

ACHR e-news

News from groups around Asia about what's happening in the region . . .

Asian Coalition for Housing Rights

e-mail : achr@achr.net

website : www.achr.net

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HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022 TO ACHR FRIENDS

Greetings to all the far-flung friends of ACHR. One useful aspect of marking the new year is the way it obliges us to stop what we are doing, pause for a moment and say, "Hmm. What just happened? And what's coming?" The January 1st date, which comes from the Roman calendar, seems a little out of place here in Asia, where we have all sorts of new year dates of our own to choose from: the Thai new year on Songkran, Diwali in India, the Islamic Hijri new year, the Chinese new year, Tet in Vietnam, etc. But since the European new year seems to have become the default one, let's follow the crowd and take our pause to send out a brief note on what's happening with ACHR and what projects are currently on the bubble for our coalition in Asia.



SOME BIG CHANGES at ACHR IN THE COMING YEAR

ACHR SECRETARIAT SHIFTING TO NEPAL: The big news you may already have heard: after some 32 years in Bangkok, under Somsook's guiding hand, the ACHR secretariat will be moving to Kathmandu, where Lajana and her team at Lumanti have heroically agreed to take on the task of facilitating the regional process. The transition won't happen at once. It's our plan to use the coming year or two to gradually shift the secretariat's various functions and coordination activities to Nepal, while the Bangkok office will play an increasingly supporting role - helping with finances and documentation, things like that. The shift couldn't come at a better time, because the grey hair, the bifocals and the flagging energy levels among the Bangkok team are starting to become conspicuous. We'll keep you posted as this transition takes a more definite shape.

CAN COORDINATION SHIFTING TO BANGLADESH: Another baton is being passed on with the coordination of ACHR's regional Community Architects Network (CAN). The all-Thai CAN coordinating team will be handing the reins to a group of idealistic and energetic young community architects who have formed the POCAA Network in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The POCAA team (Platform for Community Action and Architecture) will be supported by Kabir and Suhailey, from their base in Jhenaidah, and will also be sharing the coordination work with the community architect team in the Philippines. The CAN teams are now working together to develop a new proposal with Misereor, to fund a new stage of regional activities in the coming years.

A QUICK UPDATE ON ACHR'S CURRENT PROJECTS



KNOW STUDY in FOUR ASIAN CITIES: After several years, this big global study on "pathways to urban equality" will be wrapping up in March 2022. The teams in the four Asian cities that ACHR has helped to bring into the study (Da Nang, Nakhon Sawan, Yangon and Yogyakarta) are now wrapping up their research, producing reports, videos, books, academic articles and all sorts of materials. Brenda continues to do most of the heavy-lifting of coordinating ACHR's part of the study, linking with the research teams in each city and with our academic partners at DPU in London.

SELAVIP FIVE MODEL CITIES PROJECT: Despite the unplanned limitations of the pandemic, this project to demonstrate a more community-driven and citywide housing model continues to move forward and to chalk up all kinds of important breakthroughs and innovations. The project, which is being funded by the Selavip Foundation with a lot of flexibility and

understanding, is being implemented by community networks and their support NGOs in five cities - Jakarta, Yangon, Dhaka, Iloilo and Mahalaxmi. With funds for small upgrading projects and big housing projects, the project has allowed us to extend the kind of citywide, collaborative and people-driven action that began in our ACCA program. Minh Chau, who has coordinated several of ACHR's projects with Selavip in the past, continues to coordinate this one remotely, from her native Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where she recently moved with her family.



COLLECTIVE HOUSING

PROJECT: This important regional project to promote more collective and more community-driven housing in Asia, continues, with funds for national processes, for documenting collective housing case studies and for sharing news about Asia's collective housing innovations with urbaMonde and with the global CoHabitat network. urbaMonde is an important new partner for ACHR, with whom we find sympathetic and like-minded new friends. The project included a budget for a regional training event, which the pandemic prevented us from having. So we decided to use those funds instead to enable our friends across Asia to develop their own creative online "how to" training materials.



To read and watch these "How to" training materials, please follow this link to the ACHR website, under the Library tab:

<http://www.achr.net/collective.php>

Asaka Buraku
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • OCT 2020

- Project: Asaka Buraku
- Location: Sanyoshi Ward, Osaka City, Japan
- Size: 634 households
- Finished: 1980
- Type: On-site redevelopment of a century-old Buraku settlement, with support from various government agencies and private organizations. The project was initiated by the local government and the residents themselves, who organized a community association to manage the redevelopment process. The project resulted in a new community with modern amenities and a sense of pride among the residents.

Sangsan Pattana 7-12
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • MARCH 2021

- Project: Sangsan Pattana 7-12 Housing Cooperative
- Location: Klong Toey District, Bangkok, Thailand
- Size: 114 households
- Finished: 2005
- Type: Nearly relocation of an old squatter settlement to public land owned by the Thai Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Construction. The project was initiated by the residents themselves, who organized a housing cooperative to manage the relocation process. The project resulted in a new community with modern amenities and a sense of pride among the residents.

