha*.

I primarily work with Fukushima residents, media representatives, journalists, and students. In 2013, I started a research project with my colleagues and students on *The Global Hibakusha Network* sponsored by Japan's Toyota Foundation. In this project, a diverse group of people who were concerned about Fukushima after the nuclear power plant explosions—Fukushima university students, researchers, media representatives, and a film director—came together.

Figure 5:
During the author's visit with survivors of the Marshall Islands, together with students and researchers in 2014 (picture taken by the author in 2014)

The following are activities we carried out for the project:

- **Multi-stakeholder discussion**: We invited various stakeholders, including government officials, policymakers, media representatives/journalists, academics/teachers, NGO/CSO workers, and ordinary citizens, to discuss key issues;
- **Deliberative discussion**: We conducted debates or "2D conversations" in manners of deliberative discussion that involved people from various sectors, to establish common understanding of issues and problems. We followed various methods to facilitate discussion, for instance, consensus conference (popular in UK, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Switzerland), scenario workshop (from Denmark), future search (US), and citizens' panel (UK);
- **Naming and framing**: Naming is to name problems and difficulties to bring them to one's consciousness, while framing is to decide on a discussion area, a realm of the problem, and/or involved stakeholders. We encouraged naming and framing for discussions and actions to put mutually agreed-upon ideas into implementation;
- **Mutual interviews**: We facilitated mutual interviews among members of our group and other meeting participants for practical study about nuclear disasters in Fukushima, the Marshall Islands, and other areas. These interviews helped to build a new network of knowledge and wisdom among disaster survivors and other participants. Since 2013, students from Fukushima University and Waseda University, Japan, as well as members of

the Peace Studies Association of Japan, have visited the Marshall Islands and Fukushima. In 2018, we invited a youth representative from the Marshall Islands to Fukushima to discuss our future in a post-3.11 society;

- **Media and other organizational collaboration**: We hosted field visits/trips to Fukushima to give local residents opportunities to have their experiences heard by people from the outside, including university faculty members and students from Meisei, Ibaraki, Waseda, and Meiji Gakuin Universities of Japan, scientists/experts, and media representatives/journalists. We collaborated with representatives of both traditional and social media groups, including their staff writers and reporters who wanted to enrich their experience and expertise;
- **Citizens' solidarity**: We built civil society solidarity across people from disaster-affected areas, including Fukushima, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Marshall Islands through activities such as mutual interviews and study (inviting speakers from the Marshall Islands, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki), a field trip to the Marshall Islands (during the March 1 Memorial Ceremony Week), and open seminars (in Fukushima, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Minamata, and elsewhere); and
- **Film-making**: In order to build a civic archive in Fukushima, we collaborated with the documentary filmmaker Mr. Yasuyuki Mori of Japan and launched a new film titled *Tanemaki Usagi* ("Sowing Rabbit"). It is about planting rice after March 11. The film is one of the tools to start conversation and discussion for mutual understanding among Fukushima, the Marshall Islands, the City of Yaizu in Shizuoka prefecture, and an exposure trip to the 1954 atomic bomb testing site in the Pacific Ocean.

I have started building a network in Fukushima with citizen scientists, NGOs, and universities. We also created a network map that includes the NPO center "Peace Museum of Auschwitz" and "Nuclear Power Plant Disaster Information Center," which were built by individual citizens in the City of Shirakawa, Fukushima.

Our activities provide open resources such as videos, interviews, and other information. Through sharing, we create a new realm from the perspective of global *hibakusha* and peace study, where people can talk and learn. We interview each other about nuclear disasters and damage and review disasters with objective feedback, verbalized concepts, thoughts, and descriptions. We strongly encourage people and the young generation to participate in our activities with open minds.

Challenges and Difficulties: Collaboration with ASEAN

The risk of living with nuclear power plants is a very hot topic in Japan. The government under Prime Minister Abe's administration is trying to export nuclear technologies and power plants by concluding nuclear energy agreements with countries in Asia. We remain under the crisis of nuclear proliferation. The Fukuoka Daiichi NPP disaster has become a local problem in Fukushima. It is critical that we learn lessons from Fukushima and experiences of global *hibakusha* in order to build a sustainable society.

We face difficulties, however. The first is how to transmit our experiences to the young generation. I invited university students to my activities both as interviewees and interviewers. Year by year, however, their life stage changes and they tend to focus on other issues: after graduating from high school, they move to big cities to go to more prestigious universities. Although the project of deliberative discussion creates fruitful experiences for us, we face the barrier of life stage changes.

Secondly, activities of the civic sector do not translate well into legislation and policy-making in Japan. I have invited local government officers, schoolteachers, and assembly members to meet and discuss how to improve government policies. We must be more creative and use more diverse ways to influence legislation in meaningful ways.

Lastly, there is a limitation of resources. We must confront the lack of resources—in particular funds—and facilities, such as meeting rooms, where we can gather to talk. We are now discussing how to raise research funds more effectively. While making such efforts, I would also like to learn from the experiences of disaster-struck sites in ASEAN, for instance, tsunami-affected Aceh, Indonesia, in order to find new ways to address and solve the challenges we are facing.

Work of the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN), Thailand

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Introduction

The Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN) is committed to protecting and improving the lives of migrant workers in Thailand. We advocate for equality, both in the workplace and the community, and aim to assist migrants and their families to integrate peacefully into Thai society.

LPN's goals are:

1. To develop an understanding of issues faced by migrant workers;
2. To support the protection of individual workers and their rights, as well as the integration of migrants and their families into Thai society;
3. To assist migrant workers in becoming more self-reliant with support from the public and private sectors;
4. To create awareness about the responsibilities towards, and the well-being of, migrants; and
5. To continue operating on a not-for-profit basis with financial assistance from the public.

Background on Labor Rights in Thailand

Statistics compiled by the Department of Employment and Office of Foreign Workers Administration (a subsidiary body of Thailand's Ministry of Labour) have shown that the number of migrants working in Thailand, both "legal" and "illegal," has risen consistently in recent decades. Numbers are set to increase dramatically with the formation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), as free trade agreements promoted by the AEC are expected to facilitate greater freedom of movement for ASEAN citizens seeking employment. Thailand is expected to experience an influx of both skilled and unskilled labor migrants.

These events are also likely to lead to an increase in human rights issues. As migration rates rise, more people are made vulnerable to employer abuse, labor exploitation, and human trafficking. Thailand must recognize that these issues are unavoidable and require urgent attention. Otherwise, the problems of forced labor and exploitation will spread as illegal networks and trafficking rings continue to operate with impunity.

The Founding of LPN

LPN was formed with the intention of resolving issues of labor discrimination and inequality, focusing specifically on Samut Sakhon province, which is a central base for migrant laborers in Thailand. In December 2004, LPN was officially registered as a foundation. This official classification helps LPN generate more support, enabling it to expand its capacity to assist victims of human trafficking and better monitor the labor rights situation in Samut Sakhon.

LPN's strategies are the following:

1. Targeting field research and operations towards the issues being faced by migrant workers, public infrastructure conflict, and improving policies;
2. Providing advice to workers where they require assistance;
3. Increasing the number of state, private, and local organizations involved in supporting migrant workers;
4. Advocating on behalf of migrants to ensure their basic rights, including labor rights, right to education, and access to social services; and
5. Facilitating the education and cooperation of laborers to improve their self-reliance.

LPN's areas of focus are 1) access to basic human rights, 2) education, 3) health, 4) child protection, 5) worker rights, 6) prevention of child labor, 7) prevention of human trafficking, and 8) reproductive health. LPN's key activities and services include 1) assistance for victims, 2) development of welfare services, 3) preparation of migrant children for schooling, 4) support for migrant children enrolled in the government school system, 5) learning centers for children and adults, 6) counselling, 7) Multicultural Centre, 8) temporary shelters, 9) Labour Centre, and 10) Seafarers Action Centre (SAC).

LPN's projects and activities are as follows:

1. **Creating a committed network of activists**: One of the most vulnerable groups in the migrant labor process is young children, as they are particularly susceptible to human trafficking and exploitation. LPN aims to uncover the root cause of the problem in order to develop innovative and practical solutions to assist those who are most vulnerable. This is being achieved through collaboration between LPN and numerous other organizations, institutions, and official government bodies;
2. **Research**: LPN undertakes joint research projects with some of Thailand's largest academic institutions, such as the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, the Institute for Population and Social Research at Mahidol University, the faculties of Social Administration at Thammasat University, Chiang Mai University, Burapha University, and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), as well as a number of international universities;
3. **Service delivery**: As well as approaching issues of child labor and migrant discrimination from a preventative angle, LPN also strives to improve the living conditions of migrant families, and works to provide assistance for those who may not have access to education or other social services due to their migrant status. LPN works with a number of schools in Samut Sakhon, Ratchaburi, and Samut Prakan provinces to specifically cater to the needs of migrant children. This work is done in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Save the Children UK, the Embassy of Japan and the Embassy of the United States, the United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking (UNACT), Oxfam, and Terre Des Hommes. Our partners also include members of the private sector, such as the Thailand Frozen Food Association, Thai Union Frozen Product, the Thai Fisheries Producers Coalition, Narong Seafood Company, and the Thai Fishery Producers Coalition (TFPC); and
4. **Lobbying**: LPN regularly engages with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to formulate ways to manage and administer Thailand's foreign labor practices, and work towards introducing more effective preventative measures to combat human trafficking. This collaboration has resulted in an official agreement between these ministries and Thailand's labor rights groups, which serves to ensure that preventative steps are taken to eliminate the trafficking of persons in nine seriously affected provinces around the Gulf of Thailand. Furthermore, LPN is involved in a new subcommittee dedicated to reporting on child labor. The foundation

is also a member of a committee within the Ministry of Labour that seeks to resolve issues of child labor and forced labor in the shrimp/seafood processing industry and the agricultural sector.

Moving Towards Equality and Sustainable Solutions

Over the past 10 years, LPN has worked continuously with migrant workers and children. Our work has resulted in the development of various strategies and methods aimed at improving the working and living conditions of migrants in Thailand per the following:

1. **Collaboration**: LPN collaborates with other activists and official bodies to deliver the most effective assistance and treatment to victims of human trafficking and rights abuse. Examples include the establishment of the Labour Centre and the Seafarers Action Centre (SAC), both of which operate in cooperation with law enforcement bodies;
2. **Knowledge sharing**: LPN creates and improves methods of disseminating knowledge and information regarding the rights and legal entitlements of migrant workers. For instance, LPN has worked with local schools in areas with high-density migrant populations to ensure the inclusion of migrant issues and rights in the curriculum. This has proven to be an effective model for the integration of migrant children in Thai public schools;
3. **Evaluation and review**: LPN initiates adjustments to existing operations and strategies in order to develop effective and co-operative relationships with national and regional organizations and institutions, both governmental and private. These activities stem from an internal focus on developing best practice, and are aimed at promoting equal opportunities for everyone regardless of religion, gender, nationality, ethnic background, or age;
4. **Coalition forming**: LPN encourages participation from other migrant and labor rights NGOs, such as the Action Network for Migrants (ANM), the Migrant Working Group (MWG), the Anti-Human Trafficking Network in Thailand (ATN), and the Cambodia and Thailand Anti-Human Trafficking Network (CAHT) to push for the establishment of the Migrant Union Network in Thailand (MUNT). This initiative also includes Community Based Organizations (CBOs);
5. **Networking**: Besides ATN and CAHT, LPN also networks with Thai and Migrant Fishers Union Group (TMFG), Solidarity Committee for the Protection of Myanmar Migrant Work-

ers (SCPM), The Multi-Stakeholder Initiative for Accountable Supply Chain of Thai Fisheries (MAST), and Migrant Working Group (MWG); and

6. **Research**: At the present time, LPN operates as a research and learning center, which caters to students at all levels of education, as well as organizations working in Thailand, regionally, and worldwide. The foundation also functions as a base for national and international media associations, distributing information about the urgency and significance of migrant labor rights and the anti-human trafficking movement.

SAC's Operations to Save Workers on Fishing Boats from Indonesia[41]

Situation of Workers on Thai Fishing Boats

Thai fishing vessels have been operating in international waters, especially off Indonesian coasts, since 1965. In 2006, the number of vessels increased to around 1,500. These fishing operations have led to forced/slave labor, detention, and severe physical abuses of fishing workers, especially those victimized by human trafficking syndicates. Workers have either been held working on the ocean over a long period of time or left stranded on small islands in Indonesia. The main problems include being tricked into working on the boats for a minimum of six years, not being able to return to home once at sea, and fraudulent documentation (e.g., seaman books) leading to the inability to identify the nationalities and identities of workers.

