



Asia Pacific Mission
for Migrants (APMM)



社會政策研究中心
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

World Association for
Christian Communication (WACC)



**ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE
ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO
JOURNALISM AND THE
ADVANCEMENT OF
MIGRANTS' RIGHTS
AND WELFARE**

Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare

A NARRATIVE REPORT



Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM)
APMM August 2012



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	3
Acknowledgments	4
Narrative	5
Program flow	12
List of Participants	16
Presentations	
Keynote by Eni Lestari	18
Message by Albert Cheng	23
Panel 1	
Rev. Judy Chan	25
Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack	31
Raymund Villanueva	40
Panel 2	
Zoe Liang	45
Ronald Yick	50
Introduction of Speakers	57



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

ABSTRACT

Sixty participants from ten countries and country regions participated in the Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare that was organized by the APMM together with the Centre for Social Policy Studies of the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, that helped in providing the venue for our conference.

For four days, both local and international participants shared experiences on advocacy through alternative radio journalism and explore ways on how alternative media can be utilized in advancing causes of marginalized sectors like migrant workers. From panel discussions, the workshops that ensued proved meaningful and fruitful as concrete resolutions, action plans and initiatives were developed.

Some major recommendations agreed on were\': (a) creation of a loose network of media practitioners and organizations, migrant groups and migrants' rights advocates; (b) development of a web-based platform where resources, materials and updates on conditions of both media advocates and migrant workers can be uploaded and shared; (c) create materials (i.e. audio recordings in mp3 formats) and opportunities for migrant workers to further raise their awareness and build their capacity to cooperate effectively with the media and use the media in their causes.

With concrete resolutions made, the conference provided tasks and actions that need to be fulfilled:

- a) To finalize and send out proceedings and plans of action to participating organizations and individuals, partner organizations, etc.
- b) To create an e-group. As one of the resolutions, the e-group will facilitate in the communication exchanges among the participants in developing the map or list of media practitioners sympathetic to migrants and other marginalized sectors, creating the website and following up on actions and initiatives from the different participants.
- c) To create a web platform where materials and updates from migrant workers and media practitioners are shared. This serves as a source for advocates, media and even the governments to get information on migrants and media.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare would not have been successful without the support, contribution and involvement of many people. For that, we thank you:

The World Association for Christian Communication for its financial support to the conference;

The Centre for Social Policy Studies of the Department of Applied Social Sciences of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University for co-organizing the conference and providing the venue for our conference;

The resource persons and participants, both international and local, who have given valuable contribution to the enriched discussions and sharings in the two days of the conference; and

The grassroots migrant organizations belonging to the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body who have hosted our international participants;

The staff of the Digital Broadcasting Corporation who has graciously received us in their studio;

And last but not the least, the staff and interns of the APMM who have come and worked together in making the conference a success.

Every contribution is truly worthwhile in our over-all effort to advance the rights and welfare of migrant workers and their families.

Ramon Bultron
APMM Managing Director



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

NARRATIVE

Sixty participants from ten countries and country regions joined the Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare to share experiences in advocacy through alternative radio journalism and explore ways on how such and other alternative media can be utilized for the interest of the marginalized particularly the migrant workers.

Conference participants were composed of media practitioners, migrant workers and social activists from NGOs and faith-based communities coming from organizations based in Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Lebanon, India, Indonesia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines and the United States. Conference delegates were welcomed by Ramon Bultron, APMM managing director, who also gave a rundown on the objectives and flow of the program while the message of former HK legislator, Albert Cheng of the Digital Broadcasting Corporation that provides free radio time for migrants in Hong Kong was read. Conference participants later on visited the DBC site and got to see first-hand the facilities that it offers to ethnic minorities.



The participants of the Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE



Ramon Bultron of the APMM welcoming the participants

Afterwards, Eni Lestari, chairperson of the global formation of and led by grassroots migrant workers – the International Migrants Alliance (IMA) – delivered the keynote

address where she expounded on the crisis situation that perpetually confronts migrant workers as they get treated as commodities and forced in modern slave-like condition. She also critiqued the paradigm of using migration for development as and said that such can only worsen the crisis situation of migrant workers.

However, the crisis situation also results to opportunities for advancing fundamental changes by an organized and empowered migrant movement where Lestari urged advocates to take an active part in.

The conference topic was further explored in the panel presentations and workshops that followed.

Two panel presentations were held. The first panel was composed of Raymund Villanueva from Kodao Productions, Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack of the World Association for Christian Communication Asia Region (WACC-AR) and Rev. Judy Chan of the HK Christian Council (HKCC) who talked mainly about the significance of and challenges to alternative radio journalism for advocacy.

Mr. Villanueva shared about the development of alternative radio journalism in the Philippines and explained the suitability and advantages of radio journalism in relaying progressive ideas to the widest audience. He also expounded on the challenges facing alternative radio journalism stemming from the monopolisation and corporate control of mainstream media



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE



Meanwhile, Rev. Dr. Meshack focused his presentation on communication rights and clarified the comprehensiveness of the term that is not only limited to freedom to opinion and expression. "Communication validates human equality and human dignity," he said.

Rev. Chan for her part explained how radio broadcasting can be used as a platform for human rights, migrants rights and social justice in Hong Kong that include making Hong Kong a "home" too for migrant workers.



Meanwhile, the second panel discussion was on New Media. Speakers in the panel were Raymund Villanueva, Ronald Yick of Hong Kong inmediahk.net and Zoe Liang of the Trans Asia Sisters Association in Taiwan (TASAT). They shared various experiences on their respective groups in the use of new media for advocacy, mobilization, organizing and education in the Philippines, Hong Kong and Taiwan including problems that they are facing.

Speakers elaborated on the significance of new media as they are now widely available and commonly used by the people. However, they also warned that those who wish to maintain the status quo



either utilize new media to advance their interests or prevent progressive groups from using new media. The organizations represented by the speakers shared concrete examples on how new media helped in a faster development of campaigns or jumpstarting one.

An open forum ensued after each panel presentation where questions about how migrants can access mainstream media and how alternative and community radios can increase their listening base were answered. The benefits of call-in shows to increase interaction with listeners were also discussed.

*From top: Eni Lestari of IMA,
Rev. Dr. Sam Meshack of
WACC-AR and David
Wildman of UCM-GBGM*

The open forum on new media was very dynamic as migrant organizations themselves shared their experiences with internet-based media and the problems that they encounter.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Two workshops were conducted: 1. On the Role of Media in Advocacy, and 2. Strategies for Utilizing Media for Advocacy on Migrants Rights and Wellbeing.

Lively discussions were done in the workshop groups especially on how the participants, especially the migrant organizations and migrant-serving NGOs are using various media to advance advocacy and organizing of migrants. Clarification was also made that alternative radio journalism should not only be construed as community radio but pro-people broadcasting as opposed to corporate interest controlled and driven one. Said differentiation is also applicable to other media fields.

Some of the identified challenges were on how to balance advocating for issues of migrants with sending countries and with receiving countries as well as how to expand and sustain listeners of progressive radio programs by using creative ways to get messages across. Another challenge forwarded was overcoming obstacles in terms of existing restrictive policies and the development of the skills of migrants and advocates in the new media.

In the two succeeding days, three more panel discussions were conducted followed by two workshop discussions.

The third panel was composed of Glorene Dass of Tenaganita in Malaysia, Liang Tsu-Ying of the TransAsia Sisters Association in Taiwan (TASAT), Rev. Jang Cheongwon of the Osan Migrants Centre in South Korea and Seta Hadesian of the Middle East Council of Churches.

The presentations depicted a dire and human rights violations-filled condition





ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

of migrants in jails – from their arrest to their detention. Many of those in jail are undocumented migrants deemed as illegals and treated like criminals. Particular practices like whipping and the formation of the RELA or the Ikatan Relawan Malaysia (Volunteers of Malaysian People) were underscored as aggravating the indignity that arrested and detained migrants suffer from.

Panel speakers also zeroed in on the weaknesses in laws and legal procedures in their respective countries that make migrants vulnerable to detention or getting jailed for long periods of time without any legal justifications or assistance to understanding their cases. Monitoring is also prohibited especially in the Middle East while, in other countries, monitoring is much limited either by the lack of clear policies or by existing ones that are restrictive. Conditions in detention centres including sleeping arrangements, sanitation and food provision were also described as inhuman.



From left: Rev. Judy Chan, Rev. Dr. Sam Meshack and Raymund Villanueva

Stress was also placed on the treatment of women detainees and how their rights are violated. They experience some of the most humiliating and violent treatment such as rape by jail and detention officers.

Meanwhile, similar stories of injustice and neglect were reported by Anis Hidayah of Migrant CARE, Indonesia and Garry Martinez of MIGRANTE International in the Philippines who composed the second panel.



From left: Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, Zoe Liang, Raymund Villanueva and Ronald Yick

Both Hidayah and Martinez reported the lack of assistance of their respective governments to those who are stranded, languishing in jails or are in death row. Because of their government's inaction or slow response, migrants are denied of proper legal representation or



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

inadvertently incriminate themselves due to the absence of proper information and inefficient translations. The speakers lamented this condition considering that overseas nationals have contributed so much to their respective economies. Martinez even exposed that instead of adding more funds to services to migrants in distress, budget cuts were made to direct assistance to migrants while budget for agencies that facilitate migration increased.

In the last panel, Eni Lestari of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA) presented the view of grassroots migrants on their jailed fellows. She emphasized that actions should cover not only those in detention centre and jails but also the apprehended migrants for, from their experience, the first few hours after apprehension are where many human rights violations occur. She posed concrete challenges to the participants ranging from addressing policies and practices nationally to lobbying with relevant intergovernmental bodies.

Mabel Au of Amnesty International – Hong Kong shared the work of her group on the issue. She remarked on the multilevel discrimination that migrant workers experience that includes race, disability and gender. She said that employers aggravate the criminalization of migrant workers thru arbitrary hiring and firing as well as confiscation of documents. She also shared the reports and researches that AI have done and is doing that are used for policy lobbying in national, regional and international bodies.

Participants were again divided into two workshop groups to deepen the discussion on what are being done to address the conditions of migrants in jail and detention and problems



The participants of the conference with DBC's Albert Cheng

lear that faith-based communities,



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

migrant-serving non-government organizations and migrant organizations in different forms and levels are conducting various kinds of work and services to arrested and detained migrants including legal and psycho-social assistance, lobbying for assistance, and coordination with families in the homefront.

Migrant organizations, meanwhile, also shared campaigns conducted in sending countries that are related to migrants in jail and actions of sending governments. Other advocacies in various levels – up to the United Nations – were also shared including advocacy for alternative to detention.

