



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

CARAM Asia

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CARAM ASIA

The CARAM Asia Secretariat operates from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Secretariat Core Team comprises of:

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The CARAM Asia Vision

All people have the right to settle or migrate, and live and work in dignity, with equal rights, in a society where their quality of life is ensured.



Task Force on Migration, Health HIV and Well-Being

Brief Introduction of the Task Force on Migration, Health, HIV and Well-Being

Throughout the migration cycle, governments of origin, as well as sending countries treat migrant workers as a commodity. Their well-being and health rights are largely ignored. Migrant workers suffer from discrimination as reflected in health issues such as mandatory health and HIV testing with deportation, lack of access to HIV services and treatment, no information on health, limited access to health services, and poor working and living conditions.

Using various human rights and health rights frameworks, CARAM Asia developed the Migration, Health, and HIV (MHH) program by combining the previous Task Force of Empowering Migrants Living with HIV (TFEM) and the State of Health (SoH) Programme to focus on migrant workers' health rights. The objective of the MHH is to promote the health rights of migrants through reform of discriminatory policies and equity in provision and access of health services for migrant workers, including sexual and reproductive health and HIV.

This program also pays special attention to the health and well-being of undocumented migrant workers, as well as documented migrants who are deported for health conditions, especially HIV. Empowerment of migrants living with HIV and their spouses to be meaningfully involved in the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs and policies is an integral part of the MHH Task Force.

Objective

The objective of the Migration, Health, HIV, and Well-Being Task Force is to promote the health rights and wellbeing of migrants by advocating to reform discriminatory policies and include migrant workers under all targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-3) on “Ensuring healthy lives and promoting Well-being for all at all stages”.

Key Issues

- Mandatory HIV Testing and related deportation
- HIV Risks and Vulnerabilities (subgroups and intersecting communities)
- Access to Treatment
- Mental Health of Migrants
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Gender-Based Violence and its Impact on Health of Migrants (cross-cutting issue with above issues)

CARAM ASIA ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER MHH TASK FORCE

Since 1997 till now Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility – Asia (CARAM), a dynamic regional Asia network has pulled off lots of upsets that emerges on its way towards achieving the mission and vision of CARAM. This was possible with the support received from Robert Carr Fund (RCF) and its implementing partners from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, Philippines, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

For 2020, as usual CARAM made it through even when facing pandemic crisis. The global stumbled when pandemic hits. Though, the government and various organisation came forward to help the public. Likewise, without any hustle CARAM Asia and its implementing partners have genuinely relieved enormous number of migrants from the pandemic. Like in Bangladesh, CARAM member Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) protected and sensitized with necessary and accurate information for almost half a million of migrants via campaign called #StayHome. Furthermore, Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) has also provided emergency relief which cost almost BDT 3000 to 600 vulnerable migrants and their family members those in need.

While CARAM Asia members Community Development Services (CDS) in Sri Lanka and SPEAK Trust in Pakistan, as part of CARAM initiative have organized a three (03) months project which is to protect people living with HIV and those communities vulnerable to HIV which includes sex workers, MSM and transgender individuals from COVID – 19. Under this project, in Pakistan, CARAM and its partner SPEAK Trust successfully educated almost 101 million people on COVID-19 pandemic. Whereas, Community Development Services (CDS) enabled people living with HIV to be medically and mentally supported through counselling by professionals and advocated for their needs and challenges emerged due to the COVID 19 crisis.

As of another CARAM member in the Philippines, Action For Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) provided financial assistance to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who are living with HIV. This is because the imposition of lockdown inhibits accessibility and

availability of medications including ARVs for people living with HIV. Therefore, ACHIEVE reached out eight former overseas Filipino workers' living with HIV as well as helped a lot more people by partnered with a people living with HIV support group and supported them in terms of providing courier costs of medications and other commodities that they needed to send to their clients in remote areas and other provinces.

During the pandemic, though staff could not travel to other areas during the height of pandemic, both civil society organizations and government partners were still able to continue the activities as planned in their respective areas using the technical knowledge on HIV as they had already built their capacity in project implementation. Therefore, programmes could continue via online. The fruitful impacts yield from programmes and activities are explained in upcoming paragraphs.

The national member organizations in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka worked with implementers of HIV programmes on awareness raising about HIV. In Sri Lanka, CDS has successfully educated diverse layer of community that are MSM community, potential male and female migrants and government officials on HIV prevention and importance of getting HIV test. As a result, the increased awareness led them to practice safe sex behaviours that been taught in the workshops. Not only the participants but their close circles' have also benefitted by the participants since, they shared and spread the knowledge they gained.

In Bangladesh, newly infected HIV positive migrants gained a higher level confidence to face challenges and demands of life that awaiting as a HIV positive person. This was achieved by conducting two batches of life skills training by the experts in related field. Around 68 migrants with HIV positive were lifted to a peaceful life.

The CSO's and the Key Population community from Sri Lanka were educated and empowered about the recommendations of the Transitional Readiness Assessment report via the advocacy meetings that

had organised by Community Development Service (CDS). They have used this knowledge to give input for the GFATM 2022 country proposal for Sri Lanka.

CARAM Asia strived to bring a change in migrant's life by approaching all related-stakeholders and government officials. This effort brought fruitful change within the policy makers. In Sri Lanka, policy makers acknowledged that migrants were at high risk of contracting HIV and that they should be more adequately covered in National policies, programs and budgets. As well as CDS also created a positive view on Civil Society Organizations and Trade Unions who are working on migrant's issues among the higher officials. This allows Civil Society Organization's and Trade Union's future collaboration with the government in initiatives taken for migrants.

In Pakistan, SPEAK Trust advocates for the inclusion of migrants' HIV related needs and streamlining deportation process into new policy for emigrants which will reduce migrants' HIV vulnerabilities and provide them with HIV preventive information and better services in the long run.

In order to provide an ethical and non-stigmatized treatment to people living with HIV especially for migrants, health care professionals have been sensitized thoroughly on proper and ethical practice as a health professionals. This was done by distributing 7000 brochures and placement of eighty (80) posters at (09) hospitals that are located in Federal Territory and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

This was as an effort taken by SPEAK Trust under CARAM Asia project to enhance access to the health services for migrant's community by raising awareness and efforts for eradicating stigma and discrimination against HIV positive migrants and people living with HIV in general.

CARAM Asia's efforts also resulted in significant improvements in migrant workers' pre-departure orientation programs. In most countries, the information in orientation sessions conducted by the government officials were limited to informing workers to obey their employers and abide by the country's laws.

However, with CARAM's support, its members have been able to insert curriculum (and in some cases facilitate orientation sessions) on HIV, sexual health, and rights into pre-departure programs. CARAM Asia members make sure to provide quality information by providing comprehensive printed materials.

CARAM Asia brings its member organizations together to work on issues of mutual interest and concern. Member organizations then draw on each other's skills and experiences working on a single issue across multiple countries, as was the case for the recognition of migrant workers as a vulnerable and/or key population, which also increases advocacy effectiveness in the region.

***CARAM Asia Project on Advocacy of Migrant's HIV Issues,
Enhancing their Access to Health Services, Promoting and Protecting
HIV Positive Migrant's Rights***

CARAM Asia implements above mentioned project in collaboration with member organizations such as Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) in Bangladesh, SPEAK Trust in Pakistan, Community Development Services (CDS) in Sri Lanka and Action For Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) In the Philippines. This project is funded by the Robert Carr Fund (RCF) for Civil Society Networks.

Under the project, CARAM Asia does advocacy and capacity building with various partners, stakeholders, and people living with HIV (PLHIV) networks, CARAM Asia lobbies for comprehensive legal protection for all migrant workers health rights regardless of their immigration status.

The task force addresses stigma and discrimination against migrant workers, and makes efforts to enhance their migrant worker's access to health services through advocacy, awareness-raising on HIV prevention, and Capacity Building of Partners, Stakeholders, and Communities.