In 2006, LPN was asked by 66 fishermen from the *Prapat Navee* boat for rescue assistance. Out of 66 victims, 39 Thai and Burmese fishermen died while en route, returning to their motherlands from Indonesian waters. Some were seriously ill and needed treatment and care. None of the fishermen received any payment for their work or compensation. In 2007, LPN was asked by Thai and Burmese fishermen who went fishing in Somalian waters for assistance. We were able to coordinate and send back to Thailand one corpse and one 14-year-old laborer who had been detained. Between 2006 and 2014, LPN received 128 complaints from fishermen sailing from Thailand

41 Based on Patima Tangprachyakul (2015). "The Special Report on Operations Saving Workers in Fishing Boats from Indonesia." SAC/LPN. https://lpnthailand.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/the-special-report-on-operations-saving-workers-in-fishing-boats-from-indonesia.pdf (Last accessed January 20, 2019).

to work in Indonesian waters. Of the total number, there were 39 deaths and two injuries that led to disabilities. Those who made it out alive did not receive any payment for their work or care from their employers at all. These cases comprise the rationale for LPN's operations to save fishermen on Thai vessels operating in Indonesia.

In August 2014, LPN began fieldwork to assist fishing workers in overseas fisheries. We have worked closely with media such as the Associated Press (AP) and Channel 3 Thailand to uncover the truth about fishing workers on Ambon, Benjina, and Tual islands in Indonesia. LPN has helped workers from all nationalities—Thai, Burmese, Laotian, and Cambodian—to return home.

LPN's Findings from Field Survey in Indonesia

LPN's fieldwork in Indonesia has led to the following findings:

1. We witnessed agents and groups claiming to be governmental staff arrest and detain migrant workers from Myanmar and Cambodia, and sell them to agents to work on Thai fishing boats;
2. Many boys—average age 12—from Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos were trafficked to work on fishing boats and went missing. Some workers were sold to agents by people who claimed to be government officials;
3. More than 2,000 Burmese workers were sold to fishing boats illegally. The boats kept fraudulent seaman books that documented these workers as Thai. We found some cases of workers who had not returned home for more than 22 years;
4. More than 500 Thais were drugged and forced onto the boats. Some came back delirious and suicidal. More than 100 workers lost limbs and their vision from work hazards. Some were so seriously malnourished that they suffered from hand/foot spasms and memory loss;
5. More than 70 percent of the fishermen did not receive fair wages and payment. Most of them had to enslave themselves to satisfy their supervisors;
6. Most workers could not return home because they did not have any documents or identity papers, as employers usually kept records with the captains of the boats the workers worked on. This included identity fraud by Thai and Indonesian fishing companies, aided by systematic corruption to change the workers' nationalities—for instance, from Thai to Cambodian—in order to

deny relations between employers and employees;

7. Many cases of abuse and torture happened on the boats, including face-slapping, scalding with hot water, beating with iron pipes, hitting with fish, forcing workers to swim until they drowned, and ordering killing of those who defied orders;
8. Some workers could not stand the working conditions and either jumped off the boat to kill themselves or to escape the conditions. About 1,000 escaped and ended up stranded in small villages on Ambon, Benjina, and Tual islands. Some died from the harsh living conditions. Some were hunted down by influential people to get back to work on the boats again; and
9. Workers would not get paid until their boats docked in Thailand. Most fishing journeys took at least six years. Half of the workers were then traded by the employers to work on other boats. The total number of years some fishermen worked on the boats reached 10 to 25 years.

The results of LPN's field survey are summarized below. We saw and witnessed the true hell facing these migrant workers when we visited Ambon, Benjina, and Tual islands. The truth must be told and the public needs to step in urgently to help these workers.

Time	Date	Description	Result
1/2	August 19 - 24 September 11 - 23, 2014	A first survey: Six Thai fishermen found asking for help. LPN built temporary shelter and provided food for victims and coordinated with government offices (Department of Special Investigation, Thai Consulate General, international organizations such as IOM and UNACT).	The first group of 15 Thai victims returned to Thailand in October 2014.
3	November 15 - December 3	Another survey on Ambon and Benjina: Vast graves of Thai fishermen were found. Some victims were stranded on the islands for more than 18 years.	Ten fishermen were rescued.
4	January 11 - 20, 2015	LPN coordinated with Ambon Immigration to rescue child victims and helped to repatriate mentally-ill victims.	Six children and 12 Thai fishermen were rescued.
5	March 12 - April 6	LPN found 60 more stranded fishermen on Ambon. Only ten could be rescued at a time. Media coverage on the mass graves and victims resulted in the return of fishermen on C130 flight. Surveillance in Ambon and Benjina resulted in the Indonesian government ordering navy vessels to rescue and repatriate 500 Lao, Burmese, and Cambodian fishermen.	Twenty-one rescued from Ambon; 68 Thais rescued and repatriated. Five detainees returned home. Victims arrived in Thailand but did not receive proper labor rights protection from the government.
6	August 20 - 31	Body exhumation and DNA testing were conducted on 500 Burmese waiting to repatriate from Ambon. Three lost eyesight and hands from work, but were not compensated. None were paid their wages over one to seven years. Five hundred fishermen were left stranded on Ambon, Benjina, and Tual. Some fell sick and need to return home to restore their health, but have not been assisted by employers.	

Table 2:
Victim-assistance actions
(August 2014 to August 2015)

Table 3:
The number of rescued victims by LPN (August 2014 to August 2015)

Nationality	**Number**	**Coordinating Agencies**	**Notes**
Thai	1,613	Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thai business owners, and Paveena Foundation	Victims distributed over Ambon, Benjina, and Tual as well as Pontianak/Kalimantan
Burmese	628	Indonesian government and IOM	Three hundred (in estimate) on Ambon and 326 on Benjina. The 300 on Ambon waiting for nationality verification. LPN coordinated with stakeholders for their unpaid wages.
Cambodian	65	Indonesian government and IOM	Seven on Ambon and 58 on Benjina. LPN coordinated with the stakeholders on their unpaid wages.
Laotian	14	Indonesian government and IOM	Six on Ambon and eight on Benjina. LPN coordinated with the stakeholders on their unpaid wages. LPN also contacted the victims' families.
Total	2,320		

Livelihood Sovereignty Alliance (LISO)

Tran Thi Lanh

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Introduction

The Livelihood Sovereignty Alliance (LISO) is an alliance of three Vietnam-based CSOs: the Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (SPERI), Community Entrepreneur Development Institute (CENDI), and Culture Identity and Resource Use Management (CIRUM). Each of these organizations is working toward the livelihood sovereignty of indigenous ethnic minorities in the Mekong region. "Livelihood sovereignty" is defined as the right of people to their own land, religion, culture, knowledge, and system of governance.

Central Challenge

LISO sees the central challenge facing indigenous ethnic minority peoples in the Mekong region today as that of preserving their spiritual beliefs and values, which are embedded in their relationships to their traditional lands, and which form the basis for their customary laws for governing their land use practices. This is particularly challenging today because these beliefs, values, and practices are totally different from those being promoted globally by large transnational corporations, international financial organizations, and nation states. However, as the devastating environmental, social, and political consequences of unbridled capitalist development become clear to everyone, the search for an alternative set of values for both humans and nature is becoming increasingly urgent. LISO believes that the values preserved by indigenous peoples around the world are those that we need to adopt.

Strategy

Our efforts are directed toward ensuring that indigenous ethnic minorities in the Mekong region retain or recover their rights to their land, and that land continues to be governed according to their own customary laws. In this way, traditional spiritual beliefs and values associated with the land can be preserved as the fundamental guiding principles governing land use. Not everywhere has community land ownership been achieved—individual household ownership is

in some cases all that will be allowed by the state—but in all cases, whether the land is granted for communal or individual household ownership, we have ensured that it is governed according to local customary law. We pursue this strategy through a process of "participatory customary law-based community land allocation."

Methodology

The first step in this process involves extensive and in-depth community-based research in order to understand the intimate connection between people's beliefs and values and their relationship to the land. The next step involves engaging local village elders in surveying and categorizing the landscape of their villages according to their own traditional wisdom, knowledge, and customs. The third step is to empower local villagers as spokespeople and presenters of their indigenous land management practices at farmer-to-farmer and farmer-to-local authority meetings. The aim of these activities is to persuade local government authorities of the superior knowledge and land management practices of local villagers, in order to gain their support for legalizing the voluntary, community, and customary law-based governance of natural resources by local people.

Achievements

LISO has over twenty years of experience working with highland indigenous ethnic minorities in the Mekong region and has built up a very strong network of "key-farmers" to act as effective speakers in farmer-to-farmer and farmer-to-authority workshops. They help explain the possibilities, benefits, and advantages of community-based land ownership and customary law-based natural resource management. Positive impacts achieved through the methodology of using farmers as speakers, trainers, and facilitators, include building farmers' confidence and strengthening solidarity both within and between villages, enlivening their determination to preserve their culture of living harmoniously with nature.

Another positive impact has been the change in attitudes of local authorities. It comes as a big shock when they hear indigenous/ethnic minority farmers presenting their wisdom and practices for natural resource management and knowledge of the environment, and to see with their own eyes how effective customary laws are for natural resource protection. These shocks have caused them to change their attitudes toward indigenous peoples, from seeing them

as "backward" and "superstitious" to seeing them as very knowledgeable and capable. The outcome is that local authorities gain confidence in the ability of local people to manage their natural environment effectively according to their own knowledge and customary laws. This in turn greatly facilitates the smooth transfer of land titles from state organizations and private individuals to whole communities. Since 1995, LISO and its predecessor organization—Toward Ethnic Women (TEW)—have allocated 62,673 ha of forestland areas to indigenous ethnic minority households and community organizations in Vietnam and Lao PDR, i.e., 44,274 ha to 8,268 indigenous/ethnic minority households and 18,399 ha to 77 ethnic community organizations. The next step has been to use successful case studies of "participatory customary law-based community land allocation" to lobby the central government for a change in national land laws.

External Factors

LISOs' work is aimed at bringing about a fundamental change in government attitudes toward indigenous ethnic minority peoples and land management practices. While entrenched attitudes and policies are a major obstacle, certain external factors and circumstances have helped in achieving the goal of community land titling and customary law-based land management. Primary among these is the crisis of confidence on the part of local government authorities as to how to protect forests and natural resources from exploitation and degradation. Much of LISO's success has come from being able to supply government authorities with a workable solution to their problem, and one that is desired by and acceptable to local people.

Obstacles

Not all customary law-based land allocation projects are smooth sailing. When working with indigenous ethnic minority communities, unexpected things can happen, and unexpected situations can suddenly arise that necessitate a change of action plan. Unfortunately, some donor organizations are insensitive to the need for flexibility when dealing with these situations, and may become obstructive or even refuse to cooperate altogether. When this occurs, it is LISO's policy to put the needs of minority farmers first and take the necessary actions, even if it requires bearing costs. Efforts need to be made to re-educate donor organizations to the need for greater flexibility in their funding arrangements in order to deal with these situations. In this respect, donor organizations as well as local government authorities become the target groups for necessary changes in attitude.

Vision

LISO continues to work to preserve and enhance its regional network of "key-farmers" and "young indigenous leaders," built up since the early 1990s by its predecessor organizations—TEW, Centre for Human Ecology Studies of Highlands, and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Development—and which extends from Vietnam to Laos and Thailand. Our vision is to expand this network to the whole of SEA and beyond. Connections already exist with Myanmar, Cambodia, the Philippines, Bhutan, and in the Amazon.

Community Spirit Forestlands[42]

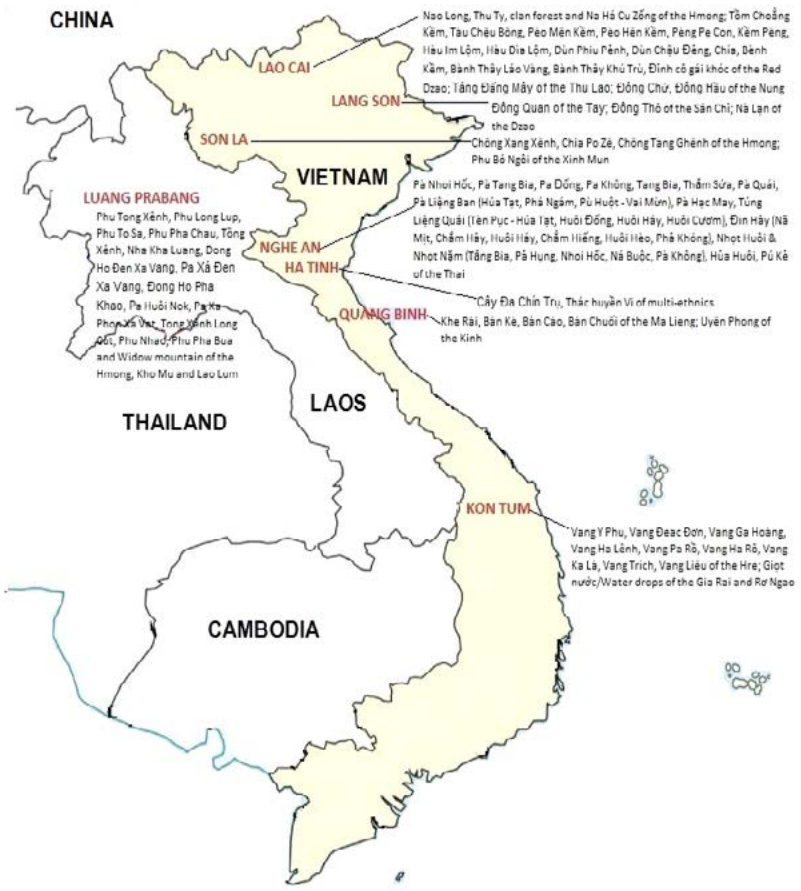

Figure 6: Community Spirit Forestlands facilitated by LISO

Community spirit forestlands are spaces in which villagers practice and maintain their religious values toward natural spirits via traditional rituals. This land has been recognized over many generations

42 LISO (2017). *From Community Forest Land Rights to Livelihood Sovereignty and Wellbeing*. Hanoi: Knowledge Publishing House.

as owned by the whole community, and its management and protection is closely associated with the traditional practices and ideologies of the community, as well as the roles of elderly/prestigious people and clan heads who voluntarily implement its management. In addition to its spiritual purpose, this forestland provides resources to ensure the livelihood of households in the community for living, cultivating, housing, firewood, herbal medicines, and food. In the minds of indigenous/minority villagers, these community forestland areas have always belonged to them, having been transferred to them by previous generations. Yet the local communities still lack rights under modern law to manage and use these forestland areas.

