Sathirakoses Nagrapradipa
Foundation

Patronage

SNF is under the patronage of H.H the Dalai Lama

SNF Sister Organisations

Wongsanit Ashram
Documentary Arts Asia
Tongkla
Santi Pracha Dhamma Institute
INEB - International Network of Engaged Buddhists
School for Wellbeing
SEM — Spirit in Education Movement

Social Enterprises

Suan Ngen Mee Ma Publishing House and Social Enterprise
Siam Baandin Natural Housebuilding Social Enterprise

Associated Kalyanamitra

SNF is closely associated with:

Foundation for Children and Moo Baan Dek (Childrens Village School)
Buddhika
Suksit Siam and Kled Thai Publishing Houses
Komol Keemthong Foundation
Institute for Contemplative Learning
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SNF was founded by Thai intellectual, writer and social critic, Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksa, in 1969 – one of the first social organisations set up in Siam - with a broad mission of supporting struggling artists and writers, and facilitating educational, cultural and spiritual activities that encourage detachment from consumerism. Named after two prominent writers and scholars of Thai culture, the Foundation has acted as an umbrella for a number of sister organisations which have sprung up under its auspices, through the encouragement and support of Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksa. Together they have been working modestly for social transformation and an end to structural violence, as well as promoting peace and justice in the region.

Sulak has launched dozens of foundations, non-governmental organizations, projects and activist groups throughout the 1970-80s, which formed the bases upon which Thailand’s robust network of non-governmental organizations currently exists. Sulak generated tangible results through his work on rural and urban community development, provided political voice to the poor and displaced, and he effectively challenged environmentally destructive pipelines and dams in northern Thailand.

The Foundation itself is non-hierarchical, but rather acts as an umbrella for small autonomous and diverse initiatives to grow and blossom. To date, seven organisations are flourishing under the auspices of the Foundation; along with two social enterprises which have spread their wings to become business models for transformation towards sustainable societies.

What identifies the Sathirakoses-Nagrapradipa Foundation (SNF) and its sister organisations from other social organisations is a deep commitment to social change through combining spirituality with social action. This approach is guided by the practice of ‘engaged spirituality’, or, as coined by Sulak, ‘small (b) buddhism’, which seeks to connect teachings of non-violence with an understanding of structural violence that maintains cycles of suffering for the worlds impoverished and oppressed.

Small (b) buddhism

Buddhism teaches us that the transformation of society must first begin within the self. We must nurture and cultivate compassion, wisdom and loving-kindness in our hearts so that we can help others to do the same. By practicing mindfulness, we awaken ourselves to the present moment and become aware of the suffering that surrounds us. The reconstruction of a spiritual, green and just society begins with this clarity in the individual mind. Personal change and structural transformation are invariably linked, therefore by awakening ourselves to suffering, we can work to change it. To reduce suffering in the world we must also awaken to the structural causes of suffering.

We must also look deeply into nature to understand ourselves, and act from that insight. Modern life has ingrained a deep, unconscious division in our minds between the human world and the natural world, and hence our ability to live in a way that is driving our world and existence towards catastrophe. The practice of spirituality and ecology seeks to reconnect these two worlds by looking into ourselves so that we can better understand our interconnectedness with nature. Here, spirituality and social action become united in a common vision – the vision for justice, peace, ecological sustainability and compassion.
Another key issue approached by SNF and its sister organizations is the recognition that the dominant model of development which has spread across the world today – driven by consumer capitalism – has no ethical or spiritual dimension. In Southeast Asia, its technological advances have involved massive ecological devastation, while its economic progress has widened the abyss between rich and poor, even while subjecting whole populations to the voraciousness of the barely masked greed called consumerism. From an engaged buddhist approach, this form of greed embodied in consumerism is one of the root causes of suffering within society, and its assimilation into social structures and norms must be investigated, resisted and transformed through skillful means.

In order to create sustainable solutions to these issues, many of SNF organisations use transformative educational approaches that weave the wisdom of traditional cultures and practices, with an emerging alternative paradigm that is informed by realization of the interconnectedness and eco-centric nature of being. Such an approach seeks to develop friendship among students and teachers, to learn from each other and the environment around us, and to plant seeds of peace within in order to transform ourselves. We believe that this in turn will lead to caring more for others, helping us to combine understanding and compassion; to work for social justice and ecological balance; and to develop right livelihood in order to work to relieve the causes of suffering in society.

This approach has provided the foundation for SNF to explore, in Siam and internationally, alternative models of sustainable, traditionally-rooted, ethically- and spiritually-based development. This spiritual activist vision is what has inspired many people within the Foundation and its wide network of good friends, to develop and use their potential to serve and work for the wellbeing of society.

**Areas of engagement**

Some key themes being addressed through the Foundation and its sister organisations include:

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**The five precepts interpreted through a socially engaged buddhism**

While the five precepts have generally been accepted as a guideline for individuals to practice at a personal level, a socially engaged buddhist approach extends their validity beyond the individual to a and society at large. In this way, we are able to look beyond the self and investigate ways in which social structures cause violence and suffering, and use skillful means to challenge these systems of oppression, to find alternatives, or at least ensure that we are not contributing to their continuation.