ADVOCACY

Activities falls under advocacy category involves programmatic policy and resource advocacy such as engagement between those in charge and those wanting changes, and those monitoring/watchdog activities

1

Meetings with various communities to develop leadership, network management and community mobilization among the migrant communities in Bangladesh

2

Advocate with policymakers for inclusion of returnee migrants and PLHIV in Bangladesh's policy

3

Advocacy meetings with officials for incorporating migrant workers needs in policy of Pakistan

4

Meeting with government officials to adopt comprehensive materials about HIV infections in Pakistan

5

Regional Research to Review Government Budget Allocation for Migrants

MAJOR ACOMPLISHMENTS

The development of a strong advocacy action plan is part of CARAM Asia strategy, as it recognizes the importance of using the information effectively which gathered via research and other sources so that it is put to good use through lobbying and advocacy work.

Meetings with various communities to develop leadership, network management and community mobilization among the migrant communities in Bangladesh

At the end of 2020, Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) along with the Community Forum of Bangladesh organized two meetings successfully with the support from CARAM Asia, Robert Carr Fund (RCF) and UNAIDS. The root of meetings is to achieve leadership, network management and community mobilization among participants of the meetings. These meetings involved a total of 88 participants including male and females from different community members and stakeholders. In this platform, representatives of seven key populations like, people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, people living with HIV (PLHIV), transgender people, youths, and migrant workers were joined together.



First Meeting with community forum members held at Malibag, Dhaka

These meetings were conducted as a sharing session between key populations, different community members and stakeholders. Thus, representatives from key populations shared their opinion on dealing with HIV infections and recommended some effective and quality HIV&AIDS services whereas, stakeholders and representatives from government officials shared initiatives taken by the government to achieve the 90-90-90 targets of preventing HIV&AIDS from Bangladesh as well as shared some useful inputs that hardly reach to the participants. The stakeholders in attendance, including representatives from UNAIDS, UNICEF, assistant inspector (LEAHN), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and etc. Hopefully, the meetings helped participants to accomplish the aim of

the program by get aware and apply the expertise and good practices shared by the participants.

Advocating with policymakers for inclusion of returnee migrants and PLHIV in Bangladesh's policy

It is obvious that returnee migrants and also migrant with HIV are not included in the social SafetyNet program in Bangladesh. Therefore, CARAM Asia in partnership with Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) along with other CSOs and NGOs were trying to advocate with the policymakers to include them in the social SafetyNet program. In line with this, an effort was made by OKUP which was issuing a press statement that appealed to the Bangladesh prime minister to announce a social safety net program for returnee migrant workers and their families, who are excluded in the government's existing social protection schemes.

Advocacy meetings with government officials for incorporating migrant workers needs in policy of Pakistan

Three advocacy meetings with officials from National AIDS Control Program (NACP), Provincial AIDS Control Programs (PACPs), and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Immigration Wing and Overseas Pakistanis Foundation and other stakeholders were held to incorporate migrant workers' HIV related needs and streamline deportation process in the new policy that will be developed for migrants later. Hence, the recommendations given on the content of the new policy will reduce migrants' HIV vulnerabilities and provide them with better services in long run. Furthermore, SPEAK Trust had convinced International Labour Organization (ILO) in integrating SPEAK Trust's HIV Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in ILO's Training manual which will then, enable briefing officers to provide comprehensive HIV information to potential migrants who are at the stage of preparing to go abroad for work.

Meetings with government officials to adopt comprehensive materials about HIV infections

Several meetings with the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment and Protectorate of Emigrants in Pakistan contributed to adaption of a comprehensive HIV content material by the Bureau of Emigration and protectorate of Emigrants. The officials allow to place it at all protectorate of migrant's offices in local languages. Thus, this action will benefit 0.5 million migrants and their families on average annually. It will prevent HIV infections among migrants and increase their access to health care services in Pakistan upon their return.

Regional Research to Review Government Budget Allocation for Migrants

South Asia and Southeast Asia are comprised of heavily populous, low-income and developing countries. Therefore, in terms of financial, those countries are highly dependent on the remittances earned through exporting manpower in the name of international labour migration. However, migrant's health is an area of concern especially, those work in informal economy because they face many challenges in accessing healthcare and services due to several factors like tend to experience face social exclusion, discrimination, language barriers, interpersonal challenges and forth . Furthermore, social, economic and political factors in origin and destination countries influence the risk of HIV infection of international labour migrants. These include separation from spouses, families and social and cultural norms, substandard living conditions, and exploitative working conditions. Therefore, these circumstance well explained the need of health care services to migrants in destination countries.

However, in destination countries, the policies and laws regulating in-migration are chaotic where migrants' health is neglected. Policies are built on the concept of a short-term remedy for labour shortage problems while policymakers failed to recognize critical contribution of migrant workers over the longer term which results in absence of a comprehensive policy on in-migration. These proved that the contributions and sacrifices of the migrants and their families are not always adequately reflected in the governments' budgets for the protection and welfare of migrants and their families, especially those with HIV.

Therefore, CARAM Asia is carrying out a review of the government's 'budget allocation for HIV and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) of migrants (including MSM migrants) interventions, policies and outcomes in numerous countries. This study aimed to generate data on experience of migrants in accessing available HIV and SRHR services. The research report then will be used to advocate for a proper and fair budget allocation for HIV and SRHR of migrants (including MSM migrants) interventions, policies and outcomes. This will be done by developing a regional research report based on the national reports submitted by the both sending and receiving countries which include Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, Bahrain and United Arab Emirates (UAE). As a research methodology, the partner countries had conducted review of literatures, numerous focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) with migrants and relevant stakeholders. The result of the research are stated below.

>> *Findings of the Research*

Bangladesh:

In Bangladesh, the existing government policies have made good progress in identifying the most pressing issues regarding HIV/AIDS and SRHR. Yet, the policies have not yet been efficient in delivering needed change. When looking at overall budget allocation for HIV and SRH, it shows lack of prioritisation for migrants. Evidently, budget utilisation for HIV programmes in Bangladesh, has been very poor in recent years which was reaching only c. 60% in 2018. While the budget for the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) has increased slightly year-on-year since its early existence, the ministry's budget allocations as a share of the total government budget have remained consistently low, hovering between 0.11% and 0.13% over the last four years.

Pakistan:

SPEAK Trust found some bitter truth which is for now there is no HIV/SRHR policy in place for emigrants under Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MoPHRD). Secondly, analysis shows that remittances contribution equates the amount of resources Pakistan needs to provide its citizenry with adequate health care but in return migrant workers do not get adequate resource for health especially for HIV & AIDS. From the experiences of the migrants, it revealed that migrants have to face stigmatized treatment from healthcare professionals and they supposed to bear their transportation fee needed for their treatment. Fortunately, their HIV diagnosis status kept confidential.

Philippines:

In Philippines, almost 10% migrants contributing to their economy in the form of remittances. In consequence, this had noticed by the government. Therefore, the welfare and rights of overseas Filipino workers have been protected quite well. This is because the research findings have proved that there are quite a number of programs and services available in all stages of migration cycle in Philippines. However, there is lack of data on allocation of funds for the programs and services offered. Yet, from obtained data the findings concluded that these agencies have adequate allocations that can be tapped to ensure rights and welfare of migrants especially, overseas Filipino workers are protected.

Hong Kong:

Findings from Hong Kong research, shows that foreign domestic workers' economic contribution to Hong Kong's economy was estimated to be about HK\$90 billion (USD\$12.6 billion), accounting for 3.6% of the Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While government expenses on services provided for migrant workers like HIV testing, HIV medical service, HIV&AIDS education activities and SRHR, it is estimated to be on a single digit of millions which is quite limited for migrant community.

