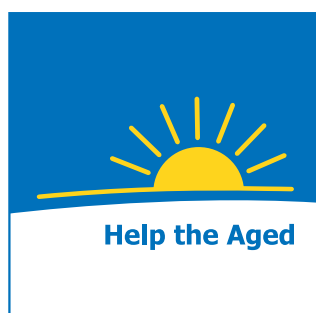


HAI Asia/Pacific Regional Conference

A strong network for the rights of older people

Hanoi, November 2004



HelpAge
International

Leading global action on ageing



Older Vietnamese women sing a traditional song

Overview

The HAI Regional Conference is a key tool in facilitating communication; sharing information, resources and best practices; and for networking and developing trust among affiliates and organizations working for the rights of older people in the region.

Held in Hanoi, from 2-5 November 2004, 64 participants from 43 organisations representing 18 countries in the region attended the regional conference. The event was organised by:

- The Vietnam Association for the Elderly (VAE)
- The Vietnam Women's Union (VWU)
- Research Centre on Ageing Support (RECAS)
- STD, HIV/AIDS Prevention Centre (SHAPC)
- Thai Nguyen Medical College (TNMC)
- HAI Asia/Pacific Regional Development Centre

Given the number of topics to be dealt with, some sessions were for all participants, while others were concurrent, so as to meet particular interests or priorities. Sessions in which all participated were:

- The network and its perspectives
- Social pensions and poverty
- Monitoring MIPAA and the Shanghai Implementation Strategy
- Advocacy.

The concurrent sessions were organised by subject experts from the affiliates and attended by those with an interest and knowledge in the relevant areas. The concurrent sessions were:

- Income-generating activities
- Home care initiatives in the Asia/Pacific
- Gender, poverty and older people
- HIV/AIDS and older people
- Emergencies and older people.

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Foreword

The first regional conference was held in Manila in 1993. Since that occasion, it has become a yearly event, each time dealing with issues affecting older people in the region. The twelfth conference in Hanoi, Vietnam, focused on 'A strong network for the rights of older people'.

More than half of the world's older population live in Asia and the Pacific, and this proportion continues to grow. In 2050, 63 per cent of all the older people in the world will be from this region. It is not surprising, therefore, that issues of ageing have become central to the development agenda, and that a strong and active network of organisations committed to the rights of older people is necessary.

Someone asked, referring to the theme of the conference: 'What makes a network strong?' Several answers were given (shared purpose, commonality of experiences, joint initiatives...), but one that struck me in particular was, 'the more we believe in each other, the stronger our network becomes'. That person was referring to trust and confidence – trust in our own organisations and confidence in our mission – trust in our capacity to learn from each other and confidence in our own experience. In fact, a measure of the conference's success could be a renewed and stronger feeling of trust and confidence within the network.

The sessions were lively and participative. We didn't always get answers to our queries, only problems and possibilities. How to develop systems of social pensions? How to support older people as carers of people with HIV/AIDS? How to enhance the livelihoods of older people and their families? How to include older people in all disaster management processes? How to support older people's organisations in their plight for preserving their rights? Pressing questions and no easy answers...

The earthquake and the tsunami of 26 December have brought a new perspective into our work. Rehabilitation will be an effort for years to come involving, no doubt, key members of the network. During this first post-tsunami period, solidarity has flourished all over, firstly within the communities affected and then throughout the world. It was particularly touching to observe the many messages between members of our network, expressing condolences and offering helping hands.

These notes would be incomplete without acknowledging and expressing our deep recognition to our Vietnamese hosts. The superb organisation, the attention given to the participants, the presence of the Vice-President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the visit to the Deputy Prime Minister, the attentions provided by the Vietnam Women Union and the City of Hanoi were simply overwhelming. Thank you to all of them.

Eduardo Klien
Regional Representative
HelpAge International
Asia/Pacific Regional Development Centre



Boondee Pattalapust/HelpAge International

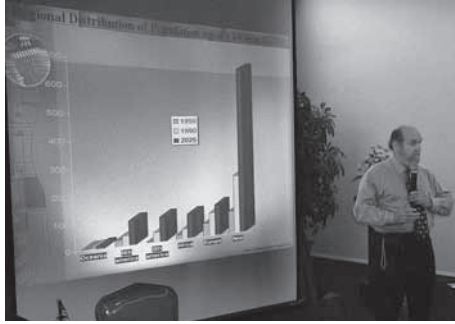
Mrs Truong My Hoa, Vice-President of Vietnam and HelpAge International senior staff



Boondee Pattalapust/HelpAge International

Mr Kittipan Kanjanapitkul, Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan and Mrs Truong My Hoa, Vice-President of Vietnam

The more we believe
in each other, the
stronger our network
becomes.



Prof Gary Andrews, member of the HAI Board

The network and its perspectives

The session consisted of presentations by Todd Petersen (CEO, HAI), Cho Ki Dong (HelpAge Korea), N.W.E. Wijewantha (HelpAge Sri Lanka) and Professor Gary Andrews (Center for Ageing Studies). The presentations were followed by working group discussions. The session was facilitated by Mathew Cherian (HelpAge India).

Objectives

- To present the background and state of the global HAI network; changes and trends of the network in the last couple of years; and an overview of the network.
- To discuss future network structure regarding improving existing mechanisms; future visions of the network; expansion of the network and who to include in the expansion; and priorities of growth for the network in the Asia/Pacific region.

Summary

The network is the heart of HAI. In working towards global change and the rights of older people, HAI focuses on policy, advocacy and communication of messages. It is crucial that structures are developed that allow for more engagement within the network and of the network with the world around it. This is a big challenge as HAI strives for fundamental changes in terms of attitudes towards older people at all levels – donors, governments, organisations working with poor people and older people themselves. The better our message is conveyed the greater our success will be. HAI will continue to work bilaterally with organisations but wants to put more emphasis and support on the network.

Discussion points

- A clear vision of the road forward for the network is needed as there is some lack of clarity about its perspectives.
- There is a need to share learning and best practices across the network through the Internet, electronic journals, newsletters and exchange visits.
- Affiliates see a need for HAI to provide financial and technical support, leadership and capacity building, to share experiences, and influence and sensitise donors.
- A link needs to be made between the impact of working with older people and larger international targets like the MDGs.
- All affiliates need to collect and share evidence that shows the impact of our work.
- There is a need to look at the implementation of older people's policies and monitor national budgets.
- The network could focus on an annual, one-point agenda. This would help the development and implementation of clearly defined projects and goals.
- To achieve our objective of mainstreaming ageing, it is necessary to work with and involve governments, civil society, other NGOs, academia, private sector, media, researchers and educators, international finance institutions and international organisations.
- Professor Gary Andrews suggested that Board members attend every Regional Conference as it is a place for interaction and the Board needs to become more proactive.
- There was a plea from Todd Petersen to all affiliates to make a commitment to consider how we work together in the Asia/Pacific Region. He hoped that this conference would be the beginning of a process determining where all affiliates and partners want to go together.

Working group feedback

Following the presentations and discussions working groups discussed four key questions.