Such an investigation at a structural level can include:

- **Abstain from harming others:** While the individual may not be killing outright, they must examine how their own actions might support wars, racial conflict, or the breeding of animals for human consumption.
- **Abstain from stealing:** People must consider the moral implications of capitalism and the depletion of natural resources that have resulted in huge gaps between rich and poor, and a catastrophic degradation of our environment, to which we rely upon for our very survival.
- **Abstain from sexual misconduct:** How social structures uphold male dominance and the continuing exploitation of women across the globe.
- **Abstain from false speech:** How mass media and mainstream education promote a prejudiced and biased view of the world.
- **Abstain from intoxicants:** ‘Third World’ farmers grow heroin, coca, coffee and tobacco because the economic system makes it impossible for them to support themselves growing healthy food for consumption. A global responsibility for drug and alcohol abuse also includes the need to examine its causes.
Alternative Economics: Through the School for Wellbeing, SNF is collaborating with the Centre for Bhutan Studies and Chulalongkorn University on theoretical and practical applications of Gross National Happiness in Thailand. Two social enterprises have also grown out from the Foundation, providing models of social engagement that contribute to new paradigm thinking and sustainability.

Art and Culture: SNF continues to support local artists in their contribution to commentary on social and political issues, aesthetics, and their own personal journeys of exploration and expression. INEB is also supporting the rediscovery and exchange of Buddhist Art traditions across the Mekong region and beyond.

Youth Activism: Tongkla (seedlings) actively promote youth involvement in society through a variety of activist-oriented activities such as culture jamming and social media. INEB’s Young Bodhisattva programme includes exchange of youth among partner organisations, and a foundational Socially Engaged Buddhism training integrating spirituality with social analysis.

Strengthening Civil Society: Grassroots empowerment has been a foundational approach across many of the programmes under SNF’s organisations. The Assembly of the Poor – a social movement representing vast networks of grassroot people across Thailand – continues to be supported through SPDI; Both SEM Laos and Burma programmes focus on grassroots empowerment, community organizing and public awareness raising as means to strengthen capacities of civil society and create platforms for social change.

Sustainable Living and Environmental Integrity: Wongsanit Ashram is a core member of Global Ecovillage Network – Asia and Oceania, and with partners, has facilitated international Ecovillage Design Education training since 2007 which seeks to provide models for sustainable community living. The Towards Organic Asia programme under the School for Wellbeing also focuses on sustainability and wellbeing of communities through supporting organic agriculture farming and mindful markets across the Mekong region and Bhutan. INEB is also involved in recent initiatives on interfaith approaches to Climate Change and biodiversity conservation which seek to bring a moral voice to the growing urgency for action to stem the current climate crisis.

Gender: SPDI and the Assembly of the Poor continue to organize capacity building activities for the of women’s groups within the network. INEB also contributes long-term thematic work on gender regarding women’s ordination and women’s empowerment across Asia.

Peace and Justice: The Cross-Ethnic Integration in Andaman project is working with migrant workers from Myanmar, including upholding and advocating migrant worker rights at policy and practical levels, and building trust and solidarity among migrant workers and local communities through cultural and social celebrations. INEB and partners have collaborated on peace and justice initiatives in the Asian region for decades. Over the last year, focus was on Sri Lanka and restorative justice for Tamils during and after the civil war, and the impacts of the devastating Fukushima disaster of 2011.

Alternative Education: SEM Thailand work specifically on empowerment education for the Thai public focusing mainly on inner growth and relationship building; and with organisations, government agencies, universities and private businesses to build workplace environments that support wellbeing. Under SEM Burma, the Coalition for the Promotion of Monastic Education is supporting local schools to become more open and democratic in their management, alongside encouraging holistic child-centred learning, engaging parents, and breaking the walls which separate the school, monastery and community by becoming starting points for wider community-driven development.

Media: DAA has become a leading centre for high quality, independent and objective documentary practice across Southeast Asia. Its work directly supports documentary artists, while encouraging public awareness through its gallery exhibitions, talks, and workshops, and wider activities such as the annual Chiang Mai Documentary Arts Festival, the largest film and photography festival in Southeast Asia. SNF also continually publishes books and magazines in both English and Thai languages including the long-running Pacasaraya magazine, and Seeds of Peace.
SNF Secretariat Office

During 2012, Sathirakoses-Nagrapradipa Foundation (SNF) collaborated with various partners to organize a series of activities to celebrate 100 years of Ajarn Puey Ungphakorn, recalling his wisdom and commitment, and documenting his valuable contributions to Thai society. Ajarn Puey was a remarkable economist and a leader of the social justice movement in Thailand during the 1960’s and 70’s. He promoted social welfare and human security, and was a Magsaysay Award winner in the field of public service. His legacies remain following the three-pronged principle, santi (peace), pracha (public participation), and dhamma (righteousness), and inspire many academics and activists working in many fields.

Activities begun in the lead-up to the centenary celebration have included urban cultural and environmental recovery activities, art projects and a magazine publication, and the establishment of an award to recognize people and organisations working with the same principles as Ajarn Puey. Seminars for the public have also been held at the Puey Intercultural Forum, which is a venue to provide space for the public to discuss alternative and thought provoking ideas. This project will continue until 2016, which will mark his 100th birthday.