Thailand:

Thailand exposed that number of migrants working in Thailand from various countries like Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam is comparatively higher than other countries. This have also reflected in their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which has drastically increased in 2019 with 17.9%. Therefore, it is crystal clear that migrant's contribution is high in Thailand. In a way to return their contribution, the facilities and services especially, healthcare services for HIV & SRHR has to be provided completely. However, the data on government spending for HIV & SRHR for migrants was lack and very limited.



AWARENESS RAISING ON HIV PREVENTION AMONG MIGRANT WORKERS

Activities falls under awareness raising category involves programmatic data, knowledge and information generation and dissemination related to HIV issues.

1

Pre-departure Orientation Sessions

2

Awareness Raising Workshops for diverse communities

3

Distribution and dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials

MAJOR ACOMPLISHMENTS

Awareness-raising is an important aspect of promoting a better understanding and increased awareness of health issues faced by migrant workers, particularly on HIV prevention, their right to equal protection under the law, and practical access to support and health services.

Pre-departure orientation sessions



Awareness raising session conducted by OKUP at Dhaka for female migrants

CARAM Asia's partners Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) and SPEAK Trust, have organized Pre-departure Orientation Sessions with potential migrants on HIV awareness and prevention. In where, one session was organized for outgoing female migrant workers in Bangladesh and three sessions were conducted for potential male migrants in Pakistan in the year of 2020. In these sessions, discussions were held to provide understanding regarding reasons as to why migrants are at risk of contracting HIV with a special focus on modes of HIV transmission and prevention, SRH and Mental Stress Management issues as well as migrants' rights.

The pre-departure orientation sessions were aimed at preventing new infections among migrant workers who secured a job in abroad and preparing to migrate at any time. These trainings successfully attracted a total of 26 outbound female migrants and a total of 39 potential male migrants from Bangladesh and Pakistan respectively.

Awareness raising workshops for diverse communities

Under CARAM Asia project, Community Development Services (CDS) conducted numerous awareness-raising workshops for diverse layers of the community in Sri Lanka. Firstly, 11 awareness raising workshops were held in different parts of Sri Lanka like Kurunegala, Horona, Galle, Panadura and Colombo which targeting potential migrants. From these workshops, CDS was able to educate a total of 180 potential male and female migrants on HIV prevention and safe migration.



HIV Awareness Raising Programme for MSM community by CDS

Secondly, Community Development Services (CDS) organized a workshop for MSM migrant community. A total of 15 MSM migrants who engaged in sex for income and those with the idea to migrate for employment attended the workshop. During the workshop, a mobile clinic was availed for HIV or STI testing. This is because the workshop relief their fear of getting tested for infectious disease. The feedback from Community Based Organization (CBO) partners and MSM community, revealed that the workshop brought some fruitful changes in moulding participant's understanding about testing which in turns pushed them to reach out CBOs to get sexual health advice as well as an increase in the usage of condoms was reported.

Distribution and dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials

Since awareness-raising via pre-departure orientation was less feasible to conduct during the pandemic, SPEAK Trust took an alternate route which is to use the social media platform to spread awareness. A total of 10,000 brochures and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials were shared with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) coalition partners before and during the COVID-19 outbreak, around 103 million people were reached through social media only by uploading comprehensive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material posts on HIV & AIDS. This effort helped in increasing awareness among migrants and reduce their likelihood of HIV infection.

Awareness Raising Workshops for potential male and female migrants by CDS in Sri Lanka



Awareness Raising Workshop for female migrants by OKUP in Bangladesh





ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Activities falls under this category involves provision of direct and quality health services for inadequately served population (ISP) groups.

1

Provide assistance to Oversea Filipino Workers Living with HIV-Assistance to obtain ARV refills.

2

Provide counselling and referral services for returnee migrants, deported migrants and their families



REDUCTING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST HIV POSITIVE MIGRANT WORKERS

This category is a subfield of enhancing access to service delivery. In where, activities under this subfield aimed to reduce stigma and discrimination against HIV positive migrants

3

Sensitize healthcare providers and hospital staffs by providing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in Pakistan

MAJOR ACOMPLISHMENTS

Migrant workers, and undocumented migrants, in particular, are often excluded from national programs for health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, and care, or social protection schemes. Therefore, CARAM Asia seeks to enhance the quality of services to migrants and their families or to provide services in locations where previously they were unavailable.

Provide assistance for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) with HIV

Due to the imposition of lockdowns and community quarantines during pandemic, accessibility and availability of medications including ARVs became a pressing concern for people living with HIV. This is because of the restrictions on public transportation and travelling which made it almost impossible for people (especially those living in more remote areas) to get ARV refills and other medications. Therefore, Action For Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) with the assistance from CARAM Asia provided financial support for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) living with HIV for accessing ARVs. As an outcome, ACHIEVE was able to reach out eight former overseas Filipino workers living with HIV in person. Additionally, ACHIEVE's partnership with a people living with HIV support group extended their financial support in terms of courier costs of medications and other commodities that the support group needed for their clients located in remote areas and other provinces.

Provide counselling and referral services for returnee migrants

In order to aware of migrant's health condition, SPEAK Trust provided counselling and referral services for returnee migrants, deported migrants and their families. This is because the counselling sessions motivated migrants to take voluntary testing to know their health status. Furthermore, SPEAK Trust arranged essential services for tested migrants like guiding them on receiving proper treatment. Directly, this ensure migrant's adherence to treatment and reduce the likelihood of further transmission to their close circles.

Sensitize healthcare providers and hospital staffs by providing IEC materials

Migrant workers routinely face stigma, discrimination, abuse, and a positive HIV status only compounds and further exaggerates the difficulties of an already vulnerable, exploited, and marginalized group. Therefore, CARAM Asia aims to reduce stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV (PLHIV) especially for migrant workers with HIV positive status. This is because stigma and discrimination are big barriers to access quality healthcare services. As an effort to combat this issue, distribution of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to hospital administration and hospital staffs were conducted on how to perform ethical treatment with HIV positive migrants without any discrimination in Pakistan by SPEAK Trust under CARAM Asia project funded by RCF.

Thus, out of 10 000 brochures printed, around 7000 brochures and 80 posters were distributed to nine (09) hospitals located in Federal Capital Territory and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The remaining 3000 brochures and 43 posters will be distributed in year 2021. This will lead to sensitization of healthcare providers which eventually will improve quality and ethical treatment of PLHIV. The information and educational material development and dissemination was done as a replacement of sensitization trainings was being done for last couple of years for hospital staffs and other providers and resulted in reducing the discriminatory practices by hospital staff members as reported by migrant workers who benefited from the services noticing change in hospital staff's behaviours.

>> CAPASITY BUILDING OF PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY

Activities falls under this category involves in provision of programmatic training, technical assistance, capacity building, and mentorship for partners, stakeholders and community

1

Capacity building workshop to scale up CSOs knowledge on HIV&AIDS, SRH issues of migrants'

2

HIV awareness workshops for government officers

3

Orientation for newly appointed officers on issues and concerns of OFWs living with HIV

4

Life skills trainings for people living with HIV

5

Regional capacity-building to advocate for sustainable HIV financing

MAJOR ACOMPLISHMENTS

CARAM Asia always pushes its partners to develop their capacity range and get flourish so that they can able to provide more efficient services to migrants.

Capacity building workshop to scale up CSOs knowledge on HIV&AIDS, SRH issues of migrants'

CARAM Asia's member Community Development Services (CDS) aimed to scale up civil society organizations (CSO's) knowledge on HIV/AIDS, SRH issues of migrants so, CDS had organized three (03) virtual advocacy discussion meetings with CSO's and Key Population's on the Transitional Readiness Assessment (TRA) report recommendations of the Global Fund AIDAS, Tuberculosis and Malaria(GFATM). These meetings were aimed to empower the partners to advocate with the government. As expected, the Civil Society Organization (CSO) and the Key Population community were educated and empowered about the recommendations of the TRA. This was a timely initiative giving CSOs adequate time to advocate with government before the GFATM leaves Sri Lanka .Besides that, CSOs have also used the empowered knowledge to give input for the GFATM 2022 country proposal for Sri Lanka.

