

ANNOUNCEMENT

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

**International Workshop on
Contemporary Perspectives on
Asian Transnational Domestic Workers**

Organized by
**Asian MetaCentre
for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis**

In association with
**International Geographical Union,
Commission on Gender and Geography of the International Geographical Union**

Supported by
**The Wellcome Trust
United Kingdom**

Date
23 – 25 February 2004

Venue
National University of Singapore, Singapore

Context and Scope

Once an occupation that is traditionally popular among poor rural migrant women who migrate to the cities in search of work, accelerated rates of globalisation and advancement of technology have facilitated the transnationalisation of paid domestic work. It has now become an occupational niche for millions of Asian women transmigrants from less developed countries such as the Philippines, Indonesian and Sri Lanka who embark on sojourns to the richer countries of the world in search of a more lucrative livelihood for their families and themselves.

Asian transnational domestic workers find work in countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada, the Middle East and parts of Europe. Whilst for some of these societies, the practice of hiring TDWs is an essential aspect of keeping up with middle-class appearances, it has also become an indispensable necessity in countries whereby dual-income households have become a norm. The flow of Asian transmigrant domestic workers is highly commoditised and organised. International networks of gatekeepers consisting of both private and public institutions mostly mediate the procedures involved in securing employment contracts and arranging migration passages for transmigrant domestic workers.

It is the aim of this workshop to bring together scholars who have carried out extensive research on Asian transnational domestic workers for a consolidated discussion of vital social economic and health impacts in the context of a sending or receiving country of Asian transnational domestic workers of their specialty. The main objective is to provide a platform to discuss, understand and compare the similarities and differences of pertinent issues concerning Asian transnational domestic workers and the complex factors underscoring them. Moreover, participants of the workshop will also discuss alternatives and recommendations in addressing problems that are directly confronted by Asian transnational domestic workers and also those that have emerged in different societies as a result of their presence or absence.

Some Workshop Themes

- The migrant's experience
- The role of the state
- Historical and cultural context of gendered mobility and paid domestic work
- Social, economic and health impacts
- NGO activities and civil society space
- Alternative pathways/policy implications

Sending countries

Country	Paper Presenter	Institutional Affiliation
The Philippines	Maruja Asis	Scalabrini Migration Center
Indonesia	Graeme Hugo	University of Adelaide
Sri Lanka	Michelle Gamburd	Portland State University
India	Parvati Raghuram	Nottingham Trent University
Bangladesh	Rita Afsar	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies

Receiving countries

Country	Paper Presenter	Institutional Affiliation
Hong Kong	Vivienne Wee & Ms Amy Sim	City University of Hong Kong
Singapore	Noorashikin A Rahman, Brenda Yeoh & Shirlena Huang	National University of Singapore
Malaysia	Christine B Chin	American University
Taiwan	Lan Pei-Chia	National Taiwan University
Thailand	Mika Toyota	Asian MetaCentre
Canada	Deirdre McKay	Australian National University
United Kingdom	Bridget Anderson	Oxford University

As the issue also concerns the division of labour in the domestic realm, shorter papers on the performance of domestic work in countries such as Japan, Korea and Australia that are not dependent on live-in full-time domestic help would also be presented for comparative purposes. These papers will outline factors underscoring non-dependency on live-in domestic help and the alternatives relied upon given the high participation of women in the formal sector.

Comparative countries

Country	Paper Presenter	Institutional Affiliation
Korea	Hye-Kyung Lee	PaiChai University
Japan	Tomoko Nakamatsu	University of Western Australia
Australia	Janeen Baxter	The University of Queensland

Other participants

Although participation as paper writers is by invitation only, the workshop is open to anyone interested to join in the discussions. Details of registration are as follows:

A registration fee of S\$250 inclusive of 4% Goods and Services Tax is applicable (5% GST rate is applicable from 1 January 2004) is required for each participant. The registration fee covers the workshop papers and meals (lunches and tea-breaks) for the 3-day event. Applicants will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation arrangements. Interested applicants should send in their cheques or bank drafts of **\$250** in Singapore Dollars, made payable to the “**National University of Singapore**” together with a completed registration form (attached below) to our corresponding address. Please state your name and “Contemporary Perspectives on Asian Transnational Domestic Workers Workshop” on the reverse side of the cheques or bank drafts. Interested applicants are to respond by **31 December 2003**.

[Registration Form](#)

Sponsorship for Workshop Participants

Limited sponsorship is available on a competitive basis for junior researchers from **Asean countries**. Junior researchers refer strictly to PhD candidates in a relevant discipline or those who have completed their PhD not more than five years ago. The application procedure is as follows:

- Applicants are required to submit a cover letter, CV and a note about 500 words explaining how relevant this workshop is to their research,
- Successful applicants will be awarded:
 - accommodation of 4 nights during the workshop period,
 - registration fee waived,
 - a maximum of S\$400 subsidy to cover economy-class return airfare based on the original air ticket receipt,
 - a small per diem allowance.

Please send your registration or application to:

Mr Leong Wai Kit

Workshop on "Contemporary Perspectives on Asian Transnational Domestic Workers"

Asian MetaCentre

For Population and Sustainable Development Analysis

c/o Asia Research Institute

National University of Singapore

5 Arts Link

Shaw Foundation Building, AS7

SINGAPORE 117570

Email: popnasia@nus.edu.sg

Applicants are encouraged to send in their application via email. The deadline for submission of abstracts is **30 November 2003**. Only successful applicants will be notified by 6 January 2004.

Enquiries

For enquiries, please contact Mr Leong Wai Kit at Phone: 65-68741024 or email: popnasia@nus.edu.sg. Correspondence address: Asian MetaCentre, c/o Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 5 Arts Link, Shaw Foundation Building, AS7, Singapore 117570.