A celebration to commemorate the passing of Ajarn Karuna Kusalasaya in 2009 was made in collaboration with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, as part of SNF’s initiative to celebrate and document the contributions of various socially-minded luminaries to Thai society. Ajarn Karuna was a master of Indian Studies, who translated many works by Indian intellectuals and philosophers in Thai prose, which helped to strengthen ties

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2012 Santi Pracha Dhamma Prize

SNF’s Santi Pracha Dhamma Prize was awarded to fifty-six year old Mr. Phongcharat Ruayrum, a legal expert with well-rounded and profound knowledge, leading him to be much more than an ordinary lawyer; a seeker of justice. His principled approach includes concern for the excluded, marginalized and oppressed in society. He has been outspoken, direct and morally courageous particularly in the face of the powers that be. He has actively worked with Muslim compatriots in the Deep South of the country to end oppression and redress human rights violations in numerous cases. As a member of the subcommittee of the National Human Rights Commission, he has initiated a programme at great personal risk to provide suspected insurgents in the Deep South with basic skills for work in exchange for not being put on trial by the State.

At present, he is serving as advisor to the 4th Military Region Command and to the Chief Public Prosecutor of the Thonburi Criminal Court, and a guest lecturer at various universities.

As faith in the country’s laws are dwindling, the presence of a principled and devoted lawyer like Phongcharat is like a candle of hope illuminating the way towards justice for many people in Thai society. It is thus highly appropriate to present him with the Santi Pracha Dhamma Prize in honor of Puey Ungphakorn.
between the two countries over the past half century. His life’s journey included time spent in jail for being an alleged communist sympathizer, which he said helped him to concentrate on translating a wealth of Indian literature, including Tagore’s *Gitanjali*, Nehru’s *The Discovery of India*, Gandhi’s autobiography *My Experiments With Truth*.

The annual ‘Sem Pringprakaew’ Lecture was held in Bangkok. This annual lecture since 1995 has included inspirational socially engaged speakers such as Satish Kumar (founder of Schumacher College), Venerable Samdhong Rinpoche and Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo.

This years’ lecture was by Dhammachari Lokamitra, whose mission is dedicated to the teachings of Ambedkar. The topic of the lecture, ‘The transformation of self and the world in Sangharakshita’s approach to engaged Buddhism’ was an inspiring insight into the diversity of approaches of engaged Buddhism, and especially informative within the context of India, which is experiencing huge numbers of scheduled castes converting to Buddhism in order to subvert discrimination and endemic cycles of poverty.

Expanding on connections with other forms of Buddhism practiced in the region, an exhibition entitled Happiness Beyond Measure, by artist Bhanuwat Jittivuthikarn was also supported. The exhibition consisted of images collected after travelling six years through Asia and specifically Tibet, meeting and photographing Buddhist pilgrims.

Two magazines continue to be published under SNF: Pajarayasa, and Seeds of Peace. Both magazines are published tri-annually, and back issues of Seeds of Peace are now available on INEB’s website, including subscription forms. It contains many articles written Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksa and his wide circle of kalyanamitta and updates from the SNF network, on issues and perspectives not normally covered in mainstream media.

Founder of SNF, Ajarn Sulak, also kept up his rigorous schedule, attending and speaking at conferences and meetings internationally, an in Thailand joining with dissenting voices to challenge Article 112 of the Constitution, on *les majeste*. A highlight was Ajarn Sulak’s first visit to Myanmar, and the opportunity to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He has maintained a close association with Daw Suu Kyi during her long years under house arrest, regularly publishing excerpts in Thai language of her writings, Freedom from Fear, and Letters from Burma, and championing her courageous stand for non-violence in the face of dictatorship.

Other visits included speeches at the Economics of Happiness Conference in Berkley; the Right Livelihood Campus in Bonn; at Georgetown University; and in conversation with author Matteo Pistono, in collaboration with the International Campaign for Tibet.

Over the coming year, SNF will continue to promote the works of great figures in Thai history beyond ruling elites, to recognize their contributions to society, and to not forget.
Cross-Ethnic Integration in Andaman

This project under SNF is aimed at promoting the rights of migrant workers from Myanmar through good governance and mutual accountability. The project grew from SNF’s tsunami response in December 2004 in southern Thailand, which helped to support the thousands of unregistered migrant workers, who were largely unaccounted and marginalized from disaster response and rehabilitation efforts.

Over the past year, the projects’ rights-based approach has increasingly focused on good governance mechanisms, human rights awareness raising and advocacy among migrants and employers. Significant successes have included the establishment of a migrant worker CBO network, which includes many migrant worker group activities which were supported in the last phase of the project. These CBO’s have also been very active in community events, which is importantly helping to improve relations among migrant workers and local Thai communities.

The project team has continued to work towards closing the gap between policy and practice regarding migrant workers in Thailand. Over the past year the team have increased the scope of the project from working with Tambon authorities (district level) to higher Local Administration authorities (provincial level). This work includes advocating for migrant workers to be included in all provincial planning, providing human rights trainings for administration officials, and setting up legal kiosks and para-legal clinics as a mechanism for migrant workers to address any violations of their rights. A network of volunteer lawyers has been established through university law departments, to support the running of the legal clinics.

A pilot area of work under the project has been to enable migrant workers to represent in entities such as labour unions, where they are able access their labour rights and entitlements. To date, potentials for migrant worker labour associations have been identified in five areas, with efforts focusing on a pilot with the Plan Toy factory in Trang province. There has been significant dialogue between employers and employees to facilitate this process to date.

At a national level, the project team have been working collaboratively to advocate for ratification of ILO conventions 87 and 98 by the Ministry of Labour, which are concerned with the rights of migrant workers to organize themselves, collective bargaining and freedom of association. They have also been working with the Government for admissions in the Trade Union Law to accept migrant workers, and for alignment with forthcoming ASEAN regulations, which require national policy to include migrant worker rights.

