

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs
April 2018

1. ICF held Program Committee Meeting and Review Workshop on Community Organizing
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6. Local Action: Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong Celebrates the 15th Anniversary of University and College YMCA
7. Movements Updates: Newly Elected President of NCY of Bangladesh / New CEO of New Zealand

May 1-6: GATN Site Managers Training, Chiangmai, Thailand

May 6-11: APAY Green Ambassadors Training,
Chiangmai, Thailand

ICF held Program Committee Meeting and Review Workshop on Community Organizing

Program Committee Planning

↑ At the Chapel before the morning prayer

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum of Asia-Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) held a meeting of the Program Committee on April 24-25, 2018 in Metta Karuna, Siem Reap in Cambodia. A two-and-a-half days review workshop on Community Organizing followed on April 26-28, 2018 also in the same venue.

The agenda for the meeting was to plan for the activities set in the ICF project proposal for 2018-2020. This was attended by 3 women and 9 men from different religious traditions, members of the ICF Program Committee representing different national forums. The representatives who came were: Mahbuba Parvin and Biplob Ransa from Bangladesh; Moeu Chandara from Cambodia; Lioni Beatrik Tobing, Ade Nuriadin and Gunawan from Indonesia, Saw Say Moo from Myanmar; Bibek Shahi from Nepal; Tirmizy E. Abdullah from the Philippines; Ebenezer Darshan Vijayaretnam from Sri Lanka; Leonardo Gamboa Marçal from Timor Leste, and Romuelah Saeyeh from Thailand.

Nam Boo Won, General Secretary of APAY, Max Ediger, outgoing ICF Coordinator, Hem Sopharak, Staff of ICF, and Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, newly appointed coordinator of ICF also attended the meeting.

↑ The Participants of the Program Committee Planning & Workshop on Community Organizing

Among the activities planned were the two-month School of Peace (SOP), one to be held within 2018 to be held in Nepal, and another one in 2019 to be held the Philippines. A two-week Peace Institute will also be organized in Southeast Asia, possibly in Chiang Mai in Thailand, or in Indonesia, and the other one in South Asia that will possibly be held in either Sri Lanka or Bangladesh.

Ten (10) Thematic Training Workshops that will take 5-6 days had been indicated in the proposal. However, the Committee requested that the number of Trainings be reduced to eight (8) for better convenience. Moreover, the hosting of these Trainings will also depend on the willingness of each country, considering the availability of facilities and local resource persons. Plans lined up for the Thematic Training Workshops for the period are the following:

Year

Host Country

Themes

2018

Siem Reap

Community Organizing

(April 26-28, 2018)

Bangladesh

Peace Education for Children

Aceh, or Kuala Lumpur

Interfaith and Just Peace

2019

Sri Lanka

Non-Violent Communication and Dialog

Indonesia

Digital Literacy for the Work of Peace

Pattani, Thailand

Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law and Advocacy

2020

Siem Reap

Community Organizing

Timor Leste

Gender Justice as a Peace Issue

The planning for the Asian Peace Summit in 2020 is left to the ICF Office. Highlights in the planning portion of the meeting included the sharing of each National Forum representatives on their local programs. Another was the passionate discussion on the shortened length of the SOP from three months to two months. Another was on the clamor to increase the budget for the Thematic Training Workshop and for the Local Advocacy and Follow up of SOPs.

From the side of ICF, stress was impressed on the understanding of the programs' output, outcome, and impact. There is so much work to be done in developing the modules needed for these lined-up activities. Gender balance, as well as balance of participants from YMCA, religious groups, and institutions were pointed out in choosing and endorsing participants to these activities.

The Thematic Training Program: Community Organizing

The thematic training program was a kind-of-review for the participants who have had undergone training in community organizing in the past SOPs. Two more male Cambodian participants joined the workshop. The Community Organizing workshop included a visit to the "Floating Village" in Chong Kneas. An orientation on the issue of statelessness in relation to the Vietnamese communities in the floating villages around the lake of Tonle Sap. To understand their situation, Sr. Denise Coghlan, RSM, the founder and director of the Metta Karuna Reflection Center gave the participants an orientation on the history of stateless people in Cambodia and the goal of the United Nations to end statelessness in 2020. The visit to the village was helpful and probably good for alternative tourism, in understanding the phenomenon of statelessness of people being used as "anthropological museum."