The last workshop conducted forwarded the following action plans for faith-based communities, NGOs serving migrant workers, advocates and grassroots migrant workers. Resulting from the conference workshops, the participants agreed on the following strategies:

- a) Work on common advocacy issues like the impacts of war to migrant workers, death row, debt bondage as well as media censorship, killings and other issues
- b) Work on the campaign for the ratification of the ILO C189 or the Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- c) Create a loose network of media practitioners and organizations, migrant groups and migrants' rights advocates, among others
- d) Create an e-group as a clearinghouse for information and materials
- e) Maximize radio as it is accessible to migrant workers
- f) Conduct media briefing to better inform media personnel on the concerns of migrant workers. Video record press conferences and post them on Facebook and websites. Produce audio recordings in formats that can be played and shared with or without internet.
- g) Support "Penny Press" that includes sharing of news and information to people through a community newsletter in simple design and printed form
- h) Create a common web platform to put resources and materials that can be readily available to media groups and the public
- i) Relate with ICT (information and communications technology) advocacy groups
- j) Design content and flow of radio programs and materials for public distribution according to the audience (i.e. young people, migrants, local people in receiving countries, governments of sending and receiving countries).

The Asia Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants Rights and Welfare was organized by the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants in cooperation with the Centre for Social Policy Studies from the Department of Applied Social Sciences in The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The conference was made possible with the help of the World Association for Christian Communication.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

PROGRAM FLOW

Day 1 (July 26)

7:00-8:00am	Breakfast
8:00-9:00am	Travel to conference venue
9:00-10:00am	Keynote speech <i>Eni Lestari, chairperson of the International Migrants Alliance</i>
10:00-10:30am	Coffee break
10:30am-12:00nn	<p>Plenary 1: Significance and Challenge of Radio Broadcasting in Advancing Migrants' Rights and Welfare (venue: GH201)</p> <p>On the reality and relevance of alternative radio journalism vis-à-vis human rights and migrants' rights <i>Mr. Raymund Villanueva (Kodao Philippines)</i></p> <p>On the importance of advancing communication rights of marginalized peoples <i>Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack, President, World Association of Christian Communication (WACC) Asia Region)</i></p> <p>On the Hong Kong experience in using radio broadcasting vis-à-vis awareness on human rights, migrants' rights and social justice <i>Rev. Judy Chan, Hong Kong Christian Council (HKCC)</i></p>
12:00nn-1:30pm	Lunch break
1:30-3:30pm	Workshop 1 (venues: GH201, BC201)-- This workshop aims to bring up the situation of media freedom, particularly of radio journalists, in destination countries vis-à-vis the challenge to help in advocacy or awareness on migrants' conditions and concerns.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

3:30-4:00pm	Report back of the workshop results (venue: GH201)
4:00-4:30pm	Afternoon break
4:30-6:00pm	Plenary 2: The Emerging Media as Tool of Advocacy and Communication Rights (venue: GH201) On the emergence of new media <i>Raymund Villanueva (Kodao Philippines)</i> On TASAT's experience in using the internet <i>Ms. Zoe Liang (TASAT)</i> On InMedia's use of various media <i>Ronald Yick (InMedia)</i>

Day 2 (July 27)

7:00-8:00am	Breakfast
8:00-9:00am	Travel to conference venue
9:00-11:00am	Workshop 2 (venues: GH201, BC201) -- Questions on moving forward and taking concrete steps will be the focus of this workshop.
11:00am-12:00nn	Report back of the workshop results
12:00nn-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-2:00pm	Travel to Cyberport for meeting with DBC
2:00-4:00	Meeting with DBC



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Day 3 (July 28)

7:00-8:00am Breakfast

8:00-9:00am Travel to conference venue

9:00-11:00am **Plenary 3: Situation of migrants in receiving countries** (venue: GH201)

Malaysia

Glorene Dass (TENAGANITA)

Taiwan

Tsuying Liang, Zoe (TASAT)

Lebanon

Seta Hadesian (Middle East Council of Churches)

South Korea

Rev. Jang Cheong-won (Osan Migrant Center)

11:00am-12:30pm **Plenary 4: Perspectives of organizations/institutions from sending countries** (venue: GH201)

Indonesia

Anis Hidayah (Migrant Care)

Philippines

Garry Martinez (Migrante International)

12:30-1:30pm Lunch

1:30-3:30 Workshop 3 (venues: GH201, BC201) – Knowing about the situation of migrants as well as the services and assistance that are both available and lacking will be important for advocacy and campaign to work and for both migrant groups and advocates to work on.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

3:30-4:00pm Report back of the workshop results (venue: GH201)

4:00-4:30pm Afternoon break

4:30-6:00pm **Plenary 5: Lessons and challenges** (venue: GH201)

From the grassroots perspective
Eni Lestari (International Migrants Alliance)

From a human rights organization
Au Mei Po (Amnesty International Hong Kong)

Day 4 (July 29)

7:00-8:00am Breakfast

8:00-9:00am Travel to conference venue

9:00-10:30am Workshop 2 (venues: GH201, BC201) -- Questions on concrete steps in addressing the needs of migrants, specifically those who are in detention or are under attack

10:30-11:30am Report back of the workshop results

11:30am-12:30pm Synthesis of the reports

12:30-2:00pm Lunch

2:00-onwards Visit/Integration with migrant communities (Indonesian, Nepalese, Filipino)



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Country	Organization	Email
David Lynn Wildman	USA	General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church	dwildman@umcmmission.org
Glorene Amala Das	Malaysia	Tenaganita (Women's Force)	glorene.a@tenaganita.net/gener al@tenaganita.net
Anis Hidayah	Indonesia	Migrant CARE	anis@migrantcare.net
Rev Jang Cheong-won	South Korea	Osan Migrant Centre	labrev@hanmail.net
JinHaeng Lee	South Korea	AMARC Asia Pacific	virus0406@gmail.com
KyoHun Hong	South Korea	Iksan Public Media Center Gemmy	meeust@hanmail.net
Shie Shin-Shiuan, Samuel	Taiwan	TransAsia Sisters Association, Taiwan	tasat.taipei@gmail.com
Liang Tsu-Ying, Zoe	Taiwan	TransAsia Sisters Association, Taiwan	tsuyingliang@gmail.com
Seta Margossian Hadesian	Lebanon	Middle East Council Of Churches	mecc.dsj@gmail.com/seta.hade shian@mecc.org
Mervin Sol H. Toquero	Philippines	National Council of Churches in the Philippines	mtoquero@gmail.com
Rev Cora Abugan	Philippines	United Church of Christ in the Philippines	
Garry Martinez	Philippines	Migrante International	garrymartinez70@yahoo.com
Erlch Barraquias	Philippines	Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants	armistico2@yahoo.com
Raymund Villanueva	Philippines	Kodao Productions	raymund.villanueva@gmail.com
Poon Jun Haw, Alfred	Singapore	Christian World Mission	alfred.poon@cwmission.org
Eni Lestari	Hong Kong	International Migrants Alliance	lestarihk@gmail.com
Ganika Diristiani	Hong Kong	ATKI Hong Kong	lizkafebertina@yahoo.com
Sringatin	Hong Kong	Indonesian Migrant Workers Union	
Judy Chan	Hong Kong	Hong Kong Christian Council	judychan@hkcc.org.hk
Dolores Balladares	Hong Kong	United Filipinos in Hong Kong	dolopelaez@gmail.com
Eman Villanueva	Hong Kong	Filipino Migrant Workers Union	emancv@gmail.com
Bruce Van Voorhis	Hong Kong	Interfaith Cooperation Forum	bruce.vanvoorhis@gmail.com



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Edwina Antonio	Hong Kong	Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge	bhmwr@hknet.com
Ahman Han	Hong Kong	Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge	
Shauna Carey	Hong Kong	Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge	
Danilo Reyes	Hong Kong	Asian Human Rights Commission	danilo@ahrchk.org
Fitri Rustiani	Hong Kong	LIPMI	
Sunita Suna	Hong Kong	World Student Christian Federation Asia Pacific	sunita.wscf@gmail.com, wscfap@netvigator.com
Nina Nayoan	Hong Kong	World Student Christian Federation Asia Pacific	wscfap@netvigator.com
Dominic Fok	Hong Kong	Autonomous 8A	
Joy Prim	Hong Kong	Mission for Migrant Workers	pfeifferswimmer09@gmail.com
Cynthia Abdon Tellez	Hong Kong	Mission for Migrant Workers	mission@migrants.net
Annie Milone	Hong Kong	DBC Indonesian Program	animilone@freshbreeze.co
Fanny Lam	Hong Kong	Student Christian Movement Hong Kong	
Elaine Yu	Hong Kong	Mission for Migrant Workers	
Joel Lee	Hong Kong	Mission for Migrant Workers	
Miranda Tomic	Hong Kong	APMM	mirandatomic@yahoo.com
Rey Asis	Hong Kong	APMM	reyasis@gmail.com
Ramon Bultron	Hong Kong	APMM	rbultron@gmail.com
Joselito Natividad	Hong Kong	APMM	palawenyonggala@gmail.com
Joram Calimutan	Hong Kong	APMM	pastorjoram@ymail.com
Yvette Pan	Hong Kong	APMM	yvette0107@gmail.com
Vicky Casia	Hong Kong	APMM	veeceecee@gmail.com
Aaron Cerado	Hong Kong	APMM	ahc27hk@gmail.com
Adrian Bonifacio	Hong Kong	APMM	adrian.ablao.bonifacio@gmail.com
Jenny Ngan	Hong Kong	APMM	jennynghan32@hotmail.com
Jennifer Lynn	Hong Kong	APMM	khinelynthu@gmail.com
Christy Ko	Hong Kong	APMM	christyko0607@gmail.com
Phyllis Wong	Hong Kong	Kowloon Union Church	kuc@kuc.hk
Yick, Man Kin (Ronald)	Hong Kong	Hong Kong In-media	inmediahk@gmail.com
Debby Lai Tak Yiu	Hong Kong	St. John's Cathedral HIV Education	www.sjhivctr.com



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

PRESENTATIONS

Advocacy for Empowerment: The Role of Advocacy Work and Advocates in Strengthening the Migrants Movement Keynote Speech by Eni Lestari, IMA chairperson

To my fellow migrant workers, organizations providing services to migrants, faith-based communities, fellow social activists, it is with much pleasure that the International Migrants Alliance – the only grassroots-based and led international formation of migrant workers – joins you in this very important gathering that will contribute significantly to the further advancement of the rights and wellbeing of migrants.

In 2008 when the IMA was founded, migrant workers declared that now, “we speak for ourselves”.

Indeed we are speaking, for in the face of the heightening exploitation, discrimination and oppression of migrant workers, grassroots migrants have no other recourse but to organize, mobilize and forge the strongest bond of solidarity with each other and with other disadvantaged people.