Overall, the project team has gained recognition as experts on migrant worker issues. Over the next year they will continue scaling up their work with Local Administration Authorities, and increasing focus on pilots in 3 areas as models of good practice regarding securing the rights of migrant workers at local and policy levels, and strengthening relationships and trust with local Thai populations.

Documentary Arts Asia

Documentary Arts Asia (DAA) was conceived in 2008 by award-winning photographer Ryan Libre for the advancement of visual literacy, support of documentary artists, and the production and dissemination of documentary photography and film in Asia.

DAA began the year with the opening of their gallery in Chiang Mai. Exhibitions held in the art space have already attracted the work of internationally acclaimed photographers, including Greg Constantine, Ansel Adams,
and Athit Perawongmetha, and together with the Annual Documentary Arts Festival, have helped to endorse DAA as a leading gallery and organisation committed to promoting documentary arts in Southeast Asia, especially around themes tracing the needs of marginalised communities and under-reported issues.

The First Annual Documentary Arts Festival was a major success, featuring exhibitions from international and regional artists – including Ami Vitale, Paula Bronstein, Suthep Kritsanavarin, Sitthixay Ditthavong and National Geographic’s All Roads project - as well as three days of workshops and portfolio reviews, film screenings and events.

Regular workshops on photography were held – including the targeting of activists, refugees and NGO’s - in an effort to raise the capacity for producing quality documentation of minority and under-reported issues.

DAA also has a satellite centre in Laiza, Kachin State (Northern Myanmar), where more than 200 students from the war-torn area have attended photography workshops - encouraging and enabling them to document the realities of life in the region. Khun Li, an alumnus of one of the workshops, exhibited his work – Life on the Frontline - at DAA, and also at the Foreign Correspondent’s Club in Bangkok. His work has also been used by various organisations to document first-hand the ongoing humanitarian situation, and as a tool for international advocacy.

The civil war in Kachin State is a major area of focus for DAA. Over the past four years, they have been documenting the Kachin Independence Organisation and the often unreported impacts of civil war on the Kachin people. This work spearheaded by Ryan and has received Pulitzer funding, and won a Nikon Inspiration Award. In the pipeline is a documentary, When Will It Be (Check out the trailer at http://www.when-will-it-be.com/), and photographic book, covering Kachin, its communities, refugees, the frontline, political ceasefire talks, environmental destruction, and cultural and religious oppression.

For more information on the Kachin situation, check out www.free-kachin.org

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**International Network of Engaged Buddhists**

INEB is an international network of kalyanamitra who bring an engaged Buddhist perspective towards contemporary social issues. The network brings together the major sects of Buddhism as well as non-Buddhists, to explore new social paradigms based upon universal concepts of interconnectedness and compassion, in order to create more self-reliant, just and harmonious societies. A range of themes were addressed through INEB’s network over the past year, including youth, gender, art, economics, and climate justice.

Over the past 5 years, INEB has actively supported youth engagement in society through the yearly youth exchange internship programme among partner organisations, and the Young Bodhisattva training, which is driven by a
participatory and experiential learning approach that seeks to meld contemplative practice with analysis of social structures and ensuing issues. Beyond these activities, a special training took place in Ladakh for youth who are experiencing social dislocation due to the rapid economic development and influx of tourism to the area. With a deepened practice of self-reflection coupled with skills in social analysis and facilitation, they will now be in a position to engage in the many social issues arising in the once-remote Kingdom, and facilitate other youth to also do so.

For INEB, one of the largest activities of the year was the Inter-religious Dialogue on Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation, held in collaboration with IUCN and Sewalanka Foundation. Held in Sri Lanka, the conference brought together over 150 people from within and outside of INEB’s network, with an aim to strengthen the growing global voice demanding that morality and ethics drive dialogue and action on climate change. As an inter-religious conference, common ground was explored on the how each spiritual tradition draws on a worldview where humans are deeply interconnected with nature. Together a common understanding of the human drivers and its impacts of climate change were articulated, and commitments devised to take forward actions. Thematic areas including advocacy, education, personal change and eco-ethics, religious institutional change, and community change and modeling, were drawn into a roadmap which will guide future actions, and be facilitated through the creation of the ICE network (Inter religious Climate and Ecology Network).

Another area of involvement has been focusing on the revival of Buddhism in India. This has also extended to Buddhism in Sri Lanka, with a workshop attended by an international group of academics - including Ajarn Sulak. They came together with the initial goal to foster critical inter-regional dialogue on topics concerning the transmission, cultures, and contacts among various forms of southern Asian “Buddhisms”. Discussions also extended to restorative justice for Lanka Tamils; discussing the history of conflict as well as the role of Sinhala Buddhism throughout the devastating civil war. The workshop was co-supported by the Swedish Council of Science, and the Faculty of Theology at Uppsala University.

INEB’s annual executive meeting was held in Japan, including an international forum on “The Wisdom of Inter-being and The Art of Happiness: A Buddhist Approach to Rebuilding Our Society and Ensuring Our Future”. The principle reason for holding the meeting and forum in Japan was to both learn of its experience facing the recent disasters, and to offer support and experience from people who have faced similar challenges among the larger INEB network. It was also an opportunity to explore a post-industrialised Buddhist country, and to explore the social fractures which are occurring, such as social reclusivity and increasing socio-economic gaps between rich and poor, young and old. Japanese Buddhism itself is also facing the major challenge of its marginalization in a highly secular, post-modern society.

