

CARAM ASIA

(COORDINATION OF ACTION RESEARCH ON AIDS AND MOBILITY)



CARAM Asia (Coordination of Action Research on AIDS & Mobility) was set up in response to the growing global phenomenon of migration and emphasises a regional approach in addressing the issues of migration and health. Since its inception in 1997, the CARAM Asia network has moved actively to address special interventions for migrant populations at all stages of migration in order to reduce all vulnerabilities including HIV and advance their health rights with focus on women migrant's access to justice against violation of rights and violence, abuse and exploitation.

CARAM Asia works at regional, national and community levels to advocate for their rights, build their capacity together with other stakeholders and provide multiple services to migrants at community level to address their needs in case of violence, abuse and exploitation. Its Secretariat is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

For more information, please visit www.caram-asia.org

Vision

All people have the right to stay or move, and live and work in dignity with equal rights in a society where their quality of life is ensured.

Mission

EMPOWER

To empower migrants, their families and communities throughout the migration process and build capacities of CBOs/NGOs working for the promotion and protection of migrant rights including health rights, reproductive and sexual health rights.

EVIDENCE BASED

To utilise participatory action research and documentation for advocacy, as a tool to ensure the inclusion of migrant voices and perspectives on all issues, and build on potential policy prescriptions for effective national and regional advocacy.

RIGHTS BASED

To use the rights based approach in promoting and protecting migrant rights through interventions to reduce vulnerabilities and improve social determinants throughout the migration process.



Members

CARAM Asia membership has evolved into an open and dynamic regional network of CSOs, CBOs and migrant organisations spread across the Asian continuum. Members are dispersed in South East Asia, North East Asia, the Gulf and the Middle East countries.

Members work extensively with local migrant communities providing community based interventions and services including pre-migration, reintegration, spouses programmes and act against abuse of migrant women. They have also engaged in dialogue and campaigned with various stakeholders to bring about policy change towards the realisation and protection of human rights and social justice of migrants.

Over the years CARAM Asia has raised its capacity and capabilities in developing PAR (Participatory Action Research) frameworks. Members have developed research skills such as data collection and analytical skills to conduct national and regional level PAR.

The network produced many research reports, manuals and toolkits that can be downloaded from www.caram-asia.org

Principles, Frameworks and Approaches

PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS

CARAM Asia endeavours to institutionalise and incorporate a rights based framework from which to address migrants' health concerns. Two other frameworks used in developing and implementing programmes are the Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV (GIPA) principles as well as gender and sexuality frameworks.

APPROACHES

Four key thrusts and pillars which provide momentum to CARAM Asia programmes are Participatory Action Research (PAR), national and regional advocacy, coalition building and capacity building for CBOs and NGOs working with migrant communities. PAR has assisted migrants in developing information tools which empowers them to understand, provide solutions and better manage their own communities. The real strength in PAR is that it is conducted by local communities for local communities. Output from PAR are used for key regional advocacy and capacity building activities aimed at creating a regional response to improving the health and well-being of Asian migrant workers.

CARAM Asia engages in action research and fact finding, advocacy, capacity building and coalition building work, in its efforts to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers across borders and between regions. These approaches provide an impetus for the development of research, publications, campaigns and policy prescriptions for CARAM Asia programmes.

MIGRATION, HEALTH AND RIGHTS

CARAM Asia believes that the health status of migrant workers serves as one of the most important and tangible indicators of a migrant's well being. Its involvement in the region and through its participatory action research, advocacy, coalition building and capacity building initiatives on health and mobility reveals that migrant workers are marginalised in various health and rights policies and programmes. Issues that are often overlooked included occupational safety, susceptibility to ill health during the migration trail, contracting diseases like HIV and their problems in accessing healthcare systems. Living conditions across countries often reflect an existence of relative poverty, as the migrant worker often earns wages lower than most local citizens. Furthermore health concerns often fail to look beyond the medical paradigm to consider the larger social, cultural, political and economic contexts in which health issues are embedded.



Capacity Building Workshop for HIV positive migrants and their spouses on Health Rights, Human Rights and Access to Legal and Welfare Services

PROGRAMMES

CARAM Asia's regional programmes are prioritised in line with four key thematic areas,

1. Migration, Health and HIV
2. Migrant Worker's Rights
3. Migration, Development and Globalisation
4. Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis

Each programme area is managed and implemented through a taskforce comprising member organisations of the CARAM Asia network. A lead organisation plays the role of converner, who will guide programme direction together with the regional secretariat.