HIV awareness workshops for government officers



Government Officer's Training Workshops conducted by CDS

CDS also conducted five (05) workshops for government officers from five (05) Divisional Secretariat offices located in Horana, Ingiriya, Bulathsinhala, Bandaragama and Milleniya in Sri Lanka. The workshops helped dispel various myths the officers had regarding HIV transmission and helped them to understand on practicing safe sex behaviours. The workshop also had developed the officer's skills and knowledge on imparting the knowledge learned to other people in the community.

Orientation for newly appointed officers on issues and concerns of OFWs living with HIV

In Philippines, CARAM Asia's implementing partner, Action For Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) organized an orientation for (26) newly appointed Foreign Service Officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs who were expected to be deployed to the different embassies and consular offices overseas. Therefore, this orientation developed their understanding on issues and concerns of Overseas Filipino Worker's living with HIV which they might encounter once they are deployed to different embassies and consulates overseas.

Life skills trainings for people living with HIV



Experts conduct lecture-like training during the life skill training which organized by OKUP

Since realizing the importance of life skill training for people living with HIV (PLHIV), Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) in cooperation with the National Network of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) in Bangladesh organized two batches of life skills training for newly affected or infected PLHIV. Thus, a total of 68 PLHIV participants were attended the two batches of training. Experts on life skills training were brought to teach and spread confidence within participants by injecting the ten core life skills and behavioral changes that are required to adapt and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life as a PLHIV.

Regional Capacity-building to Advocate for Sustainable HIV Financing

In order to advocate for budget allocation for migrant worker's HIV and AIDS related health and awareness services in sending and receiving countries, CARAM Asia aimed to build the capacity of member organizations, CSOs and migrant workers' organizations on HIV financing. In this regard, CARAM Asia planned a series of activities and conducted a regional training of CARAM Asia member organizations as a first step on HIV financing advocacy in 2019. The objective of this training was to develop and enhance participant's understanding on different key aspects of HIV financing in prevention and response as well as introducing various available and feasible strategies to advocate at a regional and national levels. The capacity building training involved participants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Nepal.

As a follow up of this regional training, CARAM member organizations organized numerous meetings with CSO's in their respective countries and developed likeminded CSO's coalition on HIV financing advocacy. This process was started in 2019 after the regional workshop and continued in 2020 as some of the partners organized relevant stakeholders meetings and developing CSO's coalition in following year and forward the plan in 2021 due to challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic.



SPEAK conducted an Advocacy Action Planning Workshop on Sustainable Financing & Budget Allocation on HIV & SRHR of Migrants

Thus, this initiative has extended till 2021. CARAM members has conducted several meetings with CSOs and people living with HIV networks working on migration and HIV issues in 2020. For example, SPEAK Trust in Pakistan conducted a training workshop on advocacy of HIV financing with seven (07) representatives of CSOs who are working on HIV, migrants' rights as well as senior government officers from Integrated HIV, Hepatitis & Thalassemia Control Program Kheber-Pakhtonkhwa and key HIV populations. As in outcome, participants' knowledge regarding funding landscape of HIV and SRHR of migrants was enhanced through discussions and sharing of research findings on HIV budget allocation.

As part of training, participants were encouraged to develop numerous action plans on two main focus areas:

1. Integrating migrant workers into their existing projects
2. Advocacy for sustainable HIV funding for migrants

The activity planned for second focus had yield numerous of advantages on its implementation. Because CSOs extended support for strengthening referral and data network. Indirectly, this will improvise the budget allocation in the future since all participants agreed that migrants are an excluded group in the national and provincial strategic plan on HIV and they have agreed to advocate for systematic acknowledgement of migrants. These show the effort made by the coalition members to actively put forward the agenda of migrant's health at UN and government's meetings. During this activity participants were provided with 10,000 brochures for potential migrants on HIV awareness. This assisted SPEAK Trust to network better and also attracted the collaboration of the government.



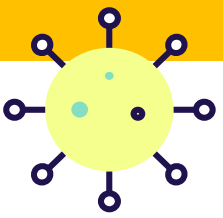
SPEAK participating in Inter-Provincial HIV Coordination Meeting of Managers

As a partner, Community Development Services (CDS) also took a step forward to achieve the objective of the regional capacity building training commenced in 2019 which was organizing a national virtual consultation meeting with seventeen (17) likeminded CSO's and policymakers including Deputy Director General, Ministry of Health and Director National STD/AIDS Control Program with the aim to develop an advocacy plan for HIV financing for the migrant worker's community. As a result, some essential inputs regarding migrant workers have been highlighted and emphasized to respective authorities. Like vulnerability of migrant workers towards HIV and the gaps have emerged in HIV-related services for the migrant community. The direct outcome of the meeting was participant's enhanced ability to spotlight the importance of testing for returnee migrants and emphasized the development of a proper plan to implement it.

Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) in the Philippines, took an initiative to reach the goal by conducting a HIV Financing Advocacy Training for CSO members of the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) via online. In this training, participants obtained knowledge on the subject who did not have information and understanding on the needs of HIV financing advocacy as well as had induced their interest to continue working with ACHIEVE and other organizations to develop more knowledge as they continue to represent their respective sectors in the Council and in their own future advocacy work.



Advocacy Action Planning Workshop on Sustainable Financing & Budget Allocation on HIV & SRHR of Migrants by SPEAK



COVID-19 RESPONSES

During COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers were affected badly because some got deported in destination countries, while returnee migrants got treated badly by the public upon arrival. This got even worse when information regarding COVID-19 prevention was not available in migrant worker's languages in receiving countries. So, CARAM Asia took several initiatives to raise awareness among migrant workers via various sources and provided required information to them as well as lifted their struggles by fulfilling their necessities.

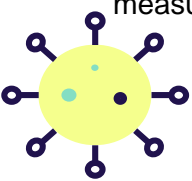
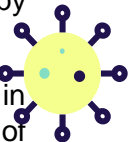
CARAM Asia's partner in Bangladesh with the similar intention that of providing accurate information to migrant workers and to sensitize Bangladeshi citizens about the importance of avoiding all kinds of hate speeches against migrants, Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) has launched an information campaign titled #Stayhome through social networks like *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* and *IMO*. However, OKUP official Facebook page is the main centre of the campaign with 1200 active members. Over the months the campaign has highlighted stigma and misinformation associated with coronavirus via social media (online content). As a result, the campaign and published materials have reached around 500,000 unique users, the migrant's community.

Besides that, to ease migrants during the pandemic, Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP) gave a hand to needy migrants in the country. For example, OKUP with the support from development partners provided emergency relief like food packages equivalent to BDT. 3,000 to 600 vulnerable migrants and their family members. At the same time, OKUP provided BDT. 3,000 unconditional cash grants to the 1025 most vulnerable migrants and their family members. To comfort their mental health, OKUP provided helpline counselling to around 3000 returnee migrant workers, families of the current migrant workers, as well as outbound migrants. Not forgetting the undocumented migrant workers who remained in the destination countries, so OKUP issued a Press Statements on the annulment of the decision of forced return of undocumented migrant workers by some destination countries amid the global crisis of COVID-19.

Similarly in Sri Lanka, CARAM Asia partner Community Development Services (CDS) had done its part in reliving migrants' struggles during the pandemic. One such example is the development of series of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials that targeted in-service migrant workers. These leaflets are designed in a way of requesting migrants to stay safe from the pandemic and stay in touch with the Sri Lanka consulate offices. These materials were produced in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages for better understanding and were released together with their partner CSO's on *WhatsApp*, *Instagram*, *Facebook*, and other social media platforms. This helped migrant workers to not only stay safe but to register with consulate offices for repatriation.