Within these activities and beyond, over the past year INEB has continued to extend its circle of kalyanamitra, developing partnerships through a variety of mechanisms and organisations. These included the International Fellowship of Reconcilliation (IFOR), World Council of
Churches (WCC) forum on Alternative Globalisation
Addressing People and Earth (AGAPE); World Day of
Prayer and Action for Children, and the International
Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Through deeper engagement at regional and global levels,
INEB is now growing into a diverse network that finds
common ground among diverse groups and people, from an
ethos of personal transformation as key for sustainable social
change. Next year’s planned activities will continue this
process, and will be highlighted at the 2013 biennial INEB
conference to be held in Malaysia, on the theme of
Buddhist-Muslim Dialogue.

Santi Pracha Dhamma Institute

SPDI is the acting secretariat for the
Assembly of the Poor – a grassroots
social movement which began during
the early 1990’s as a protest against the
Pak Mun dam in north-eastern Thailand by impacted
communities. The movement has since spread to represent
seven peoples’ networks across the country, including rural
and urban poor, farmers, indigenous people and CSO’s.

The Women’s Group of Assembly of the Poor are a very
active sector of the movement. Over the past year, trainings
were initiated for the Women’s Farmers network, with the
aim of strengthening their family’s economic independence
through agro-ecological practices. As a result, these women
farmers have been able to produce enough food for their
family consumption and generate income, resulting in
increased food security and food sovereignty within their
communities. Trainings were also provided for the youth of
farming families, in order to develop their leadership
capacities and understandings of agro-ecological approaches
to natural resource management. The trainings included
topics such as analytical skills, public speaking, Non-violent
Communication, community mapping, facilitation skills etc.

A highlight of the year was for Assembly of the Poor and
SPDI to hold the La Via Campesina Global Encounter on
Agroecology and Native Seeds. International representatives
from across the globe joined in order “to share experience
and construct a strategy and vision on agroecology and
seeds, in the holistic understanding that both are part of the
struggle to achieve food sovereignty.” Thailand was chosen
because of efforts of La Via members - Assembly of the
Poor and others - to shift from an industrial model of
agriculture towards an agroecological model. The meeting
was a culmination of continent-level meetings which have
served to consolidate the various types of knowledge and
expertise of agroecological methods already practiced by
grassroot farmers across the globe, and link up these
experiences so that farmers can share and learn from each
other nationally, regionally and globally.

A major outcome of the encounter was the Surin
Declaration, which states that,

“After sharing the experience and thoughts of the delegates and
debating on the challenges, we are convinced that agroecology is
the cornerstone of food sovereignty. We cannot achieve food
sovereignty if agriculture is dependent of inputs controlled by
corporations, if the impact of technology destroys Mother Earth, if
we do not challenge the commodification and speculation of food
and land, and if we do not make better livelihoods for those who
make available healthy and accessible food to our communities”.

Assembly of the Poor will continued to be supported
through SPDI, building its internal capacities to function
independently as a highly participative network driven by
grassroot people, for grassroot people.

Spirit in Education Movement

SEM is a capacity building
organisation, working with
transformative educational
approaches which integrate inner
growth as a foundation for social
change and wellbeing. In
Thailand, SEM operates as a training provider for the
general public, and offering in-house trainings. SEM also
maintains a Southeast Asia office, working in neighbouring
Laos and Myanmar through a range of projects and
partners, within an ethos of just, sustainable and holistic
development.
SEM’s Thai office, SEMsikkha, provides capacity building on topics which encourage life skills integrated with developing the heart. They have been offering trainings to the general public, as well as working with business and government institutions to improve working structures and relationships, in order for people to create balance in their lives, and develop happiness in the workplace.

Popular trainings offered to the public over the past year have included:

- Learning How To Die
- Satir: Transformation and Inner Growth
- Contemplation on Simplicity and Beauty
- Compassionate Communication

SEMsikkha have also continued offering Participatory Facilitator trainings among public institutions and agencies, providing skills and attitudes for staff to facilitate learning processes within their own workplaces, and through their interface with the general public. Organisational Transformation trainings were also facilitated for strategic planning and structural change. These included improving relationships among the staff, which has a direct impact on the effectiveness and happiness of the organizations as a whole. The participating institutions and organisations have set a good example of modifying organizational structures towards creating a better and happier working environment.

**SEM SOUTHEAST ASIA PROJECTS**

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SEM Southeast Asia office differs from Semsikkha (SEM Thailand) by implementing broader and longer-term projects, mostly focussing on empowering civil society to define and participate in local development processes. SEM in engaged in one project in Laos and three Myanmar-based projects on themes of civil society empowerment, monastic education, and youth engagement. Each project has expanded in scope over the years, from capacity building to include wider strategies of practical implementation support, community organising, networking and more recently, advocacy.

SEM has had a long presence in Myanmar since 1996, primarily through the Grassroots Leadership Training (GLT) programme, which is now in its present phase as ‘Sustainable Empowerment of Civil Society in Myanmar’. Over 16 years of implementation has resulted in the local team, GSMI, now taking ownership of the programme, which they will begin to run independently from 2013.

