



LATEST NEWS

Over the last few months, there has been some good response from network members in terms of sending over information to publicise past or upcoming events. In this edition we highlight those who have taken the time to send us information and suggest opportunities for collaborations.

We'd also like to welcome aboard some of our newest members; the Australian National University (ANU); the Asian Research Centre for Migration (ARCM) at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand; RECOFTC – The Centre for People and Forests; and the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia. We hope that you will be as active as our long-standing members so that we can all benefit from the networking platform that the NTS-Asia Consortium provides.

In this issue, we are happy to share some of the outcomes from the recent Conference on Sustainable Uses of Mekong Water Resources, organised by Can Tho University, Tri Viet Centre for Social and Educational Studies and the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation (HPDF), who is a member of the Consortium. News and updates on programmes such as this will help to mainstream NTS and share news and information that will be useful to others in the region, either to further research in the respective areas or to apply on the ground where relevant.

Researchers Rika Kumala Dewi and Athia Yumna, from the SMERU Research Institute, Indonesia are this issue's NTS young scholar and expert. Do keep sending us bits and bytes about your resident experts so that they too can be featured in upcoming issues. By the time the next newsletter comes around we will be able to announce the launch of our new website. We promise you a more interactive and engaging experience to come!

To update us on your news, events and experts or to send in suggestions, do get in touch with either Margareth (ismsembiring@ntu.edu.sg) or Joey (isjoeyliang@ntu.edu.sg). We look forward to hearing from you soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC)

Mainstreaming free, prior and informed consent
26-30 September 2016 | Bangkok, Thailand

Leadership Training Camp

2-7 October 2016 | Chiang Rai, Thailand

The SMERU Research Institute

Forum Kajian Pembangunan by ANU-Indonesia Project and The SMERU Research Institute

Series of research based policy forums discussing research outcomes related to topical policy issues in Indonesia. These forums are free and open to the public. For this coming October 2016, SMERU will be the host. Live streaming will be available during the seminar events.

5, 12, 19 and 26 October 2016 (every Wednesday) at 10.00am-12pm | Jakarta, Indonesia

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

RSIS Closed-Door Roundtable Meeting with the SIEW Panellists on Nuclear Safety Cooperation
27 October 2016 | Singapore

RSIS Roundtable at the Singapore International Energy Week 2016
28 October 2016 | Singapore

Asia Pacific Partnership for Atrocities Prevention (APPAP) Meeting
Co-hosted with the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
7-8 November 2016 | Singapore

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

As work on the new website continues, it's heartening to see that NTS-Asia Consortium members are coming forward to collaborate on possible research areas, workshops and conferences. RSIS and Waseda University have just put in a joint application for research funding, with part of the output being workshops that may involve other NTS-Asia members.

The input that you send to us when the Secretariat puts out a call for information will be highlighted in our publicity channels and will strengthen the content of the website when it is ready. Especially interesting are the submissions on NTS experts and young scholars. Through these profiles, we will be able to share our individual areas of interests and discover the capabilities that we have in our region. It is efforts like these that will make the network stronger and more beneficial to all.

In November 2016, the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APCR2P) and RSIS will jointly host the Asia Pacific Partnership for Atrocities Prevention (APPAP) Meeting in Singapore. This meeting will bring together relevant experts to develop a Plan of Action for the Partnership and will be an opportunity for us to maximise the strengths of some of our network expertise for this very important work for the security of the region.

I anticipate many more opportunities to collaborate with all of you and as we look towards next year's annual NTS-Asia Conference, we welcome ideas on themes of interest and partners in organising or hosting the event. Do get in touch with myself or the team with your suggestions.

Warmest regards,
Mely Caballero-Anthony
Secretary-General
NTS-Asia Consortium Secretariat

MEET THE EXPERT Athia Yumna



My first exposure to the inequality issue dates back to the end of 2011 when Indonesia's most prominent newspaper, Kompas, featured some articles related to economic growth that was insufficient to ensure equality as well as widening gaps

between rich and poor in their headlines. In fact, Indonesia began to experience soaring inequality over the last decade. Expenditure inequality measured by the Gini Ratio has increased rapidly from 0.36 in 2007 to 0.41 in 2011, the highest record of the Gini ratio

UPCOMING EVENTS

Towards Resilient Cities, Green Urban Infrastructure and Sustainable Livelihoods: Dynamics of the Just City, the Right to the City and Food and Nutrition Security

Co-hosted with the University of Erlangen-Nurnberg

23-24 November | Singapore



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NEWSLETTER TEAM

SECRETARY GENERAL	- Mely Caballero-Anthony
RESEARCH FELLOW	- Serina Rahman
SENIOR ANALYST	- Margaret Sembiring
DESIGNER	- Joey Liang

in Indonesia ever.