Migrants live and work in a state of crisis. Crisis itself breeds forced migration on one hand, and on the other hands, feeds on the continued exploitation of migrant labour in the false hope that it could be resolved by making labour – including that of the migrants – as cheap, as docile and as flexible as inhumanly possible.

Following the global meltdown, labour-exporting countries with their weak and dependent economic foundations immediately turn to even more aggressive and sophisticated labour export program to address the economic and political impacts of the crisis.

Migrant labor has become even cheaper commodities sold to modern-day slavery to relieve labour exporting countries of the pressure from a rapidly constricting economy and the potential upheaval of a dislocated and discontented populace. Remittance has become the lifeline – and credit line in order to borrow or beg for aid – of labour exporting countries while the huge income from oftentimes dubious government fees offered a seemingly bottomless



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

source of cold cash sadly drained by corruption and mismanagement that left nothing for assistance to migrants in distress.

Meanwhile in labour receiving countries, a similar drive to get the most out of migrant workers prevails though in different forms from the sending countries.

Labour flexibilization as applied to migrant workers has been implemented resulting to the further erosion of wage, social benefits and the general labour and human rights of migrants. Social exclusion has been intensified with migrant workers further relegated to the sidelines. Xenophobia and discrimination are fanned to fan the divide among migrants and local workers who are themselves also victims of the crisis. While governments scramble to bail out businesses, the people are left with crumbs to fight over.

Big businesses and their government patrons cheapen labour of locals and even more of migrants. Policies are instituted that make migrants vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, restriction on rights, arrest, detention, deportation, sickness and even death.

Yet, due to the global system that enriches a few in a number of countries and impoverishes the many in majority of countries, the supply of migrant labour is endless.

With the unresolved crisis as the background and the “benefits” that forced labour migration gives, it is almost natural for governments to turn their eyes to this lucrative business. Thus, the paradigm of migration for development was conceived, explored and used concretely through the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) that was started in 2007 and will have its sixth session this year in Mauritius.

With the remittance of migrants numbering 214 million reaching US\$325 billion in 2010 alone and was then projected to steadily increase in the next two years, governments are salivating to corner a process that brings so much finance capital. Thus, the GFMD focuses on managing migration and ensuring that migration is cohesive with other national policies. They do this while beautifying the GFMD and its neoliberal paradigm in order to hide the real cause and intent of the migration for development agenda.

However, we all know that migration can never be used for development. No country, in the history of humankind, has ever developed because it capitalized on its people being exported as chattel.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

It shall only maintain the system and structure that brought about the crisis and intensify it thereby repeating the process at an even faster and worse way.

But in the midst of the crisis, there stems opportunities that can lead to long-lasting and basic changes if pushed for by an informed, organized and empowered people.

This is precisely how the global movement of migrants was built.

Migrant workers have learned to organize ourselves to defend our rights and wellbeing in a condition where our rights are perpetually under attack. We have learned that if we do not act, then policies and practices that put us in extreme distress will continue with impunity. We have learned that commonality of our concerns regardless of nationality and we have also learned that forging solidarity with local workers and fellow marginalized is the forward.

Crucial to organizing and empowerment of migrants is advocacy work.

Through advocacy, issues that are intentionally hidden are subjected are made public. Analyses are sharpened and migrant workers learn the ropes of class contradiction and struggle. Successful advocacies can bring immediate relief to migrant workers through reforms in policies or, for those in any type of legal battles, positive outcome in their case.

Advocacy keeps issues of migrants as community concerns. It makes the public aware and can gather the support necessary to further advance these issues.

In truth, advocacy and campaign work is at the core of the process of the empowerment of migrants. Without advocacy and campaign, discussion of issues will merely be academic. Without this work, migrant workers will never realize the importance of getting organized.

To do effective advocacy for migrant workers, the role of advocates is priceless.

Advocates broaden the number of people reached by information and education on the issue. They also help widen the arena of struggle where the issues can be advanced and where grassroots migrants can engage in. There are also arenas for advocacy work that are, sadly, closed from the intervention of grassroots migrants. For example, lobbying during election period for the rights of migrants is an arena that is not open to many of us because of our status in the host country. But this can be used by advocates to expose those who hold reactionary and discriminatory views.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Advocates for migrants put primary importance to the grassroots people it is advocating for. They make it a point to always be in touch with the grassroots to learn from them, gather their opinion and echo their ideals. They do not profess to be saviours of the grassroots but instead do their utmost to provide the as much support as they can give for the grassroots to be empowered.

These are the advocates who have helped us, and are still helping us, in the IMA to, as I said before, “speak for ourselves”.

We very much appreciate your organizing of the two conferences for the next few days to advance advocacy work for migrant workers.

The Asia-Pacific Conference on Alternative Radio Journalism and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare shall open up new opportunities for the movement of migrants to further develop. Media work is very crucial to our advocacy for it reaches the widest number of people. Alternative radio programs make space for people who usually have no access to media to air out their sentiments, like us migrant workers.

We very much hope that we can cooperate with each other in the national, regional and international level to further utilize the various types of media available in all the work that shall contribute to the expansion and strengthening of the migrant's movement.

Meanwhile, the Interfaith Solidarity Conference on the Condition of Migrants in Jail is a particularly important arena where advocates and service providers really are needed.

Grassroots migrant workers can only do so much to assist our fellow migrants who get detained and imprisoned. While community of migrants in various countries help those in detention in whatever way they can that is very much limited by the condition we are in, advocates can even do more in terms of providing legal assistance, regular visitations, and other types of support.

You - media practitioners, faith communities, service providers and human rights advocates - gathered here today have a big task in front of you both in terms of exploring new avenues to advocate for migrant workers and improving work already being conducted among some of the sectors of migrants who are most at risk.

But the International Migrants Alliance is very much confident that you can take on this challenge.



Asia Pacific Mission
for Migrants (APMM)



社會政策研究中心
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

World Association for
Christian Communication (WACC)



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

While we, grassroots migrants, steadily build our strength so we can speak for ourselves, we recognize the importance of advocates like you to add on your voice. We are confident that the conferences you will hold will do this.

Thank you very much, and good morning to everyone.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Message of Albert Cheng, DBC Chairperson to the Regional Conference on Alternative Radio Broadcasting and the Advancement of Migrants' Rights and Welfare

Monopolisation of the media is a serious concern the world over. The fact that mass media is increasingly owned and dominated by conglomerates has created a trend that is detrimental to the promotion and advancement of racial, gender and social equality. In the wrong hands, the media tool could create many harmful social problems.

As guardians of the fourth estate – commonly referred to as the press, which functions in Hong Kong as an unofficial branch of the government – media professionals have an important role to play in promoting justice and democracy as well as supporting and protecting the rights of the underprivileged and minorities.

Unfortunately, there are tendencies to sideline or even marginalise the rights or interests of those who are not part of the dominant culture. Because of this, their voice often goes unheard and their views ignored.

A healthy media should promote fair, balanced and responsible journalism. In addition to producing accurate and newsworthy content, it should strive to raise journalistic standards through advocating social responsibility.

Hong Kong is home to nearly 300,000 foreign domestic helpers, mostly women, who make up about four per cent of the total population. These women, many of whom come from the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, are great assets in our society because their presence has allowed many Hong Kong women to re-enter the workforce after starting a family.

In order to meet the needs of minorities, DBC Radio has taken an unprecedented step by creating the first-ever radio channel specifically for the local minority population. Digital We gives a voice to the voiceless, as we firmly believe that in a society as diverse as Hong Kong this is not only necessary, it is the right thing to do.

There is no doubt that Digital We has an important role to play in shaping the way a caring society should behave by creating physical, intellectual and moral means to accommodate the needs and wants of our ethnic minorities. It is of utmost importance for the media to continue to not only provide high-calibre journalistic content but also to play a leading role in



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

safeguarding and promoting diversity and equal rights, irrespective of race, religion, age, gender, sexuality or disability.

DBC Radio has taken the first step; we sincerely hope that our peers and other media outlets such as RTHK will take up the baton and carry forward this effort in raising awareness of migrants' concerns and issues in Hong Kong. As a public broadcaster RTHK has a fiduciary responsibility to provide wide-ranging services that promote social diversity and facilitate social cohesion. Good journalism is not only governed by professional ethics to uphold integrity of the press, it should also be guided by the heart to do what is right and decent.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Radio Broadcasting in Advancing Migrants' Rights and Welfare Presentation by Rev. Judy Chan, Hong Kong Christian Council

My assigned topic is the Hong Kong experience in using radio broadcasting vis-à-vis awareness on human rights, migrants' rights and social justice. I do not claim to be an expert on radio broadcasting in Hong Kong or to do alternative radio journalism. I can only speak from my experience of the past 10 years as producer for English religious broadcasting on the public service broadcaster RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong). So that is what I will speak on this morning and I hope that it might have some relevance to the conference.

That said, I should mention that there are at least 4 weekly radio programs that I know of for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

Saptahik Sandesh (Weekly Message) broadcast in Nepali, RTHK Radio-3, Sundays 7:05pm - 8:00 p.m. *"Host Chura Thapa brings you a great variety of useful information and entertainment, including news, current affairs and community services with plenty of real tunes."*

<http://programme.rthk.hk/channel/radio/programme.php?name=radio3/nepali&p=4212>

Hong Kong Ki Shaam (HK This Evening) broadcast in Urdu, RTHK- Radio 3, Sundays 8:05pm - 9:00pm. *"Host Abid Ali Baig is a poet and a writer with some 30 years of broadcasting experience. He presents a unique programme in Urdu with news, entertainment and interviews with celebrities - plus some great Pakistani music."*

<http://programme.rthk.hk/channel/radio/programme.php?name=radio3/urdu&p=4211>

Selatmat Pagi Indonesians (Good Morning Indonesians), RTHK-Radio 2, Sundays, 7:00 – 8:00 am, Hosts: Barbie and Shinza; Indonesian-Cantonese bilingual live radio (part of the "Beautiful Sunday" Program)

http://www.had.gov.hk/rru/english/programmes/programmes_rad_ind.html

Good Evening Kabayan, Hong Kong Pinoy Radio, Commercial Radio AM864, with hosts Stan, Ria and Lady M; *"The premier show for today's overseas Filipino brings HOME closer to you."*

<http://www.gekabayan.com/html/home.html>

I was particularly caught by the words on the homepage of Good Evening Kabayan about bringing HOME closer to you. While most migrants are eager to hear the language, music,



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

news and entertainment from their native land, they also long for a hospitable 'home' in the places where they move to live and work. Hong Kong is famous for welcoming people from all over the world, but the city does not necessarily treat everyone equally. We live in a multi-cultural society, but many do not see diversity as a gift and an opportunity. Perhaps we could learn something from a Korean pastor living in Australia who said, "Multiculturalism is not just about culture, but a way of defining what it means to be human."

