

# Goings On Among Asian Partners



## Youth the Future of Asia

Brief Report to RIPESS Board meeting  
held from June 23-24, 2012  
at Rio, Brazil

## **Asian Solidarity Economy Coalition (ASEC)**

On Nov 1, 2011, eighteen organizations in Asia undertook the signing of the Kuala Lumpur - Memorandum of Agreement to institutionalize the Asian Solidarity Economy Coalition (ASEC). Earlier it was more a loose group of individuals, however during the 2011 Asian forum, this partnership and friendship was formalized through the signing of a MOA among the organizations.

According to Dr Ben Quinones, the ASEC Chair, "this is a commitment pledge to work through partner organizations for concerted and collective action towards advancing solidarity economy in Asia. We have agreed to focus attention on strengthening national setups in Asia through our regional partners and universities. We are asking all our partners in Asia to give us major dates of their national workshops or forums so that we can encourage solidarity leaders from within Asia to participate".

ASEC is opened for more organizations/institutions in Asia to pledge support for the common course.



## ASEF KL2011

The 3rd Asian Solidarity Economy Forum was held in Kuala Lumpur from Oct 31 to Nov 2, 2011. A total of 351 people participated at ASEFKL2011 from 33 countries from around the world. Seventeen Asian countries were represented with the largest delegation of 123 from Malaysia, 70 from Singapore, 40 from Indonesia, 36 from Philippines and 18 from India

We had the strong support of regional and national organizations such as the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO-Asia), APPEND from Philippines and COMMACT International to cite some examples. This is a very positive development as we had people from different streams now identifying under the solidarity economy agenda such as micro finance, cooperatives, fair trade and community based initiatives.

For the first time in solidarity economy forum, we have introduced faith based initiatives. Asia is rich in religious and spiritual traditions and people's trust and confidence in these institutions is high. We had a special workshop on Islamic Initiatives as this approach has not been introduced to the solidarity forum.

There was a very good representation of young people from 4 universities in the region namely Binary University College, University Kelantan Malaysia, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore and the Sam Ratulangi University from Indonesia. This is one dimension that we need to strengthen for the future as the networking with universities will be very essential. Students in economy, business and entrepreneurship schools including social sciences could have an interest in solidarity economy.

## **The Mont Blanc Meetings Nov 9-12, 2011 at Chamonix Mont Blanc, Switzerland**

Denison Jayasooria participated at the meetings and facilitated a workshop on "The social economy, democracy and sustainable development in Asia". A significant contribution of these meetings was the adoption of a resolution in favour of the social and solidarity economy and its policy advocacy role at Rio +20 summit

## **9th ASEAN Leadership Forum April 4 to 6, 2012 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

ASLI hosted this forum in conjunction with the 20th Asean Summit with the theme “One Community, One Destiny” with participants from every ASEAN country. Both Ben Quinones and Denison Jayasooria participated as speaker and moderator respectively in a plenary session entitled –“Green growth, climate change & sustainable energy: Enhancing public-private partnership”

At the **ASEAN Young Leader’s Dialogue, April 6, 2012 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia**, Ben Quinones & Denison Jayasooria facilitated a world cafe session entitled “Social economy & social enterprises, The wave of the future”

## **Luncheon Meeting with ASEAN head for ASEAN Connectivity**

ASEC leaders (Ben, Pak Bambang, Peggy, Ira and Denison) met up with Mr Lim Chze Cheen on April 20, 2012 at Jakarta, Indonesia to discuss strengthening ASEC’s presence and network with the Asean secretariat. ASEC will consider setting up a Asean level network for solidarity economy among the 10 member countries as there is a good infrastructure to do this. The ASLI connection through Dr Michael Yeoh is helpful in working with the public, private, academic and voluntary sectors.





## ASEC DISCUSSIONS

A paper entitled “Solidarity Economy as an approach to building sustainable community” written by Dr Ben Quinones served as a background discussion paper for a number of Roundtable discussions in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia & Philippines. The objective was to inspire national level action within Asian countries and this was organised by our partners in the region with Ben Quinones and Denison Jayasooria participating to provide a wider regional Asian perspective.

### **April 7, 2012 Phnom Penh, Cambodia.**

About 39 people participated at this session facilitated by Ben Quinones and Denison Jayasooria. It was really amazing to hear of the many social enterprise initiatives and was exciting to see the grassroots emergence of social enterprises in a post conflict/ communist backdrop. Ben Quinones emphasised the need to reposition these social enterprises within a value chain so as to provide a maximum impact as a majority of the enterprise were linked to tourism (food, retail shops, homestay accommodation & transport). We recognised tremendous potential in terms of capacity building and networking.