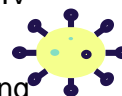
Besides that, CARAM Asia implemented a three 3 months project during the pandemic with funding support from AidsFonds in partnership with CDS and SPEAK Trust to enable PLHIV and communities vulnerable to HIV which includes sex workers, men who have sex with men (MSM), migrant workers and transgender individuals to protect themselves from COVID – 19. It further aimed at enabling PLHIV and HIV positive migrants to be medically and mentally supported through counselling and to advocate for their needs and challenges due to the COVID-19 crisis.

As participating in this project, SPEAK Trust generated and disseminated information through social media platform and held mainstream media shows to achieve the objective. For instance, two live shows on Pakistan Television broadcasted and two radio shows aired on FM 101. Eight (08) posts were published and promoted on *Facebook* and *YouTube*. This media plays a huge role as a medium to deliver inputs related to precautionary measures taken against COVID-19 and the importance of continuing treatment for HIV as well as safe return



of labor migrants during the pandemic crisis. As an outcome, millions of people have gained awareness via these platforms which approximately hits 101 million people.

Whereas, CDS implemented five (05) activities under this project with the help of three organizations namely Lanka Plus, Positive Hopes Alliance and Saviya Development Foundation. As a part of the activities, telephonic-counselling was provided to 70 distressed HIV positive migrants by two doctors from National STD/AIDS Control Program (NSACP). Through this activity, the doctors referred struggling PLHIVs to respective organizations which can help them to find employment and provide economic relief as well as assisted them to access health services like ARVs. However, some reluctance was noticed from PLHIV/HIV positive returnee-migrants in contacting doctors at National STD/AIDS Control Program (NSACP).

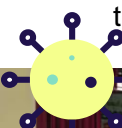


Therefore, CDS publicized about counselling services by posting around 400 leaflets on social-media including Facebook and websites of two PLHIV organizations, CDS and CSO's working with PLHIV community. Although publicity was done, PLHIV still showed reluctance to confide issues with medical doctors, instead they preferred to reach-out PLHIV organizations and peers. Therefore, CDS conducted eight (08) workshops for people living with HIV (PLHIV), men who have sex with men (MSM) communities, transgender (TG) and commercial sex workers (CSW) on covid-19 prevention. Around 741 people benefited from these workshops.

Telephone survey was conducted among 50 PLHIVs to identify their issues faced by them. This survey was aimed to formulate an advocacy report for the Ministry of Health/NSACP with key recommendations to improve the situation of PLHIV. The report has successfully been submitted to the Director National STD/AIDS Control Program (NSACP) and Director Ministry of Health.

Lastly, monthly reports are prepared based on the interviews with nine (09) government officials at Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) clinics including one interview with the National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP) in Colombo. From this interviews, CDS understood the needs of PLHIV and what steps the government has taken and what gaps are still remaining to offer better services and access to ARV's. This data and information was used to further support the advocacy report on PLHIV which was presented to the government.

As for Action For Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) in the Philippines, launched an awareness campaign on COVID-19 prevention through Facebook in May 2020 to supplement government efforts in reaching out to communities and the general public. Although this wasn't exclusively for the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) community, the campaign still has generated quite a number of engagements among overseas Filipino workers. Not only this, to cover psychosocial aspects of overseas Filipino workers and people living with HIV who affected during the pandemic, a number of debriefing sessions were organized via online by ACHIEVE. The whole program consists of three group sessions which held once a week by registered psychologist. These support group-alike sessions were provided a space for participants to open up their struggles and share their coping mechanism handled during the pandemic. In a way, it also provided an outlet for the participants to interact with others since face-to-face interactions have been limited due to the lockdowns. The first session received a big welcome and positive feedback from the participants. Therefore, this impetuses ACHIEVE to continue the sessions on following weeks in the year.



Covid-19 Prevention Workshops by CDS



Task Force on Migrant Workers' Rights (MWR)

Brief Introduction of the Task force on Migrant Workers' Rights

The Migrant Workers Rights Programme seeks to address the absence of legal protection, rights to redress, and access to justice for migrant workers. The abuse, exploitation, and discrimination faced by migrant workers are compounded by the fact that migrant workers are often viewed as a temporary cheap commodity to meet the destination countries' production and domestic needs.

The situation is made worse with the rising costs of migration that force many poor workers to migrate through unofficial channels resulting in them becoming undocumented migrant workers. Some exploitative employers refuse to renew work permits and pay wages, the majority of employers keep passports and/or travel documents of workers in their custody, which force migrant workers to become undocumented.

However, CARAM Asia views the lack of documentation as an administrative issue that should not deny undocumented migrant worker's human rights. Through advocacy with various stakeholders, CARAM Asia has been consistently lobbying for comprehensive legal protection measures to be made available for all migrant workers regardless of their immigration status.

The Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW) program of CARAM Asia area focuses on the recognition of domestic work as an economic activity and to have it included under national employment act or labor laws in both origin and destination countries. Key activities include advocacy, utilizing appropriate international instruments (SDG, Domestic Workers Convention 189, Core labor standards of ILO, CEDAW Convention Recommendation NO. 26, and Migrant Workers Convention) public campaigns, and awareness programs. Activities also include building regional cooperation with other networks, trade unions, and organizations to strengthen the response towards protecting and promoting the labor and health rights of foreign domestic workers.

CARAM Asia has initiated the formation of the United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights (UFDWRs), a coalition of regional and international groups that advocate for foreign domestic workers' rights. Due to a lack of recognition and protection under labor laws, among other factors foreign domestic workers experience rights violations as well as violence, abuse, and exploitation by employers, recruiting agents. The FDWs stay at employer's houses in isolation without any social protection and freedom to mobility puts them at risk of sexual and physical violence. CARAM Asia addresses these issues and provides legal services to the survivors of violence under this task force.

Key Priorities

- Women Migrant Workers with a focus on Foreign Domestic Workers
- Access to justice/ legal framework
- Undocumented migrant workers (addressing modern-day slavery)

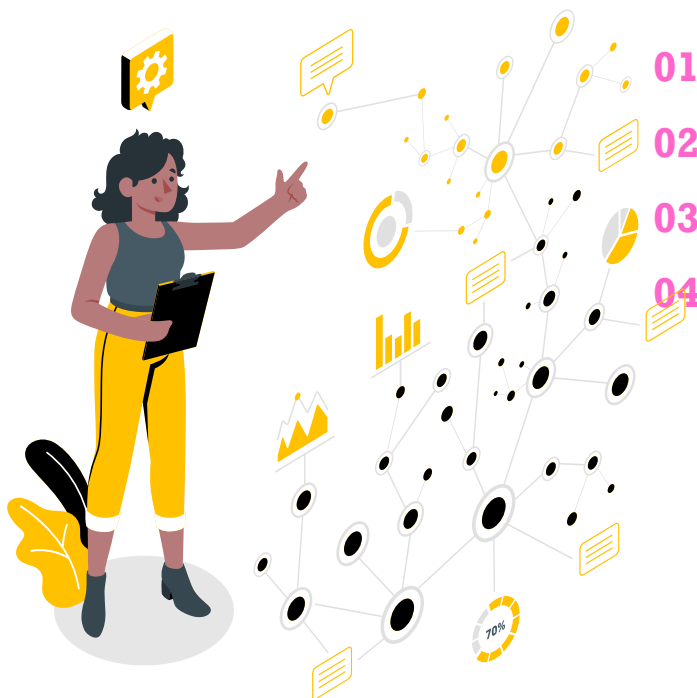


Empowering Women Migrant Domestic Workers and Promoting their Rights in Malaysia

CARAM Asia undertook a 1-year project funded by the Mondiaal FNV Foundation, for which implementation period was from 2019 to 2020, titled “Empowering Women Migrant Domestic Workers and Promoting their Rights in Malaysia”. This project aimed to promote legal protection and empower women, migrant domestic workers, through the creation and spread of awareness on their rights in Malaysia. This is because, in Malaysia, domestic workers are not protected by any legislation. Domestic workers are not considered workers therefore they do not have any protection under labour laws of the country. In most cases, even standard employment contracts do not exist and where it exists it is often ignored or replaced by sub-contracts upon arrival in the country. Usually, the sub-contracts are not based on original terms and conditions of employment even the salary is also reduced. Therefore, the project aimed at enhancing access to justice for Indonesian women migrant domestic workers, empower workers about their rights, enhance community workers’ capacity to help domestic workers in case of need.

