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IO Programme Office

Factsheet 2011

Singapore - A Base for International Non-Profit Organisations to Serve Asia's Needs

At a Glance

The increasing affluence in Asia is leading to a growing interest in philanthropic giving and the setting up of more trusts and foundations. At 21%, Asia has the highest growth rate of High Net Worth Individuals.¹ In addition, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is also on the rise among corporations, paving the way for more interaction between the non-profit sector, social enterprises and the business world. For international non-profit organizations looking for a base to serve Asia's needs, Singapore can be the place in Asia where organizations can manage their operations in multiple locations in the region, and find supporters and partners for their work.

The island-state is currently home to more than 90 International Non-Profit Organizations - a number that has almost tripled since 2005. The pool of INPOs include inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with a social, humanitarian or environmental focus, industry associations and professional organizations, philanthropic foundations, think tanks and corporate social responsibility (CSR) organizations. An increasing number of social enterprises and social enterprise platforms, have also called Singapore home.

Our strategic geographical location in Asia, excellent connectivity to the region and the rest of the world, strengths as a communications, information and logistics hub, political stability and neutrality, and state-of-the-art meeting and convention facilities are some of the reasons why we have become a global business city. Companies based in Singapore have effectively managed their operations in multiple locations in Asia. Likewise, organizations can leverage the same strengths to more effectively carry out their mission and support their programmes in countries around the region and beyond.

Singapore can also be a node for partnership opportunities to aid in knowledge creation, contextualization and adaptation to the Asia Pacific region. The critical mass of academic institutes, think tanks and other organizations here provide opportunities for non-profits to gain insights into the Asia Pacific region and work together for effective outreach in the region.

An environment where people from all over the world can call "home" is a major consideration for organisations that want diverse and

¹ Merrill Lynch Asia-Pacific Wealth Report 2007

talented teams. Our world-class education system, cosmopolitan make up, high standard of living, and safe environment make Singapore a great place to work, live and raise a family.

About International Organisations Programme Office (IOPO)

To facilitate interested IOs in setting up in Singapore, a dedicated International Organisations Programme Office (IOPO) was established in 2007. The IOPO provides a 'one-stop-shop' facilitation to INPOs looking to establish their regional base in Singapore. IOPO will also continue to assist INPOs in their needs after they are established in Singapore.

For more information on how you can set up an INPO in Singapore, please visit the IOPO portal at io.sg

Vision for International Non-Profit Sector

- IOPO is committed to nurture the growth of INPOs in Singapore, and aims to establish 150 INPOs by 2015, so that all INPOs may greater enjoy the benefits of sharing and collaboration.
- The sector is expected to generate meaningful employment opportunities to Singaporeans - 2,500 by 2015.

INPOs in Singapore

Serving the international airline industry

- **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** is an industrial association of 230 airlines from 125 countries representing 93% of international air traffic. IATA first began operations in Singapore in 1969 and has located its Asia Pacific regional office in Singapore since 1994. It now employs 60 staff. IATA provides essential air travel systems and services and its office here oversees and coordinates its activities in the region, such as representing the interests of IATA member airlines, liaising with airport authorities and providing training. In 2009, IATA handled US\$280 billion for airlines through its financial systems. Using Singapore as the base, its expansion in Asia Pacific has boosted Singapore's reputation as a global aviation hub and a leader in the aviation industry.

An Asian Disaster Response Team World Vision International (WVI), one of the largest NGOs in the world chose Singapore to set up a regional office and relocated some regional corporate support services including IT, Finance and HR here. Globally, it employs some 40,000 people and operates out of a budget of US\$2.6 billion. In response to the Tsunami crisis, WVI set up its Asian Tsunami Response Team (ATRT) in Singapore, bringing in up to 40 experts in relief operations to manage over S\$350 million worth of donations, project management as well as co-ordinate the regional logistics.

A Natural Choice

WorldWide Fund for Nature (WWF), one of the world's largest eco-conservation NGO opened its Asia-Pacific office in Singapore in March 2006. The office oversees and develops all of WWF's conservation projects in this region including the organisation of events and programmes, as well as its educational and outreach initiatives. It also organises training workshops for corporate partners in the region. The WWF One Planet Leader Asia Pacific executive training programme was recently launched in April 2010.

Conservation International (CI) one of the largest and most renowned non-governmental organizations involved in conservation work, launched its Asian Regional Headquarters in Singapore in October 2009 to engage the strong base of corporate partners in Singapore and around the region in sustainable management of natural resources. CI Singapore also partners with the National University of Singapore and the National Parks to explore joint research in marine climate change and coral reef genetic connectivity.

Helping kids one smile at a time

Operation Smile (OS) is one of two top organizations in the world specializing in treatment of cleft lip and other facial deformities for the poor or underprivileged. Singapore is OS's International Headquarters, second in terms of geographical importance only to their global headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. Operation Smile has partnered with KK Women's and Children's Hospital to leverage on their surgical expertise for cleft lip surgery and medical training around the region. As of 2010, Operation Smile Singapore and its team of volunteers, including Singaporean medical professionals, have contributed to 17 missions performing over 2000 surgeries across Asia.

Understanding Urbanisation

The World Bank Singapore office collaborates with other World Bank offices across the region, particularly on youth outreach and civil society engagement. In addition, The World Bank-Singapore Urban Hub established last year provides cities with advice and technical assistance of a practical nature based on best practices worldwide. The Urban Hub will leverage Singapore's recognized expertise in urban development and the World Bank Group's global development knowledge and operational experience through joint research, training, capacity-building initiatives and project development.

Giving the joy of sports to those with special needs - Special Olympics relocated its Asia Pacific Regional Headquarters to Singapore in 2009. The organisation creates a cathartic covenant between competitor and fan that is unlike anything else in sports. It transforms someone who has been labeled unfortunate, handicapped, disabled or challenged to something else: athlete, leader, coach, manager or Board Member. Special Olympics also transforms those who support the athletes. Its activities in Singapore include organising regional training camps for Special Olympics athletes and coaches as well as coordinating regional fundraising efforts.

New Resources for IOPOs in Singapore

The Tanglin International Centre (TIC) is a dedicated cluster of 2 refurbished buildings as office space for the international non-profit community. Situated amidst lush greenery and located close to key business districts, shopping, leisure and F&B outlets, the TIC offers competitive rental rates, shared services such as meeting and conference rooms, and outdoor gazebos for events. More importantly, the centre offers a conducive platform for organisations to interact, share ideas and foster collaborations.

Also in the pipeline are efforts to develop Singapore into a regional non-profit management education hub, to equip non-profit executives with specialised skill sets that will support the non-profit sector in Asia. The virtual "campus" will provide comprehensive and integrated training for non-profit leaders and change makers to equip them with relevant management knowledge such as policy making, ethics and governance, non-profit finance and HR management.

About the Singapore Economic Development Board

The Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) is the lead government agency for planning and executing strategies to enhance Singapore's position as a global business centre. EDB dreams, designs and delivers solutions that create value for investors and companies in Singapore. Our mission is to create for Singapore, sustainable economic growth with vibrant business and good job opportunities. EDB's 'Host to Home' strategy articulates how we are positioning Singapore for the future. It is about extending Singapore's value proposition to businesses not just to help them improve their bottom line, but also to help them grow their top line through establishing and deepening strategic activities in Singapore to drive their business, innovation and talent objectives in Asia and globally.

For more information on EDB, please visit www.sedb.com

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