**April 11, 2012 Colombo, Sri Lanka.**

About 21 people attended the ASEC discussions and the event was hosted by the Alliance Development Trust. Denison Jayasooria facilitated the session which was attended by a majority of the Sri Lankan organisations involved in relief and development work operating on foreign donor grants. While they are promoting livelihood development in post conflict situations, the dimensions of social enterprise or solidarity economy is not dominant but there is much interest and potential for the future. Here too there is tremendous interest to shift grant based institutions into more sustainable social enterprises.

**April 19, 2012 Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.**

About 200 people, majority were students from the International Business Administration (INA) Program, Faculty of Economics , Sam Ratulangi Universiti, participated at the International Seminar on “Concept & practice of Solidarity Economy in Asia” with Ben Quinones, Denison Jayasooria and Peggy Mekel as speakers.



There is tremendous excitement for solidarity economy in Manado as they saw the synergy with their indigenous 'mapalus economy'. There is a tremendous need for academic and teaching input to provide the academic and intellectual base for solidarity economy as a formal academic course.



**April 20, 2012 Jakarta, Indonesia.** About 25 people participated in two discussions. The first two hours was devoted for a discussion on Solidarity Economy and the second session after dinner was devoted to the Charter for human responsibility. Pak Bambang, Dr Ben, Dr Peggy and Dr Denison participated in this lively discussion. We found much interest and the outstanding example of Bina Swadaya founded by Pak Bambang is a shining model of community based economic enterprises.

**April 24, 2012 Malaysia.**

Dr Wong Lai Yong of CSR Asia, Japan delivered a talk entitled "What is the real CSR? The opportunities and challenges for the social sector. Discussion was hosted by the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship, Binary University College. Dr Ben Quinones, Prof Yusof Kassim and Ms Josie Fernandez made comments of the presentation.





# GATHERINGS MARCH TO MAY 2012

**COMMACT International organised a regional workshop from March 2-4, 2012 at Cochin, Kerala India.** The theme was “New directions & connections for the solidarity economy & people-centred development”. The program which was hosted and moderated by David Thompson, drew about 50 participants from India, Nepal, Malaysia, Australia and UK. This gathering provided lots of opportunities for sharing and learning.



A high point of the discussions was the sharing of Mr Loganathanji and the Sarvodaya movement -ASSEFA which has an outreach of one million families and working in 10,000 villages through 154 community based organisations.

Also the development of 15 Fair Trade retail outlets (WFTO Asia) is another step forward especially in developing a chain and collective branding.

**Centre for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE), Binary University College, Malaysia hosted from March 7-8, 2012** a Focus Group Discussion on “Theory and Practice of Social Economy”. Prof Dr John Clammer (Japan), Dr Ben Quinones (Philippines), Dr Budi Faisal (Indonesia) & Prof Yusof Kassim (Malaysia) were resource persons. About 25 Malaysians participated and discussed the intellectual underpinning and academic rationale for practice, research and teaching/training for social economy. This was an activity of the Malaysian Network for Community economy.



**Foundation for a Sustainable Society (FSSI), hosted from May 3-4, 2012 at Manila, Philippines** hosted a learning & sharing session on social enterprises, social and solidarity economy initiatives in Asia & Philippines. Dr Ben Quinones & Dr Denison Jayasooria participated as resource speakers drawing on Asian experiences. FSSI is an umbrella body of 20 national organisations working among the poor in the Philippines. About 50 people participated and this network tremendous national and regional potential.

New development in the Philippines, the introduction of a new Act –“The promotion & development of social enterprises in order to ensure poverty reduction..” (House bill 6085). This will be the Magna Carta for social enterprises of 2012.

## GATHERINGS JULY TO OCT 2012

2012 Self Asia with ASES, July 2-4, 2012 at Jeonju, Korea. The theme is “Creating solidarity among Asian social enterprises and an environment that promotes sustainable growth”. Organised by Work- Together Foundation with Korean partners. For details please contact: Ms Myung Hee Lee- email: [smartmarie@gmail.com](mailto:smartmarie@gmail.com).