CARAM Asia’s implementing partners for this project are Tenaganita, North South Initiative, Serantau, Trade Unions in Malaysia and Solidaritas Perempuan (SP) in Indonesia.

Under this project, CARAM Asia has helped almost three thousand eight hundred and ninety (3890) Indonesian domestic women migrant workers from various aspects like providing telephonic counselling, legal advices, case referral, walk-in counselling, free legal aid, rescue services etc. Out of total 3890 cases received from women survivors, 3845 cases were handled by CARAM Asia partners’ Tenaganita in Malaysia and 45 cases by Solidaritas Perempuan (SP) in Indonesia respectively.



- 01 Activities by Solidaritas Perempuan (SP)**
- 02 Activities by Tenaganita in Malaysia**
- 03 Capacity Building Trainings**
- 04 Pre-departure trainings in Indonesia**

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Activities by Solidaritas Perempuan (SP)- (Indonesia)

Legal Aid and Case Referral Services

The 45 cases received by SP from Indonesia was handled by SP National Secretariat and SP Communities, namely SP Palu, SP Mataram, SP Sumbawa, SP Makassar. These cases was resolved by conducting legal consultation via telephone, especially when a case is received. These consultations were held mainly to discuss about strategies and alternatives that could be taken in handling a case. Therefore, most of the cases were consulted by telephone, both with the concerned women migrant workers and with their families. This consultation is then also followed up with a direct complaint process and follow-up both in litigation and non-litigation. Besides that, SP also worked together with TenagaNita on reintegrating of fifty three (53) Indonesian domestic women migrant workers with their family whom were previously working in Malaysia.

Activities by TenagaNita in Malaysia

Legal Aid and Case Referral Services and Provision of Support and Care

As mentioned above, TenagaNita received 3845 cases with diverse complaints. As soon as the cases received, the case officers document it thoroughly following the guidelines, before it is placed in the hard file and the online database. Thus, all case officers were trained on documentation and storing the case details online in TenagaNita's database system. The process of case handling was carried out at the National and Community through litigation and non-litigation channels. In order to work on legal procedures, domestic workers were got briefed about the decisions that they could make to resolve their case. Few options were explained to them to make the right and informed decisions.

Upon deciding and completing the documentation, the survivors get sheltered in TenagaNita's shelterhome while waiting for court procedures, the settlement with employer or repatriation. Hence, one hundred fourteen (114) Indonesian Women Migrant Domestic Workers (IWMDWs) were provided with shelter home services where they received food, clothes, hygiene products, and other basic needs as well as enabled access to health care, legal support and other essential services. The affected Domestic Workers were also provided with counselling service during their stay in the shelter.

While majority of affected domestic workers were administered with legal aid specifically for cases that need to be resolved through the justice system or the labour court. Likewise, 157 cases were field into relevant courts of law such as High Court, Labour Court, Court of Appeal etc. Twenty-eight (28) IWMDWs' unpaid wages cases were field in labour court, five (5) cases were filed in Court of Appeal and three (03) cases were filed in High Courts because the women were cheated in re-hiring program to legalize the status of domestic workers.

Besides that, fifty-three (53) IWMDWs were provided with repatriation services after settling their cases in Malaysia. Sixty- six (66) IWMDWs were rescued in emergency situation from their work places. Seventy two (72) IWMDWs' cases were resolved with conflict management process and resultantly these women received RM 116648.76 (USD 29162.19) as a compensation and unpaid wages from their employers. This was achieved by TenagaNita who assisted with conflict resolution by conducting negotiations between the workers and employers/agents or any other stakeholder for settlements.

Capacity Building Trainings

There are total 408 people benefitted from the trainings, capacity building trainings and women empowerment activities conducted by CARAM Asia partner Tenaganita in Malaysia. As an outcome, one hundred and forty (140) young lawyers were provided legal case handling trainings. Many of them represented the above mentioned IWMDWs in the Courts with very minimal fee.

A total of one hundred fifty one (151) participants attended the Post Arrival Trainings conducted by Serantau an acquired vital knowledge and information about their rights as migrant workers and available support mechanism in Malaysia to reach out in case of need.

Two Capacity building trainings under CARAM Asia Secretariat were organised with forty two (42) community leaders and community based organizations (CBOs). The participants were trained on required knowledge in order to handle women domestic workers' cases and refer them to the services providing organizations for further legal support.

Pre-Departure Trainings in Indonesia

Solidaritas Perempuan organized four (04) pre-departure orientations in the form of training, each training comprised of two (02) days in three (03) SP Communities (SP Mataram, SP Palu, and SP Sumbawa), and three (03) days in one SP Community namely SP Kendari for women migrant workers with a job in abroad and a group of women migrant worker's leaders representing four villages from Kendari. These trainings were consists of information sharing by migrant workers themselves and experts as well as critical thinking inducing activities like role-plays. As a result of pre-departure training conducted by SP, a total of 61 women migrant workers including prospective migrant workers increased their understanding of the rights of migrant workers and their families based on the Convention C190, information related to trafficking, including the applicable legal provisions, the vulnerability of migrant workers to HIV, and the strategies that can be adopted when dealing with situations of violence and injustice throughout the stages of migration.

In addition, 12 women leaders have also increased their capacities in disseminating information and knowledge to other women migrant workers. Moreover, from the activities carried out, various problems and situations of women were also documented which pushed them to decide in becoming migrant workers, especially to work as domestic workers abroad. The pre-departure orientations were conducted in the form of discussions to strengthen the knowledge and understanding of prospective migrant workers regarding safe migration procedures, migrant worker's rights at work, and other important information needed when working as a migrant worker aboard. SP also see the demand of pre-departure orientation to be carried out in several other areas in Indonesia as many prospective women workers benefit from the information provided in the trainings.

Overall, large number of women are empowered with knowledge and information to help their communities and willing to participate in advocacy activities to raise their voices by attending the programmes organized under FNV project.

The Empowering Women Migrant Domestic Workers and Promoting their Rights project was going on in 2020 and this is the year when COVID-19 pandemic crisis affected not only people but usual working methods and implementation of activities became a big challenge. Especially organizing meetings, trainings, workshops were not possible. Therefore, CARAM Asia changed its working strategy and framework and replaced some of project activities with feasible programmes such as assessment of COVID-19 impact on migrant workers and the development of post arrival training manual. Nevertheless, this was possible even in the midst of pandemic crisis.

Assessment of COVID-19 Impact on Migrant Workers in Malaysia

Since the world has come under the grip of COVID-19 pandemic with rapidly increasing number of cases around the globe, affected countries have taken drastic measures to control the outbreak such as lockdown, temporary restrictions of movement, including entering and exiting countries, shut down of public and private institutions and almost all economic and social activities. Consequently, millions of migrant workers have lost their jobs. This critical but often neglected section of society has been thrust into the spotlight by the coronavirus pandemic. The media has reported lot of challenges and difficulties which migrant workers have suffered from. Like other destination countries, migrant workers in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand have lost their income to support themselves and their families due to the abrupt business closures and lockdowns.