SECTION THREE: POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Kota Kita Foundation: Post Yogya Workshop Reflection

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Foreword

Civic engagement is a very broad term and may be understood differently from different localities, bodies of knowledge, or ideologies. Bringing many perspectives into a workshop with very limited time is challenging, but the expansion of knowledge sharing and exchange is certainly an important first step. Civic engagement and participation is context-specific, and documenting smart practices to help inform and improve greater participation is much better than formulating a single "best method" of public participation. The Yogya Workshop provided many important learning opportunities and reflections from different perspectives.

One interesting notion from the workshop is that we need to recognize that, in chaotic liberal democracy, things are moving beyond our control and are totally dependent on market-driven development. Urban development is progressing rapidly: communities are uprooted by the impact of development that puts such a high degree of protection on individual rights that our social value as a community gradually disappears. Why is participation important? It is because we want to strengthen the community, which is able to defeat individualism, the source of the greed of capitalism and consumerism. The goal is to build a new contract of citizenship that respects collective values, social spirit, and development that leaves no one behind.

Yayasan Kota Kita (Kota Kita) or "Our City Foundation" is an Indonesian non-profit organization helping people make thoughtful and inclusive decisions about the development of their cities by facilitating citizen participation and collective action. Kota Kita aims to empower a generation of people by promoting democratic and participatory approaches to improve urban areas. Founded in 2009, Kota Kita is among the few urban sector NGOs in Indonesia that works at both the grassroots level and a city-wide scale while engaging national and global advocacy on urban issues.

The Kota Kita team has a range of various skills related to urban planning, architecture, design, community organizing, communication, and research to serve as an advocacy and resource center for urban develop-

ment in Indonesia. To date, the foundation has carried out projects in 12 rapidly urbanizing cities in Indonesia. Starting with community mapping activity in Solo, Central Java in 2010, Kota Kita has expanded its activities elsewhere. Currently, our work falls under three main themes of governance and citizenship, inclusivity, and resilience.

Kota Kita's work is based on key organizational values: to 1) develop pedagogy, 2) raise awareness, and 3) encourage participation. In a number of different activities we implement, Kota Kita collaborates with communities, citizens, city governments, the national government, and international donors to bring about change and improvement in urban settings.

Beyond urban area improvement projects, Kota Kita has started advocacy to implement SDGs and the New Urban Agenda on the ground. Adopting these two frameworks into our work is also exemplified through the refinement of our "mini atlas," a neighborhood-based information tool that is produced after citywide mapping processes. The mini atlas is color-coded according to SDGs in order to contextualize local thinking to contribute to global agendas.

Problems and Challenges

During the last ten years of promoting and strengthening participation, Kota Kita has faced the following main challenges and issues on the ground:

- **Elite capture**: Participatory processes often capture only elite voices. Those vocal in the community often dominate the process. Solutions are needed to ensure that everybody's voice is represented in various fora, particularly when the dominant voice fails to represent the needs of the whole community;
- **Limited participation of the marginalized**: Although their voices are essential to the making of inclusive cities, development processes often neglect the marginalized, including the poor, women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, and migrants. Some efforts to involve these groups are in place, but affirmative actions and policies are needed;
- **Technocratic and bureaucratic processes**: Lengthy processes of participation often fail to disrupt power relations between citizens and government;
- **Limited access to information**: Availability and accessibility of information are essential to enable meaningful participation

of citizens in development. Meanwhile, most cases in Indonesia show that basic information about the city that can help the planning process is lacking;

- **Limited participation of the private sector**: Evidence points to a lack of private sector support to participate in public affairs; and
- **Lessened interest from political actors and decision-makers**: Politicians and government officials often regard participation as a time-consuming and ineffective process. In their view, participation is not worth promoting in political campaigns.

Kota Kita believes that citizens should be at the heart of any decision-making process that determines the environment and the quality of life in urban centers they reside in. They are entitled to governance that is inclusive, transparent, and socially just.

Key Strategies for Civic Engagement: Who and What are Primarily Targeted?

Kota Kita's strategies for civic engagement are reflected in the three main focus areas of the organization:

- **Developing pedagogy**: Kota Kita is committed to shaping the next generation of actively engaged urban leaders by promoting learning and developing tools. We do this through research, capacity building, and providing pedagogic experiences within our organization;
- **Raising awareness**: Kota Kita believes that sharing information can help citizens better understand how to take advantage of opportunities and overcome challenges that come with rapid urbanization. We are committed to raising awareness through making information available and accessible to promote action and change; and
- **Encouraging participation**: Kota Kita believes that everyone in cities is important. We all have roles and responsibilities to actively participate in making our communities into better places. We facilitate and promote everyone's involvement—especially the marginalized and excluded—to bring different perspectives, voices, and strengths, to make cities better places.

Different types of engagement, from the community level to the global scale, are maintained to bring about change and improvement in urban settings. Implementation strategies are elaborated in each project in different cities. In summary, Kota Kita facilitates civic engagement by:

- Facilitating planning processes;
- Developing and introducing innovations to support citizen participation;
- Providing data and information to inform and empower communities;
- Facilitating dialogue and bridging different perspectives;
- Building capacities to advocate for change; and
- Researching and producing knowledge.

The following are examples of Kota Kita's past and ongoing projects that highlight our expertise and civic engagement experience in participatory design processes, data-driven advocacy, and facilitation, as well as promoting learning and developing information tools.

City-Wide Community Mapping in Surakarta, Central Java

In 2010, Kota Kita began working with then-Mayor Joko Widodo and local leaders in Surakarta/Solo to collect data about the city's many neighborhoods. Data about everything from water access to sanitation, poverty levels, and the number of children enrolled in school were collected in different neighborhoods and represented in mini-atlases to provide a resource for *musrenbang*, the annual participatory budgeting forum held by Solo residents. This process supports evidence-based advocacy for improving public services. It tailors urban planning decisions to the community while encouraging data interpretation skills and self-representation. Having residents collaborate in the collection of and discussion around data, and inputting intimate knowledge of their own needs proves to be a successful way to ensure that the government serves the interests of the community. Since 2010, the participatory data collection and facilitation methods have been adopted to Solo's annually updated database. The methods have also been applied in other cities in Indonesia, including Banjarmasin, Padang, Makassar, and Pekalongan, as well as overseas in Ulanbataar, Mongolia. The Solo Kota Kita city-wide mapping is a joint effort of Kota Kita, UN Habitat, USAID (United States Agency for International Development), the Ford Foundation, and the city government of Surakarta.

Participatory Urban Design in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan

In Banjarmasin, life largely depends upon the water. Economic and social activities take place on riverbanks. However, contamination

and ecological damage caused by rapid urbanization has left many households without utilities and basic infrastructure. Kota Kita organized a series of participatory workshops in which residents first learned about water-related issues and the complexities of the built environment, and proposed ideas for improving their neighborhoods. The Firm Foundation was built over the water from a simple and resilient structure that community members assembled themselves without heavy machinery. In addition to providing an enhanced public space in a neighborhood where such spaces are rare, The Firm Foundation supported informal economic activities, a reconstructed boardwalk, a grey water vegetative filtration system, a re-established port for intermodal transport connections, and structural support for adjacent structures. To really connect with the people and their uses of public spaces, Kota Kita used storyboards, illustrations, card games, and storytelling activities to have residents tell us about their activities and uses of public spaces in their daily lives. We recorded the entire process and published outcomes as a guidebook and video called *Social Design Field Guide*.[43] The Firm Foundation was a joint effort made by Kota Kita, AECOM Urban-SOS, Bappeda Kota Banjarmasin, DTRK City Planning Department Banjarmasin, and PNPM Mandiri Banjarmasin.

Urban Citizenship Academy

The Urban Citizenship Academy is Kota Kita's initiative to engage a new generation of young leaders and support them in solving pressing urban problems. This program provides a platform for transmitting Kota Kita's approaches and methodologies to youth in cities across Indonesia. A training program consists of a series of three 2-day trainings, spaced over several months, with intensive fieldwork in between. The trainings include 1) mapping and issue identification, 2) data analysis and proposal development, and 3) development of advocacy tools and campaigns. To date, the academy has trained more than 100 youth in three cities in Indonesia and will continue its program in 2017, expanding its activities to more Indonesian cities.

Women on Wheels—Promoting Alternative Transportation for Women

Kota Kita teamed up to examine potential initiatives to encourage women to bicycle. Over the past 20 years, low-cost access to finance and a lack of other public transportation options, among other fac-

43 Firm Foundation (2013). *Social Design Field Guide*. https://issuu.com/stephenjameskennedy/docs/2013_08_02_social_design_field_guid (Last accessed July 28, 2019).

tors, have diminished the use of bicycles in favor of motorcycles as a practical form of transport. Despite the long-term trend, over the past five years, bicycling has emerged as a recreational activity amongst the burgeoning middle class. Through focus group discussions and case studies, Kota Kita learned about barriers that women face to cycling and used this information to evaluate the feasibility of a "Women on Wheels" campaign aimed at encouraging women to bicycle, especially in Solo. We concluded that there was potentially a large gain from middle-class women riders who were an influential group and could potentially put pressure on governments to provide needed infrastructure investments and pro-bicycling measures. This feasibility study asked about reasons women would continue to ride bicycles, barriers for their use, and ways to make bicycle-riding more popular among women and girls.

Plans for the Future

Kota Kita's plans for future activities include the following:

- **Citywide Community Mapping**: The citywide community mapping methodology is applicable and replicable for addressing broader urban issues. It is used as an intellectual foundation in the understanding of urban problems or designing advocacy activities. Kota Kita has applied the method to conduct data analysis and contribute to advocacy agendas around urban issues, such as access by people with disabilities, creative economy, and promoting cycling in the city. The methodology has helped Kota Kita in encouraging participatory processes that include more perspectives, leading to better understanding of urban issues;
- **Urban Citizenship Academy**: The academy has been successful so far due to a widespread rise in the interest of youth in volunteerism and engaged activities. However, we realize that for further implementation, improvement is still needed to achieve a more impact. The training process of the academy requires mechanisms for mentoring; such mechanisms are still lacking. Lessons learned from the past include the need to improve methodologies and assistance, to better channel participants to resources so they can execute proposed projects, and to provide more intensive assistance to produce advocacy strategies of higher quality; and
- **The Right to the City**: Since its engagement in PREPCOM III Habitat III in Surabaya, Kota Kita has played important roles in promoting the concept of the Right to the City (R2C) in In-

donesian cities. With the support of the Global Platform Right to the City (GPR2C), Kota Kita wants to further strengthen the perspectives of the right to the city in SEA countries. The adoption of the New Urban Agenda will bring more opportunities to discuss urban inclusivity, and "leaving no one behind." The R2C concept, which recognizes cities as a common good, brings a strong message about the collective rights of citizens rather than individual rights.

Visions and Plans for Regional Collaboration

Kota Kita has been heavily involved as a representative civil society organization in Habitat III advocacy in Indonesia since our activities during 2016 PREPCOM III in Surabaya. We are focusing on our efforts to advocate for the acknowledgement of the Right to the City in the New Urban Agenda and (re-)introduce the concept as an important way to think about the city and civic rights to Indonesian and Asian networks. Our annual Urban Social Forum, which in 2017 will enter its fifth year, also acts as a platform for many urban and social activists to meet, interact, and develop collaborations, realizing that "Another City is Possible!" The latest event saw a record number of around 1,500 participants from Indonesian and Asian cities. We envision the voluntary and collaborative model of the Urban Social Forum to have presence in 2018's World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Kota Kita is confident that we will be able to expand the discourse of sustainable urban development in Indonesia and elsewhere in Asia, while strengthening civil society in the region.