The visit to the Floating Village was used as a jumping board for the workshop in CO, where three groups were asked to present their approach if they were to do organizing in that community. The sharing of the workshop outputs was followed by a review of the principles of community organizing and the importance of social investigation or analysis of the community. Max Ediger, assisted by Biplob Rangsa from Bangladesh, and Bibek Shahi from Nepal, facilitated the workshop.

As a response to the clamor for longer period to study CO, the ICF staff pointed out that learning CO is doing the actual organizing community, and that it is life-time process as each community situation is unique.

↑ One of the boat houses in the floating village in Tonle Sap Chong Kneas Siem Reap

~ Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, ICF Coordinator

Laos Partners' Support Group Meeting

The Laos Partners' Support Group (PSG) met with the Luang Prabang YMCA Organizing Committee (LBYOC) on April 7-8, 2018 in Laos to ascertain the latter's progress since its inception in 2017. The meeting which was attended by Peter Ho, GS YMCA of Hong Kong, Kim Kee Hyun, GS Bucheon YMCA, Korea, Takao Nishimura, Secretary General, Y's Men International, Nam Boo Won and Thelma Juntereal of APAY highlighted the activities undertaken to promote the YMCA to the community, the challenges encountered and the ways to strengthen the work plan.

Among the major initiatives reported to PSG included the Cleft Lip and Palate Surgery for children and the hosting of GATN group from Taichung YMCA. The operation during the 1st

Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate Surgery that was coordinated with the Lao Friendship Hospital for Children was conducted by Dr. Han Ki-Hwan and his team from Daegu YMCA, Korea. The said medical team will continue to support the project this year. On the other hand, the GATN activity has opened opportunities for LBYOC to enrich its learning in terms of program hosting and expanding its network. As such, three more GATN groups from Taichung YMCA will come to Luang Prabang. In addition, the LBYOC acknowledged the opportunities provided to them to better understand YMCA through attending and participating in some international YMCA programs.

↑ The Laos PSG members and the local organizing committee members

↑ Visit to the Lao Friendship Hospital where the YMCA cleft lip / cleft palate surgery for children was conducted

Meanwhile, the PSG members recommended three important points of actions to in advancing and legitimizing the YMCA operation. These include the registration of YMCA, hiring of full time staff and finding a suitable office. All of these actions are in view of making YMCA known to the community and accessible to potential members and young people. The organizing committee was encouraged to research, study and seek legal opinion in relation to its registration. Before the meeting ended, the committee announced that Ping Vinchalay accepted the role of a full time staff starting May. She will be assisted by for a month by one staff from Chiangmai YMCA.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to visiting program sites such as the Chomphet village where the Taichung YMCA group stayed, the Lao Friendship Hospital for Children and the present YMCA office in Phetsamone's residence. The PSG expressed its appreciation to the organizing committee for responding positively to the opportunities and challenges in the efforts to sustain the development of Luang Prabang YMCA.

~ Thelma P. Juntereal, Movement Strengthening Coordinator

A Y's Men-YMCA Joint Visit to China YMCA and Y's Men

A joint visit by Asia Pacific Area of Y's Men International (YMI) and Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) was made on 16th – 19th April 2018 through the ardent efforts of Mr. David Lua, Area Secretary as well as ISD for extension of YMI. The purpose of this visit was to explore a possibility to strengthen mutual cooperation and collaboration in extending Y's Men's movement in China as well as build closer partnership between China YMCA and APAY. The participants of the joint visit were: Area President Hsiao Tung-ming, Y's Men Asia Pacific Area; Area Secretary/International Service Director David Lua, Y's Men International; Area Treasurer James Kong, Y's Men Asia Pacific Area; Area Service Director Andy Fu; David Wong Wei-Li, PRD of SEA Region; Raul Dominic I. Badilla from SMIT District; and Nam Boo Won, APAY General Secretary.