In order to obtain in-depth knowledge about migrant worker's challenges, CARAM Asia took initiative of research for assessment of COVID-19 impact on migrant workers in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand. In Malaysia the study was conducted in partnership with North South Initiative (NSI). In this regard, NSI conducted six Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 60 migrant workers to assess the impact of COVID-19. These participants were provided with knowledge and information about their rights after getting answers for research questions from them. Since the movement control order implemented, all the discussions were done online. The researchers' team followed the guide questions that have prepared earlier. The questions covers the main challenges faced by migrant workers during the COVID -19 situation in terms of labour, security, health, access to justice, international solidarity, cross border assistance, embassy support and gender justice including the solutions they tested, what worked and what did not.

The initial findings showed that migrants are major contributors to economic and social aspects of country of origin and destination. However during the pandemic, migrant workers were very vulnerable and could barely survive. It also shows that the gaps in law, regulations and enforcement are very vital to be bridged during this critical period. During the interview, the interviewees shared their struggles faced during the pandemic which shows how precarious their situation is during the COVID-19 as employers and agents took advantage of the situation that occurred to cheat the migrant workers. For instance, withhold their wages, agents failed to assist migrants to return home safely during sudden flight cancellation and workers were not able to contact anyone for help since agents withhold their hand phones. Such situations pushed the workers in a helpless situation. Unfortunately, this becomes even worst when there is no formal check and balance system from the government side to ensure all disputes have been settled before workers have been deported.

The FGDs are also consistent with the data collected via surveys. The researchers emphasized that it will consume much more time to capture and understand the full scenario of COVID-19 impact on rights of migrants, since this a new phenomenon faced by the migrant rights groups and migrant leaders. The research in Hong Kong and Thailand is in progress.



Development of Post Arrival Training Manual

Upon arrival in Malaysia vast majority of migrant workers are not aware of their human rights particularly their rights as migrant workers in the country. They do not know where to go and from whom to seek help if they need or if they suffer from any violation of their rights as well as violence, abuse and exploitation. Therefore it is very important to develop training materials such as post arrival training manual to be used by various stakeholders to conduct trainings with migrant workers upon their arrival in the country. Since the necessity was there CARAM Asia and NSI started working on it with the aim to design, plan and rollout a comprehensive Post Arrival Orientation Program (PAOP) for Migrant Workers in Malaysia.

The training manual should be able to help workers operationalize the rights and principles as per labour laws, national laws and cultures in origin (Indonesia) and destination (Malaysia) countries, international standards and human rights. The POAP should help migrant workers understand the “HOW TO” of obtaining their rights. The POAP should also help employers see this as manual for a Win-Win scenario, especially when disputes arise.

NSI team had meetings with several stakeholders to obtain information for post arrival training manual including trade unions which helped in developing understanding on the subject and need for mutual efforts and cooperation to promote and protect migrant worker's rights in Malaysia especially Indonesian women domestic workers. The team aims to develop a manual that attempts to bring together the laws and current recommendations in a hybrid, in which activist can use to call the Malaysian government and other governments of sending countries for more protection. To ensure the rights of all workers, NSI also inserted other general rights information apart from domestic workers' related rights. Thus, the questions used for the interview sessions were based on the flaws in the current protection systems like laws and regulations to seek the possible remedies. The team coordinated the data collection and mobilization of knowledge and information from various platforms, individuals, formally or informally.

It can be said that NSI and its team acquired fruitful knowledge from the in-depth interviews that were conducted with almost 40 stakeholders including government officials, experts from related field, migrant workers, independent consultant, representative from trade unions and International Labour Organization (ILO) and forth. The comprehensive interview sessions covers various aspects like complexity of labour and dilemmas faced by migrant workers, best practices that applied in reintegration process by ASEANS, utilization of web portal-Saver Asia, importance of unionism and collective agreement, crimes and its factors of occurrence, factors that impede migrants from attaining their rights, exploring statistical analysis in way of predicting the trends and issues, the importance of the collaboration and solidarity across borders and between Union NGOs and workers and etc.

Overall, North South Initiative Research team has covered almost all aspects and dimensions of information needed to develop a comprehensive post arrival training manual via the enormous interview sessions. Despite, the interviewees also spotlight a strong point besides the research that domestic workers and migrants are excluded from many aspects of labour related laws in Malaysia .Therefore, they literally facing countless legal obstacles to enjoy their rights as a labours just like the local workers.



Task Force on Migration, Development and Globalization (MDG)

Brief Introduction of the Task force on MDG

Migration is globular in nature and is heavily affected by neoliberal policies and structures which impact migrant workers' health outcomes and well-being.

This program aims at linking and filling the gaps in the current migration and development discourses by adequately addressing the impact of migrant workers' health in the context of globalization.

Activities include strengthening the analysis, perspectives, and awareness on globalization/ World Trade Organisation (WTO) / International Financial Institutions (IFIs) policies on migration and health; the impact and implication of migrant workers' health through the privatization of healthcare and developing global action on debt and poverty to reduce all vulnerabilities in migration.

"CARAM Asia contributed globally and strengthened its potential by participating in events and programs organized by International Organizations, UN agencies and other actors in the field such as United Nations Regional Network, Clean Clothes Campaign, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) and ESAP who working on enhancement of migrants life as CARAM Asia.



Members

In

Clean Clothes Campaign SEAsia Coalition

Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) is a global network dedicated to improve working conditions and empowering workers in the global garment and sportswear industries. Basically, CCC bring together more than 230 organizations covering various perspectives and interests like consumer advocacy, women's rights and poverty reduction. As a grassroots network, both in garment producing and consumer markets, Clean Clothes Campaign identifies the local problem and develop an objective to work on which will then transform into global actions in the form of international campaign that participates by different organization from worldwide with same goal.¹

The South East Asian (SEAsia) coalition is the latest sub-regional grouping to arise under Clean Clothes Campaign. This network consists of trade unions and labour organizations from South East Asia that aim at strengthening the cooperation within the region to work on various issues especially on freedom of association, labour rights and occupational health and safety.

CARAM Asia board members serve as the Board of Clean Clothes Campaign of SEAsia Coalition. In terms of roles and responsibilities, Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) and its board of members or member organizations:

- Put pressure on companies and governments to take responsibility to ensure that the rights of manufacturing workers in global supply chains are respected and implemented
- Work in solidarity with organized workers in global supply chains fighting for their rights anywhere from the workplace to the global level and take action on concrete cases of violations of the rights of workers and activists
- Raise awareness and mobilize people to undertake individual and collective action (linked to consumption, citizenship, work, investment or other areas of life)
- Exploring judicial mechanisms and lobby for legislation to protect workers' rights and hold companies accountable
- Promoting public and private procurement that ensures workers' rights are respected in the production process
- Working together to develop network and strengthen the global alliance for workers' rights
- Advocate for greater transparency in garment supply chain and living wage for worker²

¹ 1 CCC Annual Report 2019 - PDF version', Clean Clothes Campaign, Netherland, 2020, https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/skc_ccc_jaarverslag_2019_vdef.pdf/view (accessed 23 June 2021)

² See footnote 1

Participated

In

13th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML)

CARAM Asia also participated in 13th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) under the main theme 'Supporting Migrant Workers during the Pandemic for a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN community' which was held via video conference on 10th November 2020. This event was chaired by the Vietnamese Ministry of Labour, Invalids Social Affairs in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat and International Labour Organization. Participants of the forum were triparties's representatives, representatives from relating ministries, sectors in Vietnam, academics, international organizations, experts in field of migrant labour in Vietnam.³



Participants of '13th ASEAN Forum on Migration and Labour'

Basically, annual AFML is an open platform for review, discussion and exchange of good practices and idea between governments, workers, employer's organisation and civil society stakeholders regarding the key issues faced by both women and men migrant workers in Southeast Asia. Consequently, this aid in developing pragmatic recommendations and solution which eventually improve the implementation of the principles of the ASEAN declaration on Protection and promotion of the rights of Migrant workers by coming out with better national and regional activities for them.⁴

Therefore, at 13TH AFML, the participants focused on reviewing the implementation of the recommendation from the previous AFML meetings, while discussing about the sub themes of the forum which are the impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers and the response within ASEAN as well as review the cohesive and adaptive labour migration policy for ASEAN's future preparation. As an outcome, participants brought feasible recommendation and solution for the issues that have discussed to the attention of the organizing team and relevant stake-holders for further consideration. Hence, CARAM Asia have also added some thoughts on the issues that have discussed during the sharing sessions.