This current trend of rising inequality is not a solely Indonesian scenario. A number of reports highlight this emerging issue not only in the developing world but also in developed countries. For example, the OECD 'Divided We Stand' report published in 2011, the UN 'Inequality Matters' report issued in 2013, and several other reports published by other development agencies, discuss this matter.

The uniqueness of inequality is its two-way causal relationship with development, particularly economic growth.

The first relationship is how economic development affects inequality and the second is how inequality affects economic development. This uniqueness makes this issue much more complex than other development problems. We need more evidence to be able to comprehend the

many layers of the puzzle. In the case of Indonesia, there are only limited studies looking at the issue of inequality; most of them look at the decomposition and drivers of inequality (see: Booth 2000, Akita 2003, Yusuf et al. 2013, Miranti et al., 2013). The answer to the fundamental question of whether increasing inequality in Indonesia is detrimental to economic growth is still rare or may not even exist. Our recent paper (Yumna et al., 2015) tries to add to the literature by proving that rising inequality in Indonesia is something to be worried about. The paper argues that the impact of inequality on economic growth is an inverted U-shape. Initially, increasing inequality is associated with increasing growth, but after reaching a peak point, further increase will reduce growth.

With this rigorous evidence, we can convince policy makers to acknowledge this recent trend. Luckily, we are now on the right track. Jokowi's government has

included the issue of reducing inequality as an explicit focus in their development agenda of 2015-2019. But this is not enough. Research communities need to support the decision makers with more evidence on how to do it. For advocacy, the more the merrier.

Alexis de Tocqueville in his seminal book "Democracy in America" (1840:185) reminded us that 'Almost all of the revolutions which have changed the aspect of nations have been made to consolidate or to destroy social inequality. Remove the secondary causes which have produced the great convulsions of the world, and you will almost always find the principle of inequality at the bottom'. Inequality is not a novel issue, it exists throughout human history. Tackling it is our biggest task.

YOUNG RESEARCHER PROFILE

Rika Kumala Dewi

I am a researcher at the SMERU Research Institute, Jakarta, Indonesia. I pursued my master's degree in Development Studies at the University of Melbourne, Australia. I began to develop an interest in research during my undergraduate studies, when I took part in various academic writing competitions. After successfully winning some of the competitions, I found my passion in research. For me, doing research is not only about generating deeper understanding and new knowledge, but since different research studies have different challenges, doing research has also positively affected my creative thinking, analytical skills, and the way to see a problem.

My area of research interest is development issues. My research path and interest is largely influenced by The SMERU Research Institute's research area. Being a researcher



Rika Kumala Dewi
Researcher at The SMERU Research Institute

who has been involved in poverty, education, and health studies conducted by the institute, I found that Indonesia is a country with many development problems and complicated root causes. Since then, I have committed myself to engagement to solve the problems facing Indonesia's development.

My current research projects are on health: the barriers to optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in Indonesia, and the implication of the ASEAN Economic Community on Health Services in Indonesia. Both research projects enable me to engage with many influential

development institutions in Indonesia, including ministries, NGOs, health worker associations, and international organizations. The engagement is not only developed for data collection purposes, but also for policy engagement objectives. For the IYCF project, for instance, I have engaged with ministries, NGOs, and international organizations through the IYCF policy change forum. In the forum, I am involved in formulating Indonesia's policy strategies for improving IYCF practices, and I actively disseminate research findings to the forum.

REFLECTIONS

Barriers to optimal breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices in Indonesia

By Rika Kumala Dewi (The SMERU Research Institute)



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Breast milk is free of cost. Breast milk, combined with appropriate complementary feeding for infants above 6 months old, provides ample benefits for children's future health status, as well as their productive and educational achievements. However, about 58% of infants aged 0–6 months are not exclusively breastfed, and 63% of children aged 6–23 months are not fed appropriately according to WHO's infant young child feeding (IYCF) recommendations (IDHS, 2012). By analyzing the opinion of stakeholders who closely engage with IYCF issues at both policy and community levels, the study attempts to map out the structure of the problems that create barriers to optimal IYCF.