The feedback is summarised as follows:

1. How can the mechanisms of the network be improved?
 - Improved communication between the APRDC and affiliates is needed.
 - Improve information sharing through a bulletin board, a resource directory updated annually that includes basic information on organisations, their projects and their experience, and a regional network newsletter.
 - Members proactively provide information to the APRDC.
 - Capacity building for network organisations. APRDC will discuss to determine their needs and then organise training.
 - Build information and communication capacities of APRDC.
 - Agree on resource persons for specific issues within the network.
2. Can you give us your vision of the network in 2010?
 - Well-developed information system to share best practices
Documentation of projects, challenges and lessons shared among network
 - Electronic forums with links to resources
 - More participation of women
 - Network to include older people, governments and researchers
 - Sub-regional networks
 - Older people directly monitoring government spending
 - Harmonised way of monitoring activities – subjective indicators of wellbeing which clearly indicate a ‘before and after picture
 - Sharing between all regions in the global network.
3. Should we expand the network in the region? What type of organisations should be invited to join?
 - The network should be expanded to include national bodies on ageing, older people’s associations, the International Federation of Ageing, NGOs, and academics.
 - In order to truly be an Asia/Pacific network, we need to engage with more organisations working in the field of ageing in the Pacific (currently there is limited participation).
 - In countries where there is currently only one affiliate, that affiliate might not want other NGOs to become affiliates. Organisations must determine if they are complementary in their work with others and, if agreed, they can both be affiliates.
 - Various bodies could be collaborative centres for particular issues – not necessarily be affiliates of the network but still have an association with HAI – we need to explore possibilities creatively.
4. What should be the priorities of growth for the network in the Asia/Pacific Region?
 - Sub-regional networks are needed to increase coordination and thus impact. These could focus on thematic issues. A proposal emerged for sub-regional coordination in South Asia.
 - Poverty reduction and access to health care are the key issues for the network and so expanding the network should not be a major priority.
 - An aim should be to develop and strengthen national coordination of organisations working with older people.
 - Existing expertise in home care, income generation and older people’s associations (OPAs), must be expanded upon for appropriate policy development.
 - Mainstreaming ageing in PRSP – gain evidence to show policy makers the impact of working with older people.
 - Enhance the collection of disaggregated data to be used in advocacy.

Two further interesting and important points made by Todd Petersen in this discussion were:

- Globally, poverty levels are the same as ten years ago, excluding India and China, but even in these countries there has been an increase in income disparity. The poverty reduction methods the world has been trying are not successful. Maybe a new approach is to focus on older people. Social protection and social pensions are important factors in poverty reduction.
- Older people themselves will be the drivers of any significant political change in issues affecting them. Governments frequently act out of the selfish motivation of re-election, so the constituents must become vocal to preserve their rights.



Participants share information during the conference

The better our
message is conveyed
the greater our
success will be.



Group discussion

HAI affiliation process

The session consisted of a presentation by Todd Petersen, followed by an open discussion.

Objectives

- To update affiliates and partners on the new governance structure of HAI
- Provide opportunity for affiliates to clarify points regarding new structure

Background

The board changed the governance structure of HAI in November 2003. Previously there were full members (who were able to vote for new board members), associate members, institution members and also partners. This was complicated as each level had different rights. In addition, HAI also worked with others outside this formal structure.

Update

In the new structure of HAI:

- Full, associate and institution members are all now AFFILIATES of HAI.
- All affiliates have the same rights and can nominate new board members to HAI.
- The new structure does not alter the basic relationship HAI has had with its partners.
- Partners can apply for affiliate status through the APRDC. To apply the process is as follows: the APRDC will send the criteria and forms to the partners; these completed forms need to be returned to APRDC; HAI London will process the forms; and the HAI board will then decide if affiliate status is granted.
- Only the board has the power to veto organisations that apply to become affiliates.
- Under the new structure the fee scale is lower. If necessary, HAI London can be contacted to negotiate on fees.

Action points

Anyone who would like to receive application forms for affiliates of the HAI network, please email APRDC at helpage@helpageasia.com.



The final day of the regional conference

Social pensions and poverty reduction

The session involved presentations by Dr Dharmapriya Wesumperuma (Head of Programmes, HAI APRDC) and Jane Scobie (Communications Manager, HAI London). In addition, presentations were made by Haseeb Khan (Director, RIC Bangladesh), Anant Bir Singh and Hina Sharma (HelpAge India) and Man Thapa (Nepan, Nepal) on the social pension schemes that currently exist in their respective countries. A working group discussion followed.

Objectives

- To share the findings of the recent HAI research on social pensions showing the positive effects of social pensions for poor older people.
- To discuss in working groups specific questions related to the viability of social pensions in countries of the region, drawing from country experiences compiled by affiliates.

Background

The first Millennium Development Goal is to halve the number of people in poverty by 2015. MIPAA calls to ensure a minimum income for older people. Neither of these aims are possible without including older people in development processes and PRSPs. One effective method of achieving this is through social pensions.

Recent research by HAI has shown the positive effects of a system of social pensions, targeted at poor older people. Cases were analysed and the economic viability of social pensions shown. This research is important because it demonstrates the validity of social pensions in poor countries. The session began with a presentation of the findings of the research. Then working groups were established to discuss specific questions related to the viability of social pensions in the countries of the region, drawing from country experiences compiled by affiliates.

Presentations

Social pensions refer to non-contributory pensions that can be either means tested (as in India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, China and Singapore) or universal (as in Nepal and Hong Kong).

HAI experience and research show a clear and direct relation between social pensions and poverty reduction. (See the recently launched report, *Age and Security: How social pensions can deliver effective aid to poor older people and their families*, available on the HAI website, www.helpage.org). The social and economic benefits are numerous:

- The social pension is a cost-effective way to deliver support to those in need.
- Pensions alleviate the acute poverty of older people and protect their minimum living standards; there is growing evidence that they do reduce the poverty gap ratio.
- Because the payment is regular and guaranteed, the pension has a significant role in reducing chronic poverty amongst the older poor and their families.
- People can receive credit and invest in small businesses to have a cushion in the face of unplanned events.
- They are a lifeline for families affected by HIV/AIDS.
- They improve the lives of orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) through increased school enrollment and increased nutrition.
- They support the realisation of equity and human rights.
- They can increase the share of the poorest quintile in national consumption.
- They fulfil government obligations to further the rights of older people, including the right to social protection.
- They exist and are popular.
- They cost less than 2 per cent of GDP.
- They can be included in poverty reduction schemes.



Matchima Chansawangpawana/HelpAge International

An older woman sells flowers on a Hanoi street

Pensions alleviate the acute poverty of older people and protect their minimum living standards.



An older woman and her mother weave mats in Battambang, Cambodia

©Brent Madison/HelpAge International

The HAI Agenda for Action

'We call on governments, international institutions and organisations concerned with poverty reduction to:

- target women and men over 60 years of age in poor countries as key recipients of regular income transfer
- review existing experiences on income transfer to the poor in developing countries and initiate pilots to explore mechanisms and impact
- assist national governments to learn from the expertise of a number of international agencies in cash transfer programming
- provide funding to develop pilot cash transfer programmes
- incorporate social protection measures into poverty reduction strategies
- include cash transfers to older carers as part of HIV/AIDS response strategies'.

Following the presentations, an interesting discussion took place about the terminology used and how it is important to think about using different terms with different audiences. For example, the term 'non-contributory pensions' conveys the wrong message in terms of older people's contributions, as it implies they have contributed nothing when over the years they have paid a lot of tax through indirect taxation.