This years’ activities have increasingly focused on advocacy at various levels, especially regarding the ongoing devastating civil war in Kachin State. This has included Human Rights trainings, press releases, lobbying to visiting international delegations and national MP’s, and activating legal channels to redress the abuse of rights. Activities have also focused on Dawei and the planned deep sea port and industrial zone. Here SEM is partnering with local development organisations and media groups, and has provided support for cross-border experience sharing on industrial zone impacts, and approaches combining academic and community-led analyses, such as Health and Social Impact Assessments, and Public Policy development. Other issues being addressed include continuing capacity building on sustainable community-led development for local organisations through participatory empowerment approaches, and issue-based networking across various sectors of civil society.
A secondary project in Myanmar is the Coalition for the Promotion of Monastic Education. This is a collaborative project founded by American Friends Service Committee, Phaung Daw Oo Monastic School (Centre for the Promotion of Monastic Education, and Socially Engaged Monastic Schools (SEMS), with the aim to promote child-centred, democratic schools as a centre of community-based learning. Over its 3 years of implementation, over 60 schools have participated, with almost 300 teachers and Abbots trained, benefitting approximately 20,000 students. Two prizes have been awarded to the project for excellence in its social contribution to Myanmar society.

SEM is also supporting Kalyana Mitta Foundation (KMF) to implement their programme, Buddhist Youth Empowerment, and an emerging project on environmental rehabilitation through community participation, at Inle Lake. Over the year, KMF have continued to provide a broad range of awareness trainings for youth, centred on socially-engaged spirituality approaches. These trainings have resulted in the set-up of local youth groups, where participants have joined together to implement activities in their own communities, and learn together from their actions. These groups provide youth with much needed inspiration and support to continue contributing meaningfully to their society.

At Inle Lake, where unsustainable agricultural practices, pollution, and increasing pressures from tourism are all contributing to the lakes’ degradation, KMF is supporting local youth to increase their, and local farmers, livelihood options, alongside promoting environmental integrity of the lake through sustainable agricultural practices, and community-led natural resource management. Progress over the year was made towards gaining local government support for the project, and beginning to implement sustainable agriculture and waste management trainings. Advocacy efforts on community-based watershed management have also been made through enhancing public awareness and creating networking platforms for sharing information and knowledge, and collaborating on conserving the unique ecology of the Lake and its environs.

The SEM project in Laos has been running for 10 years, focusing on capacity development for faith based and civil society actors across Laos through the Grassroots Leadership Training model that expanded from its success in Myanmar. As a result, socially aware Sangha and lay leaders are initiating and leading education and participatory community development activities which are holistic, socially just, and ecologically and culturally appropriate.

Over the last year, implementing organisation Lao Buddhism for Development (LBD) been placed emphasis on strengthening community groups and networks, and providing trainings for youth volunteers in the areas of education, ecology, economics, agriculture and community development. Trained faith-based actors are playing a crucial role in delivering spiritual, value-based, cultural and environmental awareness through various activities such as mobile Dhamma service for schools, tree ordinations and school cultural fairs.

LBD also continues to build capacities as the key implementing organisation of this project, through the mentorship of SEM and project partner PADETC. Their
initiatives have earned them a reputation nationwide through the training alumni and volunteers who are working selflessly for communities throughout the country, with the aim of achieving sustainable happiness, security, sufficiency and wellbeing for Lao society.

**School for Wellbeing**

Suan Ngen Mee Ma Publishing House was set up (in 2001) as a social enterprise, regularly publishing quality books in Thai language, and acting as a social innovator and initiator of movements towards a goal of inducing systemic change in society. This has included shaping cooperation between small-scale, organic rural producers and mindful urban consumers through the Thai Green Market Network, and introducing the Social Venture Network to Thailand through promoting corporate social responsibility and ethical investment in the business sector. As a business, it runs separately from the SNF network, but another of its social initiatives – the School for Wellbeing and its Towards Organic Asia project – has developed formal partnership with SNF.

The School for Wellbeing Studies and Research grew from interest in the Gross National Happiness (GNH) movement, which emerged from the 1st GNH conference in Thimphu, Bhutan, and has developed through a collaborative partnership with SNF, Chulalongkorn University and the Centre for Bhutan Studies. The School specifically explores a new ‘third way’, or ‘middle path’ economy, in light of the four pillars of GNH, namely:

- Good Governance structures
- Cultural promotion
- Equitable socio-economic development
- Protection of the environment

Since its inauguration as an outcome of the 3rd international GNH conference, co-organized by Suan Nguen Mee Ma social enterprise in Thailand in 2009, two years after the conference, the School has engaged in bringing alternative paradigm thinking into mainstream policy and practice.

This has included creative communication and critical dialogue on wellbeing and ‘progress’, including public speeches by pioneering thinkers such as Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz, Dr. Vandana Shiva, Dasho Karma Ura, Nicanor Perlas, Cheah Vannath, and Nic Marks from the new economics foundation (nef).

The year 2012 started with the launching of the Towards Organic Asia (TOA) programme, during an international Symposium on the Future of Food Security and the annual Green Fair at Chulalongkorn University. (See TOA on page 15).

The School for Wellbeing collaborated in initiating the first Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture on Sustainable Development at Chulalongkorn University, given by Dr. Vandana Shiva, environmental activist and author, on the topic of her latest book, Soil Not Oil. This also coincided with the publishing of her book in Thai language (in collaboration with Suan Ngen Mee Ma Publishing House). The lecture series will become an annual event through the university, aimed at mainstreaming the work of alternative paradigm thinkers into education.

