

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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March 2019

1. 20th General Assembly & 4th Youth Assembly
2. ICF holds Peace Institute in Cagayan de Oro City
3. GATN Managers meet in Pangasinan
4. 3rd PSG Meeting for establishing Luang Prabang YMCA
5. Justice Benjamin Koshy elected as President of the NCY of India

May 27 - June 1: APAY Green Ambassadors Training, Chiangmai, Thailand
June 24-27: Disaster Response & Management Task Force Meeting, Taipei, Taiwan

ICF holds Peace Institute in Cagayan de Oro City

On March 29, 2019 evening, the Peace Institute organized by Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) concluded with a simple ritual. Nineteen participants joined the institute from March 19 -29, 2019 held at SEARSOLIN-Xavier University (Ateneo), in the city of Cagayan de Oro City located in Northern Mindanao, Philippines. The participants recommended by YMCAs and peace networks were composed of two female Muslims, eight females from different Christian traditions, and three female Buddhists. The male participants were composed of three male Muslims, two male Christians, and one male Buddhist student monk. The countries represented were Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, and Thailand. The closing ritual was graced by the President of Cagayan de Oro YMCA, Atty. Noel Beja who gave a challenge, and General Secretary Sol Marie Ucab of Cagayan de Oro YMCA. Atty. Noel Beja graciously took part in the handing out of the certificate of completion to each of the nineteen participants and the facilitators who were present during the closing rite.

Group photo at masjid(mosque) in Patag, Cagayan de Oro

Atty. Noel Beja, President of Cagayan de Oro YMCA
giving the certificate to a participant

The subjects taken up during the Peace Institute included Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis. Conflict Transformation as a Peacebuilding Framework. Dr. Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro facilitated the above-mentioned topics. Under the topic on Understanding the Conflicts and Peace Processes in the Philippines, Ms. Ofel Cantor of the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform traced the five decades of conflict and peace talks between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front. Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah sketched the history of the Moro people, the conflict with the Philippine government and the emergence of the Bangsamoro Organic Law as the outcome of the peace process. Dr. Lily F. Apura led the

discussion and workshop on Peace and Religion, while Ms. Amina Mambuay facilitated with Ms. Nathaniel, the workshop on Nonviolent Communication. Dr. Myra V. Waddington facilitated the discussion, role play and simulation games for the topics on Mediation-Negotiation, and Trauma Healing. The methodology included enhanced lectures, group work/workshops, simulation games, and role-playing, community visits and dialog. Morning meditations considered the faith traditions of the participants. It included sitting and walking meditations from Buddhist practice.

Muriel flanked to her right by GS Sol Marie Ucab &
Amina T. Mambuay to her left
Culminating dinner at Panagatan, in Bulua, Cagayan de Oro

Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro has enlisted the help of Ms. Amina Mambuay and Nathaniel Mambuay of Silsilah Forum as the Local Partner, preparing the venue and all. Baidido Saganding also came to help in the documentation. Both the Mambuays and Saganding assisted the participants in their needs, as the Coordinator focused on facilitating some courses, as well as seeing to it that the facilitators of other subject come as scheduled.

The participants were able to blend and bond with each other quickly, despite the unintended intergenerational character of the institute participants. There were challenges and conflicts, but the facilitators also turned the sessions into a laboratory for the participants to learn the real-life challenges that come their way. Moreover, the presence of the student monk helped the participant understand better the Buddhist tradition. Overall, the Peace Institute went well. ICF wants to thank all the YMCA chapters and peace networks in the abovementioned countries for their support by sending participants to these activities. It is ICF's hope that the participants will be given the chance to share and practice what they learned in their respective areas of work, YMCA programs, and peace networks.

Student Monk Singh (Phra Theeratpid) sharing a reflection during the Solidarity Night

~ Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, ICF Coordinator

GATN Managers meet in Pangasinan

There is a reason why "It is more fun in the Philippines." Our GATN Managers Training Program took place in Pangasinan, the Philippines from 25th March to 29th March 2019. Seventeen participants from 11 countries attended this training program that was hosted by the YCMA of Pangasinan with the assistance of the NCY of the Philippines. The training was very fruitful and informative regarding local YMCA's application of GATN values and principles.

Day 1: Atty. Eduardo P. Pilapil, President of YMCA Philippines inaugurated the program and the presence of Juanito Bacani, General Secretary of the Pangasinan YMCA and Pablito Tabucol, NGS of Philippines YMCA. The next phase was the presentation on Social Enterprise from Ms. Celinee Lee from Fair Travel Japan. She highlighted on fair travel delivers sustainable tourism that respects the community, culture, and nature. After a lunch break, we moved on to the reports from each local YMCA's GATN sites regarding the application of GATN values and principles. Each local YMCA's program managers presented their niche GATN activities and highlighted on the implementation of the CHANGE principle and safety procedures they adopted for their programs.

GATN Managers Training Program , Pangasinan in the Philippines

Day 2: Pangasinan site sampling. On the second day, Pangasinan YMCA took us island hopping at Hundred Islands National Park. It was a great day to experience and appreciate the beautiful nature and attractions where international GATN volunteers often went for relaxation after completing a week of community service work in the local schools and villages. We were also very privileged to be invited to lunch and a tour of the Capitol Building, hosted by the Provincial Governor of Pangasinan. Later in the afternoon, we went to local community centers. The first stop was at a local school where we were greeted by very cheerful school children followed by an elaborate program with music, dance performances and even a demonstration on how to debone the milkfish. Next, we visited the local community center across the water by boat for our next destination. There was a sewing shop run by women in a local community producing school uniforms. It was very inspiring to see how Pangasinan YMCA has partnered and worked with these local communities through the international service programs of GATN.