Appendix 2 contains a summary compiled by APRDC on the country situations in the region in terms of social pension provisions.

Working group discussions

Participants formed working groups to develop ideas on how to promote social pensions.

Group 1 – Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos

Update on country progress:

- Philippines – In the forthcoming national congress, the national older people's network is tabling a proposal to have a social pension.
- Indonesia – Recently the House of Representatives passed the Bill on National Social Security System, paving the way for free health care and social pensions.
- Cambodia and Laos – National Policy on Ageing was approved in both countries in 2004.

Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos objective: To raise awareness of social pensions among different stakeholders such as government, NGOs and others.

Activity	Alliances	Outcomes expected
Identify key stakeholders/ actors	Government, academia, NGOs, older people	Mapping of stake holders
Organise sensitisation workshop		
Consultation with older people	Older people's networks	Increased awareness and understanding
Study procedures and simplify the process	Service providers, older people	Regular delivery of benefits to older people
Monitor implementation of the national policy on ageing	Older people associations, local service providers	Development of a social security policy

The social pension is a cost-effective way to deliver support to those in need.

Group 2 – China, India, Pakistan

China objective: To expand the low-income scheme into rural areas.

Activity	Alliances	Outcomes expected
Introduce first into more advanced areas like coastal China/South China	Provincial governments, national governments	Create momentum to expand into other areas
Expand low-income scheme to cover all rural areas		

India objective: To increase the number of beneficiaries of the current OAP scheme.

Activity	Alliances	Outcomes expected
Lobby with state and national government to simplify procedure for application	NGOs, MSJE, state governments, Finance Ministry	Simplify procedure for application Increase budget for older people's pension
Seminars with MSJE and lobbying with MPs and Finance Ministry to raise budget for older people's pension	NGOs, researchers, MSJE	Higher number of destitute older people enrolled in pension scheme
Work directly with older people and local government to enrol older people in pension programme	Partner NGOs, HAI network	Increased number of OP benefiting from the pensions scheme

Pakistan objective: To increase the number of beneficiaries on the Zakat scheme or on other government schemes for older people.

Activity	Alliances	Outcomes expected
Write letters to all levels of government officials	Other organisations, such as the senior citizen's forums	Government officials sensitised to problems of older people
		Greater number of beneficiaries

Group 3 - Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam

Bangladesh objectives: To increase the government's target number of recipients and to increase the amount of pensions relating to older people; to ensure the procedure for receiving social pensions is suitable for older people and transparent; to ensure older people's participation.

Activity	Alliances	Expected Outcome
Consultation	Policy makers	Improved coverage and amount given for old age pensions
Dialogue, lobbying	Media	
Research	Local civil society groups	
Expand older people's monitoring of government policies (OCM)	Community LEB	



Participants gather information at the information desk

[Social pensions]
support the
realisation of equity
and human rights.



An older woman keeps up with the daily news in India

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Sri Lanka objective: To advocate for the introduction of social pensions for older people.

Activity	Alliances	Expected Outcome
Survey to identify potential recipients	National Council of Elders and Institute of Policy Studies	Introduction of social pension for older people

Vietnam objective: To inform and influence the government to provide social pensions for people above the age of 65.

Activity	Alliances	Expected Outcome
Raise public awareness	Mass movements, NGOs, older people associations, government agencies	Close monitoring and support for social pensions
Raise awareness of older people's organisations		
Gather evidence		
Enter into dialogue with the government		

Group 4 – Australia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand

Country	Current situation	Objectives	Activities
Australia	-Means tested: pensions -Over 65 receive AU\$30k per annum -Private savings in place	Increase coverage of social pensions	NGO collaboration
Hong Kong	-3-year portable pensions if older people have \$3000 -Over 70 eligible for US\$50 per month	Increase social awareness	Empower the older people associations to influence the government
Malaysia	-Laws and Acts for Destitute launched in 1946. This covers those with a family income of less than US\$60 per month; people over 60 without relatives; and older people in homes with a monthly income of less than US\$26 -Handover by SWD is through district level every month	Coverage for all older people	Research Documentation
Singapore	-Means tested: social funds/ social pensions -Public assistance scheme for 2000 older people across the island -Ongoing study being conducted	Facilitate better understanding and appreciation of social pensions	Research Documentation Networking
Thailand	-Means tested: monthly allowance of US\$75 to 520,000 older people -20 government homes and some charity organisation's homes -All covered by 3 years	NGOs/ local GO to provide evidence of best practices to government or policy makers	Documentation Dissemination

Fundamental changes in policy design and in pension and health systems are necessary.

UNESCAP, 2005

Monitoring the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the Shanghai Implementation Strategy

Osama Rajkhan, Social Affairs Officer, UNESCAP and Professor Gary Andrews, Centre of Ageing Studies, Flinders University gave presentations.

Objectives

- Explain how MIPAA will be monitored for the 2007 MIPPA review
- Encourage HAI affiliates input into the review

Summary

The presentations introduced:

- The major demographic trends in the region relating to the rapid ageing of populations and its implications.
- Challenges and opportunities in raising the quality of life, inter-generational relations, productivity, health care, gender, dependency, and income security; and the need for effective and efficient interventions to maximise positive outcomes.
- The key Asia/Pacific regional inter-government and UNESCAP initiatives preceding and following MIPAA, namely (a) the 1999 Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific, (b) the September 2002 Regional Implementation Strategy (known as the Shanghai Implementation Strategy) for the implementation of the MIPPA and the Macao Plan of Action.
- A regional survey on national policies and programmes on ageing conducted by the ESCAP secretariat in June 2002 to monitor progress of MIPPA.
- Development of a protocol for review and appraisal of the implementation process, which consists of bottom-up participatory research methods and a matrix of indicators. The protocol will enable governments and NGOs to collect information in systematic and comprehensive way. It can also act as a guide for the development of internal assessment protocols. Moreover, it offers a set of indicators (instrumental and outcome) for measurement.

Discussion points

The open discussion focused mainly on the following points in the ESCAP presentation:

- Promulgation or amendments to existing legislation to support social security and social protection of older people.
- Supporting the effective implementation of legislation related to abuse or neglect of older people.
- Promoting universal or means-tested income security and social insurance schemes while ensuring effective regulation.
- Encouraging the provision of (price-indexed) social pensions to older people earning at or below the poverty levels as defined in specific countries.

Action points

A MIPAA global review of the implementation process will take place in 2007. A regional high-level meeting will be held in Macao in 2006 to feed into that review. The high-level meeting will be supported by two sub-regional meeting to be held in 2005. UNESCAP would like input from NGOs on what governments are doing to meet the aims of MIPAA, in particular policy/programme adjustments, impact analysis and what monitoring and evaluation modalities were used to understand the impact of their activities.

ESCAP will be sending out a survey questionnaire to the network, through the APRDC asking, among other things:

- Has MIPAA made a difference to the way in which ageing and older people oriented NGOs work?
- If so, what is the impact of these changes in the way NGOs work?
- How do you know/monitor if this impact exists?