Mae Myit Thar
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JULY 2020

- Project: Mae Myit Thar
- Location: Ward 16, Shwepyithar Township, Yangon, Myanmar
- Size: 254 households
- Finished: 2003
- Type: Relocation of squatter quarters and non-residents to a new community in the same township, on land government land, with collective, long-term land use rights.

Miraculous Hills Subdivision
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • FEB 2021

- Project: Miraculous Hills Subdivision
- Location: Rodriguez, Metro Manila, Philippines
- Size: 215 households
- Finished: Still ongoing in 2021
- Type: Relocation of a group of squatters from squatter settlements to land they purchased collectively, where they planned a new subdivision and are building their own self-help houses in phases.

Kampung Pisang
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JUNE 2021

- Project: Kampung Pisang
- Location: RT14, RW5, Maccas Somba sub-district, Tandjung District, Makassar, Indonesia
- Size: 28 households
- Finished: 2017
- Type: Land sharing in which a small informal community rebuilt their houses on a small portion of the privately owned land they used to squat on, with permanent tenure.

Sanjay Nagar
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JANUARY 2021

- Project: Sanjay Nagar
- Location: Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, India
- Size: 298 households
- Finished: Still underway in 2021
- Type: On-site reconstruction of a long established town, with the new housing organized in eight established courtyard buildings, each managed by its own housing cooperative.

One room and a Roof
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JUNE 2021

- Project: One room and a roof
- Location: Anusara District, Balochistan Province, Pakistan
- Size: 1,575 households in 25 villages
- Finished: 2016
- Type: Community-managed reconstruction after a major earthquake, with an intervention that provided only a bit of materials to help families build their indigenous style roofs.

Kirtipur Sambridha Awas
CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JUNE 2021

- Project: Kirtipur Sambridha Awas
- Location: Pajalpur, Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal
- Size: 44 households
- Finished: 2005
- Type: Relocation of poor middle-income squatters to new land that was purchased by the Kathmandu municipal government, where the people designed and built a new community of single brick dwellings.

And follow this link to see some of the detailed collective housing case studies (above) groups around the region have prepared:

<http://www.achr.net/library.php?ic=16>

Our current project with urbaMonde will be wrapping up in June 2022, but we are already working with Bea and Lea at urbaMonde in Geneva to explore ways to extend the partnership and to develop a special project to explore the issue of collective housing finance - a project that will involve both study and action.

COMMUNITY COVID RESPONSE in FOUR ASEAN COUNTRIES: This short project, which ACHR is facilitating in collaboration with IIED, involves both study and action. The project will finish in March 2022, but it has given us a good opportunity to look at all the interesting ways communities and their networks in four countries (Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand) have been creatively coping with all the needs the covid crisis has made urgent, and to support those efforts a little bit, at the same time we study and document them. The final report will be coming out at the end of March 2022.



FROM THE ACHR SECRETARIAT IN BANGKOK

LOTS OF ZOOMING: Like so many groups around the world, we have been forced to set aside our old ways of working (with lots of in-person meetings, project visits and peer-to-peer exchanges) and learn some new "virtual" tools like online seminars and zoom meetings. We are now managing most of our regional ACHR projects entirely by zoom, without any visits or exchanges or in-person meetings at all. It seemed like a big drag at first, but as we got used to the medium, I think all of us have become fairly competent zoomers - competent enough to be able to listen, to present and to learn from each other from our little boxes on the zoom screen. And there are advantages to the new tools: we can easily arrange discussions with people from all over Asia, and all over the globe, and it doesn't cost a cent. Of course everyone is longing for a lovely big, warm ACHR regional gathering - and in several of our current projects, which were planned long before the pandemic, we have budget all ready for one. But with this new Omicron variant, the prospects for a big ACHR regional meeting remain uncertain.

ACHR STAFF NEWS: Somsook has recently reached the distinguished age of 70, and is now spending most of her energies on her work in Thailand, with CODI's Baan Mankong housing program (both urban and rural), and with the extraordinary program CODI has run over the past two years to support a national community-driven and network-driven response to the Covid crisis. Natvipa ("Nat") is now fully retired from her work at CODI, semi-retired from her work at ACHR and comes in just one or two afternoons a week to help with ACHR administrative work. Pakorn ("Chai") continues to manage all the ACHR finances and day-to-day office stuff, with his unsinkable grace and good humor. After working for a few years in Bangkok, Brenda has moved back to her native Bogota Colombia, where she continues to help facilitate our KNOW and urbaMonde projects from a distance. Minh Chau has also moved back to her native Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, with her family, but continues to help coordinate the Selavip 5 Cities project remotely. Chawanad ("Nad") helps coordinate the CAN network and is working with the team at Lumanti to manage the transition of the ACHR secretariat. And Tom finds himself the only full-timer left at the sometimes-lonely ACHR office, where he continues with the writing and documentation work that seems to be part of all the various projects.

We'll close it there, and end with a big load of very warm wishes to everyone for a fruitful - and perhaps less viral - new year. Take good care everybody,

- Tom, Somsook, Minh Chau, Brenda, Nad, Nat and Chai