The programs that I produce for RTHK are ecumenical Christian programs that have been going on for over 40 years. After 1997, some wondered if English language radio had a future. I am glad to say that we are still here! The way I see it is that it helps keep Hong Kong multicultural as our speakers come from many different countries sharing messages of peace, harmony and goodwill. We are supported by the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches under the auspices of the Hong Kong Christian Council and the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese. There are 4 weekly programs including Sunday Service (55 minutes), Minutes that Matter (8 min, 45 sec), Reflections (3 min) and Thought for the Week (5 min). Our speakers are all volunteers, both clergy and laity. Weekday programs are pre-recorded in the Hong Kong Christian Service studio in Tsim Sha Tsui. Our programs are 'sponsored', which means we take care of the bulk of the production costs and RTHK gives us free air time and pays for the line maintenance/installation at broadcasting churches.

Earlier this year, I had a conversation with the head of Radio 4, which is the station which most of our programs are aired on. It is a fine arts and classical music station, which makes an interesting context for our speakers. From time to time, there are listeners who ask RTHK why they are forced to 'endure' Christian programs which seem to be a colonial relic. The station replied that RTHK is a public service broadcaster with a mandate to give air time to minorities as a platform for community participation. Christians are a minority group in Hong Kong, so they are given air time to express themselves and reach out to the Christian community. This explanation is not exactly the same as my own understanding of why we have Christian religious broadcasting on RTHK, but I do appreciate the principle of inclusiveness.

As a sponsored program, we are given wide latitude as far as program content and music. The only negative comments we have gotten from RTHK concerned (1) musical selections of some of the speakers which had more of a 'pop' beat; and (2) questionable political references such as calling Taiwan a 'country'. Other than those, we are free to choose our topics and speakers. On our Sunday program, we usually broadcast the service from a local church, but we do have special studio broadcasts from time to time on social topics such as



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Environment Sunday (HK Christians for Eco-concern) and World AIDS Sunday (St John's HIV Centre).

As producer, my own editorial guidelines ask speakers:

To prepare scripts that are beneficial to the Hong Kong audience as a whole, whether one is Christian or of another faith, or no faith;

To be respectful of diverse opinions and practices in the community.

The last point can be particularly tricky, since our speakers come from different theological perspectives and cultural backgrounds. For example, what if a speaker wishes to talk about making same sex marriages legal in Hong Kong as a basic human right? What if another speaker wishes to say that homosexual behavior is against the teachings of the Bible and will destroy families and morality in Hong Kong? What should I do? What did I do?

I asked both speakers (who did not know each other) to reconsider their script and whether our program was the appropriate medium to communicate their views. Why? One reason is that we have to pre-record our programs, which means there is no chance for live audience feedback. Another reason is that such a hot topic is probably best handled in a panel discussion where different opinions can be heard and debated, and allows the audience to make up its own mind. One of the most important aspects of effective communication is that it opens the door for conversation, for give and take.

That doesn't mean that our speakers cannot talk about controversial issues on the radio. However, since our programs are essentially a one-way communication, what I aim for is a message that is well-crafted and persuasive, that speaks truth to power. It must appeal to the heart as well as the mind. One of our programs, Thought of the Week, comes on early Sunday mornings on Radio 3. This is right after "Letter to Hong Kong" in which leaders from political parties and government departments have their say. On Thought for the Week, we invite our speakers to comment more on social issues or community affairs where listeners can make a difference.

Rev. Phyllis Wong, Minister of Kowloon Union Church, spoke the following message on Thought for the Week broadcast of 16 October 2011:

Good morning! I am Phyllis Wong.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

The court ruling in favor of the right for a foreign domestic worker to apply for abode has intensified the debate in the wider community. In the debate on this issue, the mainstream voice is very negative. Legislators, groups of local residents and newspaper columnists have expressed their opinions against foreign domestic workers gaining this right.

The argument against foreign domestic workers' right of abode is that if they are granted the right, thousands of their family members will flood into Hong Kong. They would create a huge burden to the welfare system. In addition, the more educated workers will go into the job market, creating more unemployment for local people.

The scare tactic by some legislators has generated a lot of fear and negative sentiment against foreign domestic workers. The fear driven approach has revealed a plain fact of discrimination against this vulnerable group. Foreign domestic helpers are the minorities who are marginalized. They enjoy the least rights and respect in our community. Although they have been contributing so much to families and the community at large, they are not well recognized and accepted as part of us. They are still regarded as outsiders though they are an integral part of our society.

It is important for the government to develop a long term population policy in Hong Kong. However, the foreign domestic workers should never be taken as scapegoats of the government's ineffective policies and social discontent. The negative sentiment generated and accusations against the domestic workers are unfair. Hatred towards foreigners is equally dangerous to the society at large.

How can we allow our society to discriminate against people because they are weaker and have lower status than others? How can we accept a society that so openly excludes the disadvantaged foreigners from outside?

The success of Hong Kong relies on the rule of law in which everyone is given equal rights with dignity. The exclusion and discrimination against foreign domestic workers out of selfishness will erode the core values of the city.

God created man and woman in God's own image. Therefore everyone is a child of God and entitled to basic human rights. All should be treated equally and with dignity. Foreign domestic workers are no exception.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

In the Bible, the LORD God instructed His people to love foreigners. Leviticus 19 says, "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God."

Many of our parents and grandparents are outsiders from Mainland coming to Hong Kong and settling here in the 50s and 60s. Given opportunities and being well received, they have contributed tremendously to the community. We should therefore treat these foreign domestic as friends and even our family members. Take them as part of us, but not second-class citizens.

A society in which people share the spirit of inclusiveness and embrace one another with equality regardless of race, nationality and social class would be a more loving and peaceful place to live. It is what truly makes us "Asia's world city".

I think Rev. Wong's message is strong for several reasons:

- a) It was very timely given the court ruling that had just come out on right of abode for domestic helpers.
- b) She is a local Hong Kong Chinese who supports migrant workers' rights.
- c) She employs powerful phrases such as 'scare tactic', 'scapegoats', 'second-class citizens' and 'equal rights with dignity'.
- d) She is a Christian and quotes Scripture to make a case for hospitality to foreigners.
- e) She ends by appealing to Hong Kong's best nature, to be a more loving and peaceful place, truly Asia's world city.

In other words, radio can be a platform to advocate for human rights, migrants' rights and social justice, even with limitations of format and time. I believe for public radio, such as English religious broadcasting on RTHK, we make a contribution by reminding listeners of the rich diversity of the people of God and the blessings we receive in sharing who we are and what we have. We also can challenge the audience to reflect on what kind of 'home' we create for those far away from their families and native lands.

In closing, I share a story I heard recently about Indonesian domestic workers living in a shelter run by a Christian organization in Hong Kong. Most of the clients are Muslims and expressed that they had positive experiences while staying in the shelter. Some said they felt like "a member in the family" for the first time in their life. For others, it was the first time to have such positive experience with Christians, as they had negative experiences with Christians back in their home countries or had been working for Christian employers



Asia Pacific Mission
for Migrants (APMM)



社會政策研究中心
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

World Association for
Christian Communication (WACC)



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

overseas (including Hong Kong) who ill-treated them. When I heard this, I thought how ironic that these migrant women who had been terminated or abused or owed wages had to come to a shelter to find any real sense of 'home' in a foreign land. Thus, I hope that this conference will find ways to improve communication and understanding between the local population and migrant sectors, and that the medium of radio can be more effectively utilized to advocate for vulnerable minorities in Hong Kong.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

The Importance of Advancing Communication Rights of Marginalized Peoples

Prof. Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Meshack, President, WACC – Asia Region

I bring greetings to you all from members of the World Association for Christian Communication- Asia Region as its Chairperson and from the Global Board as its Secretary. I am grateful to my friend and colleague Mr. Ramon Bultran, the Vice-President of WACC-Asia and Rey and other members of APMM for inviting me to share our concerns on the Communication Rights. I am also delight to share the platform with my colleague in WACC-Asia, Rev. Judy Chan.

In the late 90s an editorial in WACC's official journal called "Media Development" (3/98) identified migrants as the primary victims of the process of globalisation. Over a decade later nearly one billion people of its 6.6 billion are on the move both within their own countries and overseas. Of these some 200 million are international migrants according to the UNDP Human Development Report 2009.

WACC has recognised that people who for one reason or another attempt to flee from various insecurities – be it economic downturns, impoverishments, growing gaps between the rich and poor, conflicts over national and personal identities – are, in the first place, among the most vulnerable sectors of any society. Most of them face multi-layered discriminations. The Yogyakarta declaration of the WACC – Asia region focused on the theme "Communicating Climate Justice", also brought out the issue of migration is an issue of climate justice. It reminds us that an estimated 25 million people around the world have suffered from the forced displacement from their homelands and communities due to the devastating effects of climate change.

WACC is concerned about the communication rights of migrants, displaced persons and refugees and works through project partners who work with migrant' organisations. One of our partners is the Asia Pacific Migrants Mission. In the statement given on the International Migrants Day, it quotes the words of the Director of APMM, Mr. Ramon Bultan saying, "Migrants – especially the undocumented – are deprived of their communication rights. In many countries, they are treated like criminals and their basic rights are not recognised. Worse, they are under threat of arrest, detention and deportation as in different countries of the European Union due to the recently approved EU Return Directive Policy, as well as the continuing crackdowns in South Korea, Malaysia and Japan."



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

The International Migrants Alliance (IMA) took the theme “For a long time, others spoke on our behalf. Now we speak for ourselves.” Listening to the voices of the people directly affected by migration instead of intermediary organisations speaking on their behalf goes some way towards restoring their dignity. Another important issue is the discourse on migration and development among those who see migration as an economic strategy for development in the midst of the global economic crisis.

WACC calls on communication organisations and networks to take action to ensure that migrants, refugees and displaced people's voices are heard. It urges media professionals to ensure that migrants and their needs are represented and reported in a fair and balanced manner consistent with their rights to speak and be heard.

Media representation of issues of migration and migrants has been a matter of debate and discussion by scholars and activists alike. Is media representation of migrants fair or not? Are the myriad reasons which compel people to migrate truly represented in all their complexity? Do migrants constitute a group whose rights are non-existent?

First let us look at; what are ‘communication rights’? How do they relate to ‘human rights’? How do they differ from ‘freedom of expression’? How it is related to Migrants’ Rights and how do the media present their voices. What need to be done in order that their voices are heard properly?