He Bao Quan, Zhang Xiao Ya, and Prof Zhang Zhixin from China



The Older Citizens Monitoring group meeting in Pubail, Bangladesh

Godfred Pau/HelpAge International

Organising older people

Anant Bir Singh (HelpAge India), Dim Vy (HelpAge Cambodia), Haseeb Khan (RIC Bangladesh) and Professor Zhang Zhixin (CNCA Sichuan) made presentations to share their respective project models used for promoting the organisation of older people into associations and support groups.

Objectives

To promote discussion and to explore best practices for encouraging older people's participation

Summary

Organising older people into associations or support groups has been a popular activity for local partners in the region as it improves older people's long-term health and livelihoods. Many of the local partners in the region have successfully demonstrated that the formation of older people into associations or support groups has been very positive and the lessons learned from their modelled activities have provided many benefits to poor and vulnerable older people and their communities. Four affiliates were invited to share their project models.

Discussion points

The discussion centred on whether it is more effective to organise older people on their own or to encourage younger people to be part of older people associations as well. Participants had mixed experiences with examples of benefits in both approaches.

However, there was a general agreement that with younger people involved, the older people may not get some of the benefits of increased confidence and experience in engaging with local authorities, or direct access to resources. It was further agreed that it was generally best to include younger people in older people groups only for specific activities, such as helping with the physical labour to build rice banks in Cambodia or younger people learning from older people's role in dispute resolution in Bangladesh.

The discussion concluded that what is important when organising older people at all levels is that older people must be increasingly empowered to voice their concerns on the issues affecting their lives by themselves.

Action points

- Ensure older people's organisations have the full participation of the targeted older people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.
- Promote documentation, sharing of models, and best practices for forming older people associations and support groups within the HAI network in the region.
- Encourage governments and donors for their support in forming older people's groups.

...older people must be increasingly empowered to voice their concerns on the issues affecting their lives by themselves.

Income generation

Presentations were made by Mahipal Singh (GRAVIS), Professor Yuan Hong Jiang (HPTCA), Hina Sharma, (HelpAge India) and Sawang Kaewkantha (FOPDEV) on the different types of income-generating activities (IGAs) in their respective countries.

Objectives

- To familiarise participants with different types of income-generating and micro credit activities
- To share experiences with issues of sustainability of income-generating activities

Summary

A large number of older people in the Asia/Pacific region are living under the poverty line. Therefore, most of HelpAge International partners in the region have extensive experience in implementing income-generating activities to help lift poor and vulnerable older people out of chronic poverty. The income generation session started off with presentations from HelpAge India, GRAVIS India, FOPDEV Thailand and CNCA China-Sichuan on the different types of income-generating activities (IGAs) in their countries. The four presentations were:

- Income-generating activities and older people by HelpAge India
- EU-HAI project on poverty alleviation in Sichuan, China by CNCA
- Income generation and poverty alleviation of older people through project 'ADOPT' by Gravis
- Income-generating activities (IGAs) by FOPDEV

These presentations covered both lessons learned as well as identifying challenges.

Discussion points

The country presentations were followed by a small group exercise aimed to promote discussion and create action points. The exercise was as followed:

- Compile a list of five income-generating activities that are possible in your country/region for older people above 65 years of age. The value should not exceed \$500 for an individual. Choose either a rural or urban setting with available local skills. Specify why these activities would succeed.
- What additional support/action will be required by the implementing agency, community, or CBOs to make the activity sustainable, such as training the beneficiary or working capital financing?
- Write down the possible economic and social impacts of these activities on the beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Action points

From the presentation, discussion and exercise the following action points were raised:

- In order to increase the sustainability of income-generating activities, the project activities must be based on an understanding of the norms, culture and beliefs; relationships with leaders; and existing resources.
- Encourage others in the community to support income-generating activities in the target communities.
- Project activities need to be more comprehensive. Income-generating activities are much more than just giving a person an asset and expecting them to start producing an income.
- Older people need training, and targeted technical support.
- Change the myth that older people are less productive. To disprove this myth gather evidence quantifying their contribution in economic terms.
- Evaluate and document the lessons learned from income-generating activities and share these with others in the HAI network.
- Evaluate and document models of successful income-generating activities and share these models with others in the HAI network.
- Promote 'produce what you eat and eat what you produce' theory.
- Participation of the target communities is the key to establishing sustainable income-generating activities.



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Meak Veon waters vegetables in Battambang, Cambodia; her garden helps generate some income for her family



Blood pressure test at a health station

‘Asian values’
of familial care
drastically reduce the
burden of institutional
care of the elderly.

UNESCAP, 2005

Home care

There was a short overview of the implementation of home care projects in Vietnam, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Sri Lanka (by Dr Lung from RECAS, Mrs Eva Sabdono from YEL and Mr Wijewantha from HelpAge Sri Lanka). Joseph Pannirselvam (APRDC) gave an overview of home care work in the region. A group discussion followed. The session was moderated by Mr N. W. E. Wijewantha, (HelpAge Sri Lanka).

Objectives

- Information sharing on home care projects across the region
- To discuss as a group how to apply good practices and experiences to the work in our respective countries
- To discuss as a group what advocacy measures and messages are recommended to influence public/social policies to address the needs of marginalised older people
- To discuss as a group what specific actions are recommended for the HAI network to maximise the impact of our home care programme in the region

Summary

Older people are a vulnerable, invisible and marginalised sector of most of the societies in Asia. They are likely to experience a wider and more continuous range of physical, mental, social and environmental constraints and hardships. The majority of them are disadvantaged and live in deteriorating conditions and hence require appropriate care and support. With the rapid increase in the number and proportion of old-old population, there is an increasing demand for health services and social support. More and more women who used to provide the bulk of care and support to older family members are now entering the work force which results in deprivation, isolation and loneliness of older persons.

In this context home care is seen as an effective strategy to mainstream ageing into the national health care and social welfare systems as well as an effective measure to promote social and legal protection of poor and vulnerable older people. It helps create widespread awareness on issues affecting poor older people and to mobilise community support in addressing their concerns. It also enables marginalised older people increased access to health and social services in the community and to claim their entitlements and benefits from the state. Home care promotes independent living of older people and helps them receive appropriate care and protection from their families or communities, thereby also maintaining their dignity. In short, home care programmes help to translate the UN Principles and Madrid Plan of Action into reality.

The policy environment of most countries in the region is favourable to the promotion of family and community care of older people. They recognise the weakening of traditional support systems due to various factors and the need to continue these support systems which involve the care-giving role. Ultimately, the family and the community are responsible for the improvement and/or maintenance of the quality of life of older people. However, traditional support systems need to be supplemented with formal services through appropriate policy and programme framework.

In practical terms, home care encompasses a range of services provided in the older person's own home, to support the highest possible quality of life and allow the individual to remain in the family/community as long as possible. Home care services fall broadly into two categories of social care and health care.

Home care is one of the most strategic interventions to resolve the ageing problem in the Asia/Pacific. A home care strategy is suitable and attractive to all concerned:

- Older people: Their wish is to live with family and in familiar surroundings.
- Family: The family is the main source of care, and this is now under threat – if the family is supported, it is the most willing unit in society to support older people.