The Task Force on Migration Health and HIV

Migrant workers health and well-being is a major concern in both origin and destination countries. Using various aspects of human rights and health rights frameworks, CARAM Asia through the State of Health of Migrant programme addresses health testing policies; access to quality anti-retroviral treatments (ARTS) for migrant workers and promotes equity health care for migrants so that their access to HIV prevention, care and support is facilitated. This programme will also pay special attention on the health and well-being of undocumented migrant workers, with special focus on those going through detention and deportation. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are an integral part of migrant's health and well-being and are also effectively addressed.

This Task Force focuses and promotes the health rights of migrants through the reform of discriminatory policies and equity in provision and access to health services for migrant workers, including sexual and reproductive health and HIV. It focuses on capacity building at the local level involving NGOs and government officials, and advocacy and networking. It is also partnering with international, regional and local partners in the implementation of policy advocacy for health rights of migrant workers.

This Task Force pays special attention on the health and well-being of undocumented migrant workers, with special focus on those going through detention and deportation. Sexual and reproductive health and rights, empowerment of migrants living with HIV and their spouses to be meaningfully involved in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies addressing HIV & AIDS and migration issues are an integral part of MHH Task Force.

Task Force on Migrant Worker's Rights

The abuse exploitation and discrimination faced by migrant workers are compounded by the fact that migrant workers are often viewed as temporary cheap commodity to meet the destination countries production and domestic needs. The situation is made worse with the rising costs of migration that force many poor workers to migrate through unofficial channels resulting in them becoming undocumented migrant workers. Some exploitative employers refuse to renew work permits and pay wages, majority of employers keep passports and/or travelling documents in their own custody which force migrant workers to become undocumented too. However, CARAM Asia views the lack of documentation as an administrative issue which should not deny undocumented migrant worker's human rights. Through advocacy with various stakeholders, CARAM Asia has been consistently lobbying for comprehensive legal protection measures be made available for all migrant workers regardless of their immigration status.

The rights and protections of migrant workers have been specified under international law, such as those set out in ILO Conventions on migrant workers - the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) and the Migrant Worker's (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) - as well as the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990; and various specific ILO Conventions, such as Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (No. 189). Yet, these languish with low ratification rates.

This Task Force addresses issues related to violation of rights and violence against migrant workers and seeks to remedy the extreme situations of a lack of legal protection, rights to redress and access to justice for them. The Task Force also addresses the absence of legal protection, rights to redress and access to justice for migrant workers.



National Consultation for migrant workers on Access to Justice and Right to Redress.



Task Force on Migration, Development and Globalisation

Migration is globular in nature and is heavily affected by neo liberal policies and structures which impacts migrant workers development outcomes and well-being. This Task Force aims at linking and filling the gaps in the current migration and development discourses by adequately addressing the impact of migrant workers well-being in the context of globalisation. Activities will include strengthening the analysis, perspectives, and awareness on globalisation/ World Trade Organisation (WTO) / International Financial Institutions (IFIs) policies on migration and development; the impact and implication of migrant workers health through the privatisation of healthcare and developing global action on debt and poverty to reduce all vulnerabilities in migration.

Task Force on Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis

Climate Migrants have been defined as persons or groups of people who for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment as a result of climate change that adversely affect their lives or living conditions are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so either temporarily or permanently and who move either within their country or abroad (IOM 2008). Variations in the world's climate have been happening for all human history. However with passage of time rising temperature, decreasing rainfall, rising sea levels, increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions are leading to massive flooding, earthquakes, landslides and droughts causing extensive damage to property assets and human life. And the science of climate change indicates that these trends are likely to get worse. Asia is most at risk as it continues to be exposed to climate change impacts. Asia is home to the majority of the world's poor, the population of the region is particularly vulnerable to dangerous impacts and pushing people to migrate. Hence Climate Change is also one of the drivers of migration now.

The Task Force on **Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis** has been formed to understand and provide input from the perspective of migration, climate change and humanitarian crisis and advocate for the rights of Climate Migrants.

CARAM Asia ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