The analysis indicates a lack of mothers/caregivers knowledge and awareness on how to feed infants and young children, as well as a lack of commitment in carrying out appropriate feeding practices. While health workers have better knowledge of IYCF, they discourage breastfeeding practices by promoting and feeding formula milk to newborns.

Mothers/caregivers' decisions on how to feed their infants is also influenced by the behavior of employers, formula companies, and the media. Employers are identified as lacking awareness of the importance of their support, thus putting a higher priority on profit and productivity than on provisioning lactation rooms

and breastfeeding breaks. Formula milk companies provide training for health workers on breastfeeding, but are not fully committed to promoting breastfeeding practices. At training venues, companies conduct promotional activities for formula milk products. The media is identified as giving a low priority to covering health issues, including IYCF practices.

Inadequate IYCF socialization, weak law enforcement, and low local governments' priority on IYCF improvement are identified as some of the root causes of suboptimal IYCF practices in Indonesia.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Michelle Kwa, 26 January 2016, TPP, SDGs: Friends or foes?, New Straits Times

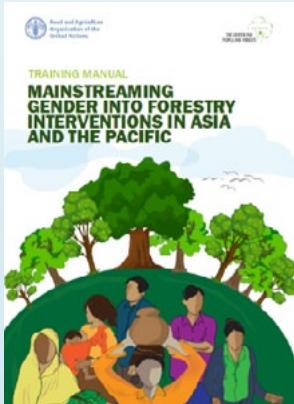
Thomas Daniel, 26 April 2016, Why we should care about Rohingyas, New Straits Times

Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmin, 17 May 2016, Healing the wounds of war in Sri Lanka, New Straits Times

The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC)

Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations and RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests, 2016, Training Manual: Mainstreaming gender into forestry interventions in Asia and the Pacific

Click [here](#) to read more.



3 directors, 30 years: an interview with Dr Tint Lwin Thaung, Dr Yam Malla and Dr Somsak Sukwong (Podcast)

Click [here](#) to read more.

Centre for International Security Studies, The University of Sydney

Jonathan Bogais, 15 June 2016, Violence and the Contradictory Coexistence of Peace and Conflict in the Asia Pacific Region, Middle East Institute, The University of Sydney

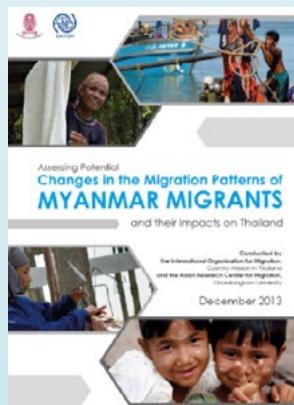
Click [here](#) to read more.

Asian Research Center for Migration – Institute of Asian Studies (IAS), Chulalongkorn University

Asian Research Center for Migration , Thailand Anti Trafficking Outlook, Vol. 1/2016



The International Organization for Migration, Country Mission in Thailand and the Asian Research Center for Migration, Chulalongkorn



The SMERU Research Institute

Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Programs in Five Ministries: A Study on the System and Implementation, Research Report, June 2016

Click [here](#) to read more.

Inequality and Stability in Democratic and Decentralized Indonesia, Working Paper, April 2016

Click [here](#) to read more.

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

Vishalini Chandara Sagar, As the Water Recedes: Sri Lanka Rebuilds, RSIS Commentary, 10 June 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Julius Trajano and Phidel Vinezles , Road To Low-Carbon ASEAN Community, RSIS Commentary, 17 June 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Mely Caballero-Anthony, Forced Migration: Some Sobering Realities, RSIS Commentary, 24 June 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Margareth Sembiring and Jonatan A. Lassa, International Disasters in Asia Pacific: Indonesia's Civil-Military Responses , RSIS Commentary, 12 July 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Celina Yulo Loyzaga, From Brazil to Singapore: Containing Zika in Southeast Asia, RSIS Commentary, 19 May 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Margareth Sembiring, Climate Change and Renewable Energy: Mitigation or Vulnerability?, RSIS Commentary, 13 July 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Margareth Sembiring, Combating Haze:Holding One's Breath A Year On, RSIS Commentary, 19 August 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Christopher H. Lim, Tamara Nair, Southeast Asia's Haze Plight: Is Insurance a Suitable Preventive Mechanism?, 13 September 2016.

Click [here](#) to read more.

PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

Tri Viet Center for Social and Educational Studies



Conference on "Sustainable Uses of Mekong Water Resources"

22–23 April 2016
Can Tho City, Vietnam

Rivers and freshwater resources not only play an essential role in the basic daily lives of people, have a major impact on the environment and livelihoods of riparian communities, but also play an increasingly essential role in development strategies, economic potential, and social security of many countries and regions. As the demand for freshwater increases, supply is limited and has been impacted by climate change and human exploitation. The world is witnessing a race for water resources among countries, with a number of cases leading to friction and dispute between states. Located in a region that is densely populated and facing increasingly serious water scarcity, Asian nations are particularly vulnerable to tensions over water resources. In such a context, the main challenge - according to Vital Water Graphics - will be to find alternatives and creative solutions to water resource management without aggravating ongoing disputes and conflicts. Effective agreements in other regions such as the Missouri river flowing through several states in the U.S. and the Rhine river in Europe are functional experiences for Asia in general and the Greater Mekong Sub-region in particular to take reference from.

The conference on "Sustainable Uses of Mekong Water Resources" was organized by the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and

Development Foundation, Tri Viet Center for Social and Educational Studies and Can Tho University with the aim of providing a multi-dimensional, multi-perspective forum involving diverse stakeholders, with an open crosscutting approach incorporating national perspectives and regional vision. This approach stressed the pressing importance of promoting appropriate and timely awareness among all stakeholders of the imperative for intra-country and inter-riparian countries consultations and cooperation (among lower riparians as well as between lower and upper riparians). Held at a time when salient issues of the Lower Mekong region came to the fore, the conference was also meant to be a practical, topical discussion where different ranges of the latest understanding and reflection on the current and coming realities in the Mekong River region were shared among participants, facilitating the formation and consolidation of a common situational awareness and appropriate, timely responses.

The Conference brought together high caliber and seasoned Vietnamese and international speakers (experts, researchers, officials and social activists) as well as a diverse but informed and engaged audience. This was not conceived as a scientific conference, and the main purpose of the conference was to encourage discussions. This allowed for an animated substantive debate which clarified and substantiated various positions and brought out interesting aspects and factors, which also resulted in specific suggestions and recommendations. Most striking was the surprisingly high participation (over 30% of participants) by a whole range of media and more importantly the extent of the resulting media output. One of the main objectives of the Conference i.e. awareness raising and high profiling of responsible social opinion was thus met beyond expectation.

The overall theme of the Conference put the issue in a broad long-term perspective. At the same time, the topics of the three panel sessions allowed for focused and concrete analysis and debate on three important dimensions (hydropower; environment

and climate change; the human security dimension). And the follow-on session provided an opportunity to add country and region specific perspectives to the debate with some case studies of transboundary river arrangements (US, Europe, and Asia).

Throughout the Conference, it became clear that there were many areas of convergence in viewpoints and observations on the matter. This included both the short and long term importance of the issue; the negative multi-sided impact of hydropower dams on the mainstream; the interconnectedness of climate change, policies (related to energy, environment, agriculture - forestry - fisheries...) and community and local realities and practices. The transboundary nature of water resources and the ensuing imperative to chart joint initiatives and mechanisms for sustainable mutually beneficial use of these resources, especially between the lower and upper riparian states, was also discussed. The challenge posed by the intricate intertwining of economic interests among various riparians: e.g. Thai and Chinese investments in Lao hydropower dams or Viet Nam's import of Lao hydropower; the insufficient consultation and limited integration in approach among the different national stakeholders and riparian countries; and in view of climate change, drought and salt water intrusion, the pressing need arises to revisit the excessive focus on rice in Viet Nam's agricultural strategy and practice. There is a need to apply the flexibility and adaptability of the Vietnamese towards floods (embodied in the expression "live with" the flood i.e. rather than against) to the challenge of salinization. The issue of sustainability for the Mekong River attracted broad and strong interest from the international donor community as well as from domestic and international civil society organizations.

However, there was still a notable divergence of opinion regarding the exact extent and nature of harm, in the short and long term, caused by hydropower dams as well as the position of hydropower in national energy strategies. There was also the question of how to bring China directly into the conversation and induce it to join

efforts to reach a modus vivendi with all other riparian countries. The feasibility of such an option and an alternative solution have yet to be discussed.