COMMACT Malaysia, Sept 3-4, 2012 at UKM Bangi. The theme is “National Seminar on People-centred development: The Future of community enterprises”. For details please contact Prof Datuk Mohd Yusof Kassim at email: [datukyusof@ucti.edu.my](mailto:datukyusof@ucti.edu.my)

ASEF Indonesia 2012, Oct 1-3, 2012 at the Sam Ratulangi University, Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Theme is “Solidarity Economy as a means of building sustainable communities”. For more details: Dr Peggy Adeline. Email: [peggyadeline@yahoo.com](mailto:peggyadeline@yahoo.com), [asef@ibafeunsrat.com](mailto:asef@ibafeunsrat.com)



Asian Solidarity Economy Forum – Philippines will be held on October 26-27, 2012 at Stotsenberg Hotel, Clark Freeport Zone. For more details contact: Dr Benjamin Quinones: Email: [benqjr117@yahoo.com](mailto:benqjr117@yahoo.com)

## **Preparations for 2013 RIPESS Global Forum**

National Organizing Committee (NOC) of ASEF Philippines meets monthly under the chairmanship of Mr Brigido Simion as they actively prepare for the 2013 RIPESS International Forum on the Globalization of Solidarity Economy to be held on October 14-17, 2013. The venue will be at Angeles City, Philippines. For more details contact : Dr Benjamin Quinones. Email: [benqjr117@yahoo.com](mailto:benqjr117@yahoo.com)

## **Partnership with City Governments**

The city government of Angeles, Philippines which is the location site of ASEF Philippines 2012 & 2013 RIPESS International Forum on the Globalization of Solidarity Economy has agreed to serve as partner host organization of ASEF Philippines 2012 & 2013 RIPESS global gathering.

In addition the Mayor of Angeles city has agreed to sign a sister city agreement with the city of Manado, Indonesia and has also agreed to attend the ASEF Indonesia 2012 in Manado. There is a plan for the signing of the sister city agreement then.

## **Post graduate Research and supervision**

We in Asia are realising that there is need to strengthen the supervision of post graduate students in solidarity economy research. While Dr John Clammer was in Kuala Lumpur he met up with three post graduate students of the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship on March 8, 2012. There is potential to develop the network among academics and institutions across Asia. This is another aspect that ASEC will focus attention upon as it will develop younger leadership.



# Conceptual & Practice framework for Fair Trade & Social Entrepreneurship: The Philippines Initiatives



Fair Trade and Social Entrepreneurship are two concepts borne from different contexts but which have converged as a unified movement with the same goal: to put an end to the cycle of poverty besetting the poor and marginalized people.

Two schools of thought on social entrepreneurship that emerged from Europe and the United States have influenced the development of theory and practice in the Philippines, as evidenced by the emergence of a growing number of social enterprises in the country. However, the European tradition emerges as the more dominant in the Philippine setting, with social entrepreneurship seen largely as a response to the failure of both state and market in solving socioeconomic problems.

Fair Trade, on the other hand, traces its conceptual roots to Europe, and has made significant inroads in the Philippines over the years. It is a movement committed to promoting alternative trading practices which unequivocally expresses partiality for small and marginalized producers and artisans.

This theme was discussed by the ASEF partners in the Philippines (WFTO ASIA/ WFTO Philippines, the Foundation for Sustainable Society Inc. the Ateneo Center for Social Entrepreneurship and the Philippine Social Enterprise Network) on 23 May 2012 at the Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.





## Khmer Enterprises

Esther Ding a Malaysian has been living among the Khmer people for the past 17 years in the Baray district which is about 120km from Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Esther and her friends participated at the ASEC RTD on April 7, 2012 and they all shared their story.

Over the years a number of them have been inspired by the entrepreneurship vision of Esther and the village folk have together pioneered a chain of social enterprises.



These include:-

- Khmer Homestay
- Solar Cafe
- Khmer handcraft cottage industry
- Khmer retail outlet at Phnom Penh
- Transport services including vans and local tour arrangements including village participation of bull-a-carts.

In a land where people have suffered the horrors of the killing fields these social economy projects is a breath of fresh air. There is some fear towards cooperatives and solidarity thrust due to the negative experiences of forced collective activities of the past. However there is tremendous openness for networking and partnerships in enterprise development which benefits the village as a whole.





Esther might not have known that she was developing social enterprises within a social economy. Nor has she been associated with other such groups. In her pioneering and participatory way with village folk she and her team have developed a balance between profits, people and the environment. In addition their efforts include enhancing local cultures and empowering people to believe in themselves.



ASEC has a major role in identifying such models out there and document these stories. Developing effective networks between these micro initiatives to the wider social economy family in order to fully tap the potential of ordinary people at the grassroots is our urgent task.



For more details:

[www.khmerhomestay.com](http://www.khmerhomestay.com) or email them at [khmervillagehomestay@yahoo.com](mailto:khmervillagehomestay@yahoo.com)

Further details and networking with ASEC contact:-

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