Policy Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development in Malaysia: A Reflection

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Background

Establishing a framework in the policy sphere requires the work of many individual actors. Working from within the public administration, these actors often undertake "policy work" as public sector analysts and policy researchers. Some actors also participate in public policy as "policy entrepreneurs." Unlike activists who mainly work outside of the formal government system, policy entrepreneurs work within the system by acting as advisers and issue/knowledge brokers in defining a policy problem and lobbying to make policymakers accept the problem and eventually do something about it. Policy entrepreneurship is, therefore, a strategic act. Beeson and Stone distinguish between policy entrepreneurs and public intellectuals.[44] A public intellectual is someone outside the formal institutions of governance who can cultivate a broad audience in championing a policy agenda. In contrast, the policy entrepreneur is a dynamic policy actor who works within the architecture of the state—sometimes behind the scenes—in pursuit of policy change. The art and craft of policy entrepreneurship include negotiation skills to function as an issue initiator and strategist to bring different people together.

The following constitutes the author's reflection on his own two decades of experience in defining and framing policy problems to set the national agenda in the area of sustainable development in Malaysia. It is organized around six questions as prescribed by the organizers of the Yogya Workshop. These questions and responses are reframed herein under four headings: 1) perceived problems and prioritization; 2) strategies and methods used for civic engagement; 3) factors facilitating and limiting involvement; and 4) the vision and plan for regional collaboration.

44 p. 2 in Beeson, Mark, and Diane Stone (2013). "The Changing Fortunes of a Policy Entrepreneur: The Case of Ross Garnaut." *Australian Journal of Political Science 48*.1: 1-14.

Perceived Problems and Prioritization

Two trends have bedeviled the goal of environmental sustainability in Malaysia. First, conservation is hardly a top political priority. Although the Malaysian government has formulated numerous environmental laws, enforcement is generally weak and ineffectual. Similarly, while policy statements on the environment are in abundance, government expenditure on the sector is meager. Spending on the environment and natural resource management accounts for only around one percent of the country's total budget. As a result, the ecological footprint of the country has increased to around 4.0 global hectare (gha) per person today from approximately 0.5 gha per person in the 1960s. In spatial terms, peninsular Malaysia continues to lose its forests: Forest cover fell from 9.5 million ha in 1954 down to 5.79 million ha in 2010. A similar trend is observed in the region of Sarawak and Sabah. Second, the environmental movement in Malaysia is weakening. Elsewhere, well-organized environmental movements have proven able to exert considerable political pressure on the powers that be to strengthen environmental measures. This is not the case in Malaysia. An interview with a prominent environmentalist aptly describes the current plight in Malaysia:

> [W]e need the base, a certain amount of broad environmental awareness and commitment. I still argue that these are still very limited. Therefore, I don't even call ourselves as a movement. I see us as groups working on these issues.
>
> Because a movement means there's a mass of people. The first indication started with the Bukit Merah people.[45] They are at the community level. A movement has to start at the grassroots level. We are not at the grassroots level.
>
> We are urbanites interacting with policy actors and all that. Of course, we try to trigger the consciousness…What we need is a crisis to trigger [communities] and hope it catches on. Bukit Merah was a good example, but it didn't catch on because the government stopped them, Operasi Lallang.

As indicated by the quote, environmental activism is haphazardly pursued, lacking the strategic push for it to become a potent force to mobilize stronger environmental governance. This twofold situation

45 A rare earth metal extracting company dumped radioactive waste in Bukit Merah, Malaysia. For more information, see "Unresolved Issues of the Minamata Disaster: Local and International Citizens' Responses" by Yoichi Tani and Penchom Saetang in this publication.

of low government interest and weak civil society reaction does not bode well for the quest for sustainable development in Malaysia.

Strategies and Methods for Engagement

By the late 1990s, there was urgency to build an "inside-architecture" activism to strengthen the sustainability agenda in the country. The federal government was the primary target of this activism. From 1998 to 2011, the author was a staff member of the Institute for Environment and Development (Lestari) at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The institute was established in 1994 with the mission to influence policy on matters related to sustainable development. From 2011 to 2016, the author served a renowned policy and security think tank, the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, as director of environment and sustainability affairs. As a novice policy entrepreneur at Lestari, the author was involved in the framing of sustainability responses at the state government level through the Sustainable Selangor and Agenda 21 initiative. The three-year initiative led to the institutionalization of a land use concept known as environmentally-sensitive areas (KSAS) at the state level and eventually, the national level. The author also played a significant role in the formulation of a suite of draft sustainability indicators for the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister's Department. Through these initiatives, Lestari and its researchers were influencing the definition of what sustainable development is (or is not) by incorporating ecological rationality into the discourse and development planning.

At ISIS Malaysia, the author took a more aggressive brokering role by grabbing the attention of policymakers and the public at large, simultaneously. This function constituted routine advisory activities, such as commenting on documents, preparing draft policy and legislation, writing speeches for ministers, negotiating, and consulting. As the project strategist at the national consultation for the Rio+20 process, the author facilitated convening numerous sessions with the government sector, civil society, and academia.

Following this process, the author was appointed by the EPU to draft the country's National Sustainable Development Blueprint. The draft was subsequently used by the government and the United Nations Development Programme to design a three-year project titled "Policy and Institutional Reforms for Sustainable Development in Malaysia." While pursuing the advocacy agenda within the policy system, the author was actively involved in communication with the public

by writing op-ed commentaries and appearing on TV and radio programs to share opinions on matters related to sustainability.

Finally, towards the end of his tenure at ISIS Malaysia, the author released a manifesto-type book entitled *The Sustainability Shift: Refashioning Malaysia's Future*. The book provides a clarion call for development pathways that are underpinned by the logic of sustainability. Moving forward, the book proposed that Malaysia needs to shift from framing responses from an environmental lens to a sustainable development one, from focusing on an organization to an institution, and also to galvanize more concrete efforts to deliver policies rather than coming up with more aspirational goals. Doing this requires nothing short of an institutional change that comprises reforms in institutional hardware, software, and "heartware."

Factors Influencing Engagement

Persuading an audience to accept the frame advocated by policy entrepreneurs can take time. In other words, there is no such thing as short-term gratification in public policy. There are numerous internal and external factors and circumstances that facilitate or limit the mainstreaming of sustainable development in Malaysia. The tempo of government in embracing environmental policies varies within different domains. It has taken the Cabinet of Ministers six years to accept the National Environmental Policy, because some members viewed it as a threat to the country's industrialization drive. Similarly, the endorsement of the national solid waste management bill has taken almost ten years. This has to do with the fact that some states viewed the federalization of waste management as an infringement on their powers. In contrast, the government took only 100 days to formulate and endorse the National Green Technology Policy, as they viewed green technology as a profitable new economic sector. As for sustainable development, the government position is that Malaysia has integrated the concept into development planning since the 1990s. This stance limits the absorptive capacity of key agencies, such as the EPU, to embrace ambitious targets and goals related to sustainability.

The effectiveness of a policy entrepreneur depends on the political resources that s/he commands. In the context of sustainability in Malaysia, these resources are scarce. True to the paradox of the connectivity era, the management silo is not just a problem in the government circle, but also among members of civil society. The rather limited space for critical feedback on government policies has led to acquiescence or self-censorship on the part of scientific fraternity, aca-

demia, and think tanks on matters related to land use decision-making that are detrimental to the environment and the populace.

Vision and Plan for Collaboration

The global endorsement of the 17 SDGs with its 169 targets has wedged open the most significant policy window to date for sustainability. Undergirded and underpinned by the principles of "leaving no one behind" and "indivisibility of the goals," the SDGs also beg a different form of policy entrepreneurship on the part of actors working to influence public policy. Recognizing this, in 2015, a group of policy brokers established an informal network called the Malaysian Civil Society Alliance for Sustainable Development Goals ("the CSO Alliance"). The CSO Alliance currently comprises over 30 civil society groups from the human rights, environment, social work, social business, and gender domains that all share beliefs about the problem of unsustainability and its solution. The author is a co-founder of the CSO Alliance. Apart from engaging with the government in preparation of official SDG documents, such as the recently launched Voluntary National Review report to the High-Level Political Platform, the CSO Alliance aims to function as a "think-and-do tank" on matters related to SDGs in the forthcoming years. With the membership of prominent civil society leaders, it is envisaged that the alliance will grow to be a political coalition with more significant weight in influencing policy change towards sustainable development.

Unresolved Issues of the Minamata Disaster: Local and International Citizens' Responses

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Penchom Saetang

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Unprecedented Man-Made Methylmercury Contamination

Minamata is located on the western coast of Shiranui Sea in Kyushu, one of the four major islands of Japan. *Minamata-byo*, or Minamata disease,[46] was caused by the discharge of methylmercury by the Chisso Corporation (Chisso) in Minamata. When methylmercury contamination peaked in the 1950s, more than 400,000 people were living on the coastal areas of Shiranui Sea. The contamination is estimated to have affected 200,000 residents. Mercury-tainted seafood was sold and eaten to a population exceeding two million. Those who ate processed foods, such as fish paste and dried anchovies, were also affected. The impact reached as far as Kyoto, approximately 600 km away, where consumers were served conger eel from Minamata.

Minamata disease is often associated with severe convulsions, paralysis, coma, and eventual death. These are extreme cases, however. The disease symptoms experienced by individual victims, including ataxia, numbness in hands and feet, general muscle weakness, loss of peripheral vision, and damage to hearing and speech, are quite different and diverse. Characterizing Minamata disease only with the severe symptoms limits our understanding of the nature and scale of the disaster. It may also make us complicit with Chisso and the government, who have consistently tried to downplay the impact of the disaster. In fact, due to the restrictive definition of Minamata disease, no new patients were found for many years after 1960. Consequently, in the early 1960s, Minamata disease was (mistakenly) considered to be a thing of the past.

A 100-Year Chronology of Minamata Disease

Minamata disease was officially identified by a local public health center in 1956. More than 60 years have passed since then. It is import-

46 Minamata "disease" is probably a misnomer. It is man-made industrial pollution or poisoning.

ant, however, to put the case in an even longer historical perspective, because signs of the problem were felt earlier, especially among local communities. A much wider view also helps us recognize that Japan's rapid industrialization was the root of this man-made disaster.

Chisso's origin can be traced back to the early 1900s (see Table 4). The expansion of the company epitomized a model of development that Japan promoted to achieve rapid industrialization in order to catch up with Western powers. Chisso made great efforts to adapt modern technologies under the central government's high economic growth policies. It also expanded operations into China and Korea, then colonized by imperial Japan. This development model—though disrupted shortly by Japan's defeat at the end of World War II in 1945—survived and prevailed again in the post-war reconstruction era and through the rise in mass consumption culture. Chisso began mass production of plastics by exploiting cheap local labor. They maintained a tight hold on production secrets to prevent competition from other manufacturers. The company, like many other large industries in Japan, achieved a high economic growth rate and made huge profits. This industrialization model, however, was pursued at the risk of one of the greatest environmental and social disasters that Japan has ever encountered.

Table 4: Chronology of major events

1906	Sogi Electric builds a hydropower plant in Kagoshima, to the south of Minamata.
1907	Japan Carbide is established in Minamata.
1908	Sogi Electric merges with Japan Carbide to become Japan Chisso Fertilizer.
1932	Chisso's Minamata factory begins producing acetaldehyde, releasing mercury-contaminated wastewater.
1945	Japan surrenders. World War II ends.
1946	Chisso resumes acetaldehyde production.
1949	Catch of red snapper, sardine, shrimp, and octopus drops considerably.
1952	Fish, cats, birds, and other small animals show various effects. Acute cases appear in humans.
1956	**Minamata disease is officially identified by the Minamata Public Health Center.**
1958	Chisso reroutes toxic wastewater into the Minamata River, facing the Shiranui Sea, instead of Minamata Bay.

1959	A medical research group concludes that mercury is the probable cause of Minamata disease. Four thousand fishers rally to demand the National Diet inspect the case; some break into Chisso. This is reported by national media and Minamata disease becomes a public issue in Japan.
1960	Acetaldehyde production reaches its peak.
1961	A congenial patient is officially identified.
1965	**Minamata disease breaks out in Niigata Prefecture** (**Second Minamata Disease**). Chisso changes its name to "Chisso Corporation."
1968	**The government officially identifies industrial pollution as the cause of Minamata disease**. Chisso stops acetaldehyde production.
1973	Kumamoto district court issues a verdict on the first lawsuit. **Minamata disease is reported elsewhere in Japan** (**Third Minamata Disease**).
1977	The government establishes a legal framework for pollution relief and compensation.
1995	The government announces 2.6 million JPY settlement (approximately 25,000 USD) as lump-sum payment.
2004	**The Supreme Court rules in plaintiffs' favor in the Kansai lawsuit, for the first time acknowledging government responsibility for Minamata disease.**
2010	The government begins implementing the Special Relief Act, which mandates the breakup of Chisso and a lump-sum compensation of 2.1 million JPY (approximately 26,000 USD) for each victim.
2011	Chisso is divided into the newly established Japan New Chisso Corporation and Chisso Corporation, the latter responsible for victim compensation.
2013	The Supreme Court hands down a ruling in two lawsuits, calling for revocation of earlier dismissals. The "Minamata Convention on Mercury" is adopted and signed.
2017	The convention enters into force.

