



# NEWSLETTER

March 2024



## NEW YEAR, NEW STRENGTH OF IVS



As the year 2024 begins, we are pleased to present our first Newsletter.

As we compile the Annual Report, we hear from many of you that the impact of Corona is still very much in evidence and that you are not able to gather as many volunteers as you did before Corona. However, while saying this, we also strongly feel the strength and ambition of everyone who has worked hard and survived this difficult time.

There will also be a GA in Nepal in May. Let's make the network of members stronger than ever and spread the power of IVS!

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# ACTIVITY REPORTS

## ASIAN VOLUNTEERS VOICE

By Thu Pham

The first Asian Volunteers Voice of 2024 was held on January 18 with presentations from representatives of 03 organizations MCE - Mongolia, NICE - Japan and Dalla - Thailand along with the participation of more than 30 audiences. audience from 13 countries across the Asia region via Zoom and shown live on NVDA's Facebook. Through the AVV session, participants directly interacted with representatives of organizations, listened to camp leaders introduce projects in 03 countries and at the same time asked questions and concerns directly about the projects. . This is a great opportunity to help hosting organizations reach out to potential future volunteers and attract them to join their programs/projects. At the same time, this is also a good opportunity to promote the image of the NVDA network as well as increase the reputation of its members to the public. In addition, direct access helps the public better understand the project as well as increases trust with hosting organizations. This encourages potential volunteers to share and sign up for future projects while enhancing volunteer exchange between network members.

Below are some participant feedback after the first AVV session:

1. What did you like the most in the meeting?
    - To be able to get more concrete information about what we do in Workcamp
    - The opportunity to volunteer in other countries and contribute in social impact
    - I liked the individual sharing for each country's volunteer opportunities
    - Very good. Thanks for organizing it.
  2. Any suggestions for next meetings
    - I'm interested to participate for the Japan program. Kindly reach me so that I could get more details (e.g. participation fees, locations, accomodations, etc.) and prepare for the visa application first.
- Thanks.



## EC MEETING IN CAMBODIA

By Noriko Ohkusa

From February 4 to 10, EC members and Secretariat gathered in Cambodia to participate in the Mini Mangrove summit (TFC workcamp) and hold an EC meeting. Kai, Thazin, Sophat, Nori, and Ben(GREAT) and Tayo(Mulyo Asri Mangrove : GREAT's local partner) participated in the Mini Mangrove summit in Kampot Province. They worked with workcampers like collecting mangrove seeds and planting seedlings. After that, the ECs and Secretariat traveled to Phnom Penh for a 2-day meeting / 2-day working. The ECs usually have online meetings once a month, but actually discussing and working together face to face is a completely different experience.

After 2 days of intensive meetings, Ben and Tayo joined us again. The ECs especially focused on preparing for the May GA and producing the Annual Report.





## MANGROVE MINI SUMMIT IN CAMBODIA

By Ben Pramudya

The Mangrove Project is one of the environmental projects owned by several members at NVDA. Of course, every project has its own problems and challenges. Therefore, having the opportunity to visit each other between mangrove projects will be very beneficial for local partners to be able to exchange information and good practices.

On February 4-9 2024, GREAT Indonesia had the opportunity to join the Mangrove Summit by visiting a mangrove project in Cambodia organized by CYA and Trapaeng-sangkae Fishery Community (TFC) to learn how the TFC community develops ecological tourism based on mangrove forests. Mr Tayo, a mangrove farmer from Indonesia accompanied by Mr Ben as project manager from GREAT together took part in activities at TFC. Together with several other international volunteers, they volunteer to work with the local community. The activities they carry out include harvesting mangrove seeds, seeding, planting and repairing wooden bridges.



On this occasion, we both learned a lot from discussions held with leaders from TFC which were facilitated by Mr Sophat from CYA. We know the history of this community along with all the challenges they face. It is not an easy thing for the TFC community to develop as it is today, they have encountered many problems and threats on their journey.

This experience was very valuable for Mr. Tayo in preparing a mangrove project development plan in his community. He hopes that in the future the village where he lives can become an environmentally based tourist village. Thank you for this opportunity and we hope that activities like this can be held again at another time.

This visit was financially supported by the internal fund of NICE, Japan for SCC (Stop Climate Change).



# MEMBERS NEWS

## RUCHI INDIA



## DISASTER RELIEF IN SOLAN DISTRICT



The unprecedented rains during July-August, 2023 brought a havoc in this part of the Solan district besides severally affecting other areas in the State. Many district and link roads were damaged, bridges collapsed, drinking water and power supply gone for more than 72 hours and mobility severely affected.

Many houses developed cracks and the residents were evacuated. About 20 houses in Salga and Dhanyon villages were completely gutted and their land was declared unfit for redevelopment of houses. Many migrant workers working on roads in the area lost their belongings and temporary shelter. Even one of our building block was fully blocked with debris and it took us 2 months to clear the debris manually and restore the building to its use.

RUCHI geared up to help disaster victims and tried successfully to raise some funds through crowd funding in order to salvage lives, extend essential supplies to the disaster victims and help in their rehabilitation.