Communication is recognized as an indispensable and very essential and basic human need as well as a basic human right. Without having the possibility to communicate and talk to other people, no individual, community, group or any other institution would be able to exist, or prosper. Strictly speaking the ability to communicate or the general right of communication make it possible to exchange opinions, thoughts and meanings. So it enables people to express themselves and show their own points of view. Consequently communication makes people who and what they are and particularly strengthens human dignity. By having the right to communicate and express personal thoughts, ideas, and opinions, people feel themselves treated equally – in other words: Communication validates human equality and human dignity. To put it in Biblical terms, communication rights affirm the “image of God” concept, that all are created equally in the light of God's own image. Thus the protection and implementation of communication rights represents an essential part of the general topic of human rights.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Communication rights go beyond freedom of opinion and expression to include areas such as democratic media governance, media ownership and control, participation in one's own culture, linguistic rights, rights to education, privacy, peaceful assembly, and self-determination. These are questions of inclusion and exclusion, of quality and accessibility. In short, they are questions of human dignity.

Strictly speaking there exist four central Pillars of Communication Rights. Each Pillar refers to a different domain of social existence, practice, and experience, in which communication generally represents a so-called core activity on the one hand and performs specific key functions on the other hand. The most important point considering the four pillars consists in the fact that each involves a relatively autonomous sphere of social action. So they are extremely necessary in order to achieve communication rights – a fact that means that everybody has the right to communicate about every single topic of their existence.

The Four Pillars of Communication Rights are the following ones:

Communicating on the Public Sphere: The role of communication and media in exercising democratic political participation in society.

Communication Knowledge: The terms and means by which knowledge generated by society is communicated, or blocked, for use by different groups.

Civil Rights in Communication: The exercise of civil rights relating to the processes of communication in society.

Cultural Rights in Communication: The communication of diverse cultures, cultural forms and identities at the individual and social levels.

The Four Pillars of Communication Rights point out very clearly why the right to communicate is important for people in order to live in freedom, peace, justice, and dignity. So the right to communicate can be seen as a means to enhance human rights as well as to carefully strengthen the social, cultural and economic lives of people of different nations, communities, institutions and groups.

The first broad-based debate on media and communication globally, limited mainly to governments, ran for a decade from the mid-1970s. Governments of the South, by then a majority in the UN, began voicing demands in UNESCO concerning media concentration, the flow of news, and 'cultural imperialism'. The MacBride Report in 1981 articulated most



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

comprehensively a right to communicate. The debate was compromised, however, by the Cold War, and fell apart after the US and the UK pulled out of UNESCO, clouding discussion in UN bodies ever since.

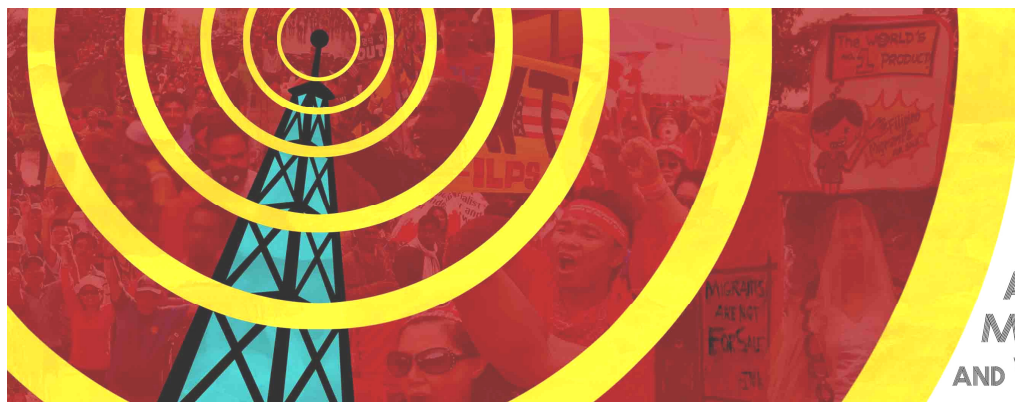
At the same time, NGOs and activists from the 1980s onwards became increasingly active in a variety of communication issues, from community media, to language rights, to copyright, to Internet provision and free and open source software. In the 1990s, these began to merge into umbrella groups tackling several issues. The idea of communication rights began to take shape, this time from the ground up.

It is very important to know that the 'right to communicate' does not have the equal meaning of 'communication right'. Although, the two terms are closely related in their history and usage, strictly speaking the 'right to communicate' is generally associated with the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate and expresses the need for a legal acknowledgement as a framework for a better implementation. The other term, 'communication right', points out that a group of international rights stimulating communication already exists, but in spite of everything many are too often ignored.

What is the role of media and why is the media coverage is important?

Immigration is still perceived as an unfair harmony and a security and/or economic threat by certain fringes of the public opinion in Europe. This negative perception of migration can only be counterbalanced by a professional and high quality press coverage that takes into account migrants' provisions and contributions to the economic, social, cultural and political dynamics of our contemporary societies. In this sense media professionals have an elemental role to play towards public opinion: to stimulate and guarantee a pluralism of points of view and opinion, susceptible to ensure a real democratic debate over migration issues and their impacts.

For many years now, the media in some European countries developed various initiatives to make "the other" seen and heard, the one that is perceived as such, the one that comes from away; the migrant. This is the case for the so-called specific programs, developed and broadcasted notably by French public television channels, until the beginning of the year 2000. These programs are devoted to immigration issues and immigration people. Since the end of the 90s in Great Britain, or in France more recently, voluntarist policies about immigrants' and minority access to media professions were put in place. These policies are aimed to contribute to a representation more in line with the diversity of our contemporary



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

societies and to a content opening taking into account the transformations linked to the introduction of various groups of people into these societies.

Thus, at the dawn of the 90s began the debate on the representation of "visible" immigrants and minorities within the media. Outlining the principal initiatives in France, the United Kingdom, or even in the United States, clearly shows that the presence and the representativeness of immigrants raises complex issues that originate in the history of immigration peculiar to each of these countries; in the introduction models of the migrant populations in the concerned societies or in the regulatory modalities of the communications and audio-visual sectors chosen by these states. Yet, whatever the country, for political, economic or social reasons, this question continues to be perceived as an issue for the reinforcement of social cohesion.

However, we have to admit, that to this day, few or not to say no analysis exists that permit us to outline the impact on the media of more than 15 years of voluntary actions. Indeed, the research papers dedicated to the media field, notably in France, remain silent on the production of sense, on the symbolic discourse and the creation of a social imagination by the media regarding immigrants, visible minorities and global migration. Even if we agree to recognize that the visibility of ethnic minorities within the media has increased, notably in the United Kingdom, a high degree of dissatisfaction seems to persist within the minorities concerning their representation on the screen. This dissatisfaction is mainly due to the question that representation exceeds the simple fact to see a person with the same skin colour on the screen. People coming from minorities and recruited by the media are still not considered as professionals. They are often confined to the role of spokesman for these groups, which are thus presented and represented on air.

Concerning the content, it is regularly observed that migration and minority populations are still today presented as a threat to other people's security as the "communitisation" of the news items shows. This is for example the case when we look at the common journalistic practice to mention the origin of a person who has committed a misdemeanour. However, at the end of the 90s, public media start to show examples of "successful migrants". These figures are, however, limited to the single dimension of the spectacle or the performance. Therefore, this new journalistic approach will not be able to counterbalance the often negative representations about migration flows, suburbs and Islam, etc... Scientific research shows public media generally treat migration themes in a sensationalist way and continue to think of immigration as a problem.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Finally, how does public opinion react to a greater visibility on the screen of migrants and minority people? What does the public think about it? What are the impact of a more visible presence and an increased expression of the minorities on the “live-together dynamics” and on the acceptance of the migration issue? It is difficult to answer this question because there is a serious lack of research.

Yet, the linkages between media and migration refer to more global issues raised by international migration. The notions of sovereignty (connection to the territory), citizenship (place and status of minorities), discrimination (access to the right to speak) or social relationships (generation, gender) are challenged. At a time when the questions of diversity also reveal the actual political and cultural tensions at the national as well as trans-national levels, the issue of representation becomes even more important. A balanced representation on the screen as well as in the press and an adequate participation in the production of one of the most influential cultural institutions of our times – the media – is an important issue for the media but also, and especially, for a truly democratic functioning of the whole of society.

The issue today is to go beyond the single question of physical visibility, which is necessary but not sufficient condition for a better representation of minorities in the media. Indeed it is urgent to look into the content produced and broadcasted about migration, its impact on public opinion, and the role given to visible minorities at the various stages of the development and distribution of media productions. But these different initiatives will only become significant, in particular regarding international migration issues, when media and the whole society have made the invisible visible and rendered the visible invisible. For all this will remain vain if society, while it accepts to see, refuses to hear and above all to listen.

Summarizing the importance of media coverage on human rights issues, Phillip Lee points out the following:

- a) Most governments care about their public image. Democratically elected governments wish to be re-elected. All governments wish to attract foreign investment and promote their country's tourism industry. No government likes domestic or international criticism. With regard to human rights, the media can:
- b) 'Play a key role in building awareness and shaping public opinion on human rights and related issues; shape the framework and nature of debates over important issues affecting human rights, not least the death penalty or human rights in foreign policy; generate action from its audience; influence government policy, both directly and through its power to influence and mobilise opinion; put direct pressure on a government by placing it in the spotlight; help build the morale and influence of



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

human rights activists and organisations all over the world; investigate and expose human rights issues.’(3)

- c) One problem for the media – setting aside proprietorial or editorial obstacles – is access to accurate and reliable information. The problem for human rights groups is how to ensure that the massive amount of violation data they collect reaches its intended audience. A large part is lost due to confiscation or destruction, neglect, the passage of time or because the activists who gather the data lack the resources and infrastructure to document and communicate it systematically and securely.

The ICT and Communication Rights

The convergence of telecommunication, computer and broadcasting technology is revolutionizing the production, distribution and consumption of information of all kinds -- from mass entertainment, to social, cultural and educational services, to scientific research and business. In the process they affect all social institutions, perceptions and thought processes.

Globally the information and communication sector is already expanding at twice the rate of the world economy. Decreasing costs of increasingly powerful, reliable hardware and software, as well as the fact that much hardware has become a desktop item, will continue to drive the use of information and communication technologies, facilitating access by ever wider segments of society. But this tendency can have profound benefits only if gains in physical access are accompanied by capacities to exploit these technologies for individual and societal development through production and dissemination of appropriate content and applications.

However, the telecommunications gap between the developed and the developing economies *can be* closed given the right pre-conditions for growth. The Asia-Pacific region is now the world's largest single market for telecommunications products and services. The region is the fastest growing and most dramatically changing on the planet. For instance, the number of cellular subscribers in the Asia-Pacific region has already overtaken that of Western Europe and is forecast to outstrip the USA soon.