Contextualizing Minamata disease over a time span of 100 years also helps us recognize, quite disturbingly, that its history is replete with negligence and inaction on the part of Chisso, as well as government authorities. It took almost ten years before troubling signs among fish and small animals in the late 1940s to the early 1950s were officially identified in 1956. Authorities took no steps to prevent contamination from spreading or to disseminate information to either immediate victims or the general public. They did not ban

the harvest or sale of fish from contaminated waters. There was no government effort to analyze factory effluent or stop its discharge into the bay. Worse still, in 1958 Chisso rerouted toxic wastewater to discharge into the mouth of the Minamata River, which directly faces the Shiranui Sea, instead of into Minamata Bay, consequently spreading contamination (see Figure 7). It took an additional ten years before the Japanese government officially recognized industrial pollution as the cause of Minamata disease in 1968.

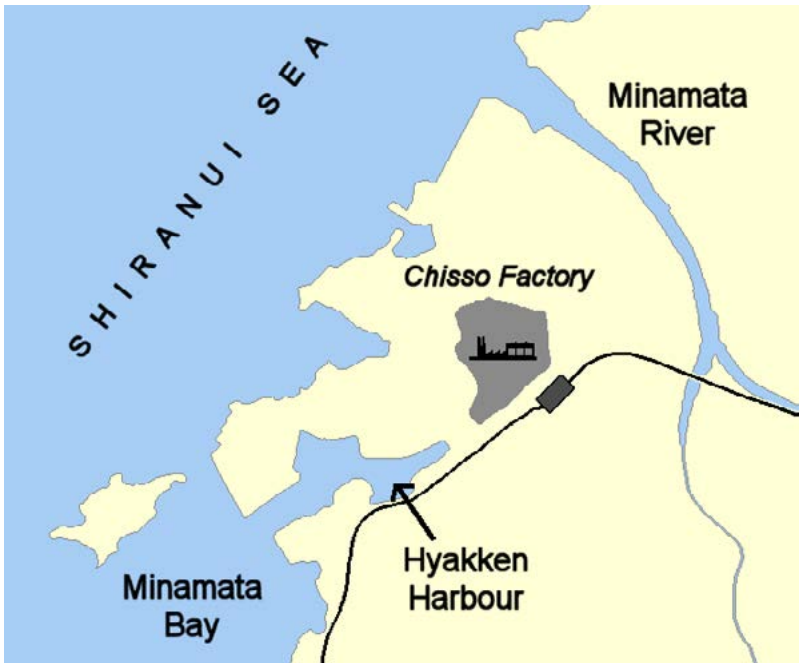

Figure 7: Minamata (from Minamata. *Wikipedia*)

In the same year, 1968, Chisso finally stopped acetaldehyde production. During the 12 years between 1956 and 1968, Chisso's acetaldehyde production peaked. Congenial patients were discovered.[47] A second incidence of Minamata disease broke out in Niigata Prefecture.[48]

47 It was believed in those days that the mother's placenta would protect the baby from toxins in the bloodstream. However, the placenta removes methylmercury from the mother's bloodstream and concentrates it in the baby. After several years of study, medical experts came to conclude that some children exhibited a congenital form of Minamata disease. The 1962 certification committee subsequently agreed that these children should be certified as Minamata victims, and that they qualify for Chisso's payments.

48 In June 1965, several patients with the same symptoms as Minamata disease were discovered in fishers living along the lower reaches of the Agano River, on the outskirts of Niigata City, a location far away from Minamata. Methylmercury was discovered in victims' bodies as well as in the fish they ate. Along the upper reaches of Agano River, and also in the area of the river mouth, were Showa Denko Corporation's acetaldehyde production plants.

Certification and Compensation for Victims

Negligence and inaction on the part of Chisso and the Japanese government was consistent throughout the process of victim certification and compensation. After the Kumamoto district court issued a verdict on the first lawsuit in 1973, the government established a legal framework for pollution relief and compensation in 1977. The government, however, adopted strict certification criteria, narrowly defining Minamata disease. This excluded many victims without medical justification.

In 1995, the Japanese government announced a "final comprehensive resolution" to Minamata disease. Some 10,000 victims agreed to a political settlement, and the government declared the issue resolved. Then, in 2004, a Supreme Court ruling on a lawsuit by victims living in Kansai district declared the central and the Kumamoto prefectural governments liable for damages for the outbreak and spread of Minamata disease. This opened the door to a large number of new claims. Nonetheless, under the 2010 Act on Special Measures Concerning Relief for Victims of Minamata Disease ("the Special Relief Act"), the government again attempted to put Minamata disease behind it by simply breaking up Chisso, and mandating a lump-sum compensation payment of 2.1 million JPY (approximately 26,000 USD) per victim. It tried to close the book on Minamata disease even while major questions lingered about the effects and mechanism of the disease and the full extent of the disaster.

During the past few years, 60,000 more victims have filed claims for relief, complaining of headaches, numbness in their extremities, spasms, tremors, and other neurological symptoms. As of March 2017, certified Minamata disease victims numbered 2,284. The number of victims participating in the 1995 settlement is 10,353. Applicants for relief under Special Relief Act amount to about 63,000.

Social Dimensions

A huge power imbalance was structured in the way Chisso came to operate in Minamata. Community leaders in the early 1900s begged the company to build a factory in Minamata to fill in its development gap. This put local villagers at a great disadvantage with Chisso. Minamata's economy almost completely depended upon the company. Ui writes:[49]

49 Ui, Jun (1992). "Minamata Disease." In Jun Ui (ed.) *Industrial Pollution in Japan*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press. http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu35ie/uu35ie0c.htm (Last accessed July 8, 2019).

> During the period when the Minamata complex was enjoying its greatest economic success, 60 percent of all city taxes came from the chemical company and other related income sources. The mayor of the city was a retired director of the complex and a majority of the city council members were related in one way or another to the manufacturing facility. In the post-war period of so-called democratic politics, the city of Minamata was structured along typically feudalistic interactions and relationships centering around the chemical company and its manufacturing complex. Everyone knew that the level of economic prosperity enjoyed by the city depended on the rise and fall of the chemical company.

This made it extremely difficult for Minamata villagers to raise issues with Chisso. Minamata disease broke out in fishing communities. Victims were discriminated against for having a rare disease. Their families also struggled in village society. The victims and their families were often treated as enemies of the community. One of the causes of Minamata disaster is attributable to the company's monopoly power.

Ongoing Legal Actions by Victims

Minamata victims have strategically used legal measures to try to hold both the government and Chisso accountable for the disaster. They have filed a number of lawsuits. Their struggles are on-going. Major lawsuit cases include:

1. **National Government Compensation Lawsuit**: This was filed by eight plaintiffs of the second generation of victims. The Minamata Disease Victims' Mutual Aid Society is supporting the case. The plaintiffs claim damages under the Special Relief Act with regard to Chisso's responsibility for causing damage and the prefectural and national governments' failure to prevent the outbreak and spread of Minamata disease. The case was presented to Kumamoto District Court in October 2007. The court ruled in March 2014. An appeal hearing is now with the Fukuoka High Court;
2. **National Government Compensation Lawsuit**: This was filed in June 2013 by 2,000 plaintiffs of the Minamata Disease Shiranui Victims Group in Osaka, Tokyo, and Niigata. The group primarily consists of victims excluded from the Special Relief Act; and
3. **Cancellation of the Rejection Disposal, Authorized Imposition Lawsuit**: This was filed by the Minamata Disease Victims' Mutual Aid Society in October 2015. The case is with the Kumamoto District Court.

Lessons from the Minamata Disaster

The Minamata disaster provides the following broader implications:

1. When a disaster takes place, it is necessary to make every effort to assess and determine the full extent of impact. It is also necessary to investigate why the disaster was not prevented. Failure to examine the comprehensive scale of damage prolongs negative impact of the disaster and puts victims in very difficult situations;
2. Unless responsible parties are held accountable and take full responsibility for responding to all questions related to the causes of the disaster, mistakes are destined to be repeated; and
3. There is a need to question the practices of chemical plants, petrochemical industries, and today's technological society as a whole, in particular those related to plastics, dioxins, agrichemicals, nuclear power, genetic engineering, and asbestos.

These lessons are applicable both in Japan and elsewhere in the world. Unfortunately, they have not been properly learned. Similar environmental disasters have re-occurred in Japan. Representative cases include the HIV-tainted blood scandal in the 1980s, the Snow Brand milk contamination in 2000, and the more recent Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant accident. In the latter case, a huge earthquake hit northeast Japan, including Fukushima prefecture. Nuclear reactors in Fukushima shut down. However, the *tsunami* after the earthquake disabled the emergency generators that would have provided power to cool the reactors. Insufficient cooling led to three nuclear meltdowns, hydrogen-air explosions, and the release of radioactive material. In 2012, the National Diet of Japan Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission found that the causes of the accident were foreseeable, and that the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company, had failed to meet basic safety requirements, such as risk assessment and evacuation plans. As of 2017, more than 40,000 victims are still taking shelter.[50]

Industrial pollution cases have also occurred elsewhere in Asia. They include the Agent Orange contamination caused by the US military operations during the Vietnam War, the 1984 gas leak at the Union Carbide India Limited pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, and the ille-

50 For more information, see Mariko Komatsu's "Citizens' Initiatives in the Fukushima Radiation Disaster: Measuring and Sharing Fukushima" and Hiroko Aihara's "Global *Hibakusha's* Deliberative Democracy: What We Discuss, Describe, and Archive after the Human-made Nuclear Disaster in Fukushima" in this publication.

gal dumping of radioactive waste involving a Japanese company in Malaysia. In the latter case, a rare earth metal extracting company, Asia Rare Earth (ARE), was opened in Bukit Merah, Malaysia in 1982. ARE's biggest shareholders were Mitsubishi Chemical Industries, Japan, and Beh Minerals. Extracted rare earth metal can contain radioactive elements. Residents living in the neighborhoods complained of the smell and smoke from the factory and experienced difficulty breathing. Members of the local community eventually took the case to the Malaysian courts. The Ipoh High Court ordered ARE to halt their activities until better safety measures were taken. ARE did not stop operations, however. In 1992, after a long legal battle, the local community won the case. ARE was ordered to close its factory. In 1994, the company announced the closure of the factory. However, they left 80,000 liters of radioactive waste in barrels in the Kledang mountain range.[51]

International Initiatives to Control Mercury and the "Minamata Convention"[52]

Mercury contamination has spread across the world. Particularly worrying is the health hazard from metal mercury use in artisanal small-scale gold mining (ASGM). Cases of mercury pollution caused by ASGM have been reported in Amazon, South East Asia, and east Africa.[53] Given global mercury contamination, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) began a mercury program in 2001. In 2002, UNEP published the first report, *Global Mercury Assessment*, regarding effects on human and actual state of contamination. The report warned:[54]

1. Mercury is discharged into the environment in various forms, does not resolve, and circulates around the world;

51 "30 Years Ago, a Huge Radioactive Incident Happened in Perak. And they're still Cleaning it up…" cilisos.my. https://cilisos.my/30-years-ago-a-huge-radioactive-incident-happened-in-perak-heres-the-story-behind-it/ (Last accessed March 11, 2019).

52 The following section owes much to Nakachi, Shigeharu (2016). "On Minamata Convention – International Law to Protect Environment from Mercury Poisoning." PowerPoint Presentation.

53 Global Mercury Assessment 2018 for Comments. UN Environment, UNEP. https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/global-mercury-assessment-2018-comments (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

54 *Global Mercury Assessment*. UN Environment, UNEP. https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/global-mercury-assessment (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

2. Methylmercury readily accumulates in living organisms;
3. Mercury is highly toxic to humans and hazardous to the developing nervous system, in particular unborn babies, newborn infants, and children;
4. It also accumulates in wildlife via the food chain; and
5. The amount of mercury used has decreased in industrialized countries but it is still used continuously in industrializing countries. Mercury concentration in the atmosphere due to artificial discharge is increasing.

Based on these findings, *Global Mercury Assessment* recommended regulation on the use of mercury.

In 2009, the UNEP Governing Council (UNEP GC) decided to develop a legally-binding global instrument on mercury to reduce risks to human health and the environment. The UNEP GC noted that mercury is a substance of global concern due to its long-range transport, persistence, ability to bio-accumulate, and toxicity. Its conclusions were based in part on *Global Mercury Assessment*.

CSOs are actively engaged in these international processes. IPEN, or the International POPs (persistent organic pollutants) Elimination Network[55] in particular has initiated global movements. Founded in 1998 and registered in Sweden, IPEN is an international network of citizens working together for a world in which toxic chemicals are no longer produced or used in ways that harm human health and the environment. The network is comprised of over 500 organizations in more than 100 countries, primarily in countries with developing and transitional economies. Members take action internationally, working on local, regional, and global campaigns and policies.