³ Social Republic of Vietnam- Ministry of Labours, Wars Invalids and Social Affairs {Website}, <http://english.molisa.gov.vn/Pages/News/Detail.aspx?tintucID=224291> (accessed 23 June 2021)

⁴ See footnote 3

Participated

In

Stakeholders Consultations for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

CARAM Asia participated in one of the preparatory meeting of Asia Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) which organized in the form of virtual briefings on 16 December 2020, named as Stakeholders Consultations for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

There are total of four consultation organized by the United Nations Regional Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific to inform the regional review process of the implementation of the GCM. The consultations was held in line with the clusters of the GCM objectives envisaged for the roundtables of the International Migration Review Forum, according to General Assembly resolution 73/326.

Since all consultation conducted similarly, CARAM Asia took part in the third consultation on 'Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development' which tackled the six objectives of the GCM which are 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22. The consultation also aimed to facilitate and expand collaboration and participation of stakeholders in the regional review process, and in particular to elicit their experiences and views around the review objectives, namely:

- To take stock of the overall progress of implementation of objectives to date
- Identify key challenges, opportunities, gaps and emerging issues
- Identify established and emerging good practices and lessons learnt
- Identify resource requirements and capacity building needs
- Formulate recommendations

On the day of event, over 70 stakeholders, including civil society organizations, local authorities, academia, migrant communities, trade union, and the private sector were present. They explored various topics such as consular protection and assistance, access to basic services for migrants, social cohesion and migrants' inclusion, their contribution to development, facilitation of remittances, and portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits, in the COVID-19 context.

At the end of the discussion, several recommendations were made by participants, which will feed into the upcoming intergovernmental meeting that will held in March 2021. There was broad consensus met regarding consular assistance and protection needs to be improved, including by strengthening cooperation between embassies, consulates, and civil society and governments in destination countries. Undoubtedly, CARAM Asia agreed on the recommendation made and brain stormed useful solution for the issues arose.

Participated

In

Virtual Consultation with Civil Society Organizations (CSO)'s

CARAM Asia attended a Virtual Consultation that was organized by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia Pacific in 2020 especially for Civil Society Organizations. This consultation aimed at informing relevant CSOs about the context of upcoming UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Programme.

This event was done via online which consists of several sessions. While, the main goal of the event was achieved by the well-organised breakout sessions in where participants discussed and shared about their thoughts on the context for developing the next regional programme in regards to ICPD PoA and Agenda 2030, UN Reform at the Regional Level as well as to deal with UNFPA Strategic Plan.

The breakout sessions tackled following questions that develop in a way to obtain thoughts on strategies and techniques to strengthen UNFPA Asia Pacific advocacy for ICPD PoA and Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (APMD) at regional level:

- What does UNFPA need to do to catalyse advocacy efforts?
- What are our opportunities for positioning ICPD PoA and APMD at the regional level?
- How can we achieve better coordinated advocacy for ICPD PoA and APMD?
- How can UNFPA support CSO advocacy efforts?
- How can we ensure better alignment between regional and country level advocacy efforts

Likewise, CARAM Asia also contributed some pragmatic inputs during the session which says:

“Migrant workers' issues are pervasive, but under appreciated. Therefore, CSOs and related stakeholders need to put more attention to their issues. Besides, there is also institutionalized discrimination arose against migrant women's when accessing to services like reproductive health and rights, family planning, prevention of STIs and HIV in migration policies. In addition, mandatory testing undermines all of SRHR of migrant women. Yet, all these issues can be diminished by increasing support on evidence-based research as well as bringing civil society together in sub-regions and regionally to voice the issues and raise advocacy to high levels, including but not limited to ICPD. This means migration-specific groups, women's groups, SRHR groups, and labour groups come together in multi-sectorial settings”

Participated

In

Virtual Conference on the Global Compact on Migration and the Regional Migrants Agenda

CARAM Asia participated in Virtual Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Regional Migrants Agenda along with 50 participants hailed from 38 organizations of migrant workers, returnee migrants, families of migrants, trade unions, migrant serving-institutions, academic, faith-based organizations, migrant's rights advocates and child rights advocacy groups based in 13 countries and regions.

It is a two day online conference organized by Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) on 21-22 October 2020. With the aim, to engage the participants in a meaningful conversation around issues confronting migrants especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and come up with recommendations and demands. This is because the shared useful inputs will feed into the regional migrants' agenda, which will then serve as advocacy tool by the migrants, advocates as well as submitting the report to the respective UN Migration Network, a network of UN agencies who working on the GCM and its implementation.

This discussion was conducted on the second day of event, during the breakout session in where participants divided into breakout groups to share their thoughts on the issues and demands of migrants in their respective locales. In the effort to achieve the objective of the conference, CARAM Asia joint the meaningful conversation and emphasized on migrant worker's health rights particularly with regards to migrants with HIV positive status. CARAM Asia also contributed in development of regional agenda and raised the issues to be included into regional agenda such as eliminating mandatory medical-testing for migrant workers, repealing policy that discriminating migrant workers with HIV positive. As well as proposed to review the available health policies and remove cost discrimination for migrants in health sector and enhance access to health services to all the migrants.



Task Force on Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC)

Brief Introduction of the Task force on MCCHC

This task force is a new addition in CARAM Asia's thematic areas due to the increasing number of Climate Migrants. Climate Migrants who have been defined as persons or groups of people who for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment, as a result of climate change that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so either temporarily or permanently and who move either within their country or abroad (IOM 2008).

Variations in the world's climate have been happening for all of human history. However, with the passage of time, rising temperature, decreasing rainfall, rising sea levels, and increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions are leading to massive flooding, earthquake, landslides, and droughts, causing extensive damage to property, assets, and human life.

According to the United Nations Between 2008 and 2015, an average of 26.4 million people per year were displaced by climate or weather-related disasters. The science of climate change indicates that these trends are likely to get worse.

Asia is most at risk as it continues to be exposed to climate change impacts. Home to the majority of the world's poor, the population of this region is particularly vulnerable to dangerous climate impacts that push people to migrate. Hence Climate Change is currently also one of the drivers of migration. This task force was formed to understand and provide input from the perspective of migration, climate change, and humanitarian crisis and to advocate for the rights of Climate Migrants.

Objective

To understand and provide input from the perspective of migration, climate change and humanitarian crisis.

Migration, Climate Change, and Humanitarian Crisis Plan

The strategy of the MCCHC task force was to collate clear evidence that climate change is one of the driving forces in migration, collaborate with like-minded partners, and link up with the COFP.

Ongoing activities on climate change issues are the collection of policies and adaption strategies, lobbying and strategizing, capacity building workshops, and the publication and dissemination of information through various digital and physical mediums.

Solid preparation of ToRs for task force members ensured that they were equipped with information, best practices, and case studies. The task force also worked to collect secondary information, for example obtaining information from COP-23 (Germany) on migration and climate change. The collection of clear evidence of migration due to climate change, and the impact of these reports to COPF 24 is to be presented in COP-24, Fiji by CARAM Asia.

On the humanitarian crisis front, the strategic-planned activities were in lobbying, advocating, and calling on governments and other stakeholders to address crisis situations as well as to amend policies/acts in respective countries. Consultation workshops were held in response to regional crises, and an information dissemination strategy was planned in order to effectively bring awareness of these issues to a public front. In order to better prepare for the advent of crises, pre-planned statements for every humanitarian crisis that happened within the region were prepared.

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