Like the idea of universal access to basic communication and information services, the 'right to communicate' is not a new concept. Philosophers and social scientists have long recognized that communication is at the basis of any society or group of human beings, and that the history of humanity is inextricably linked with that of communication.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

That is why it is timely to examine issues related to the 'right to communicate' in the context of the emerging global information society. Because of the way in which the communications and information technologies cut across all aspects of our lives, a concerted approach is required from the whole international community.

None of the fundamental human rights established in the Universal Declaration can be implemented fully in the absence of communication between those who lay claim to them. The right to communicate, therefore, must be seen as a dynamic concept, perceived as remaining open to any form of further development of technology and its implications. It is appropriate to think in terms of harnessing the potentials of information and communications technologies towards implementation of right to communicate as much as it is being used at securing sustainable economic development for all.

Citizen's Journalism /Barefoot Journalism/ Peace Journalism

There is no doubt that Information and Communication Technology, community radio and community Television could be harnessed to educate to enable responsible citizens for democratic institutions, good governance and the reconstruction of the country. In this process it is also an urgent necessity to educate people to gain their human rights and human dignity, particularly among the marginalized, neglected, silenced masses. It is time to think in terms of small community empowerments through the community media, or citizen's journalism.

Citizen's Journalism is involving citizens contributing, in one form or another, to existing professional news sites. In other words, private individuals do essentially what professional reporters do - report information. Enabling the people from the community to understand their situation and problems and share it first for their own community and then to make the people in governance and power to know what is happening in their own community and to the world at large. That information can take many forms, from a podcast editorial to a report about a city council meeting or in an immigrant camp site on a blog. It can include text, pictures, audio and video. But it's basically all about communicating information of some kind. The other main feature of citizen journalism is that it's usually found online. In fact, the emergence of the Internet - with blogs, podcasts, streaming video and other Web-related innovations - is what has made citizen journalism possible. The citizens become the reporters about their own situation in their own context, which can become more authentic and challenging.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

UNICEF programmes such as “Bringing Cinema to Every Community”, to produce large community screenings of educational films and documentaries for hundreds of thousands throughout Africa and Asia on current issues like women’s rights, conflict resolution and AIDS prevention, to broadcast messages of equality, hope and joy, all the while improving the quality of life. Programmes such as “Amplifying Voices through Digital Story-telling”, to bring out new inspirations, giving voice to the silenced communities living off the digital grid. Our innovation will be to tangibly connect the best ideas from these communities through digital storytelling workshops, regional screenings and connection to online social media networks.

Conclusion

A communication right is fundamental to every human being ushered by God to every human being who created them in His own image, giving them the right to be co-creators. Violation of these rights is excommunicating people from the community or from the world, which is a grave sin. It is essential to educate the marginalized, weaker sections of the society to know their rights enshrined in the constitutions and empower them to have their own human dignity. It is appropriate to harness the media available in this task of educating and empowering the marginalized people, particularly the ICT, focusing on the concept of Citizen’s journalism/Barefoot Journalism or Peace Journalism.

I thank you for your patient listening and thank the organisers for this opportunity given to me to share my views through this presentation.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Significance and Challenges of Radio Broadcasting in Advancing Migrant Rights and Welfare

Presentation by Raymund B. Villanueva, Director for Radio, Kodao Productions
Manila, Philippines (for panel discussion 1)

Dear participants, fellow speakers, organizers and hosts, good morning.

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to be invited as one of the speakers in this conference, more so on matters very personal to me. I am a radio broadcaster and migrant workers and their rights and welfare have always been a subject of my radio programs and advocacies.

More to the point, I am an alternative radio broadcaster. It means I am not your usual person that does it for a living. While this state of affairs is sad for me economically-speaking, it also means I am unfettered by the usual limitations attendant mainstream radio broadcasting.

Kindly allow me to present what to me are the challenges first. To begin, the following are Philippine radio broadcasting realities.

We have about 600 radio stations in the Philippines, split nearly in half between AM and FM radio bands. Curiously, in my country, AM is mostly talk (news, commentary, 'public service') and FM is mostly music and entertainment.

The oldest radio station in the Philippines was put up by an American colonial in the 1930s. It was and is still a privately-owned, commercial radio station. This set the trend, as majority of radio stations in the Philippines is owned by a handful of media conglomerates. When the colonial government and, later, the Philippine government started licensing, these businessmen applied to put up radio stations in all key towns and cities all over the country. They applied to have stations in both AM and FM bands. When the concept of community radio was introduced, they even applied for licenses for these even though they are commercial in nature. Manila Broadcasting Company takes pride in owning more than a hundred radio stations all over the country. That's more than 15 percent—a significant fact that would define what I would later explain as the first challenge.

The next biggest group of radio station owners are the various religious groups. Next is the government.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Let me focus on the majority of radio stations in the Philippines, the commercial ones, and their brand of broadcasting first. Company-hired and block-time anchors are made to toe the company line—sell the products and services of the advertisers and protect the interests of the sponsors and owners. In case of conflict with other parties (i.e. migrants) the advertisers, sponsors and owners come first.

This is how the public are seen and treated by commercial radio stations—a market for various products and services. It is not surprising, when up to 25 percent of airtime is spent on commercial breaks. It is not unique to you, but the migrant sector is seen as one of the biggest markets for various products and services—from condominium units, pre-need plans, even mobile phone services. This is the first challenge—that migrants, such as other sectors, are nothing more than gullible buyers of whatever is being peddled by the commercial and mainstream radio broadcasting industry.

If at all possible, government radio stations are even worse at times. They are tools to justify anti-migrant policies, such as fees, policies and programs. As we all know, governments of developing countries view migrants as milking cows while host governments see them as cheap, docile, disposable human labor. I am not aware of any government-owned and operated radio station that consistently takes up the cudgels for the migrants against its principal—the State. This, to me, is the second challenge—no traditional radio station owner is consistently an ally of the migrants. In fact, they could be downright enemies, so to speak.

The least evil, in a manner of speaking, are the religious-owned radio stations. In them we listen to radio programs that minister to migrants and their families. It is not exclusive to them, but radio stations owned by religious groups are often more sympathetic to migrants compared with the previous two owners—as they should. But there are religious groups that look at the migrant question as supra-political. And so they limit themselves to providing free-call services (before the time of cheaper mobile phones) between the migrants and their families back home. These mostly tear-jerky programs understate migrant issues and offer nothing more than palliatives to real problems. This, I think, is the third problem—that migrant issues are not comprehensively understood and tackled by existing radio programs dealing with migrants.

Another challenge would be the usual fare they give us on air, in exchange for meaningful, informative, educational, useful discourse and service.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Let me quote former University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication dean Luis Teodoro:

The networks have argued for decades that trivia and escape are what the great majority of their public wants. This stubborn belief in the inherent stupidity of the mass audience persists despite the results of research that show that the mass audience is hungry for real information, whether it's on rising prices, education, employment, or other matters relevant to their lives. The by now hoary assumption is that the majority of the radio public can understand only so much, and that, the media being commercial enterprises, pandering to the public's supposedly limited wants is what rates enough to insure the networks' profitability.

Radio and all the other mass media have always been useful tools to preserve the status quo that benefit the few, the elite who take advantage of the vast majority. But it can also be our tool. By asserting our communication rights, we can be broadcasters who advocate for rights and welfare systematically violated by the economic, political and cultural elite.

Hence, our outfit's and my personal insistence to stay 'alternative.' By alternative we mean non-commercial and non-government. And while for most of my broadcasting career, I have been a block-timing in commercial radio station, we still remain unfettered to limitations imposed by either the commercial or government nature of the stations. More importantly, an alternative broadcaster to us means serving the underserved and being the voice of the voiceless.

We broadcast news that are from and are about the marginalized sectors. We choose to interview persons from these sectors over government officials and functionaries. We choose to side with the people rather than pander up to corporations. While useful, we certainly do not want them to dictate editorial policies of our programs. We produce radio segments and antire programs that are useful to the common folks—migrants included, of course.

And what have we contributed to migrants, their families, and migrant organizations with these? I believe ours is the only radio program that not only consistently interviews them, but without expecting to personally gain in so doing. I believe ours is the only radio program that readily advocates for the rights and welfare of migrants, even when others vacillate on so-called controversial issues. We have gained the trust, friendship and solidarity of the migrants and their organizations. And, proudly, we say we may have contributed to some successful campaigns and advocacies.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Case in point was the recent anti-migrant plan of the Philippine Health Insurance Company to double their premium for Filipino migrants. It was nothing but a greedy scheme designed by this government-owned and controlled corporation to earn more from the migrants on a requirement that is useless to them once they leave the country. Ours was the first program to talk about it and to invite Migrante International to air its complaint and opposition. We consistently featured it in our newscasts. And, while the migrants' united and vehement opposition was the real reason why it was shelved I like to believe we contributed to the defeat of the scheme.

It could be a migrant facing execution abroad. It could be a migrant family suffering from the social cost of a parent being abroad. A pro-people radio program can contribute to the advancement of migrants' rights and welfare, as well as other the peoples in general.

But, why radio?

To explain, let me describe some characteristics of the medium.

First, radio is almost a universal medium of communication. In terms of numbers of radio stations and listeners out there, radio is still first. It speaks to billions. It has no boundaries—in the normal scope of things.

But while it counts that many in listener-ship, radio speaks to the individual. A good broadcaster sounds like it is talking to just one—the individual listener. A listener has his or her own take to what is being said on air. It can be warm—at least, warmer than the print and online media and as warm as television.

Radio is fast. Sometimes, when the issue is urgent or even when lives are at stake, this is crucial.

Radio is relatively simple. It is easier to talk than to write, take photos that tell stories or produce videos. But I hasten to add that there is nothing easy in being a good, interesting and engaging broadcaster.

Most importantly, radio is for the disadvantaged. It is comparatively low-cost. An hour-long airtime in a big station might cost tens of thousands per hour of airtime in the Philippines. But small, regional stations can sell airtime for as low as a couple of thousand per hour.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Ours is for free. Production of radio segments is also comparatively low-cost, more so if compared with video and television.

On the listeners' side, radio is friendliest. Listeners may be engaged in other activities, such as driving, cooking, washing clothes and still listen to the radio. It is least demanding of their time and concentration. To most migrants, this is ideal.

If we take all these characteristics together, and some others, radio does appear to be the mass medium most useful and accessible for advancing migrant rights and welfare, both in the production and listener-ship sides of things.

But radio is not confined to just the airwaves alone. It has in fact hitched on the website bandwagon and anyone can be broadcasters through the worldwide web. They are called podcasters and their programs or segments are called podcasts. In circumstances when we are not allowed to broadcast the traditional way we can use the worldwide web. Examples of how this can be popular and effective abound. I strongly recommend that this conference give it a serious thought. We would be more than willing to provide trainings toward this end.

