

Scholars and Experts Gather at HKIEd to Discuss Social Policy and Social Protection in Asia

27 July 2015



Social Policy and Social Protection in Asia Workshop

Over seventy participants from around the world gathered at The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) today (27 July) for academic discussion and exchange on social policy development in Asia.

The **Social Policy and Social Protection in Asia 2015 Workshop** was co-organised by the Department of Asian and Policy Studies (APS) and the Centre for Greater China Studies (CGCS) at HKIEd, and was well attended by internationally renowned scholars, professors, social work professionals, postgraduate students and those who serve in the field of social work and social policy.



Professor Lui Tai-lok, Acting Vice President (Research and Development) and Director of the Centre for Greater China Studies (CGCS) at HKIEd.

In his welcome remarks, **Professor Lui Tai-lok**, Acting Vice President (Research and Development) and Director of the Centre for Greater China Studies (CGCS) at HKIEd, said that the growing economic prosperity of and widening income disparity in Asia have led to increased interest in social protection systems and specific interventions. "By bringing together leading international experts in the fields of social work, social policy and public administration, we aim to provide a platform through which we can critically examine the new challenges to social protection and investigate the appropriateness and effectiveness of different social protection arrangements

across the vast sweep of Asia”, he commented.



Professor Peter Saunders, Research Chair in Social Policy at the Social Policy Research Centre of the University of New South Wales in Australia

Also in attendance were four eminent keynote speakers who offered analyses and reviews of social policy and social protection in Asia. **Professor Peter Saunders**, Research Chair in Social Policy at the Social Policy Research Centre of the University of New South Wales in Australia, comprehensively discussed social security trends using an expenditure decomposition approach. **Professor Nelson Chow Wing-sun**, Emeritus Professor at the Department of Social Work and Social Administration at The University of Hong Kong, analysed the causes of poverty and its eradication, taking Hong Kong as an example. **Professor M Ramesh** of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore discussed the decentralisation and centralisation of health care in India and Indonesia, respectively. **Professor Ive Marx**, Programme Director at the Centre for Social Policy at the University of Antwerp in Belgium, discussed his views on social policy choices in hard times.



Professor Nelson Chow Wing-sun, Emeritus Professor at the Department of Social Work and Social Administration at the University of Hong Kong

At various panel discussion sessions, speakers offered their observations and exchanged views on poverty and poverty alleviation, migration and social protection, governance and welfare systems, health care, education and housing, social protection in comparative perspective, vulnerable populations and social protection, labour, retirement and elderly care. **Dr. Wong Hung**, Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, for instance, questioned whether the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme could eradicate absolute poverty in Hong Kong. **Dr. Jill Hanley** and **Dr. Ya Wen** of the School

of Social Work at McGill University in Canada presented a comparative study of the experiences of irregular migrant workers in Shanghai and Montreal, drawing mutual lessons for developing an inclusive social welfare system. **Dr. Alex He Jingwei**, Associate Head of APS at HKIEd, explored the introduction of voluntary private health insurance in a mixed medical economy to ascertain whether Hong Kong will succeed in that endeavour. **Dr. Wang Tingyan** of the Nanyang Centre for Public Administration at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore used evidence from urban China to examine the issues involved in constructing a child deprivation measure.

The workshop also provided an opportunity to enrich students' learning experiences. Two postgraduate panels dedicated to doctoral students allowed them to present their dissertations and findings. The four keynote speakers were invited to serve as discussants for the panels to help the students improve their research. Sixteen postgraduate students from the School of Public Administration at the South China University of Technology attended the workshop as observers to extend their study outside their campus.

With the support of the Journal of Asian Public Policy, the high-quality papers presented will be considered for publication upon mutual agreement.



Professor Chou Kee-lee, Head and Professor of the Department of Asian and Policy Studies (APS) at HKIEd



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