- Community: In spite of the forces of modernisation, the community retains the willingness to support voluntarism.
- Cultural, religious and traditional values in every society support care of older people.
- Government would welcome home care since it is a most cost-effective strategy to support older people.
- With extensive home care there is less expenditure on health care and welfare for older people.
- There is enough anecdotal evidence which suggests that home care leads to poverty reduction and promotion of social protection by giving older people greater access to social assistance and other community services.
- UN agencies would support home care programmes since they promote the wellbeing of the individual family and the community, contributing to the achievement of the UN conventions to improve quality of life for all.

Action points

- Training of home care programme managers/coordinators on volunteer management, case management and impact assessment against a set of indicators by using tested tools.
- Exchange visits within the region and learn from each other.
- Gathering of regional volunteers to share ideas – being amongst other home care givers improves self-esteem and retains their motivation.
- Documentation and dissemination of models and best practices (publications, case studies, web-base, multi-media).
- Advocacy with international/national/regional bodies (ASEAN), policy makers, media, NGOs, and donors with annual meetings, social marketing plans, workshops, or exchange visits.
- Networking with gerontology societies.
- Plan for sustainability of pilot projects into long-term programmes.
- Taking into consideration specific country situations, develop strategy to institutionalise projects, such as identifying stakeholders, continued engagement with policy makers to make project a national programme.
- Develop capacity of HAI affiliates to support the replication of similar projects elsewhere in the region.

Home care promotes independent living of older people and helps them receive appropriate care and protection from their families or communities, thereby also maintaining their dignity.



Home care project in Hai Duong, Vietnam



'I do not depend on my children; my income is enough to support them.' Kaushalya, older woman, India

'Our problems are obvious – we are poor, we are old and we are women so no one wants us. We are alone.'

Older woman, Moheshkhali, Bangladesh

Gender and poverty

The session included a gender sensitisation exercise, presentations by Susana Concorde (TSAO Foundation), Pham Hoai Giang (VWU), Masudul Haque (BWHC) and Usa Khiewrord (APRDC) and concluded with a group discussion.

Objectives

- To gain an overview of the gender and poverty situation in the Asia/Pacific region – covering demographic dimensions of gender and ageing and factors that contribute to gender differences in economic wellbeing among older people
- To provide information on Beijing +10, including its background and a description of the review process that is taking place in preparation for the conference in March 2005
- To discuss how Beijing +10 is relevant to the issues of older women, including the opportunities for advocacy
- To share information on project experiences from VWU and BWHC

Summary

The gender sensitisation exercise was used to discuss the differences between gender and sex, which helped focus the group on the issues to be raised in the presentations. The discussion resulted in the following recommendations on ways to mainstream gender in organisations and how to mainstream ageing issues within the gender movement in light of the Beijing +10 review process.

Action points

- Gender-sensitive training for staff of organisations in the network.
- Seek and include gender disaggregated data throughout project analysis, from project baselines to monitoring and impact analysis.
- Involve both older women and men in programme planning.
- To provide both leadership/assertiveness training and negotiation skills training for older women, to be used within and outside the family.
- Seek resources from donors for gender impact appraisal.
- Consciously include gender issues in programme planning and implementation and make the existing programmes and policies more gender friendly.
- Lobby NGOs who work in poverty reduction to reduce the gender disparity in programme benefits.
- Review the impact of projects on both older women and men.
- Procure information about the status of older women in each country.
- Raise awareness around the impact that the migration of young people for employment has on older people, and encourage other agencies working in poverty reduction to create better employment opportunities to decrease migration.
- Organise older women's groups.
- Lobby policy makers, both in the government and NGO sectors, about rights and protection of older women and to include older women as the target group.
- Lobby and influence governments and the APRDC to sending a group of older women to New York to attend the Beijing +10 meeting in March 2005.

Further recommendations for HAI and specifically APRDC in terms of action to effectively address the gender and poverty situation include:

- Provide more support to affiliates, coordinate information and build the capacity of the network, for example, by organising workshop/conference for the network on the gender issue.
- Develop guidelines for the inclusion of older women in projects.
- Lobby with the organisers of the Beijing +10 review process to include older women's issues in the final documentation.
- Link advocacy efforts around older women to children's issues.

HIV/AIDS – International AIDS Conference (IAC) and beyond

The presentations by Godfred Paul (APRDC) on the IAC participation and by Sawang Kaewkantha (FOPDEV) on FOPDEV's work in northern Thailand were followed by very stimulating group discussion.

Objectives

- Provide affiliates with feedback from the IAC
- Facilitate information sharing on HIV/AIDS projects in the region

Summary

The feedback from the IAC stated that the highlight of the IAC was the presence of older people themselves. For example the presentation at the satellite session by an older woman affected by HIV/AIDS made a huge impact on those who attended. The IAC was also successful in facilitating networking and information exchanges with other organisations working in the same field. An HIV/AIDS NGO based in Mumbai is now in touch with HelpAge India regarding the work they are undertaking on impact of the AIDS epidemic on older people in India with a focus on the State of Maharashtra. Additionally, UNESCAP is using a short HAI film, *Young Hopes in Elderly Arms* in some of their workshops in the region.

Discussion points

- FOPDEV is developing a care model for older people affected by HIV/AIDS in northern Thailand. This involves training community members to collect information on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the affected and infected, and to collect information on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of older people and health care workers in dealing with HIV/AIDS. The resulting database will be available to everyone when completed in 2005.
- There is a possible link to be made between HIV/AIDS and social pensions – social pensions can be a crucial support for those affected and infected.
- Data collection does not always mean collecting new information. UNICEF recently re-analysed existing data with an ageing lens and found lots of useful data. HAI members could also try to find ageing-related information from available reports.
- Older people have a role in the issue of human trafficking, particularly in protecting young girls and vulnerable women.
- For most donors HIV/AIDS prevention is still the priority and they are not yet very supportive of proposals on care and support, the area in which older people's role is significant. It is important to try and change our approach and show that older people can be a resource for raising prevention awareness as well.

Action points

- India – study existing HIV/AIDS programmes within India and identify gaps relating to older people. As HelpAge India has no experience on the issue of HIV/AIDS, HAI will share information with them. HelpAge India will investigate linking their study with the research currently being undertaken in Maharashtra.
- Lao PDR – conduct a survey to assess the impact of HIV/AIDS on older people and how they are coping and responding to the challenges faced by the family.
- China – promote awareness of the problems faced by older people as a result of HIV/AIDS, as well as the contributions that older people make to alleviate the HIV/AIDS situation within families and communities; share information with other countries, for example, there is a new research paper titled, *A Study of Impact of AIDS on the Older Persons in China*.
- Vietnam – include older people in all of VWU's work on HIV/AIDS; encourage the spread of the Clubs for Families Affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Regional – educate the HAI network's own staff about HIV/AIDS and the role of older people. This would be especially beneficial in large organisations with country-wide offices, such as HelpAge India; continue encouraging donors to fund HIV/AIDS projects that include older people.



HIV/AIDS working group



Gujarat earthquakes, India
26 January 2000

Older people are rarely included in disaster preparedness, relief and rehabilitation in the region and around the world.

Emergencies and older people

Presentations were made by Haseeb Khan (RIC), and Anant Bir Singh (HelpAge India) and the session was facilitated by Quyen Tran (APRDC).