To conclude, even for just the basic human need to communicate and even more so when we have so many things to say about migrant rights and welfare, radio is still the most accessible for various marginalized sectors and it has still the widest reach. It poses a few challenges that are still far less compared with the other traditional media. It would serve the interest of migrants to seriously consider being their own broadcasters. We, the alternative broadcasters from all over the world, would be very glad to welcome you to our ranks.

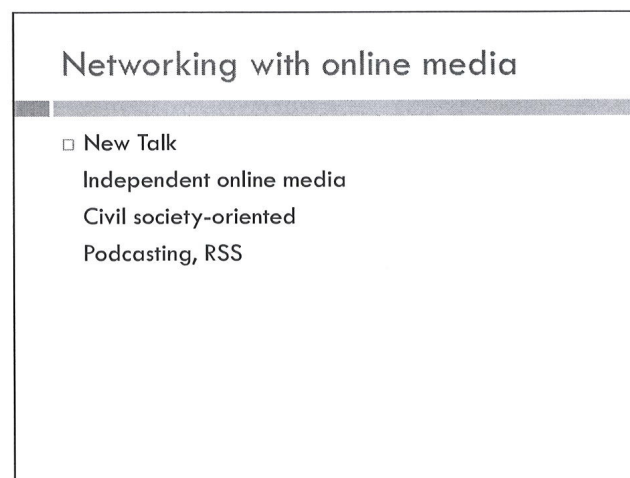
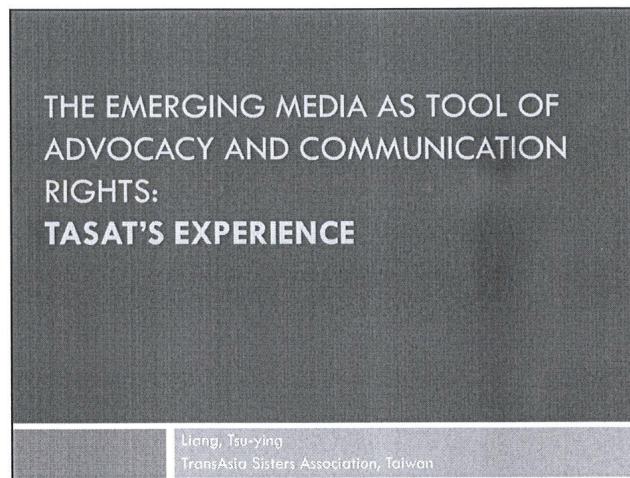
Good morning and thank you.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

The Emerging Media as Tool of Advocacy and Communication Rights: TASAT's Experience

Liang Tsu-Ying, TransAsia Sisters Association, Taiwan





ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Networking with online media

- Why collaborate?
 - a. The channel operated by migrants, for migrants
 - b. More training opportunities for TASAT's Southeast Asian Culture's lecture group
 - c. Raising public awareness
 - d. Dissemination tool for TASAT's advocacy

TASAT's Program

- 30-minute program
- Migrant-related news (law, policy & relevant news)
- Migrant NGO's advocacy
- Southeast cultures (Food, music, art, etc.)
- Migrants' life stories



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Overall Evaluation

- Strength
 - ✓ Software & hardware facility are provided
 - ✓ Digital archives
 - ✓ Migrant empowerment
- Weakness
 - ✓ Low viewer rate, lack of manpower and insufficient migrants participation in technical & program planning parts

Overall Evaluation

- Threat
 - ✓ Inflexibility of production
 - ✓ A conflict of interest between New Talk & TASAT



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Overall Evaluation

- Opportunities
 - ✓ Various online media platforms have emerged
 - ✓ A well-trained TASAT production crew

Future Strategies

- Increase migrants' participation
 - ✓ Time
 - ✓ Financial incentivizes
- More fund and manpower
 - ✓ Sponsorship proposal
 - ✓ Recruitment



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Future Strategies

- Production Transformation
(Terminate collaboration with New Talk)
- Flexibility of production process & autonomy over program's content
- Different & more access to our program

Future Prospect

- Government's support
 - More public channels
 - Establish Migrant's media (Cooperation between migrant-exporting and migrant-receiving countries)



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

How inmediahk.net impacts on advocacy and mobilizations in Hong Kong

Ronald YICK, Contributing reporter and editor of inmediahk.net

Organization

Independent media has a long history in Hong Kong. In recent years, as a result of the advancement of the Internet and communications technology, individuals and small organizations with limited resources have begun utilizing new electronic media, bringing about a new media era characterized by diversity and direct participation. Established in 2004, **Hong Kong In-media** is the foremost organization in Hong Kong which aims to initiate an independent media movement.

Hong Kong In-media and inmediahk.net

What is more well-known in Hong Kong is **inmediahk.net** (<http://www.inmediahk.net>), which has been one of the funding projects of Hong Kong In-media since October 2004, and registered as a company in 2005. (Hong Kong In-media is a registered society in Hong Kong.) For the sake of editorial independence, the website is run by a team of editors and contributing reporters, while Hong Kong In-media gives full financial support to its daily operations.

Hong Kong In-media collaborates with inmediahk.net to publish printed newsletters of the June 4 vigil and July 1 rally. We also work with NGOs and activist groups in publishing campaign pamphlets and booklets. We hold regular offline salons and seminars, inviting speakers to discuss current issues. Hong Kong In-media has been active in engaging with policies related to the media environment and free speech, such as amendments to the Indecent and Obscene Article Ordinance, Copyright Ordinance, and website filtering.

Missions of inmediahk.net

The mission of the web project is “to serve as an independent media platform for Hong Kong’s democratic and social movements, as well as developing a public space for Hong Kong that is not dominated by any political power, consortium or political parties”.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Citizen reporting

In order to nurture a new citizen-subject, the website encourages the growth of “citizen reporters”. We believe that through the practice of citizen reporting, individuals become more active in engaging with community and social issues. Over the past few years, the website has become an influential public platform for social commentary and narration of Hong Kong stories. It connects and unites a group of independent intellectuals, educators, students and civil community activists, who, through dialogues and debates, present their vision for a better Hong Kong. Indeed, citizen reporters often obtain first-hand information from the civic sector and some have even become opinion leaders on public affairs.

Financial management

Since our establishment, we have made it our clear intent to not accept funding from political parties and governments, nor adopt a commercial business model. We seek to establish an autonomous space through individual donations.

We want to build a full-time staff team. Currently, Hong Kong In-media receives about \$20,000 in individual monthly donations, sufficient for less than two full-time employees. Our aim is to raise \$40,000-50,000 in monthly donations thereby allowing us to build an ideal working team.

Daily operations

The website's daily operations are maintained by volunteer editors (currently around 10) and contributing reporters (currently around 20). The team of editors is responsible for recommending feature articles and managing author status, as well as publishing the weekly newsletter. The contributing reporter team was established in late 2009; reporters hold inmediahk.net press identity cards and represent the organization during interviews. Editors and contributing reporters hold regular news planning meetings and reports, and go through a collective editorial process before being published.

Writers, citizen reporters and contributing reporters are very active in engaging with society and have undertaken several initiatives in organizing report series and commentaries on issues such as urban planning, environment, cultural policy, politics and Mainland-Hong Kong affairs.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Users and visitors

Inmediahk.net has accumulated more than 7,000 registered users; of those, more than 400 are contributing writers. The site has grown steadily to more than 6,000 daily visits, 8,000 page views per day. Aside from direct access, readers can also subscribe to articles via RSS reader, Facebook, Twitter and mobile applications. Moreover, the website has established a YouTube video channel (IndySpec) since 2009 and, earlier 2010, a live broadcast channel on justin.tv.

Social change through reports and campaigns

1) 2005 Anti-WTO protest: to counter mainstream media

In December 2005, the WTO ministerial meeting was held in Hong Kong. A large number of protesters from local and overseas communities, marginalized by global capitalism, demonstrated in Hong Kong. At that time, mainstream media framed the protest as a matter of “security threat” and created an atmosphere of fear in society. inmediahk.net then organized a citizen reporter team to monitor the situation and published a newsletter to counter mainstream media’s impartial reports. Following the incident, it published a book, *Breaking news: The making of WTO news stories in Hong Kong*, reconnecting on the differences in news coverage seen between mainstream and alternative media throughout the meeting and protests in Hong Kong.

2) 2006-2007 Preservation movement: platform for information dissemination, movement reconnection and mobilization

In December 2006, a group of young people occupied the Star Ferry Pier demolition site. One of inmediahk.net’s citizen reporters decided to report on the demonstration. The action triggered a preservation campaign for the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen’s Pier. At that time, the activists turned inmediahk.net into a platform for information dissemination, movement reconnection and mobilization. The website’s citizen reporters kept digging up new information and went on to closely follow the movement for over a year.

Aside from providing online news, inmediahk.net cooperated with an activist group, “Local action”, and co-published several campaign newsletters, including *Our home, We Plan - 3.18 March* special issue. These activists organized city tours, people’s planning consultations, social movement history sharing, demonstrations, music and dancing performances, forums, lobbying meetings and participated in government consultation, Legco discussion, public



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

debates, etc. The new generation of activists has carried on the social movement tradition and calls for a decolonialization process in Hong Kong via people's participation in planning.

Although both piers did not escape the fate of demolition, the struggle has changed the culture of Hong Kong social movements. It enhanced public concern for city planning and environment. Moreover, it did see some policy changes and pave the way for future preservation campaigns.

3) 2009-2010 Anti-XRL mobilization: citizen reporters took the lead

At the end of 2008, the Government held a public consultation on construction plans for the Hong Kong portion of a Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. As mainstream media downplayed the significance of the news, very few Hong Kong citizens were aware of the impact the construction would have on local communities. In response, Hong Kong In-media and inmediahk.net jointly organized a "Media Activist Workshop", using the Express Rail Link as a focus, and planned a report series. Subsequently, our citizen reporters traveled to Choi Yuen village, site of the future XRL back-up station, reporting on the forced demolition of the village and fielded questions regarding insufficient consultation related to the construction plan.

The series of reports provided the basis for the campaign against the financial plan of the XRL. For a year, website editor Chu Hoi-dick provided steady updates of the latest developments in the campaign. Urban and rural residents affected by the construction, as well as professional groups spoke out against the project and raised alternative ways of life, away from economic efficiency and developmentalism. Between December 2009 and January 2010, coinciding with a Legislative Council meeting for approving the financial plan of the XRL, inmediahk.net organized contributing reporters to publish simultaneous reports on Twitter and Facebook, and was reposted and discussed in online forums. At the peak of the anti-XRL campaign, the number of daily visitor to inmediahk.net reached 20,000.