Pangasina site sampling day, Dagupan City-Malued

Howard Lee, Taichung YMCA spoke about GATN of Taichung YMCA

Day 3: The third day started with learning from external evaluation report and also strengthening GATN. Mr. Howard Lee from Taichung YMCA spoke about the GATN of Taichung YMCA from sending country perspective. He highlighted on working towards a mutual understanding of both hosting and sending countries. Afterward, there was a lively follow-up discussion between sending and hosting YMCAs on what is are some of the expectations from hosting and sending countries, particularly with regards to issues of safety and community developments. Final presentation delivered by Mr. Duncan Chowdhury on Checklist for Self-Evaluation. He shared on many issues, such as quality, standardization, insurance, and safety, that are important to consider as we move towards branding and identity for GATN.

Day 4: In the final day's sessions we discussed preparing for the GATN Marketplace that will take place at the General Assembly in Tozanso, Japan 2-6 September 2019. We also gathered ideas on how to promote and market GATN program in the Asia Pacific. We decided that we will use hashtags to increase and consolidate our presence on the internet: #GATN and #YMCA tourism

~ Andrew Bat-Unur ERDENE BAYAR, GATN Intern

3rd PSG Meeting for establishing Luang Prabang YMCA

Since the official start of the Partners Support Group (PSG) in April 2017, the 3rd PSG Meeting to help establish Luang Prabang YMCA was held in a temporary YMCA office in Luang Prabang on 9th and 10th March 2019. Seven members from the PSG, APAY and ICF Laos attended the meeting: Mr. Peter Ho, General Secretary, Hong Kong YMCA, Ms. Lee Ji Yang, General Secretary, Yangsan YMCA, Korea, Ms. Chularat Phongtusirikuly, Associate GS, Chiang Mai YMCA, Ms. Phanomwan Yoodee, Associate GS, Chiang Mai YMCA, Mr. Thena Posysenthong, Alumni of 2018, School of Peace, Mr. Nam Boo Won, General Secretary, APAY and Mr. Lee Yun-Hee, new Movement Strengthening Coordinator of APAY. From the Local Organizing Committee, there were also seven attendees: Ms. Phetsamone Manola, Chairperson, Local Organizing Committee, Ms. Phonethip Panisay, committee member, Mr. Phon, committee

member, Mrs. Bounleing, committee member, Mr. La, Member, Ms. Peak , Secretary and Ms. Ping , Secretary.

PSG Meeting at the temporary YMCA office

PSG and local committee members in front of the temporary YMCA office

The PSG members reviewed last year's programs/activities of Luang Prabang YMCA Organizing Committee together with its financial report of 2018, based on the written reports as well as explanations from Chairperson Phetsamone and Secretary Peak and Ping. Discussions centered on how to speed up the process for registration of Luang Prabang local YMCA as practical difficulties and hurdles were expressed by the local organizing committee. Concerns were expressed on the difficulty to organize big-scale programs or activities without the committee being recognized by the government. Another important discussion took place around how to improve financial management towards more accountable and transparent financial operation of the committee.

The new programs to be implemented this year were identified, i.e. youth life skill development, cooking class as well as English and computer class. The cleft lip and palate surgery service conducted by Dr. Han Gi-Hwan from Daegu YMCA, Korea will continue this year, along with speech therapy for children by Chiang Mai YMCA. As well, GATN hosting and environmental education will also continue this year. To support the computer class, Mr. Peter Ho committed that YMCA of Hong Kong will donate 18 used computers for Luang Prabang YMCA.

On the second day, PSG members participated in a Sunday morning service at a local church. They also visited Lao Friends Hospital for Children to see the operation facilities for cleft lip and cleft palate patients. In the afternoon, they made a visit to a village called 'Ban Pakmoud', where GATN groups from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Honolulu, Hawaii will visit and conduct work camps this year. PSG members had a candid conversation with village women leaders and agreed that GATN will make concerned efforts, in collaboration with local government and villagers, on helping to develop the Pakmoud village as a model of a "sustainable village" within Lao context.

At 'Ban Pakmoud' Village where GATN will bring work camps this year

APAY is very grateful to all PSG members, Dr. Han Gi-Hwan from Daegu YMCA; IP Moon Sang-Bong of Y's Men International for Yeosu IC Host Committee's contribution to Laos; AP Kim Sang-Chae of Korea Area for coordinating Y's Men's medical service in Laos; and other volunteers for their genuine support and volunteer service for the development of Luang Prabang YMCA in the near future.

~Lee Yun-Hee, MS Coordinator

Justice Benjamin Koshy elected as President of the NCY of India

APAY takes this opportunity to congratulate Justice Benjamin Koshy, who has been elected as the President of the National Council of YMCAs of India during the elections of the National Council of YMCAs of India held on 2 December 2018 at Adoor, Kerela, India. The elections were held under the supervision of the Election Officer Justice Anil Dev Singh (Retired Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice) appointed by the Delhi High Court.

Justice Benjamin Koshy is a well-known personality in legal arena of India and held many

judiciary positions including former Chief Justice of Patna High Court (Bihar) and former Chairman of Human Rights Commission of Kerala State. He is a life member from Earnakulam YMCA and hails from Cochin, Kerela, South India. We wish him every success in his leadership of the Indian YMCAs, especially in the reconciliation process the Indian YMCAs are undergoing after the recent crisis.

Also recently, Mr. Bertram Devadas, former General Secretary of New Delhi YMCA, was appointed as an Officiating National General Secretary until the National Board will appoint a new NGS in due process.

Not interested any more?