In 2011, IPEN partnered with the Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) to undertake the Global Fish and Community Mercury Monitoring Project. The goal of the project was to generate new data and raise awareness about global mercury pollution and specific hot spots, primarily from developing and transitional countries.[56] In 2013, IPEN released a report to highlight the urgent need for an overall reduction in mercury emissions to coincide with a meeting in Geneva where government delegates were to negotiate in a final session to establish an international mercury treaty. The IPEN report showed new scien-

55 IPEN. "A Toxic-Free Future for All." https://ipen.org/about-ipen (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

56 IPEN. "Mercury in Fish and Human Hair." https://ipen.org/projects/mercury-fish-and-human-hair (Last accessed May 28, 2019).

tific evidence[57] that humans and marine ecosystems around the world were contaminated with mercury and that mercury levels in humans and fish regularly exceeded health advisory guidelines.

After several inter-governmental negotiations, a text of the international convention was adopted and opened for signature in October 2013 at a conference in Japan. The conference took place in the city of Kumamoto, Kumamoto prefecture, where Minamata is located. Prior to the meeting, a ceremonial opening was held in Minamata. The convention was then named "Minamata Convention on Mercury."[58] The convention entered into force in August 2017.

Challenges Ahead

The Minamata Convention on Mercury entering into force is one thing; its implementation is another. In 2017, IPEN and BRI released a new report *Mercury Monitoring of Women of Child-Bearing Age in the Asia and the Pacific Region*.[59] The samplings were undertaken in 2015 to 2016 from 1,044 women in 37 locations across 25 countries where IPEN members worked. The study was supported by the Minamata Convention on Mercury's Interim Secretariat, hosted by UNEP, and was conducted to measure the prevalence of mercury body burden at levels that can cause neurological and organ damage. It was the first of its kind to sample as many countries and regions and spotlight women of childbearing age. The study found significantly elevated mercury concentrations in the hair of women in numerous regions of the world related to three predominant causes of mercury pollution: 1) coal-fired power plants, which is one of the main sources globally that contaminates oceans with mercury that accumulates in fish; 2) ASGM; and 3) locally contaminated sites from various industries releasing mercury to soil, water, and air.

During the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP2) held in Geneva in

57 "Mercury Levels in Humans and Fish Around the World Regularly Exceed Health Advisory Levels." IPEN Press Release (January 9, 2013). https://ipen.org/sites/default/files/documents/ipen-and-bri-pr-2013-01-09-en.pdf (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

58 Minamata Convention on Mercury. UN Environment, UNEP. http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Home/tabid/3360/Default.aspx (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

59 "New Study Reveals Dangerous Levels of Mercury in Women of Childbearing Age Across Global Regions." IPEN Press Release (September 18, 2017). https://ipen.org/documents/press-release-new-study-reveals-dangerous-levels-mercury-women-childbearing-age-across (Last accessed May 29, 2019).

November 2018, UNEP released new data showing that global atmospheric mercury levels had risen 20 percent in just five years between 2010 and 2015. This staggering increase in mercury emissions is largely related to coal-fired power station emissions and ASGM activities. It is these emissions that are contaminating the oceans, fish, and the people who eat them, especially those living in Small Island Developing States.[60]

COP2 needed to review and continue to guide development for some technical issues and the establishment or reconfiguration of expert groups to initiate (or continue) drafting of other technical guidance. Developing and transitional countries advocated for sufficient, adequate, and predictable funding along with capacity building and technology transfer to implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Currently, no guidance has been developed on Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices (BAT & BEP) for reducing mercury releases from anthropogenic sources, even though required by the convention. Prior to COP2, the secretariat prepared a draft decision which effectively said that the development of BAT & BEP guidance on mercury releases should be postponed until after all parties submit their first report, which would include inventories of mercury pollution emissions and releases. The reason given was that only three countries had submitted any information to the secretariat on release sources. This delay would mean that adoption of any guidance could not realistically be considered until at least 2022.[61]

While efforts have been made internationally to control mercury, victims and their supporters in Minamata have faced persistent and resource-intensive attempts by Chisso and the government to make the general public believe that "Minamata is over." These greenwash efforts have taken different forms, and involve local communities as well. Notable cases include "*Moyai-naoshi*," the campaign which translates as the "restoration of social bonds that encourage community members to support and work with each other," as well as a call for Minamata to be a "model environmental city." Under these soft and overtly optimistic slogans, both Chisso and the central, prefectural, and municipal governments have tried hard to lull the general public, trying to make protests and demands by Minamata victims look as if they were disharmonizing society, rather than making legitimate demands for restoration for damages caused by the disaster.

60 Lee Bell (2018). "What Happened at COP2?" IPEN.
61 Ibid.

Minamata is NOT over. Most of the issues caused by the massive contamination have yet to be solved. Difficulties experienced by victims mount, including employment, marriage, health care, and welfare. Most congenital patients are now in their forties and fifties with their health increasingly deteriorating. Their parents, who are often their only sources of care, are in their seventies and eighties or already deceased. Congenital patients often find themselves tied to their own homes and the care of their family, effectively isolated from the local community. How to build a society that is friendly to Minamata victims remains a burning issue.

Ironically, many Minamata victims and their supporters opposed adding "Minamata" to the designation of the international convention to regulate mercury.[62] They viewed the naming of the convention as part of the act to create the public discourse that Minamata is over, and argued that Minamata victims should be fairly compensated and the destroyed environment fully restored first. They thus call the convention the "Mercury Convention" instead of "Minamata Convention."

62 Sakamoto, Ryukou, and Hideki Sato (2012). "Statement by Minamata Victims and Citizens Groups." http://www.ne.jp/asahi/kagaku/pico/mercury/minamata/121227_Minamata_groups_statement_en.pdf (Last accessed July 28, 2019).

The Role of Citizen Science in Policy Advocacy and Building Just and Ecologically Sustainable Communities in Thailand

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Growing Concerns over Industrial Pollution in Thailand

Industrial pollution has been a problem since the very beginning of Thailand's industrialization. As early as the 1960s, unplanned and unregulated development of industry caused severe and widespread destruction of local economies and livelihoods, ecological systems, environmental quality, and arable land. The situation has been getting worse and more severe since the Thai government has aligned national policies to expand heavy industrial investment and special economic zones in all regions of the country.

Industrial development has not only caused uncontrolled environmental problems, but also widened the gap between rich and poor, as well as between urban and rural populations. Most factories are set up in rural areas where land is cheaper and there is little government oversight. Businesses often engage in corrupt practices to avoid costly treatment of toxic waste or improvement in heavily polluting technology. The rural poor suffer the most from industrial pollution. As it becomes more severe, wealthier people begin to relocate, but poor residents are forced to endure. Exposure to long-term industrial pollution causes them to become suffer economically due to the financial burden of pollution-related illnesses as well as by worsened living conditions.

Challenges Posed by Industrial Pollution and Civic Responses

Polluters are rarely held accountable due to a lack of scientific evidence. This shortage of information is sometimes due to a lack of understanding about the dangers of toxic chemicals. Most citizen complaints are dismissed as isolated or temporary cases with unknown causes, rather than as indications of emerging environmental or health damage from industrial pollution. Due to Thailand's centralized administrative structure, experts in pollution monitoring or pollution-related illnesses are mostly stationed in central government offices in cities, far from provincial areas where industrial pollution cases occur. Coupled with the prevailing socio-cultural

misperception that rural residents are uneducated and ignorant, government officials often dismiss their complaints or even berate them for unreasonably panicking. At other times, the shortage of scientific evidence is due to a lack of good governance. When government officials do respond to citizen complaints and conduct field inspection and environmental sampling, they almost never return to inform affected communities of their findings.

Government officials and polluters will acknowledge the existence of industrial pollution only after extreme damage has occurred. Many citizens across Thailand are beginning to protest that their bodies are being used as monitoring equipment, with no attempt by government or industry to reduce or prevent the release of toxic chemicals. When citizens' protests become strong and effective, community leaders are often silenced by threats, physical violence, or even by murder. From 1974 to 2013, 33 environmental defenders have been killed: 17 of them related to industrial pollution or mining problems.

Nowadays, an increasing number of affected communities have organized environmental campaigns to protect their livelihoods and environment from industrial pollution. These people voice their views to the general public and policymakers, and press for accountability from the government and industrial polluters. Several communities have formed networks to campaign together—against, for instance, gold mining and coal-fired power plants—and to amplify their voices. Some groups have come together to call for more sustainable development options and the right to participation. They have sought technical assistance and information support from outside experts, civil society groups, and the media, especially when fighting in court or negotiating for remediation of polluted land and damaged health.

EARTH's Strategy: Science Responsive to Citizens' Concerns

Ecological Alert and Recovery – Thailand (EARTH) was established as an environmental NGO in early 2009 with the purpose to provide outreach and support to protect the environment and rights of under-represented people in Thailand. EARTH developed from the Campaign for Alternative Industry Network (CAIN) which was set up in 1998 in order to take over the role and mission pursued by the Toxic Chemical Campaign Committee (TCCC). TCCC was a civic group, voluntarily organized to help victims who had been exposed to one of Thailand's worst chemical explosions at a warehouse in Bangkok Port in 1991, and to advocate for their rights.

In the past several years, EARTH has conducted research and trainings to support local communities who have suffered from industrial pollution, including air and water degradation in petrochemical industrial zones and heavy metal contamination around gold mines and coal-fired power plants. In 2015, EARTH established the Pollution Monitoring Volunteer Network under its Citizen Science Project to increase transparency in industrial pollution management and environmental health protection. Citizen science under this project aims to promote community-based environmental monitoring, participation in scientific research, and action to demand government and corporate accountability to the natural environment and the health of community members. In other words, in recognizing that science must be responsive to citizens' concerns and needs, the Citizen Science Project tries to strengthen their capacity to produce reliable scientific knowledge that can be used in their struggle and negotiation, both outside and inside the official court system. More importantly, the project helps affected communities join various peoples' networks in fighting for meaningful changes at the policy level.

For Better Governance and Transparency in Industry-Environment and Pollution-Reduction Management

Thailand needs to reform its environmental laws and related mechanisms urgently to address issues of health and environmental compensation and rehabilitation, encourage broader levels of public participation and the right to know, and foster better governance and transparency in industry-environment and pollution-reduction management. National laws and legal mechanisms should be improved to comply with the international conventions that the Thai government has ratified. In order to achieve these policy goals, close collaboration among local communities, CSOs, the media, and expert groups from outside and inside the country is needed.

SECTION FOUR: SYNTHESIS

Synthesis on Community Empowerment

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This is a synthesis of the six case presentations related to the topic of community empowerment in Section 1. I have to confess that this synthesis is indeed not as complete and perfect as was expected of the discussant. Any shortcomings or mistakes made by possible misunderstanding, despite the efforts to pay due attention to the presentations, shall be my fault and I am solely responsible.

Of the six presentations, two presenters mainly discussed land rights and land issues, two presentations were on food security and agricultural issues, one was a case report on indigenous textile industry, and finally one discussed transformation based on engaged Buddhism.

On the issues of land rights and land grabbing, presented by Josie Fernandez and Nonette Royo respectively, it is important for local people, especially indigenous peoples, to get useful and factual information. Problems are often based on the poor—mostly undereducated farmers in rural areas and indigenous peoples—lacking access to rights information. Education, awareness training, and leadership skills are essential for community leaders, so that their land—which may be the only asset they have for survival—is not taken away from them unlawfully. At the same time, government officials, both local and central, should be educated about the cultural practices of indigenous peoples, such as respecting geographical boundaries, providing protection for territorial rights, incorporating ethical norms, and maintaining forests and water resources. It is important to understand that *"the land outlives us."* Investment, not just of money (although necessary), but in people and in trust can be beneficial. This includes leaders or any person, even military personnel or policemen, who could do something good for the people. In addition, external factors regarding land issues and land rights, such as unreliable and/or shifting policies and attitudinal changes of the government, should also be taken into account. Promoting accessibility of information, facilitation, and awareness training, especially for youth, is essential.

In her presentation, Supa Yaimuang highlighted food production and food security issues. It was noted that food security problems are related to consolidation of the food chain. People need to be aware of what they are eating, and may even need to be educated about food

production and food security, since most of us hardly know anything about what we eat. For instance, in Myanmar, people like spicy food and use various types of chili powder that are locally produced. A group of people from an NGO came to notice the recent increasing cancer rates among people in Myanmar. As they were very much concerned with safety in food production and food security, they sent chili powder samples to a laboratory to test them. They chose a lab in the United Kingdom, since local labs were not reliable in giving accurate results. The laboratory found that 60 percent of the chili powder was actually not chili, and that the dyes used to color them were not allowed for food but were to be used for fabric. Supa stressed the dire need for civic engagement to develop knowledge on food production and food security, especially among the wider public. She contended that situation analysis and participatory action research together with groups of farmers, conducting seed research, developing farmers' markets, and fostering entrepreneurship through farmer schools, are all useful. Simultaneously, it is good to create social spaces for farmers, urban citizens, and those interested in agriculture and farming to have serious discussions about farming practices and sustainability. These activities, once implemented, should promote farmers' productivity for food security that will increase both farmers' income and agriculture sustainability that protects consumers from vulnerability.