Affective mobilization

An important feature in the campaign is affective mobilization. Before the budget bill was brought to the Legislative Council, a team of "penance walkers", comprised mainly of students, embarked on an action to walk prostrated around Hong Kong. On the one hand, the action reinforced emotional connections within the opposition camp, winning greater social support and the upper hand over public opinion on the other; it also brought public attention on issues related with the generational difference in the perception of social justice. Public



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

opinion of the Express Rail Link construction was drastically reversed within just a few months. Those who opposed the construction and those who endorsed the alternative plan grew to outnumber those in support of the government plan. Although the opposition was backed by most of the elected legislators, the budget bill was nevertheless pushed through by the functional constituencies which dominate the Legislative Council. The “Anti-Express Rail Link” campaign was subsequently attenuated by political demands for parliamentary democracy and abolition of the functional constituencies.

Roles of inmediahk.net in summary

In the above three cases and others, inmediahk.net has been an active participant and vehicle of campaigns. Briefly speaking, the website undergoes the following process in public mobilizations:

- a) Produce investigative reports;
- b) Expose social problems and make criticisms;
- c) Stir up discussions;
- d) Bridge and advocate for mobilization offline and online.

Sources of mobilizations

We have discovered that the above mentioned mobilizations were somehow connected to the —Post-80s Youth-movement. The drive behind this new wave youth movement comes from the social structure premeditated by neoliberalism, in which the market resources of every kind are increasingly monopolized by the elites led ruling bloc. While the financial-real estate hegemony upheld by corporate-government collusion further marginalizes those excluded from the interest network, the younger generation resists by invoking local cultural values to counter with the invasion of the abstract economic capital. At the same time, the young generation’s communication culture, as well as their world view culture, is closely connected with the development of the Internet media technologies. New forms of political resistance and actions have emerged through the interaction between local politics and the new technological setting.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Interplay between mainstream and social media, offline and online communities

Chains of micro-actions and affective mobilization get triggered

The influence of these sorts of “micro-actions” lies mainly in the interaction between the Internet and traditional media. The rigid bureaucracy of Hong Kong however seldom responds to public opinion and changes their policies. Another characteristic of individual network distribution is the mobilization of affection, as mentioned above. When information is passed along personal networks, it no longer remains a mere objective news item; rather, the news becomes a significant story to the distributors. They share with their friends their idea of the story, fostering a form of inter-subjective beliefs. These common beliefs among friends can become a source of strength and an affective power for collective action.

When mainstream news item is circulated across social media, responses of different kinds arise, each of them has added value to the original piece of information. These responses might, in turn, influence how traditional media respond to the issue.

Organization of mobilization as a continuing challenge

The huge number of “micro-actions” generates an explosion of public opinion that spreads through the Internet in a personalized affective manner. Nonetheless, the momentum is often difficult to sustain. In a large-scale virtual mobilization, approximately 5% of participants will support offline action, and generally around 5% of those will take on the role of organizer or facilitator. Without an organizational core, when an issue subsided, the network will soon be dissolved. The present challenge is to consolidate the organizational core of each campaign and to establish linkage and coalition among the cores of different oppositional campaigns. As mobilization through social media takes place in semi-private, semi-opaque networks, a mobilization network risks isolation from the general public if not enough effort is invested in the cultivation of public discourse. The transformation of such incidental outburst into sustainable social movement requires a lot of organization efforts and political articulations.

Final words on migrants' campaigns

The website has not completely involved in advocacy of migrant issues. Nevertheless, we have produced citizen reports and videos to let the public understand migrant workers' voices and thoughts during controversies (such as the time when the court was hearing cases of application of right of abode of foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong), as well as digging up the groups who mobilized people against their right of abode. In spite of this, it is



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

worthwhile to get some of the insights when migrants' groups would like to initiate campaigns with the use of internet:

- a) News and messages can be spread like virus through social media;
- b) Engage the public with close look of the issue;
- c) Motivate the offline / public and mainstream media to get interested in your campaign;
- d) Interact between online and offline community during the campaign;
- e) Make wise use emotion during mobilization.

Note:

Some of the content of this article is adopted from the following sources:

<http://inmediahk.org/about/>

[Leaflet of Hong Kong In-media](#)

[Social Media Uprising in the Chinese-speaking World](#) (Edited by Ip lam-chong)

[Hong Kong: A New Page for Affective Mobilization](#) (Lam Oi-wan and Ip lam-chong)



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

INTRODUCTIONS

Eni Lestari

Ms. Lestari came to Hong Kong as a domestic worker herself in 2000. She was subjected to contract violation and abuse by her employer. While pursuing her legal case as a client of the Bethune house, she learned how to organize her fellow migrant workers. Eni chartered the Association of Indonesian Migrant workers, as well as PILAR, the Alliance against overcharging of Indonesian Migrant Workers. She is a member of the AMCB (Asian Migrants Coordinating Body) and the IMA (International Migrants Alliance). Eni is a staunch advocate for the rights of migrant workers.

Albert Cheng

Albert Cheng, known as “Tai-pan,” is a former member of Hong Kong’s legislative council, and an active member of Hong Kong media. Cheng is the chairman of Wave Media Limited. In 2010, he was awarded the Digital Opportunity Award by the World Information Technology and Services Alliance and the Gold Bauhinia Star GBS by HKSAR Government. Mr. Cheng has been an outspoken advocate of migrant rights throughout his career.

Raymund Villanueva

Raymund started his broadcasting career in 1994 while still a national youth and student leader and has anchored and produced radio programs in four Manila stations. He has also trained community broadcasters in the Asia Pacific Region and Europe. Raymund is director for radio of Kodao Productions, an independent and progressive multi-media group based in Manila, Philippines. He hosts the daily radio program Sali Na, Bayan! over DZUP that broadcasts over Mega Manila area. He is also a social activist and was a former national secretary general of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers-Philippines and vice-president for Luzon of the College Editors' Guild of the Philippines.

Sam Meshack

Prof. Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Meshack is the elected President of the WACC – Asia Region for the second term in May 2011, during the Triennial Assembly of WACC-Asia and as the Secretary to the Global Board of WACC in the Board Meeting held last September 2011. He served as a Professor of Communication for over 29 years and Principal of a Gurukul Lutheran Theological College & Research Institute, one of the corporate member of WACC – which has



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

pioneered in Communication in Theological Education, introducing Communication studies at the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral levels. At present he is guiding five doctoral students doing Doctor of Theology in Communication under the Serampore University and three doctoral students doing their PhD at the Martin Luther Christian University and Mother Teresa Women's University in India.

He is an ordained minister of the Lutheran Church in India. Currently he is working as the Principal of Concordia Theological Seminary in India. He authored a few books and published several articles on national and international journals. He is also serving as a member of the Academic Council, a member of the Research Committee and the Chairperson of the Board of Studies for Communication of the Senate of Serampore College (Christian University).

Judy Chan

Rev. Judy Chan is Executive Secretary for Communications at the Hong Kong Christian Council. She is producer of English language Christian radio programs broadcast on RTHK. Judy is an American-born Chinese and serves in Hong Kong under the sponsorship of the United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ and Presbyterian Church USA. She received her Master of Divinity from Yale University and her Master of Journalism from Hong Kong University.

Zoe Liang (Liang, Tsuying)

Ms. Liang received a Bachelor in Diplomacy from the National Chengchi University in 2009, with minors in Sociology and English. She completed her M.A. in Applied Human Rights at the University of York in 2010 UK. Ms. Liang is currently a member of Organization Development Commission of TASAT and the Advocacy Commission of TASAT. She is responsible for TASAT's magazine editing & online TV program production.

Ronald Yick

Founded in 2004, inmediahk.net is a local portal website in Chinese, which seeks to facilitate public engagement in citizen journalism. Its website writers and citizen journalists are involved in a wide range of local and international issues. The website was also first to stir up the challenge to professional journalism in Hong Kong. Ronald Yick has been a writer shortly after the website had launched. He has become a contributing reporter since late 2009 and an editor since 2011. He mainly writes about local politics, social welfare, migrants' situations and citizenship issues in Hong Kong. He studied sociology in both undergraduate and master's degrees.



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Joram Calimutan

Joram Calimutan is a pastor at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Also, he is the program coordinator of Asian Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), an organization for migrants situated in Hong Kong. As a devout practitioner of his religion, he believes that all men are created equal and securing human right for all humanity is the basis to creating harmonious society. Thus he became an activist in APMM's advocacy actions for migrant workers in Hong Kong.

Reverend Cheongwon Jang

Reverend Cheongwon Jang is Convenor of Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity in Korea. He is also the director of Reconciliation and Unification Mission Center & Osan Laborer's Center in Korea. With stern faith in his religion, he also is an active member of Korean Progressive Labor Network Center and International Coordinating Body of the International League of People's Struggle.

Glorene Dass

Glorene Dass is the program director of Tenaganita Women's Force, an organization based in Malaysia. Tenaganita was founded in 1991 under the motto "protecting and promoting the rights of women, migrants and refugees." Currently her organization's main focus is migrant and refugee rights protection, anti-human-trafficking, and business accountability and responsibility. Although her mother organization is based in Malaysia, she actively participates in promotion of migrants' rights in other countries, such as Hong Kong.

Seta Hadesian

Ms. Seta Hadesian is director of Diakonia and Social Justice at the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) based in Lebanon. In the Global Forum on Migration, Development, and Human Rights held in Brussels in 2007, she made a presentation to the governments' plenary sessions on behalf of MECC. Also in 2008, she represented MECC as an implementing partner of UNHCR in Lebanon.

Anis Hidayah

Anis Hidayah is an Indonesian activist who supports migrants. She is the executive director of Migrant Care, a Jakarta-based organization that supports migrant workers. In 2011, Human



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO JOURNALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

Rights Watch honored her for her dedication to the rights of Indonesian migrant domestic workers. Anis Hidayah doesn't confine her boundary to Indonesia, but also actively participates in international conferences regarding migrant workers' rights.

Garry Martinez

Garry Martinez is a Filipino pastor who was a migrant worker in South Korea who experienced exploitation and abuse at the hands of his employer. After this experience, Garry educated himself on migrant rights, and became involved in organizing migrant workers. He was the chairperson of KASAMMAKO, an alliance of Filipino migrant workers in South Korea. Afterwards, he returned to the Philippines, and currently serves as the chairman of Migrant International.

Au Mei Po, Mabel

Au Mei Po graduated from Hong Kong Baptist University. She was a member of the association for the advancement of feminism. She also participated in the Hong Kong People's Alliance on the World Trade Organization, a coalition formed during the fifth World Trade Organization meeting, held in Hong Kong in 2005. Au Mei Po is currently serving as director of Amnesty International, Hong Kong. Ms. Po has been a good friend of the migrant community, supporting our causes and issues, particularly with regard to foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong.