

NETWORK FOR VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA



NEWSLETTER

March 2025



WELCOMING NEW SEASON WITH GROWTH AND CHALLENGES



Three months into 2025, we're excited to share our first newsletter!

The highlight was AVS. In the AVS Special Night on March 13, where participants shared struggles with language, culture, and new environments—capturing the spirit of IVS as a journey of growth.

Spring has arrived after a long winter in East Asia, and the GA in Macau is just around the corner. Let's keep doing our best until we meet again!

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Sister Staff Communities (SSC) - Season 4

Sister Staff Communities are brand new practices started in 2024 April! It is a platform for the staff of NVDA member NGOs in the same role, consisting of 5 groups (see below) to have;

* Trimonthly meetings "Special Week" in the beginning of Apr., Jul., Oct. and Jan.

* WhatsApp groups for the daily communications

After the great success of Special Weeks in April 1-5, Jul. 1-5 and Oct 7-11, the fourth week was fruitfully done with over 46 participants from more than 18 IVS NGOs in 2025 Jan. 6-10 as follows;

Outgoing Placement Officers (Jan. 6)

14 staff of 11 NGOs in 9 countries participated and Kai (NVDA General Secretary) facilitated 😊 The main topics were;

1. Impact story of 2024 & Work goal for 2025
2. Promote to those who've never volunteered.
3. Involve/ Activate returned volunteers.
4. Reform Project description from our views.
5. Create an online guidebook for the officers.



Incoming Placement Officers (Jan. 7)

11 staff from 10 NGOs in 9 countries participated and Baatar (NVDA Treasurer) facilitated 😊 The main topics were;

1. Pre Departure Training by Hosting NGOs/ Projects to be specified in the info. sheets.
2. Reform Project description with considering the ideas from Outgoing placement officers.
3. Most common communication tools in each country such as WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.



Project Coordinators/ Trainers (Jan. 8)

8 staff from 6 NGOs in 5 countries participated and Alex (NVDA Vice President) facilitated 😊 The main topics was how to deal with Generation gap in our work.



Public Relations staff (Oct. 10)

8 staff from 6 NGOs in 6 countries participated. Richa (NVDA Vice President) facilitated and presented the practice of VIN Nepal 😊 Then, they discussed on Conversation rate, Best PR tools and Brand awareness.



Presidents/ Directors of NGOs (Oct. 11)

6 staff from 6 NGOs in 6 countries participated and Sophat (NVDA President) facilitated 😊 Olivia (VT Hong Kong) presented their new initiative "Project Oneness", then they actively had Q&A and discussions.

ACTIVITY REPORTS

NEW TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE STUDY VISIT IN BUDAPEST

By Thazin(GIVE Myanmar)

One of the NVDA member representative Thazin Aung from GIVE -Myanmar who is currently in Europe joined the Study visit Training about New Trends in International Voluntary Service organized by IVS network organizations; CCIVS, SCI, ICYE and hosted by The European Youth Centre Budapest (EYCB). The training period was from 2-8 February 2025.



February 6, 2025 11:58

NEW TRENDS IN IVS		2/02 - 8/02/25					
TIME	SUNDAY 2	MONDAY 3	TUESDAY 4	WEDNESDAY 5	THURSDAY 6	FRIDAY 7	SATURDAY 8
9:30		OPENING AND INTRODUCTION	TRENDS IN IVS	SPEAKER: EVA GONDOR ON TOOLKIT OF TOMORROW	ADAPTATION TO TRENDS	HOW DO WE WANT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH TRENDS	DEPARTURE OF PARTICIPANTS
11:00		BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	
13:00		GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER	CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TRENDS	SPEAKER AND APPLYING TOOLKIT	IMAGINE FUTURE SCENARIOS	PILOT PROJECTS DEVELOPMENT	
13:30		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
14:30		WHY ARE WE HERE?	CONSEQUENCES OF TRENDS	FREE TIME	PROJECT LAB	EPH PRESENTATION	
16:00		BREAK	BREAK	FREE TIME	BREAK	BREAK	
16:30		TEAM BUILDING	CONSEQUENCES OF TRENDS	FREE TIME	PROJECT LAB	CLOSING AND EVALUATION	
18:00		REFLECTIONS	REFLECTIONS	FREE TIME	REFLECTIONS	REFLECTIONS	
19:00		DINNER	DINNER	DINNER OUT	DINNER	DINNER	
21:00	WELCOME EVENING					FAREWELL PARTY	



There were 30 participants and 5 trainers from 27 countries participated in the training. The aim of organizing this program is that in face of the declining numbers of volunteers, the need for IVS organizations to respond to this and to come up with new ways of working and adapting.