Objectives

- To promote interest and awareness of emergencies and older people
- To discuss what HAI can do to increase awareness and inclusion of older people in disaster preparedness, prevention, relief and rehabilitation

Summary

The session started with a short introduction from RIC on disasters in the Asia/Pacific region. The main emphasis of the presentation was that sixty per cent of all disasters in the world occur in the Asia/Pacific region. Disasters cause great damage and suffering to millions of people every year and those that tend to suffer the most are older people. However, most emergency relief or preparedness programmes mainly target women and children and exclude older people. There is a great lack of awareness regarding the impact and affect of disasters and emergencies on older people. There is an even greater deficiency of awareness of the roles older people play in emergency situations. Older people are rarely included in disaster preparedness, relief and rehabilitation in the region and around the world. Even amongst HAI member and partners, there is very little interest or awareness of emergencies and older people.

Discussion points

Following the India and Bangladesh country presentations, a group discussion was conducted to focus on what the HAI network can do to increase the awareness and inclusion of older people in disaster preparedness, prevention, relief and rehabilitation. The discussion concentrated on the following points:

- the effect and impact of disasters on older people
- the linkage between older people falling back deeper into poverty due to disaster
- how to lobby key disaster players to increase their focus on the special needs of older people during disaster preparedness, prevention, response and rehabilitation
- how to influence key disaster players to increase the inclusion of older people in their disaster management strategies and activities.

Action points

- Influence main relief agencies like MSF, Oxfam, Red Cross, and UNDP to include older people in their agenda.
- Encourage the inclusion of older people in curriculum of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center.
- Advocate inclusion of the issues faced by older people in manuals produced by the Red Cross, UNDP, and other relief agencies.
- Change the mindset of people regarding the expendability of older people.
- Use documents produced by HAI and affiliates to influence policy makers.
- Affiliates collect data on older people and how they are affected by disasters and the role they can play in disaster response and mitigation.
- Affiliates identify and influence key actors in disaster response and management in their country vis-à-vis older people.
- Affiliates exchange information on community-based disaster preparedness activities undertaken and any other learning in disaster management and response focusing on older people.
- APRDC to disseminate materials it has on older people and disasters.

Advocacy development

Ed Gerlock (COSE) facilitated this session and Jane Scobie, (HAI Communications Manager), made a presentation.

Objectives

- To develop the perception of the network's distinctive competency in advocacy and influencing government decisions in favour of older people
- To understand the practical steps, methodologies and processes of advocacy
- To define issues from previous sessions, that can be identified for advocacy purposes.

Summary

In the earlier session on the HAI network and its perspectives (session 1) there was a general agreement that the network's competency in influencing government decisions in favour of older people can be strengthened. In order to do this, the advocacy session initiated a discussion and actions around developing regional advocacy plans on key themes identified earlier in the week.

Presentation

Advocacy works by:

changing policy ⇒ impacting on people's lives ⇒ building awareness

Advocacy involves both:

Older People Advocating for Themselves	Policy Level Advocacy
Group formation ⇒ group activities ⇒ group federation beyond village level such as in Cambodia, Thailand, and India; involves a lot of capacity building.	Heightened awareness about an issue ⇒ contribution to debate ⇒ changed opinions ⇒ changed policy, for example in Indonesia, the National Policy on Ageing.
Movement which takes on vested interests for example, Bangladesh where older people are involved in identifying recipients of Old Age allowance and beginning to demand an increase in the social pension.	Policy change implemented ⇒ positive change in people's lives, such as India changing policy of banks in distributing older people's pensions and in Bangladesh, the age limit on national credit scheme was removed.
Older people involved in framing legislation and have control over resources, such as in the Philippines.	

← The stronger the relation between the two, the greater the impact of the advocacy →

The network needs to not only advocate to get policies in place, but also to ensure policies and legislation are resourced and implemented properly, especially as many policies do not have attached budgets. Equally important is that government delivery and expenditure against commitments are monitored. Work needs to be done at the regional and international policy levels and in some countries with the international, bilateral and multilateral donors as well as the government.

Advocacy planning

There are seven building blocks involved in developing successful advocacy plans. These are:

Objectives

It is important to include two to three time-bound objectives (often include capacity building).

Message

A clear message is a clear call for action. Having a clear message is important, especially in a team which works across regions or in different locations. Repetition reinforces argument.



Information materials available at the conference

The network needs to not only advocate to get policies in place, but also to ensure policies and legislation are resourced and implemented properly...



Vietnamese reporters interview Wesumperuma from HelpAge International

Do not forget that local community media is also a useful tool in advocating.

Target audience

Look at who controls the resources and policies you are seeking to access or change. In order to influence them you need to understand them and understand how they make decisions.

Evidence

Consider what evidence to gather in order to make your case. This can include demographics, data showing economic and social benefits to community when older people are targeted, such as number of day's labour spent fetching water a year. Make sure to present statistical information in an accessible way and think about how to couch the information, for example, when lobbying government agencies use government terms, such as 'social pensions' and 'girl child education' in India. Also show the impact over time of the interventions advocated such as social pensions, income generation projects and their cost effectiveness (UNESCAP framework), or the impact of policy frameworks on older people.

Alliances

Building alliances is crucial since advocacy objectives can rarely be achieved by one, or even a few, organisations alone. Alliances can include network members, older people's groups, academics, human rights organisations, child focused agencies or HIV/AIDS agencies.

Time line

The time line will vary as objectives vary. However, think about key dates in the external environment that will impact advocacy plans, and consider how these dates should be incorporated into/determine/effect the plan such as the MIPAA review, MDG review, Beijing +10, and so on.

Activities

The activities involved will be different for policy advocacy from the advocacy activities carried out by older people. For example older people's activities might include input to meetings and policies, publications, media work, drama, community meetings, and so on.

Following the presentations there was a discussion examining the use of the media in advocacy. The discussion focused on the following points:

- Media coverage for international development issues is difficult to obtain. However if there is a big conference organised then interest already exists and the conference can be used as a media peg to get the media coverage required.
- The organisations who are advocating are responsible to take the issues to the media in ways that have 'human interest' and that the media would use!
- Do not forget that local community media is also a useful tool in advocating.

Working groups

Three working groups each developed a draft advocacy plan for next three years and specific action points for the next twelve months on three issues, identified by the participants: gender; access to primary health care – building on current home care work; social pension – building on income-generating activities of the network.

The groups were asked to consider the following questions when developing their advocacy plans:

- What information should be shared and how?
- What support is needed from whom?

Conclusion

To be successful in advocacy it is important to be strategic, as one cannot advocate change for everything at the same time. Advocacy should not be seen as just an 'add-on' to current work, as it is something that requires strategy, resources, time and commitment.

Working group results

A. Gender regional advocacy plan

The discussion considered the following gender issues in the countries of the participants in the group and then advocacy plans were developed for each country.

- Singapore – The current pension policy means pensions received by men do cover the children, but not the wife. This is obviously biased against women.
- Laos – Laos Women's Union sits on the Laos National Committee on Ageing; Laos Red Cross has a gender group; older women are currently facing access to health care.
- Thailand – Older women are carers for people living with HIV/AIDS; lower daily wage compared to men in the agricultural work. Not covered by benefits.
- India – There is unequal social status between genders, mostly in favour of men.
- Bangladesh – Women lack access to health care, income and savings.