Esteemed Buddhist theorist and writer David Loy was also in conversation on the topics of Buddhist Economics, and the launching of the Thai translation of his latest book, Money, Sex, War, Karma: Notes for a Buddhist Revolution.

April was marked by the historic meeting Happiness: An Alternative Development Paradigm at the UN Center, New York, following the adoption of the UN Happiness Resolution proposed to the General Assembly by Bhutan, and where The School for Wellbeing contributed a conference paper.

The annual study-visit to Bhutan also took place, with delegation leaders Sisaliao Svengsuksa (Laos) and Lanh Thi Tran (Vietnam). A group of 16 international participants, including the Rector of Maejo University, Chiang Mai,
visited the Prime Minister of Bhutan H.E. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Honorary Patron of the School for Wellbeing.

In July the School for Wellbeing was invited to conduct together with partners from France and Ecuador a 3-day workshop on Wellbeing, Wealth and Indicators at the CRID Summer University in Lyon, the French version of the World Social Forum. From there a visit was paid to the initiative towards action-research applying new indicators, in Grenoble, France; the group includes the Ecole de la Paix, an organization promoting Peace Education.

Over the next year, the School for Wellbeing will prepare to organize an annual Right Livelihood Summer School in Thailand, the first in 2014, together with the Right Livelihood College, Penang, and other partners. The next Gandhi Memorial Lecture 2013 will be delivered by Satish Kumar, founder of Schumacher College, U.K., Resurgence and the Small School. And further talks by eminent thinkers will continue, including Arthur Zajonc, president of the Mind and Life Institute.

Tongkla

Tonkla (meaning seedling in Thai) was established in 2004, focusing on working with youth and students. A year later, Tongkla began to use the concept of ‘We Change’ as a campaign strategy, and expanded their target group to include wider groups of people. Tongkla work through three strategies:

Creating communities: Various activities have been initiated in order to create communities as a mechanism to campaign on ‘We Change’ in society. The activities include seminars and public campaign events on issues such as analysis of capitalism, consumerism and other topic related to daily life and society.

Creating Atmosphere: Tongkla want to create an atmosphere of change in the society, and to promote social change as an ordinary concept in everyday life. Spaces for communication have been created, for example through website, campaign T-Shirts, We Change magazine, and public talks on different occasions.

Collecting Knowledge: Data and knowledge related with the We Change concept are collected for supporting the campaign. Particularly social actions, theories and concepts from other countries are explored, such as the Zapatistas, deep ecology, Anarchism, mind mapping, DIY etc. The knowledge is distributed to the target groups to sharpen their ideas and concepts for social change.

Over the past year Tongkla have adjusted their working strategy, in order to build self reliance and sustainability. As a result, no proposals were submitted to donors, instead activities were initiated in partnership with other organisations. The main areas of action included:

Stop Mae Wong Dam: Campaigning activities revolved around the development of a website from which other campaigning activities will be organized from.

Local Food Campaign: Working in collaboration with Food For Change (food4change.in.th) under Biothai and the Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, supporting local food promotion, DIY gardening, seed sharing etc.

Tongkla have also continued to be a source of capacity building, including students, farmers and non-violence activists, while the We Change learning hub has focused on developing skill sets for social activists. This year on translation skills were a focus for activists involved with sharing of knowledge from the international arena.
Towards Organic Asia (TOA) is a multi-stakeholder partnership under the School for Wellbeing, inspired by the Bhutan experience on Gross National Happiness and their “100 percent organic country” policy. TOA has its mission to strengthen collaboration among the organic movement in Asia, and to promote organic agricultural practices within a multi-dimensional framework that upholds food sovereignty, wellbeing and sustainability.

Today’s challenges for agriculture in Asia are aging farmers, decreasing numbers of traditional smallholders, indebtedness of farming households, limited markets for safe locally-grown food, and policy and public expenditure channelled towards large scale industrial agriculture. These issues directly affect million lives of farmers, yet the causes go beyond farming. In order to tackle these challenges, strong initiatives and consolidated actions need to be conducted on many fronts; agriculture, business, policy, research and education among others. Asia clearly needs platforms for the collaboration among advocates to meet, grow and move forward together. TOA currently has 21 partner organizations based in Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, working collaboratively to find innovative and sustainable models to challenge these issues.

The main activities and outcomes over the past year have included:

Engagements with local actions: Cooperation across sectors and among diverse stakeholders in local, regional and international levels are crucial to create strong action for social change. Small local actions which reflect grassroots needs are seeds for change. In Thailand, TOA engaged with partners who initiate change in agriculture in different fronts. Maejo University (vision to become an organic university), Organic Agriculture Innovation Network (innovation for organic products), Alternative Agriculture Network (new generation farmers) and School for Wellbeing Studies and Research together formed “Asia Today” cooperative framework for sharing resources and expertise for moving forwards organic agriculture in Thailand.