↑ At the reception lobby of the national YMCA office with Mr. Wu Jianrong, NGS of China YMCA and Ms. Helen Zhao, NGS of China YWCA

↑ In front of the Minhang Qibao Huaai Elderly
Care Centre run by Shanghai YMCA

On the arrival day, there was an impressive presentation by Mr. Wu Jiangrong, new NGS of China YMCA on the main activities of both Shanghai YMCA and China National Council YMCAs, followed by a fellowship dinner hosted by Asia Pacific Area of YMI attended by YMCA and Y's Men leaders of Shanghai aside from the visiting delegation. On the second day, the delegation enjoyed a fellowship breakfast with the presence of Prof. Chen Xin, President of Shanghai YMCA. Afterward, there was an informative presentation on Y's Men International and Asia Pacific Area by AP Hsiao Tung-Ming and AS David Lua, followed by discussions on how to extend Y's Men activities in China in partnership with China YMCA. A lunch was hosted by China National YMCA at the National Office with presence of and warm welcome by Rev. Xi Xiahong, President of the National Council. In the afternoon, the delegation made a visit to Shanghai Minhang Qibao Huaai Elderly Care Center, a joint social welfare venture with a socially-minded company in Shanghai. Thereafter, a dinner was warmly hosted by China YMCA.

On the third day morning, Nam Boo Won, APAY GS made a presentation to introduce APAY – its history, organizational structure and governance, major activities and programs – to the executive staffs of both Shanghai and National YMCA of China. The presentation was followed by several questions and answers and discussions as well. This was a good opportunity for the attending staffs to understand the regional and global dimension of YMCA movement with which China YMCA can explore possibilities of various partnership and collaboration towards accomplishing the common mission of YMCA.

(Though the writer of this article could not join the visiting schedule up to the last day, a full version of the joint visit report is being prepared by Mr. David Lua, which will be available sooner or later through APAY if you want to receive it).

~ Nam Boo Won, General Secretary

Asian Pacific Islander Leadership Network (APILN)
International Leadership Institute (ILI) of Y-USA visits APAY

Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs welcomed the first cohort of the Asian Pacific Islander Leadership Network (APILN) International Leadership Institute (ILI) of Y-USA last April 21, 2018 during their visit to Hong Kong, as part of their study journey to Asia including Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong and YMCA of the Philippines. The half-day session was made meaningful and productive in terms of mutual learning and exchanges of ideas through input presentations on the work of APAY and the areas of involvement of each participant in their respective YMCAs. The meeting has further encouraged both parties to strengthen the partnership in various areas of YMCA work particularly those that will strengthen local/national YMCAs involvement in movement strengthening and community engagement.

↑ APAY welcomes APILN-ILI of Y-USA

APAY then hosted a fellowship lunch for this year's participants that included:

* Ms. Toni Kayumi, Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, Ann Arbor YMCA

* Mr. Andy Vamis, Vice President of Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness, YMCA of San Francisco

* Mr. John Borromeo, Senior Program Director, Great South Bay YMCA, Bay Shore, New York

* Ms. Joanna Eder, Membership and Performing Arts Coordinator, Mililani YMCA, YMCA of Honolulu

* Ms. Jessica Rojas, Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, Y-USA

* Ms. Trang Truong-Hill, Technical Advisor for Global Initiatives and Newcomer Strategy, Y-USA

~ Maria Cristina Miranda, Executive Secretary

HER STORY:

YMCA affirms my Christian values and social responsibility

↑ Nagako Okado, APAY Committee on Gender Equity Chair, presides committee meeting

I first encountered the YMCA Camp in the United States as an International Rotary Foundation scholarship student. I was then very fascinated by the spirit of YMCA for being together with the YOUTH. Thus, I have committed my time acting as a volunteer at Yokohama YMCA for more than 35 years now. Among the various volunteer works, I am particularly supporting landmine victims in Cambodia. This engagement started since 1998 along with my other colleagues.

Yokohama YMCA held a workshop for all members to think about indiscriminate weapon or the “anti-personnel landmine.” From this exposure, I started to set up a volunteer group for supporting landmine victims in Cambodia which was called Yokohama YMCA Organization Against Personal Landmines.

Since its inception, we have been supporting landmines victims especially the women by giving them education. This was because in the 1990s, Cambodia was the biggest victim country and women were given much less opportunities to be educated. I believe that people can change towards a healthier lifestyle if given the chance to build their potentials. I find this purpose similar to the YMCA mission of empowering all through the development of MIND, BODY and SPIRIT. Through this, the dignity of each person is given importance. The scholarship students we worked with in Cambodia encouragingly went back to their own hometown as teachers. It is my hope that the cycle of poverty would end through the education that was given to them.