Objectives:

- Bangladesh – grant women equal access to health services, high opportunity for employment and income; women organisations including older women
- Thailand – raise awareness of gender issues around HIV/AIDS, improve opportunities for older women to earn an income, older women to be recognised by women organisations
- Laos – include older women in the programmes of Laos Women's Union
- Myanmar –raise gender awareness in the education of young people
- Singapore – suitable policy and programmes developed by gender based organisations
- Philippines – lobby government to provide access to health care; income security through social pensions
- China – increase retirement age for women in the government sector.

Message:

Society with equal rights for all

Target audience:

- both older men and women
- women's organisations
- concerned ministries
- NGOs working on gender-based issues

Evidence:

- unequal access to health care
- less income earning opportunities for older women; older women are not recognised by
- women organisations
- earlier retirement of women (than men)

Alliances:

- older people's organisations
- NGO, CBO, GO
- UNFPA
- UNAIDS
- UNESCAP
- donors

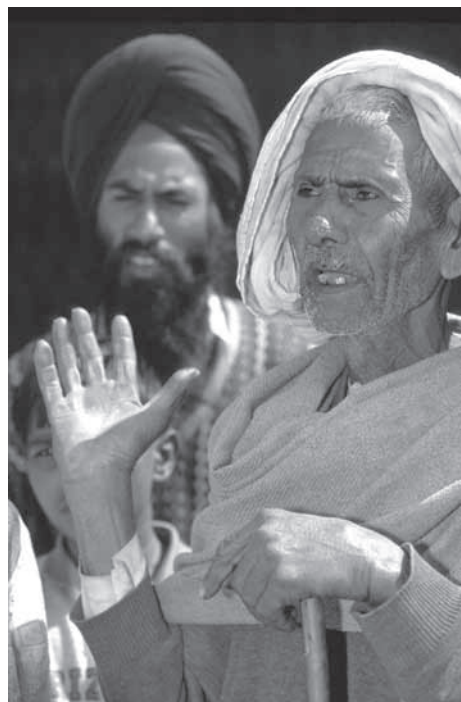
Activities:

- lobbying and influencing target audience
- working with media
- consultations with older people
- sensitisation workshops for relevant organisations

Time line: one year



Advocacy materials and publications of the regional network on display during the conference



Participation of older people is crucial for success in our projects

©Brent Madison/HelpAge International

B. Access to Primary Health Care Regional Advocacy Plan

Objectives:

Increase access to affordable, age-friendly, quality, primary health care. (It should be noted that primary health care includes a wide range of elements such as access to clean water and so on. For this discussion primary health care is restricted to mean medical care. We acknowledge that in a three-year advocacy plan, the focus must be limited as not everything can be addressed).

Message:

Access to quality, age friendly and affordable primary health care is a core component of building a society for all ages.

Target audience:

- ministry of health
- professional and voluntary sector – network working on health areas
- ministry of education/medical universities – medical and nursing training and curriculum
- older people's associations
- policy makers such as consultative committees on health and members of parliament
- service providers such as doctors, nurses, traditional healers

Evidence:

- health status of older people – levels of disability
- accessibility of health care for older people
- status of current primary health care system
- special needs of older people
- economic impacts of a poor health care system, for example, adult children need to take time off from work to accompany older person to distant health care centre, loss of economic productivity
- barriers to care such as transport, lack of staff, and affordability

Alliances:

- NGOs
- government ministries
- researchers and academics
- older people's committees
- local administration
- UN agencies such as WHO

Activities:

- seek funding for research and projects
- gather evidence (national level research, NGO's involved in healthcare)
- organise events around key dates such as World Health Day
- educate older people about the importance of primary health care
- mobilise older people to advocate for primary health care
- form community support groups within older people associations to advocate for primary health care
- link to WHO Age Friendly Primary Health Care project
- link to WHO regional centres
- organise workshops/seminars/dialogues with policy makers

Time line: one year

C. Social Pension Advocacy Action Plan

Objectives:

- increase the coverage and the amount of social pension for disadvantaged older people
- change the universal age for social pensions to be 60 years

Message:

- enhance the role of older persons in their households
- improve the livelihoods of poor older people and their families

Target Audience:

- government
- academia
- UN bodies
- civil societies

Evidence:

- increases the economic productivity of the family and thereby society
- improves social cohesion and harmony
- improves voting and participation of older people
- local economies become dynamic

Alliances:

- civil society key players
- research organisations
- leading social activists
- media and journalists
- various unions
- community leaders

Activities:

- gather evidence on existing pension schemes
- study the impact of social pensions on households
- lobby target ministries
- publication of advocacy guidelines
- organise a workshop with government functionaries, policy makers, NGOs, and so on
- gather resources, both financial and technical

Time line: one year



Mr Todd Petersen, Chief Executive Officer of HAI and Mr Vu Oanh, President of Vietnam Association of the Elderly

‘Older people do so many things – looking after livestock, growing food, earning money – but we do all this on a voluntary basis and no one recognizes its value. Instead we are seen as a burden.’

Older people of Moheshkhali, Bangladesh

Field visits

Affiliates spent a morning visiting one of the local projects being implemented by our Vietnamese partners.

Objectives

- To see first hand what projects are being undertaken in Vietnam
- To share information on these projects and those undertaken throughout the region

Summary

There were three groups that visited three different projects in the Hanoi region:

Home care

Affiliates were taken to Dong Da district to visit the ROK-ASEAN home care project. They visited two recipients of the project and talked with them as well as their home care volunteers. The volunteers mainly come from the local Vietnam Red Cross. Most have been volunteers for some time and none of them receive incentives for their work. The support given by these volunteers includes befriending, house keeping, providing some basic health education and, when needed, taking their clients to the local health centre.

Income generation

The Vietnam Association of the Elderly took affiliates to Bat Trang Village, a very large ceramic-making community, which reportedly manages to export over US\$10 million worth of products a year. Older people contribute to this project mainly by training the new, younger generation of artisans. They seem to have a lesser role in the marketing and promoting of the ceramic products. Even though the project is very successful, the majority of the visiting group felt that this model was too large for many of the local partners to replicate in their own country.

HIV/AIDS

The affiliates attended a regular monthly meeting of a ‘Family Club Against HIV/AIDS’ in Hanoi, supported by VWU. HAI was involved the establishment of the club in 2002. The Club has 46 members, mainly older people. They receive skills and information to help them care not only for their children who are drug addicts and at risk of HIV/AIDS but those with HIV/AIDS as well. The club members work in the local community to educate those living with HIV on how to help themselves, and how to prevent the spread of the disease in their community. In addition, they visit the homes of members when family members are sick. All members benefit from the support they give each other, and from each other’s experiences that they can share. In November club members visited a care facility where HIV/AIDS patients could call in. At the care facility one of the members, a doctor, trained patients in pain relief techniques. The affiliates concluded this project was a wonderful example of a support group.



An older artisan teaches a young man how to decorate ceramic vases, Bat Trang Village, Vietnam

Conference conclusions

At the end of the regional conference, Eduardo gave a brief summary of the key learnings and conclusions from each of the major sessions:

Network

- Information sharing is important.
- Communication within the network needs to be improved.
- Mechanisms for affiliation have to be disseminated in the spirit of promoting rational growth and strength.
- National coordination must be promoted.
- Some issues would benefit from sub-regional coordination.
- We must work together to strengthen the network's joint capacity to advocate in order to influence policies and practices.
- APRDC will focus on capacity building and communications.