Therefore, the youth workers, staff and volunteers from participating organizations explore the trends in IVS with the global current trends, exercise between the connections between trends and learn the consequences of the trends and possible adaptation to trends.

The program was successfully finished with pilot project development and materials for how to move forward with the trends.



ACTIVITY REPORTS

ASIAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Asian Voluntary Service (AVS) is a special program of NVDA to exchange the LMTVs (Long and Mid Term Volunteers) focusing on various themes (environment, rural development, culture, education, refugee, and human rights) in the Workcamp (group) format. It started in 2014 and 94 volunteers from 14 countries have been hosted in 40 projects of 11 countries till now.

AVS 2024-2 took place from 15th February to 14th March, this time 7 participants (5 Japanese, 1 Thai, 1 Vietnamese) working in Japan, Nepal, Australia, Belgium and India.

During their month-long activities, they conducted workcamps and internships, and in the end of their activities, they participated in an online event, AVS Special Night, to report on their activities.



2024-SECOND SEASON



There are some comments by participants.

Linh (VPV → NICE) : To be honest, I cannot choose one because everything I experienced is a memory for me. There were some really bad experiences but looking back it was still a memorable memory for me. Overall, my 1 month journey in Japan was really great for me.

Nara (Dalaa → NICE) : I love staying at NICE office and spending time with the staffs! They are amazing! + I was not sure about living at the workcamp in the middle of the mountains at first, but now I know I'm gonna miss living here.

Naoki (NICE → RUCHI) : Main thing I learnt is women's current position in society and the problems they are facing and what RUCHI did for women empowerment and How it succeeded. And what women are desire to do in the future.

Rio (NICE → FSL) : There were no particular work at the hospital. I needed really hard work to find something to do . However I had really good time with a patient. He shared a lot of stories and I also talked about Japan .

We conduct AVS thanks to receive a grant from the Mitsubishi UFJ Foundation in Japan! (Thanks to the efforts of NICE). We are planning to hold another AVS in 2026 Jan.-Mar. (to be confirmed in June.)

MEMBERS NEWS

VOLTRA, HONGKONG



【GLOCAL LEADER ACADEMY INTERCULTURAL BOOTCAMP 2024: "WHEEL WE DANCE": THE MELODY OF LIFE BEYOND BOUNDARIES】

On December 7, 2024, the highlight event of the Intercultural Bootcamp 2024—— "Wheel We Dance": The Melody of Life Beyond Boundaries was successfully held in collaboration with Wheel Power Challenge and China Hong Kong Para Dance Sport Association. It powerfully demonstrated the transformative potential of wheelchair dance.

Three exceptional athletes, Ms. Evina Wong, Mr. Wong Wo Chau and Ms. Lui Yee Ting showcased the artistry of wheel dance, while interactive workshops provided international workcampers with a hands-on experience, promoting inclusivity and challenging perceptions of ability. This experiential learning fostered personal growth, expanded multicultural perspectives, and built a supportive community where workcampers embraced diverse abilities and contributed to a more inclusive society.



This wonderful event exemplifies the will of creating a globally connected and inclusive world. Let's continue to dance towards a more inclusive future! Our heartfelt thanks go to all our partners, and The Hong Kong Jockey Club Community Project Grant for making these impactful bootcamp possible!

Let's work together to cultivate impactful actions!



【GLOCAL LEADER ACADEMY: INTERCULTURAL BOOTCAMP 2024: VOLUNTEERING AT PO LAM ZEN MONASTERY】



On December 6, 2024, 28 international workcampers from Intercultural Bootcamp 2024 and 13 Cultural Facilitators united by a shared purpose, to enhance the living environment of the elderly monks at Po Lam Zen Monastery through meaningful volunteer work in collaboration with Kusala Education 善念學舍. Workcampers engaged in essential tasks such as weeding and agricultural work to improve the monastery's surroundings. They also experienced the practices of lamps lighting and bell ringing inside the Pagoda of Many Treasures.