As I continue every year to go to Cambodia to meet and communicate with all the scholarship students from our organization, I am also given the opportunity to learn more about fostering international understanding and intercultural harmony in this diverse society. Like the education shared to the scholars, this process have helped me improved my interpersonal and facilitation skills and it has given me confidence and many friends in my life. The sense of community and the family atmosphere of YMCA have motivated me to be consistent in achieving my goals. The friendships built through YMCA activities either through work or even simple good conversation,

reminded me that we are not alone in our journey. Most importantly, being a volunteer at the YMCA has strongly affirmed my Christian values of love and compassion. The experience has nurtured also my social responsibility to contribute towards transformation not just of myself but of others who are less privilege.

~Nagako Okado, Chair of Gender Equity Committee

Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong Celebrates the 15th Anniversary of University and College YMCA

Established since 2003, the University and College YMCA celebrated its 15th Anniversary Dinner cum Joint University Inauguration Ceremony at Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village on 10 March 2018. Officiated by Dr. Yau Chung Wan, President of Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong, Dr. Arnold Cheng, Chairman of the University and College YMCA Committee, and Mr. Karl Lau, General Secretary, this joyous celebration invited over 400 students, alumni, and representatives from local higher education institutions, community, and the Association to enjoy a Chinese casserole ("Poon Choi") banquet while witnessing the inauguration of the Student Executives from nine University and College YMCAs.

Themed "Welcome Home", the event also featured a 1,286-photo art decoration and an exhibition highlighting the 15-year development of University and College YMCA, both of which commemorated the collective moments and achievements of each unit thus far.

Stepping into the significant milestone of 15th anniversary and looking ahead, the University and College YMCA strives to continue to nurture youth into responsible young leaders who are committed to serve the society with passion, vision, and mission.

New Elected President of NCY of Bangladesh

The 41st Annual General Meeting of the National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh was held successfully on 20th April 2018, Friday at the Bangladesh YMCA Training Center, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Mr. Raymond Areng NEC representative of Birisiri YMCA has been elected as the new

President of National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh.

Besides of his leadership at Birisiri YMCA, Mr. Raymond Areng served the National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh as Vice-President during the tenure 2008-2009 and Honorary Treasurer during 2010-2011. Earlier Mr. Raymond Areng was elected as President of National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh for the tenure 2012-2014.

Mr. Areng attended at the World Council of World Alliance of YMCAs held in Oaxtepec, Mexico in 2002. He is actively involved with politics in Bangladesh and now a member of the Executive Committee of Bangladesh Awami League, the present ruling party, giving front line leadership in the national politics.

We hope and pray that the Bangladesh YMCA will step forward for towards serving the humanity in the country under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Raymond Areng.

Chris Knol appointed as new CEO of New Zealand YMCA

The National Board of Directors of the YMCA Council of New Zealand is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Chris Knol as Interim National Chief Executive Officer (NCEO).

“Chris’s commitment to be a strong voice for and community builder is well known in the sport, recreation and education. We are thrilled to get a person of Chris’ considerable experience and knowledge into the YMCA,” says Tony Hassed, National Board Chair, for the YMCA.

Chris’ past employment includes the Hillary Commission, New Zealand Mountain Safety Council and he is a past CEO of Outdoors New Zealand. He is well recognized as an advocate and community leader for active recreation and has worked extensively throughout his career toward developing and providing recreation opportunities for the people and communities he has served. For the past 5 years he has been Regional Manager for NZ consulting company Maven International, based in Muscat in the Sultanate of Oman working across education and adventure tourism developments.

The national office of YMCA New Zealand fosters and stimulates the development of strong YMCA Member Associations. We encourage collaborative initiatives; protect and enhance the reputation of the YMCA; and advocate on behalf of Associations regionally, nationally, and internationally. A recent report commissioned for Sport New Zealand showed that the YMCA network had over 2.7 million participants across 178 various sport and recreation offerings nationwide in a year. This work was collectively delivered by 900 paid employees and over 1,500 volunteers.

Chris’s role as NCEO is to further the organization’s unique ability and role in building a vibrant YMCA community throughout New Zealand with the organisations 12 regional associations. He will be focused on enabling, supporting and strengthening YMCAs so they can continue to provide opportunities for all to belong to an inclusive, healthy and active community.

Not interested any more?