Khamphoui Saythala's presentation raised similar concerns and discussed rice-based integrated farming systems. He mentioned that food security for poor, rural communities and the related issues of nutrition, education, health, and the rise of poverty still remain to be tackled due to a lack of efficient systems to do so. He also contended that the Lao government's official acceptance of CSOs is important to help ease these problems, to a certain extent. He discussed the impact of agriculture on climate change. For example, despite the need for quantity and quality of rice for Asians, as this is our staple food, new research on climate change and greenhouse gas effects indicates that a considerable amount—13 percent—of the methane that enters the atmosphere is produced from rice planting, whereas 2 percent comes from fuels. While this is not good news for Asians, scientists are working on developing and adapting new species of paddy seed to meet the challenges of today.

The fifth presentation by Chandra Kirana Prijosusilo was on the textile industry, and how dyes for industry come from nature. She mentioned twenty different plants and trees in Indonesia alone that produce dyes. She stressed that to nurture nature is critically important, and that sub-

jects like ethnobotany, design, chemistry, mathematics, and technology, as well as socio-political, and economic issues must be addressed to enrich culture. Handicraft skills and know-how about the use of non-hazardous natural materials of indigenous peoples must be made known and valued by the outside world. Broader markets should be developed for indigenous handicrafts and the majority of benefits should not be left in the hands of businesspeople, so that the livelihoods of the original producers of these products can be improved. It is also important that traders realize this. Key strategies and methods of engagement to tell their stories of provenance, their sustainability brand, impact on landscapes and seascapes, and cultural know-how, as well as exploring other plants that might be useful for the textile industry by using information technology will make a difference. It is of note that, next to the oil industry, the textile industry is second in contributing to environmental pollution.

Last but not least, Theodore Mayer gave his presentation on transformative higher learning. He talked in depth about how Buddhism must respond to the challenges of modernity as many famous figures of Buddhism, such as Sulak Sivaraksa and Ambedkar have done. Ted introduced important programs that his organization, INEB, has developed: for instance, Master of Arts in Socially Engaged Buddhism and English for Engaged Social Service. He also described the difficulties in implementing the curriculum despite its high quality. These matters should be taken as a new calling and commitment especially for the youth, because younger generations will soon take the reins to steer us into the future. Our present responsibility is attracting them to these new subjects.

It is my conviction that participants gained many benefits from these presentations and will try their best in their own given spaces and time to make this world a better place for all people with increased human security and environmental sustainability. Let us continue to spread our stories and practices, dare to confront evil powers, and break the chain of malpractices and irresponsible acts. Let us be prepared to be challenged and brave enough to be innovative in our region and beyond. Let us take courage and commitment to fulfill this essential duty of civic engagement, as we are privileged to be informed and trained, and we have been given a certain status as community leaders, academics, religious leaders, and responsible people of ASEAN. And let us give our children and grandchildren, future generations, the potential for progress and the inheritance of the importance of civic engagement to create a better world for them.

Reflections on Civic Engagement and Key Issues

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The Yogya Workshop was attended by 28 scholars, practitioners, and activists from SEA and Japan. The key terms of the workshop were civic engagement, a just ASEAN, and a sustainable ASEAN. There was no consensus on the definition of these terms. But generally, "civic engagement" refers to the participation of civil society and grassroots people in policy design and implementation and the positive impact that civil society can generate with regard to social justice and development. "Just ASEAN" refers to an ASEAN that respects human rights and human dignity. "Sustainable ASEAN" refers to an ASEAN that cares about the environment, ecosystem, and future generations. The UN SDGs should be the main agenda of regional cooperation and collaboration given that they set key sustainable development goals to be achieved by 2030. Regional and national institutions in SEA need to apply more efforts toward realizing the SDGs.

The workshop was divided into ten sessions: opening and setting the tone, thematic presentation on community empowerment, sustaining the tone, breakout session I, thematic presentation on public advocacy, thematic presentation on policy engagement, breakout session II, and wrap-up and way forward. Each session lasted about three hours.

The participants raised their concerns that global governance and national governments are neither viable nor resilient. The world is entering an era of a new crisis. We need to face the challenges caused by modernity. Climate change is a core threat to the planet and humanity. Existing institutions in the region do not lead to a just and sustainable society. ASEAN, a regional body in SEA, has limited capacity, and lacks political will on sensitive issues and in promoting a truly people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN. The legitimacy of governments in SEA is declining, due to a lack of people's participation. Some argue that there is a legitimacy crisis in SEA. Different institutions tend to work in silos. Therefore, robust reforms in the state institutions are urgently needed and a new type of leadership is required—one that is transformative, adaptive, and responsive to changes.

In response to governance and legitimacy crises, we need transformative learning to change our mindsets and re-design our national and global institutions, better coordinate and connect regional insti-

tutions, and strengthen civic engagement. We need to build peace in our hearts to face an uncertain world. We need to enlarge space for civil society's engagement in policy dialogue, design, and implementation. People should also be the actors of development. Civic engagement helps build an inclusive and representative government. Civic engagement promotes policy entrepreneurship—developing innovative and creative solutions—and assists the government to implement sustainability transitions or shifts.

Engaging policymakers and stakeholders in an inclusive manner will multiply the impacts of civil society (a non-state actor). Inspiring and working with young people will help collectively shape a development trajectory that is more just, peaceful, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient. Creating a participatory development model by putting people at the center, multi-stakeholdership (state-market-society partnership), taking a middle way between different religions and civilizations (including cultural tolerance and appreciation of diversity), balancing heart and mind, documenting and sharing knowledge (including local, indigenous knowledge), and solidarity among civil society groups are some of the key measures in addressing global issues and challenges.

The sources of power for civil society to engage with policymakers are information and knowledge, networks and alliances, and innovation— providing innovative ideas to solve social and environmental issues. Other sources of power for civil society are the power of telling stories and listening to people's concerns. We need to strengthen the role of civil society in the region to engage with policymakers and other stakeholders, including the private sector and media.

In a complex and interconnected world, no country alone can address emerging challenges. We need to build multi-stakeholder partnerships and collective ownership to address common issues and challenges. We need more facilitators, trust builders, and bridge makers to deal with complex global issues. Engaging young people should be one of the core strategies of future regional activities and projects. We need to develop new pathways for millennials to become engaged.

The workshop has addressed the following issues:

The Perceived Problems and Issues

The presenters discussed priority issues that their organizations have been working on, such as indigenous people's rights (land rights and community forest conservation), sustainable agriculture (organic

farming), unsustainable forestry, human trafficking, water stress, urban planning and development, social enterprises (textiles and agri-business), social and religious harmony, and capacity building and networking support for civil society groups (including knowledge creation and sharing and leadership training).

The stories of the organizations presented at the workshop demonstrate that individual passion and vision, and social needs define how specific issues are selected to be dealt with. Leadership, personal dedication, and commitment determine the success of the organization.

The Key Strategies and Methods Used for Civic Engagement

The strategies adopted by organizations are: public awareness campaigns, policy advocacy, capacity building for local community, including indigenous peoples and youth, knowledge documentation and sharing (such as oral history construction, documentary production, and research and publication), cross-sectoral dialogue, and international alliance building on specific issues such as the Minamata mercury pollution, human trafficking, and food safety.

We need to connect and find balance between public intellectuals and policy entrepreneurs. We need to build hardware (institutions, legal frameworks), software (contents and substance of the policy and action plans), and "heartware" (values). We need to promote media engagement, inside-architecture activism (activists within the existing system), and identify champions in public policy.

The Internal and External Factors that Facilitate or Limit the Desired Changes

The internal factors that facilitate desired changes are: clear organizational objectives (mission and vision), value-driven leadership (that is able to mobilize people and resources), funding sources (both internal and external), and capable human resources.

The external factors that facilitate desired changes are: political environment and space (i.e., How much political space is provided for civil society to operate), national governance (corruption as the main issue), and international systems (i.e., Neo-liberalism has damaged planet earth and a sense of humanity).

Policy changes, lack of consistent regulation implementation, mal-governance, and turnover in local leadership are some of the external challenges and factors that limit the impact of the project.

Globalization, which is mainly driven by neo-capitalists, is not sustainable. Global governance is weak, not viable, or resilient to meet the existing and future challenges. Trade liberalization, food production and consumption patterns, and consolidation of food chains adversely affect sustainable agriculture.

The Manifested Attitudinal Changes, Social Practices, and Policy Changes

Some projects have led to policy design and implementation. For instance, the Collaboration Center for Minamata Disease Victims (in Japan) is a pillar behind the Minamata Convention on Mercury,[63] which was signed by 128 countries. The Convention is an international treaty to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. Another example is the work of Kota Kita Foundation (in Indonesia), working on smart and sustainable urban development. Its mapping and problem solving strategy has been adopted as part of government policy on urban planning. Other countries, such as Mongolia, have also learned from the experience of the foundation.

The Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (SPERI, Vietnam) has utilized its knowledge and wide network built over 28 years to influence policymakers and impact change at the local level. Public engagement and policy campaigns on indigenous rights to land and forest are the main strategies of the organization to impact changes. The Vietnamese and Lao governments have worked closely with the organization in protecting community forest and land rights of indigenous peoples.

Most projects led to social change through public awareness, policy advocacy, and capacity building. The Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN, Thailand) has rescued about 3,000 victims of human trafficking in Thailand and across SEA. Raising public awareness on human trafficking, especially in the fishery sector, has affected consumer behavior in consuming seafood and drawn public support to fight against human trafficking. Public opinion in turn shapes government policy and intervention. Now the Thai government and local and international organizations are cooperating with LPN in collectively addressing human trafficking issues.

63 See Sakamoto, Shinobu (2011). "NGO Statement: Speaking on behalf of Collaborative Center for Minamata Disease Victims, Health Care Without Harm, IPEN, and ZERO Mercury Working Group." http://www.ne.jp/asahi/kagaku/pico/mercury/INC2_NGO/Intervention_Shinobu_Sakamoto_en.pdf (Last accessed July 15, 2019).

The Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (in Thailand) has promoted public awareness of food safety and sustainable agriculture in Thailand. Its project has affected social behavior concerning the consumption of organic food. It contributes to the safe food movement in Thailand. The foundation engages farmers and consumers, as well as local and national governments in promoting sustainable agriculture and food safety. Farmer empowerment is critical in facilitating farmers to become producers, entrepreneurs, and owners of the market.

The Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC, Laos) promotes leadership training, research capacity, and facilitation skills for local community members to make a difference in participatory development. In terms of policy changes, the government has started to accept and recognize the work and contributions of the center. Local government is the key actor that PADETC needs to engage in order to make policy change.

The Sekar Kawung Foundation (in Indonesia) provides job and income opportunities for local villagers, while helping local people preserve their knowledge about textile production and strengthen local community spirit. The foundation has positively affected local behavior with regard to production and marketing.

To measure attitudinal changes, the Samdhana Institute (in the Philippines and Indonesia) has applied a logical framework to reflect on the process and has developed a matrix to score the program or project based on both results-based and asset-based approaches.

Unexpected and Unintended Negative Consequences of Civic Engagement

Dependency, groupthink, corruption, and self-censorship are some of the unexpected or unintended consequences. Some projects, without proper and inclusive designing, may lead to local conflicts and community disintegration.

Trust can be eroded if the project does not produce expected outcomes. How to maintain trust by delivering results is the most challenging part of project implementation.

Some actors (e.g., politicians and businessmen) can manipulate information and knowledge created by civil society groups for their own interests and benefits. Therefore, we need to be careful in how we communicate our message and research findings to the public.

Visions and Plans for Regional Collaboration

Mapping exercises on regional issues, actors, and resources are critical for promoting regional collaboration. Mobilizing regional volunteers and building a web of regional stakeholders working on similar issues will encourage more regional collaboration and joint activities.

Using ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to mobilize volunteers and build human networks can also be effective. For instance, Net Idol implemented by LPN effectively mobilized volunteers in the region.

Values-driven leadership, trust building, alliances of like-minded individuals and organizations, cross-sector partnership, and multi-stakeholder dialogue are the key principles in promoting regional cooperation.

In order to build regional trust, we need social assurance, common moral aspiration and ethics, safe environment, diversity, and a common identity. We need to appreciate different systems of knowledge and value. Do we understand the issues the same way? Regional institutions should provide an enabling and safe environment for cross-border collaboration.

We need to further develop and share knowledge to a wider set of stakeholders in the region, empower local communities through transformative learning, and build alliances through promotion of values-driven cooperation. We need to link and integrate community knowledge with specialized and strategic knowledge. In other words, we need to build a collective intelligence.

We need to engage and educate young people, while continuing to inspire, innovate, and impact social changes. Identifying local issues and needs (i.e., applying anthropological approaches), developing innovative local solutions, and promoting local ownership are needed to build regional community.