As a part of relief work, we with the help of a few international volunteers were able to do following:

1. Distributed warm blankets to 75 families, one each
2. Repaired and restored water supply to Bandh village and RUCHI campus
3. Developed a protective wall to check further damage to property in RUCHI campus
4. Five families were extended cash benefit of INR 50,000/- each to redevelop/protect their house
5. Distributed 2750 kits containing, hygiene kits, bed sheets and mosquito nets, Tarpaulins for temporary sheds, mattresses, safe drinking water kits etc.

The community has learned a lesson from the mother nature for their unplanned housing structures, land development and digging at places. They are now determined to not fiddle with nature and take all precautionary measures against future natural disasters. They also plan to take up more tree plantation and construct their houses on solid ground taking all earthquake/disaster resistant technologies.

### IVP, AUSTRALIA



### GOULBURN SHOW WORKCAMP 2023

IVP has one annual workcamp which is now in its 6th year. Our cooperation with Goulburn Agricultural and Horticultural Show grows stronger each year and will feature in a book they are compiling on the history of the Goulburn Show. This year the team of volunteers will have some interaction with local highschool students which will enhance the cultural exchange aspect of the workcamp. As usual, most of the volunteers for this camp come through the NVDA network and we are pleased to have a camp leader from NICE Japan. Our experience is that camp leaders are hard to find these days. Do other NVDA members have similar experience?



### VOLTRA, HONG KONG



### HONG KONG WORKCAMP

Following the return of the first local international workcamp after the pandemic last summer, VolTra successfully organized the second Hong Kong workcamp from 13 to 18 December last year. Participants came from 10 different regions, including the United States, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, Russia, Indonesia, Singapore, Laos, the Philippines, and Macau.

Their main activities included a community visit in Sham Shui Po to understand grassroots life and poverty issues, visiting Tung Tak School to spread festive blessings to students, sharing their respective cultural backgrounds, and supporting the RunOurCity event by cheering on the runners at the finish line. Through diverse experiences and activities, both participants and Cultural Facilitator were able to discover another side of Hong Kong, leaving behind brief yet profound memories!





## IWO, KOREA

### >>> A WAVE OF WARMTH: BETTER WORLD & POWER PLANT COMPANY SHINE IN POLAND!

We recently embarked on a meaningful journey of volunteerism in Warsaw and Konin, Poland with a power plant company as a CSR project. From January 30th to February 6th, a dynamic team of 24 university students from Korea, along with 6 power plant company employees, came together to make a difference.

Our mission? To spread warmth and cheer to the local communities. We whipped up over 600 packed meals, ensuring that elderly, homeless, and vulnerable individuals had something nutritious to enjoy. But that's not all – we also brought the stage to life with vibrant performances! From heart-pounding Taekwondo displays to infectious K-pop dances, we showcased the best of Korean culture at universities, schools, and NGO venues.

The highlight? The World Taekwondo Federation's demonstration team wowed audiences in Warsaw, leaving a lasting impression on locals in Konin. Their energetic performances didn't just entertain; they also sparked a newfound interest and connection with Korea and Poland.



The impact? This volunteer experience has truly brought us closer to the people of Poland. We're committed to fostering lasting relationships and continuing our positive impact. Residents of Konin echoed the sentiment, expressing their appreciation for the cultural exchange and warmth brought by the Korean team. The diverse programs garnered significant local interest, and volunteers fostered cultural exchange with the community, furthering mutual understanding between Korea and Poland through enhanced communication.

Despite the winter chill, the atmosphere was anything but cold – it was filled with the warmth of shared experiences and newfound friendships.

**WE CAN SEE  
IMPACT ON  
THE  
COMMUNITIES,  
IMPACT ON  
THE  
VOLUNTEERS**

# IVS IMPACT STORIES

**FSL INDIA DJ & VYA TAIWAN**

**-These are examples of impact on Members' Projects in 2023 from NVDA annual report-**

## ➤➤➤ FSL, INDIA

Completion of sanitation camp by ESTP University students as volunteers from France send by JR France. The camp started since 2012 and the volunteers have created awareness on sanitation to the tribal community, the school students with mural paintings and renovation work and construction of 45 toilets. The community also raised the resources from the Government and completed the toilet construction for all the families.



## ➤➤➤ VYA, TAIWAN



Project: Discover the Rich Folk Culture of Xiushan Community Date: Aug.9th-22nd: Since 2017, the Xiushan Project has famous in work together with elders and share religious traditions by local masters. International volunteers' participation just like alternative vitamin to re-booth into elders. Make them become energetic and more younger. Project: Centennial Spring's Beauty Revives Date: Jul. 5th-10th: First time for local partner to host international volunteers. A town has spring within it for century long, and the residents use the spring for washing dishes and clothes, for tea making after boiled, etc.. Volunteers came to learn the ancestors' wisdoms and also decorate the area of spring side to remind local people to co-live with the nature.



# COMMENT FROM EC

*The current EC members were elected in 2022 and have been active for about 2 years (some EC members were elected before that). This is the last issue of the Newsletter with this EC, so I asked them for their impressions of the EC activities and messages to the members.*

**Kai :** My case may be quite special to be in the EC since the beginning of NVDA until 2018 when I left. Then, I and NICE were not planning to come back to the EC, at least for a while, but due to the special situation of the COVID and the crisis of our movement network, we got to try to do our best to first make our movement survive in COVID. And of course, the network is and should be run not only by the EC, all the members together. And there are many ways to be involved in the network. Still, being in the EC is very special. It's hard, but because of that, it's also rewarding and fun. And we can improve ourselves by the challenge, and it's more responsible, but you can implement your ideas more directly and powerfully. Of course, it's also very necessary to listen to and consider the voice of members, but to coordinate this, EC has a very important role. You don't have to be afraid of your experience or capacity or whatever. The most important thing is pure motivation to create a better network and movement together with the other colleagues. So, if you are interested, why not try?



**Sophat :** I think personality-wise, it is nice to be at ease, especially when working as a team with everyone. Firstly, it gives a lot of good experience to me personally, and secondly, it's also good for the organization and the CYA that I'm working with. Thirdly, as a member of the network of NVDA, I think this is a good platform for everyone to contribute and to make the network grow. There are more things that everyone can do. It doesn't mean that members cannot support NVDA, but EC is the core team that operates NVDA strongly, so welcome to EC.

**Alex:** Being NVDA EC comes in addition to our own volunteer organizations' work, DaLaa Thailand in my case, which is already very demanding so this needs to allocate time and energy for it. Working as an EC is very interesting and even if it's not paid, it gives the opportunity to travel, to meet great world activists and to get a bigger picture of the network. It's increasing our level of responsibility from a national to a regional level for the good of volunteering and peace in the Asian + continent. Our wish for recognition and economic support depends on the coordination of each of our members, hosts and volunteers' great work.







**Baatar** : The human being is a part of society. So, during the pandemic, we were very apart. We cannot meet our friends or so on, so after the pandemic, everyone wants to go back to their normal life, which is back to society. It's always nice to be a part of something. You feel that you are part of something is always nice, and especially to be part of decision-making bodies is even nicer, yeah. So, also, those decision-making people are very powerful, like leaders usually, so it's a very good place to improve yourself, you know, challenge yourself. So, yeah, that's why I'm back after 8 years.

**Thazin**: It has been a wonderful 4 years of involvement with EC on behalf of GIVE. We were in a hard time during COVID and in the post-COVID, but being as a network member and also involved as an EC gives you a closer connection with the regional network. Also it makes you more involved in the members' activities and also more opportunities to engage more with other members as well. You could also volunteer and contribute more to this network, so there's an opportunity and also the contribution for being work as an EC.

**\*THEY ARE JUST  
EXAMPLES AND  
MORE PROJECTS  
ARE ORGANIZED BY  
MEMBERS NGOS.**

**\*DATES ARE  
INDICATED BY  
MONTH/DATE  
ORDER(2024)**



## MEMBERS UPCOMING PROJECTS

### >>> MCE, MONGOLIA

**School-4 workcamp (April 1-14)** : It will be organized together with MCE and one of the secondary schools in the suburb of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Mongolia has 12 years Secondary school system. Until 1990 kids/students were studying only Russian as a second language. But since 1990 we changed our political and economical system. Since this time we have chance to study the 3rd language. But English studying is still very poor and MCE is always focusing to improve it.

### >>> DALAA, THAILAND

**Kids holiday workcamp (March 24- April 6/ April 16-29)** : Organize 3 children camps at DaLaa Voluntary Service Community in Kok Rieng village. Each camp would take 3 days and involve different Thai children from 7 to 13 years old. The activities and camp's daily life organized by volunteers should be strongly connected with our community values, authenticity, responsibility and inclusion. Besides, they should allow children to be in a harmonious and safe environment.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## »»» SPECIAL WEEK FOR SISTER STAFF COMMUNITIES

We are starting Special online meeting for NVDA's member orgs' staff members in the same position can share common know-how, concerns, and ideas. The first meeting will be held April 1-5. More details will be sent to members shortly via email.

### Date / Theme / Facilitator

**April 01** : Outgoing placement (incl. preparation of vols.) Kai

**April 02** : Incoming placement (incl. preparation of vols.) Baatar

**April 03** : Trainers of Camp leaders Ben

**April 04** : Head (President and Directors) Alex

**April 05** : PR (get more Outgoing and National Vols.) Thazin

## »»» 19TH NVDA GA+ PRE-WORKCAMP & 20TH TNW IN OKHALDHUNGA, NEPAL

The time has come and we warmly invite you to the 20th TNW and 19th NVDA GA + pre-work workcamp of NVDA in Kathmandu and Okhaldhunga, Nepal (May 13-18, 2024) .

We will have special (pre) workcamp(optional), workshops, voluntary work, and GA.

TNW & GA will be hosted at Nara Tika Community Learning Centre (CLC), Okhaldhunga. The venue is 250 km from Kathmandu from which the travel is an adventure that takes you through the picturesque landscapes, stunning views of the Nepalese countryside, winding through hills, valleys and small villages. The journey can take around 7-10 hours by jeep, VIN will arrange for you all. So please register now!

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