Social pensions

- Clear link exists between social pensions and poverty reduction.
- Benefits are needed at family and wider community levels.
- Social pensions are a tool for development, not a 'welfare' approach.
- We need to gather more information and evidence of existing pension practices.
- More discussion and analysis on the economic implications are required.
- The network should start building awareness of social pensions in governments and older people's organisations.
- Social pensions are an issue that the network can advocate around both nationally and regionally. The network needs to share evidence that illustrates the benefits of social pensions with each other.
- Our work in income-generating activities can be linked with social pension advocacy.
- 'Going up the mountain starts with one small step'.

MIPAA

- We need to be aware of the MIPAA review process that will take place in 2007 and determine how the network can input into this process. APRDC will liaise with UNESCAP.
- MIPAA needs to be linked with other international conventions like the MDGs, Beijing + 10.

Advocacy

- There was a general consensus on the need to strengthen the network's competency in influencing government decisions in favour of older people.
- It is crucial to develop a strategic advocacy plan that is regularly updated as we cannot advocate change for everything at the same time. Advocacy should not be just 'an add-on' to current work as it is something that takes time, energy, commitment and needs to be properly resourced.
- In order to further the plans for regional advocacy, like the ones developed in the working groups, on the key themes of access to primary health care, social pensions, gender and poverty, the network should work together.

Other sessions

Concurrent sessions on organising older people, income generation activities, gender and poverty, HIV/AIDS, home care, and emergencies also provided sharing of experiences and best practices across the region and prompted many fruitful discussions.



A group discussion during the conference

By 2050, Asia and the Pacific will be home to over 1.2 billion people aged over 60 years... and this will account for 63 per cent of the world's total.

UNESCAP 2005

Appendix 1: Conference Schedule

1 Nov - Monday	2 Nov - Tuesday	3 Nov - Wednesday	4 Nov - Thursday	5 Nov - Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrivals • Regional conference organisers meeting • Press conference 	8:00 – Registration 9:00 – Opening session chaired by the Vice-President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome by national steering committee • HAI – Todd Petersen • Colombo Plan – Kittipan Kanjanapitkul • Cultural presentation 11:30 – Presentation of the programme for the RC	08:30 – Social pensions and poverty 10:45 – Monitoring MIPAA & Shanghai	Field visits – three options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS • Home care • Income/micro-credit 	08:30-12:00 Advocacy development practice
12:00 Lunch				
Informal dinner meeting	The network and its perspectives 2:00 – Presentation by HAI and affiliates 2:45 – Working groups 4:15 – Plenary, Conclusions	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income generation and organization of older people • Home care Meeting with President of VWU	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender & poverty • HIV/AIDS • Emergencies 5:00 – Meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam	2:00 – Open discussion 3:30 – Wrap up and conclusions
Evenings HAI welcome dinner with entertainment	Evenings Artistic Presentation at the Hanoi Opera House - VAE welcome dinner	Evenings Hanoi People's Committee sponsored dinner	Evenings	Evenings

Appendix 2: Social pension provisions in the region

Country	Criteria	Rate per month	Approx. no. of older people receiving pensions	Regularity of payment	Responsible Ministry	National budget allocation
Nepal	Universal 75+	150Rs	400,000	Twice a year	Ministry of Local Development	Approx. US\$676,000
India: National old age pension State old age pension Some state pension schemes	Means tested 65+ 60+ and destitute without a son +21	75Rs (US\$ 1.50) 200Rs	6.2 million 15-20 per cent of population 65+	By money order depending on availability of funds	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment – district collections	8.35 billion Rs (US\$192,374,000)
Lao PDR	No social pension					
Bangladesh: Old Age Allowance Widow and abandoned women allowance Vulnerable group development	65+ Less than income of US\$50 Priority for sick and disabled, freedom fighters, homeless widows	Taka165	1.3 million	Quarterly by Sonali Bank	Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Women's Affairs	Taka 2.6 billion (US\$443,989)
Cambodia	No social pension. Funeral benefit of US\$200 on death					
Philippines: no social pension, only one-off payment to individuals in crisis	Means tested 60+ and in crisis	Medical, transport and burial assistance	300,000 a year		Social Welfare and Development	
Singapore: Public assistance scheme	Means tested For destitute citizens with no family	US\$80	2,000	monthly	Ministry of Community Youth and Sports	
Hong Kong: non-contributory social security allowance	65-69 means tested 70+ available to all		455, 522			



Mr Cho Ki Dong from HelpAge Korea

Appendix 3: Participants and Honoured Guests

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Honoured Guests and Hosts

Guests of the opening ceremony

- Mme Truong My Hoa, State Vice President
- Mr Kittipan Kanjanapitkul, Secretary General of the Colombo Plan
- Mr Pham The Duyet, President of Vietnam Fatherland Front
- Ms Tong Thi Phong, Chief, Central Party's Commission for People's Mobilization
- Ms Nguyen Thi Hoai Thu, Head of Commission for Social Affairs of the National Assembly
- Ms Nguyen Thi Hang, Minister, MOLISA
- Ms Ha Thi Khiet, President of the VWU
- Mr Vu Ngoc Ky, President of the Vietnam Farmers' Association
- Mr Vu Oanh, President of the Vietnam Association for the Elderly (VAE)

Visits from participants

- Mr Vu Khoan, Deputy Prime Minister
- Ms Ngo Thi Thanh Hang, Vice President of Hanoi People's Committee, at the Melia Hotel

Conferring Ceremony of the medal 'For the Cause of Women's Emancipation' to HelpAge International

Ms Ha Thi Khiet, VWU President, at the VWU headquarters in Hanoi



Nguyen Thi Ngoc and Pham Quang Lung, participants from Vietnam



Mrs Truong My Hoa, Vice-President of Vietnam speaks with participants at the regional conference 2005

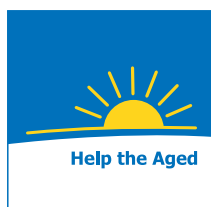
Asia/Pacific Regional Conferences 1993-2004

- 1993 Manila, Philippines
- 1994 Chiang Mai, Thailand
- 1995 Chiang Mai, Thailand
- 1996 Macau, Hong Kong
- 1997 Perth, Australia
- 1998 Singapore
 - Developing the HAI Network in the Asia/Pacific Region
- 1999 Chiang Mai, Thailand
 - Changing Lives: Positive Ageing into the 21st Century
- 2000 Delhi, India
 - A New Century of Independence and Better Quality of Life for Older People
- 2001 Beijing, China
 - The Voices of Older People
- 2002 Colombo, Sri Lanka
 - After Madrid – Linking Ideas and Action Through the HAI Network
- 2003 Chiang Mai, Thailand
 - Health, Social and Economic Challenges of Ageing in the Asia Pacific Region:
Including older people in poverty alleviation, health and HIV/AIDS
programmes and policies
- 2004 Hanoi, Vietnam
 - A Strong Network for the Rights of Older People

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Working together to improve the
lives of disadvantaged older people
around the world



The Colombo Plan