By working together, with one voice, civil society groups can multiply their impact. For instance, civil society groups in Malaysia developed the Malaysia Civil Society Alliance for Sustainable Development. In Asia, there is an Asia Civil Society Alliance for Sustainable Development.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Concept Note on the Yogya Workshop

Introduction

ASEAN as a region is undergoing profound change in all areas of human existence. In pursuit of "modernization" and "development," the governments of nation-states have largely adopted a range of policies that promote an increasing regional integration with one another as well as deeper entanglement with the dominant global socio-economic order.

These changes have brought about tangible benefits for significant segments of the human population in many cases. For others, they have deepened socio-economic inequities, stunted human rights and democratic freedoms, affected mental and psychological stability and identity, and caused an array of ecological disruptions.

In the wake of these crises and challenges, a diverse range of community-based NGOs, CSOs, and socially-engaged enterprises in ASEAN have mushroomed in the past decade or so. Cross-fertilizing with similar responses world-wide, civil society-led engagements in ASEAN have in particular employed a creative array of media technologies, educational pedagogies, and campaigning strategies to guide and empower their respective target groups and communities, resulting in tangible remedial transformations in attitude, behavior, and action at individual and collective levels.

Objectives of Regional Workshop

This regional workshop aims to bring together some of these groups and organizations from the ASEAN region to share (and learn) from each other's practices of civic engagements in addressing some of the afore-mentioned issues in their respective communities, societies, and nation-states. A few presenters will participate from outside ASEAN, Japan in particular. For several decades, Japan has played a key role in helping to shape the region's "modernization" through business investments and development assistance. At the same time, some Japanese CSOs have collaborated with a number of organizations in ASEAN to work towards a more just and sustainable society.

More specifically, the workshop aims to address the following key questions:

- What were perceived problems/issues prioritized by your organization for civic engagement? How and why were they selected?
- What were the key strategies and methods used for civic engagement? Who and what were primarily targeted? Why?
- What were some of the internal and external factors and circumstances that helped to facilitate (and/or limit) these desired changes in the short and long term?
- What and how were some of the desired attitudinal changes, social practices, and policy changes manifested in the target groups? How were these changes 'measured' and assessed? What are their prospects of survival in the long term?
- What were some unexpected and unintended negative consequences of your civic engagements with the target groups? How were they eventually addressed?
- What are some of your visions and plans for regional collaboration based on your civic engagement experiences?

Format of Presentation

- Each organization is given a maximum of 30 minutes to address the above questions.
- The presentation should be in power-point supplemented with visuals such as photos and short videos.
- Each presenter is requested to submit a two-page presentation abstract in advance. All abstracts will be included in a workshop report which will be published sometime in 2018.
- A prepared paper of this presentation is not required but recommended for distribution among workshop participants. Any material prepared in advance, will be made accessible to all participants prior to the Workshop for effective conduct of the discussions. A Workshop website will be launched prior to the Workshop and the materials will be uploaded.
- Samples of the organization's civic engagement activities (books, posters, videos, artwork, social media links, etc.) are welcomed for sharing with workshop participants. These can also be uploaded on the Workshop website.

- English will be the medium of communication. Presentations will be grouped and moderated thematically. The discussant, a public intellectual/activist, will then highlight and synthesize salient points in the case studies from wider perspectives to facilitate discussion, which helps formulate ideas for public policies and/or other follow-up activities.

Appendix B: Program of the Yogya Workshop

Program
Regional Workshop
"Civic Engagement for a Just and Sustainable ASEAN:
Our Stories and Practices"
August 11-15, 2017, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Meeting venue and accommodation: The Phoenix Hotel, Yogyakarta
Jl. Jenderal Sudirman No.9, Yogyakarta 55233 – Indonesia
Tel. + 62 (0)274 566 617, Fax + 62 (0)274 566 856
www.accorhotels.com/gb/hotel-5451-the-phoenix-hotel-yogyakarta-mgallery-by-sofitel/index.shtml

August 11, 2017 (Friday)

Arrival of participants

August 12, 2017 (Saturday)

All meetings will take place at Phoenix I Room, Ground Floor

06:00- Breakfast at Paprika Restaurant, Ground Floor

08:00-08:30 **Registration,** in front of Phoenix I Room

08:30-10:20 **Session I: Opening**, **Setting the tone**
MC: **Michiko Yoshida**

Welcome remarks:
Surichai Wun'Gaeo, Professor Emeritus, Director, Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University
Siti Syamsiyatun, Director, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS)

First keynote speech:
Erna Witoelar, Co-chair, Advisory Board of Indonesian Philanthropy Association; Founder, KEHATI (Indonesian Biodiversity Conservation Trust Fund); Former UN Special Ambassador for MDGs in Asia Pacific
Introduction of the speaker:
Mochamad Indrawan, Independent researcher and consultant for forest and climate change, Indonesia
Expression of appreciation:
Nualnoi Treerat, Director, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Introduction to the workshop:
Toshi Doi, Senior Advisor, Mekong Watch, Japan/ Thailand
Yeoh Seng Guan, Senior Lecturer, School of Arts & Social Sciences Monash University Malaysia
-Workshop concept, flow, goal, guidelines
-Self-introduction

10:20-10:45 Group picture and coffee break

10:45-12:35 **Session II: Thematic presentations: Community empowerment**
Moderator: **Yeoh Seng Guan**
Discussant: **Maung Maung Yin**, Vice President and Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Founding Director of Peace Studies Center, Myanmar Institute of Theology, Myanmar

10:50-11:20 **Josie Fernandez**, Special Representative, Society for the Rights of the Indigenous People of Sarawak, Malaysia
11:20-11:50 **Chandra Kirana Prijosusilo**, Founder and Chair, Sekar Kawung Foundation, Indonesia
11:50-12:20 **Supa Yaimuang**, Director, Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Thailand
12:20-12:35 Q&A

12:35-14:00 Lunch at Paprika Restaurant, Ground Floor

14:00-17:20 **Session II: Thematic presentations: Community empowerment** (continued)

14:05-14:35 **Khamphoui Saythala**, Executive Director, Participatory Development Training Centre (PADETC), Lao PDR
14:35-15:05 **Nonette Royo**, Co-founder and Head of Networking and Fellowship, The Samdhana Institute, the Philippines/Indonesia
15:05-15:35 **Ted Mayer**, Academic Director, INEB (International Network of Engaged Buddhists) Institute, USA/Thailand
15:35-15:50 Q&A
15:50-16:10 Coffee break

16:10-17:20 Discussion

- Discussant to provide linkages among the presentations and highlight points for further/in-depth exchanges
- Open floor discussion
- Synthesis by the discussant
- Closing by the moderator

19:00- **Welcome dinner**

August 13, 2017 (Sunday)

06:00-08:30 Breakfast

08:30-09:30 **Session III: Sustaining the tone**

Second keynote speech:
Heng Monychenda, Founding Director, Buddhism for Development, Cambodia
Introduction of the speaker:
Penchom Saetang, Founding Director, Ecological Alert and Recovery - Thailand
Expression of appreciation:
Hiroko Aihara, Journalist, Founding Director, Japan Perspective News, Inc., Japan

Introduction to breakout session:
Yeoh Seng Guan and **Toshi Doi**

09:30-11:20 **Session IV: Breakout session 1**
Group discussion: Setting agenda, focus
Group I facilitator: Ted Mayer
Group II facilitator: Nat Manickam
(Coffee included)

11:20-12:00 **Session V: Reporting back from group discussions/Q&A**
Facilitator: **Mochamad Indrawan**

12:00-13:30 Lunch at Paprika Restaurant, Ground Floor

13:30-17:40 **Session VI: Thematic presentations: Public advocacy**
Moderator: **Nualnoi Treerat**
Discussant: **Dicky Sofjan**, Core Doctoral Faculty, ICRS

13:35-14:05 **Mariko Komatsu**, Fukushima Project Leader, Japan-Iraq Medical Network; Fukushima Booklet Committee Member, Japan
14:05-14:35 **Hiroko Aihara**
14:35-15:05 **Sompong Srakaew**, Founder/Executive Director, Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN), Thailand
15:05-15:20 Q&A
15:20-15:40 Coffee break
15:40-16:10 **Tran Thi Lanh**, Chairperson/Founding Board, Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (SPERI), Vietnam
16:10-16:40 **Nat Manickam**, Founder/Director, Centre for the Study of Sustainable Futures and Spirituality, Malaysia
16:40-16:50 Q&A

16:50-17:50 Discussion

Free evening

August 14, 2017 (Monday)

06:00-08:30 Breakfast

08:30-12:00 **Session VII: Thematic presentation: Policy engagement**
Moderator: **Josie Fernandez**
Discussant: **Chheang Vannarith**, Southeast Asia Consultant, The Nippon Foundation, Cambodia/Japan

08:35-09:05 **Ahmad Rifai**, Co-founder and Director, Kota Kita Foundation, Indonesia
09:05-09:35 **Hezri Adnan**, Fellow, Academy of Sciences Malaysia, Malaysia
09:35-10:05 **Yoichi Tani**, Director, Collaboration Center for Minamata Disease Victims, Japan
10:05-10:35 **Penchom Saetang**
10:35-10:55 Coffee Break
10:55-11:15 Q&A
11:15-12:15 Discussion

12:15-13:30 Lunch at Paprika Restaurant, Ground Floor

13:30-15:10 **Session VIII: Breakout session 2**
Guidelines: **Yeoh Seng Guan** and **Toshi Doi**
Group discussion and write up:
Next steps on collaboration and action
Group I facilitator: Ted Mayer
Group II facilitator: Nat Manickam

15:10-15:30 Coffee break

15:30-16:00 **Session IX: Reporting back from group discussions and synthesis**
Facilitator: TBC

16:00-17:30 **Session X: Wrap up--Way forward**
Moderator: **Toshi Doi**
Resolutions and action plans: **Yeoh Seng Guan** and **Michiko Yoshida**
Concluding remarks:
Mochamad Indrawan and **Maung Maung Yin**

Adjourn

August 15, 2017 (Tuesday)

Departure of participants

Appendix C: Guidelines for Presenters, Discussants, and Moderators of the Yogya Workshop

Presenters

- Each presenter is given a maximum of 30 minutes to report your case. Please make sure to address the six key questions (see bottom of this document) in your presentation.
- English is the medium of presentation.
- Your presentation should be in power-point supplemented with visuals such as photos and short videos.
- Please avoid presenting materials directly from the Internet at the Workshop venue as technical difficulty may interfere with your presentation. Please download all the materials beforehand on to the power point for a readily presentation.
- Each presenter is requested to submit a presentation abstract by no later than Monday, July 31, 2017. The abstract should clearly lay out your responses to the five key questions. We would greatly appreciate it, if you could follow the style sheet below in writing your abstract:

Abstract Style Sheet
File: Word
Length: Not more than two pages
Size: A4
Line spacing: Single
Font style: 12 points in Times New Roman
Language: English
Non-English words are to be italicized with their English translations provided.

- Proofreading of the abstract by a native English speaker would also be greatly appreciated. Should we have editorial suggestions on your abstract prior to the publication of a workshop report, we would consult you.
- All abstracts will be posted on a project website and included in a workshop report (to be published in 2018). Both the website and

the report will be made publically accessible.

- Please send your abstract and power point to <Michiko.y@chula.ac.th>.
- Should you want a full paper to be made accessible to the Workshop participants, please send it **to the above e-mail address by August 7, 2017,** so that it can be uploaded on the Workshop website. Please note that the organizer will not be able to make hard copies of your papers during the Workshop.

Moderators

- Presentations will be thematically grouped and so indicated in the Workshop program.
- All the presentations in each thematic grouping will be given first. Please ensure that each presenter observes the maximum 30-minute timeframe.
- After all the presentations, there will be time for questions and discussion. Please facilitate questions, answers, and discussion within the designated timeframe.
- When a discussant is in the group you are assigned to, please ask her/him to give a summary of the presentations after the question-and-discussion session.
- You can facilitate more discussion if the time remains. Otherwise, please end the session.

Discussants

- Each discussant is given a maximum of 20 minutes to speak.
- The discussant's role is to highlight and synthesize salient points presented in the case studies from wider perspectives to facilitate discussion at the Workshop.
- One discussant will be expected to sum up four to six case presentations.
- Please ensure that your synthesis covers issues raised by the five key questions.

Key questions

- What were the perceived problems/issues prioritized by your organization for civic engagement? How and why were they selected?
- What were the key strategies and methods used for civic engagement? Who and what were primarily targeted? Why?
- What were some of the internal and external factors and circumstances that helped to facilitate (and/or limit) these desired changes in the short and long term?
- What and how were some of the desired attitudinal changes, social practices, and policy changes manifested in the target groups? How were these changes 'measured' and assessed? What are their prospects of survival in the long term?
- What were some unexpected and unintended negative consequences of your civic engagements with the target groups? How were they eventually addressed?
- What are some of your visions and plans for regional collaboration based on your civic engagement experiences?

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE ASEAN: Our Stories and Practices

Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
11-15 August 2017 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

IAS -CU Institute of Asian Studies Chulalongkorn University
ICRS INDONESIAN CONSORTIUM FOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES
ASIA center JAPANFOUNDATION