Many workcampers expressed profound insights, with one workcamper sharing, "The temple experience was definitely my Ah-Hah Moment. I learned a lot about Buddhism and gained a new perspective." This event not only fostered a spirit of community service but also deepened understanding of diverse culture of HongKong.

A heartfelt thank you to The Hong Kong Jockey Club Community Project Grant for making this bootcamp possible. Let's work together to cultivate impactful actions!

MEMBERS NEWS

NICE, JAPAN >>> NICE 35TH ANNIVERSARY

By Kai (General Secretary of NVDA/NICE)

The memorial event for the 35th Anniversary of NICE was held in Tokyo, 2025 Jan. 25-26. 128 local partners, members, ex. members and their families happily made it together. The colorful programs were organized such as Key note speech, Slide show, Workshops, Local Partners Summit and of course, never-ending Party! We could re-discover the power of IVS and workcamps through the various impact stories (and coming up the second generations as the proof of over 100 "workcamp marriages"!). We heartfully appreciate all of you who have been working with us!



Comment from participants

Happy 35th birthday, NICE!! 🎉🌟 While 35 years might feel like a long time, thinking of it as a person's age, it's still so young! 😊 Let's continue to cherish NICEness while staying healthy, colorful, and true to our style, creating lots of wonderful memories together! 🌈

It was an inspiring day as I joined a NICE event after a long time, reconnecting with familiar members and meeting new ones! This experience motivated me to get more involved in NICE activities moving forward!

By YOSHIDA Naoki (AVS Volunteer)

In 2025, volunteers participating in the Asian Voluntary Service (AVS) conducted interviews with the founders and staff of their Sending Organizations to deepen their understanding of the organizations. We will present this special interview series in consecutive installments. This time, Naoki, AVS Volunteer from NICE Japan, interviewed Ragland, the founder of RUCHI.

How and why RUCHI was established?

RUCHI was formed to aware and improvement of rural people. The main objective of RUCHI is sustainable development of less privilege people, with out giving any respect of caste, culture or religion. RUCHI is tackling many social issues such as scarcity of water resources, women empowerment, and education problems and garbage disposal issues.

These activities are all connected to improvement of life of people in rural areas.

I heard now in India NGO is under the very severe conditions because of lack of support from government, but in the future how do you want to help the society to develop in the future?

In future we shall try to help the society or target groups through some need-based projects. we shall provide our service through awareness camp, dissemination sharing information.



Especially in women empowerment what was the biggest issue to start this program?

The biggest challenge we face in the beginning was narrow mentality of women's families. Since at that time when we started the program the situation of women in rural areas are more serious than present. For example, they are not allowed to go out side from their houses without their husband's or sons' permission.

Therefore, we had to explain their husbands and to aware the importance of women groups and respecting women. that's why it was very difficult to form the women's self-help group in the villages.

Through activities on women empowerment what change were brought to the society?

By keep doing activities in the women empowerment women got more self confidence and they see now became a one of the important members in the family as a division maker.



Some of them borrowed some money from the group and started a small business own their on. On top of that, these days they get more and more information about government schemes through connection with other women groups. Now there are more active than they used to in the past actually.

How volunteers from overseas and other areas of India helped this project?

They sometimes share the business ideas to sustain this. One of the successful examples was the previous American volunteer. She brought back the bags which a women group made and sold them in USA and she sent benefits to women group trough RUCHI.



IVS IMPACT STORIES

-These are examples of impact on Members' Projects in 2024 from NVDA annual report-

DJ INDONESIA

In 2024 after hosting community feel like we back alive after suffering during the pandemic. Some people starting to know our NGO as hosting and sending volunteer. We got several request also from new partner to do partnership between Dj and them.

Ex, our program in WHV Prambanan Temple (11 Aug-17 Aug) we hosting 13 campers from HK. Most of them were their first time to be in indonesia. We starting by accompanied them going around the village to take a look and observe then most local people was happy and greets them and take a photo. During the project we also organized the cultural exchange between campers and local people. The campers bring the spirit and happiness to the society in project site.



MEMBERS UPCOMING PROJECTS

➤➤➤ GIED PHILIPPINES, MT. MANUNGAL NATIONAL PARK

Mount Manunggal, located in Barangay Sunog, Balamban, Cebu, stands at approximately 1,003 meters above sea level and is part of the Central Cebu Protected Landscape. Known for its historical significance, it was the crash site of the presidential plane Mt. Pinatubo, which claimed the life of President Ramon Magsaysay in 1957. A memorial marker and a bronze bust now stand at the site, serving as a tribute to the late president.



➤➤➤ NICE JAPAN, SHIRAKAMI (28 APR.-2 MAY.)

This project is actively working for SDG13 (Climate Action) and SDGs 15 (Life on Land), organized together with Shirakami Mountains Preservation Society (SMPS), since 2006. The Shirakami Mountains is one of Japanese valuable preserved natural forests consisting primarily of beech trees, registered as a World Natural Heritage in 1993. SMPS aims to preserve the natural beauty of the Shirakami Mountains by nurturing seedlings of beech trees, planting them, training mountain guide, etc. SMPS hosts tree-planting ceremony every June for preserving beech forests and promoting the value. They also preserve the forests near the Mutsu-bay, famous as production of scallops.

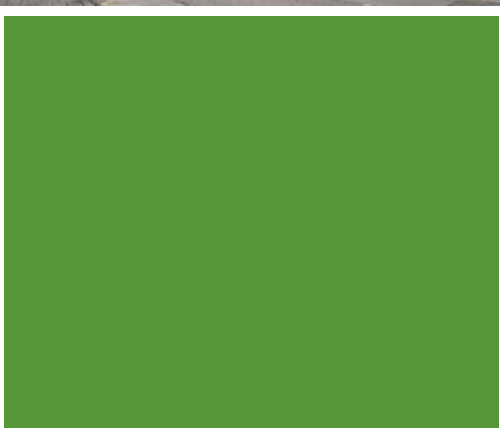
Park's guardians Kuya Baltz Tribunalo, the camp offers an immersive learning experience that combines environmental education, sustainable practices, and cultural appreciation, participants will engage in an action packed life skills eco friendly methods such as responsible land stewardship and biodiversity conservation while exploring traditional farming practices and the rich cultural heritage of local communities. Through hands-on activities, the camp empowers participants to become strong advocates for climate actions and sustainable development.

This program is a group workcamp that accepts participants throughout the year.



Due to climate change, the sea water temperature increased abnormally in 2010, the most of scallops were dead, so SMPS started to preserve the forest there to let nutrient water flow to the ocean.

Work will be carried out in two locations, Ajigasawa and Hiranai. In Ajigasawa, volunteers will remove the snow fence of Shirakami Nature School, putting up a plastic greenhouse, chopping firewood, and digging and transport new saplings at the nursery. In Hiranai, work is carried out to remove dead saplings and replant new ones. The contents of work might be changed due to weather condition, so volunteers need to be flexible!



UPCOMING EVENTS

»»» NVDA TNW&GA 2025 IN MAKAU

The 19th TNW and 20th General Assembly (GA) will be held in May 2025 in Macau, hosted by MNCYA. This event will be part of our collective reflection to further strengthen our organization and realize the major policies, programs, and strategic action plans for 2026-2030. Currently, about 30 participants have been confirmed.

The 2025 GA will serve as a platform to further deepen and refine the discussions and outcomes of the 2024 GA. Over the course of the 3-day TNW, adjustments to policies and program proposals will take place, followed by the 2-day GA where strategic policies, actions, and future plans will be discussed and agreed upon. Additionally, informal spaces will be arranged during breaks to facilitate bi/multilateral meetings, fostering collaboration and friendship among members.

For organizations unable to attend in person, we are considering providing an online open meeting space to ensure broader participation.

»»» SPECIAL WEEK FOR SISTER STAFF COMMUNITIES

It has been one year since the special online meetings for NVDA member organizations' staff to share common know-how, concerns, and ideas in similar positions began. The next meeting will be held from April 7 to 11. More details will be sent via email soon.

Date / Theme / Facilitator

April 07 : Outgoing placement : Kai

April 08 : Incoming placement : Baatar

April 09 : Project Coordinators/ Trainers : Alex

April 10 : Public Relations officers : Richa

April 11 : Head - President and Directors : Sophat

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