Collaborating with international civic actions: TOA exists as a platform for local actions in Asia to connect and communicate with wider global movements. In 2012, TOA co-organized:

- Via Campesina first Encounter in Thailand (in collaboration with SPDI and the Assembly of the Poor)
- Asia-Europe Peoples’ Forum
- International Conference “Asia Today: Questions and Answers on Agriculture, Politics and Wellbeing”

Supporting roles of young farmers – the future of agriculture: TOA partnership organized “Mekong Youth Alliance for Organic Agriculture and Agro-ecology”, a 5-day gathering of young organic practitioners from across Mekong region and Bhutan to exchange ideas, share vision and work together to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing among themselves. The gathering was hosted by Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC) and Tha Tang Organic Farm in Sekong Province, Laos. After the gathering, the young organic practitioners travelled to Vientiane to organize a workshop “Occupy Your Life: Young Farmers’ Perspectives on the Future of Food Sovereignty” at the Asia-Europe’s People Forum.

Promoting alternative markets and public outreach: TOA partnership works to promote consumer awareness through organizing public outreach activities such as organic fairs
and public lectures. TOA organized a 2-day symposium “Organic Agriculture for Society” together with Chulalongkorn University's Office of the Commission on Agricultural Resource Education (OCARE) and Chula Global Network at Chulalongkorn University.

Over the next year, TOA will co-initiate an international forum with Via Campesina, URGENCI and IFOAM, on Innovating Alternative Markets Towards Food Security and Food Sovereignty: the ‘community organic’ approach to sustainable development.

**Wongsanit Ashram**

Wongsanit Ashram is an eco-community that aims to promote an alternative and a more sustainable way of living based on engaged spirituality. It is a place for learning and organizing activities based upon deep ecology, sustainable development, social justice, cultural integrity and spiritual practice. Located in a peaceful and natural place on the outskirts of Bangkok, it also holds accommodation services with seminar and meeting rooms.

Over the past year, the Ashram has continued initiating activities and workshops for the general public, including organic food production and skills in organic farming, and earthen house building. Life Coaching trainings were also organised through network partners. In total, nearly 50 groups utilised the Ashram for accommodation and using the meeting spaces, and over 1,000 participants attended the various trainings facilitated by the Ashram and network partners.

The Ashram also welcomes many visitors who are also interested in studying the lifestyle and structure of the Ashram, and its foundational philosophy. As a model of sustainable living and a solution to the current climate crisis, Wongsanit Ashram is a member of the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), and has also organised the Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) training on a yearly basis since 2008, where participants explore the multiple components of ecovillage living, including economics, ecology, socio-cultural design, and worldviews, within the setting of the Ashram. This year, 29 participants from 17 countries came together for seven weeks to explore sustainable community living, including Asia, Europe and the Americas. In the future, Ashram would like to secure funding for prioritising more Asian participants.

Over the past year the Ashram have been looking to generate income for economic independence, which is being planned through implementing more trainings, such as Earthen House Building and “Contemplation for Society” workshops. The Ashram would also like to develop a deeper participatory working approach, and enhance human resources through developing skills and sharing that knowledge with others, in order for members to work with happiness and achieve goals in terms of quantity and quality.
Ecovillage Design Education at Wongsanit Ashram

The seven week EDE programme consists of four weeks of Gaia Education syllabus (www.gaiaeducation.net), which is a social module progressing to worldview, economy, and ecology modules. Following this is one week dedicated to Design Studio, which consists of the practical design of an ecovillage. The final part is a two-week Training of Trainers module, which aims for participants who wish to facilitate learning and practice of sustainability themselves.

What defines the programme in Wongsanit Ashram is the use of a participatory empowerment approach which seeks to build a learning community among the participants where they can share ideas, participate in decision making, and develop confidence and mutual respect through building a body of knowledge together. Decision making by participants is encouraged as much as possible, through setting learning guidelines, schedule and topics, encouraging them to take a role in what they want to learn, and how. Any issues arising are also utilised as an opportunity for participants to put into practice tools that support social cohesion, such as Non-violent communication, in order to solve problems by themselves. Reflection and evaluation are also given prime importance – not only as feedback for the facilitators – but also for participants to reflect and draw conclusions together on their learning process.

Importantly, the process of learning seeks to align a cultivation of the heart, alongside knowledge building and skills development. Contemplative processes throughout the training integrate working with feelings and self awareness, so that participants are able to ‘cultivate their hearts’, through sensing oneself, and the deep interconnections with others and the surrounding environment. The learning community provides a safe and trusting environment for each participant to explore this process, and develop wisdom to put into daily practice.

The Wongsanit Ashram EDE uniquely draws from Asian traditional village life as examples of existing models of ecovillage design and practice. Here, participants are given opportunities to learn and interact with villagers, and discover existing practices, knowledge and worldviews that have helped to sustain communities over centuries. Many lessons can be drawn, especially related to how these existing communities view their relationship with the world around them.

What also stands out from the 5 years of EDE trainings at Wongsanit Ashram, is the unique participation of grassroot farmers, workers and activists from rural Southeast Asia, alongside international students who are seeking alternatives to modern living. The diversity of experiences and perspectives that participants bring to the training creates a vibrant learning community, with unique opportunities to expand worldviews, develop respect and understanding among each other, and challenge dominant discourses.

While the course – like all EDEs – is designed to be holistic, integrating theory and practice, this EDE has a real focus on spiritual engagement. This is based on an understanding that ‘cultivating the heart’ is at the core of education. Throughout the course, contemplation plays a key role in building self-realisation among participants; awakening to the qualities of compassion, wisdom and generosity. Cultivating these qualities makes for a strong foundation to resist the trap of consumerism, and work ardently towards sustainable alternatives.
# SNF Financial Report

January – December 2012

## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

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Please Note: Not all project financial statements have been integrated into SNF’s overall Financial Report.