For more information or reports on the Conference, please write to sdwg@tvcenter.vn



The SMERU Research Institute



2016 Indonesian Development Research Network Workshop

17–18 May 2016

Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

The Indonesia Project of the Australian National University (ANU), in cooperation with the SMERU Research Institute, organized the 4th Indonesian Development Research Network (IDRN) Workshop. The objective of the Indonesia Project research network activities is to support and strengthen the rigor of social

science research conducted by Indonesian researchers, through establishing an active network of Indonesian research institutes and holding annual research workshops and research grants to stimulate research cooperation between Indonesian and Australian research institutes. It was attended by approximately 40 researchers from various institutes in Indonesia and Australia.

Asia Human Center for Non-Traditional Security and Peaceful Development Studies, Zhejiang University



The paper: "Dragon and Elephant, Shoulder to Shoulder": Non-traditional Security Cooperation Between China and India.

Professor Yu Xiaofeng published an important paper in the Journal of International Security Studies in March 2016 with Ruth Kattumuri, director of Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), entitled "Dragon and Elephant, Shoulder to Shoulder": Non-Traditional Security Cooperation between China and India. The main point of the paper is that there is a connection between issues of traditional and non-traditional security cooperation between China and India, such as financial security, energy security, national secessionism and terrorism, water resource security, epidemic disease, marine security, ecological security and so on, and

it argues that non-traditional security offers favorable and practical options to enhance peaceful bilateral relations between China and India. So "peace-cooperationism" and "pluralistic win-win" are ideal paradigms for Sino-Indian non-traditional security cooperation in particular.



On July 18th, Professor Yu Xiaofeng and his doctoral students attended The Ninth Annual Meeting of the Academic Community of Political Science and International Relations, which is held by Tsinghua University.

On June 5, the think tank Pangoal, based in China, hosted the 2016 Global Think Tank Forum in Xiangshan, China. The

non-traditional security and peaceful development studies center of Zhejiang University and eight other top global think tanks jointly launched the "Global Governance Think Tanks Network Mission".

In addition to the main forum, Pangoal held five sub-forums throughout the day (June 5). Professor Yu Xiaofeng was a panelist for the sub-forum, the topic of which was "Global governance: opportunities and challenges". Professor Yu put forward the "peace-cooperationism" viewpoint.





Group photo taken at the World Humanitarian Day Event

HADR Research in Singapore

24 Jun 2016

Singapore



The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme (HADR) at the NTS Centre, RSIS organized a roundtable meeting to explore HADR Research in Singapore on Friday, 24th June 2016. This event brought together a varied group of HADR-related professionals based in Singapore to share their experiences, areas of work and current projects, with the aim of fostering collaboration with one another. Representatives came from RSIS, the Earth Observatory Singapore, the Nanyang Business School, the APEC Secretariat, AIG Insurance, Save the Children, The Logistics Institute-Asia Pacific, GCORE, Singapore Polytechnic, Singapore University of Technology and Design, and the Network of ASEAN Defense and Security Institutions.

Relief (HADR) Programme brought together practitioners, policy professionals, the research community and the wider public by organizing an exhibition, panel discussion and networking session to celebrate those who dedicate their lives to humanitarian work at the Park Royal Hotel on Beach Road, Singapore.

Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), welcomed more than 70 participants to the event from across the community. The three panellists were Ms Janet Lim, Former UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, Mr Xavier Castellanos, Asia Pacific Regional Director of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and Mr Egan Hwan, Communications and Media Manager, Asia, Save the Children. The panel was moderated by Dr Alistair D. B. Cook, Coordinator of the HADR Programme.

At the exhibition and networking session, Badan Agama Dan Pelajaran Radin Mas (BAPA), Earth Observatory of Singapore, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mercy Relief, Save The Children, Singapore Red Cross, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme (RSIS), and World Vision presented their research and field activities, shared their experiences and answered questions from an engaged and interested crowd.

CSCAP Nuclear Energy Experts Group Meeting

19–20 Sep 2016

Singapore



RSIS and Pacific Forum-CSIS co-organised the Nuclear Energy Experts Group Meeting in Singapore from 19 to 20 September 2016. 40 nuclear experts from Asia-Pacific countries deliberated on the Nuclear Security Summit process, nuclear security governance in Asia, the nuclear safety regime in Asia, radioactive waste management, and ways to respond to nuclear accidents and incidents. Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, RSIS Associate Research Fellow, made a presentation on nuclear safety cooperation in ASEAN while Dr Alistair DB Cook, RSIS Research Fellow, discussed the regional cooperation on nuclear emergency preparedness and response in ASEAN.

World Humanitarian Day Public Panel and Exhibition

18 Aug 2016

Singapore

On the evening of 18th August, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies marked World Humanitarian Day. The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster