

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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November 2014

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Growing YMCAs in China

Most YMCAs in Mainland China were established over 100 years ago in major cities. During the Cultural Revolution, 1966 – early 1980's, all YMCAs had to close the YMCA and their properties were used for different purposes. In 1980's one by one, the YMCA got permission from the government to use the original buildings. This time Xi'an YMCA and Hangzhou YMCA conducted their 100th anniversaries.

The Chinese society has been rapidly changing and growing. We saw many buildings under construction in many parts of the city. Many people in rural communities have moved into urban cities such as Xi'an and Hangzhou. Both have over 8 million populations. In the last 3 years, the Government changed their policies. The policies have been shifted from providing social services by the government to selecting service providers for more social services. Due to this big shift, many social service organizations have been established and have become very competitive for receiving contract from government as responding to the growing number of population in many cities. In the last 3 years, they got nearly 100 government projects by the existing 10 YMCAs in China. The programs they offer are for the left behind children due to the parents' migration to big cities or migrant children in cities, services for elderly and handicapped people as well as running community centers.

Due to the competition in getting the contract from government, YMCAs naturally have become more open to public needs rather than for their members. The organizational qualifications required by government to get government projects may probably change the nature of the YMCA as well as the qualification of YMCA staff members. More skills in project management, more specialties in social services and experiences and skills in working well with government have become necessary.

Changes also have been happening among young people. The rapid economic growth in China has caused more diversified life styles and that demand more choices of programs. It was just three years ago, YMCAs were able to recruit many young volunteers for its programs, but now young people have various choices of volunteer activities. Many young people are joining other NGOs for their interests. This challenges YMCA a lot.

On the other hand, YMCAs in China have kept good relationship with local governments, and also have kept close relationship with churches. YMCA now realized that they should be different from the other social service providers. YMCA has Christian values and own missions. Mr. Tu, the NGS of NCY China, said that they need more professional YMCA secretaries who understand and carry out the YMCA mission through the programs. Such mission oriented training is important and very necessary, he said. At the same time, as needs and demands of the people have changed, YMCA's programs should be challenged to fit the needs of the people, young people in particular.

~ Kohei Yamada, General Secretary

PSG meeting in Cambodia

Movement Strengthening is a program which enable emerging YMCAs to become sustainable YMCA by working together as team works and support each other among the YMCA families. PSG for Cambodia YMCA (CYMCA) met at least once a year for evaluation of the past year program and planning for the next coming year. This year, Cambodia PSG meeting was held on September 27-28, 2014 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Members from the YMCAs of Perth, Australia, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand and APAY were attended at the 2 days meeting.

During the meeting, It was observed that, CYMCA become bigger than before and the Staff learning from each other in implementing program, which is the key of CYMCA success during this year. The Street Children Program (SCP) has 2 new centers, with 65 students, and 30 children have integrated to Government school. Mobile Clinic's program for poor community began with 15 Volunteers youth, whom are the student studying in medical and nurses courses. There are 88 elderly members under the Home based care services. 11 groups from various countries had visited Cambodia YMCA Alternative Tourism program with 285 youth and provided community development services.

Cambodia YMCA has become a full member of APAY and WAY in 2014. CYMCA has been developed gradually and now renting a new building for office and program center in prime area near two universities. The finance situation is better than before with annual external audit system. Through hosting International youth events, People getting to know more about CYMCA. However, the president stated that, there are still some Challenges to be addressed and become more stronger.

As one of the newly youngest movement in Asia and Pacific region, we wish Cambodia YMCA for the success and be able to serve the youth and community more effectively.

~ Richard Kaing, Coordinator of Movement Strengthening

ICF holds Human Rights Training Workshop in Cambodia

↑ Participants of ICF's human rights training workshop in October in Phnom Penh reflect on a series of questions about faith and human rights before sharing their thoughts with the others.

Since September 2012, Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) has been holding a series of workshops to train some of its School of Peace (SOP) alumni to be resource people in the area of human rights. The third workshop in this series was held from Oct. 20 to 23 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, with participants from the Philippines and Sri Lanka as well as the host country and a new ICF intern from the United States.

A major focus of the workshop in Cambodia was to prepare a curriculum and methodology for conducting future human rights workshops for SOP alumni and others beginning in 2015. Two of the participants of the workshop in Phnom Penh will be the resource people, along with ICF staff member Bruce Van Voorhis, for this program next year.

In addition to preparing for next year's human rights workshop, the participants also discussed the link between corruption and human rights, noting that both corruption and human rights violations take place in a context of weak respect for the rule of law that fosters impunity for the perpetrators. The participants also observed that corrupt practices can lead to a denial of people's rights, such as through the illegal diversion of funds for education, health care, shelter, etc.

ICF staff person Sopharak Hem also provided an overview of community organizing, or CO, during the workshop. Human rights abuses are seen as issues around which people can be organized and also that CO is a tool that can be utilized to help people protect their rights.

Another topic of discussion was faith and human rights. With Asia's major faiths and the spirituality of indigenous people ingrained in the culture of every country in the region, a question that arose was, Why are human rights violations so prevalent, especially in South and Southeast Asia?

Among the answers, particularly regarding so-called religious violence, the participants said that religion is manipulated and misused by politicians, especially to attain votes during an election, and that religious holy books are sometimes misinterpreted to foment tension and violence between people of different faiths. Moreover, some people of faith choose to remain silent because they perceive these political problems as unrelated to them, but their silence, the workshop participants believed, passively condones this violent abuse of people's rights to continue to take place.

~ Bruce Van Voorhis, Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF)

Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation Response Phase 3 in Progress

As my 3-year stint as Executive Secretary for Program at APAY winds up, I am pleased to inform you that another task has been given to me, still under the APAY, for the next two years. I have been assigned as APAY's Project Manager of Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation Program in the Philippines. My work assignment will consist of the recovery and rehabilitation work in Tapacon, Iloilo, Philippines. This is in collaboration with all contributors/partners from around the world, including those who supported Phases 1 & 2, and the continuing partners for Phase 3, a collaboration among the APAY, Y Care, Japan, Canada, Germany and 34 other local & national YMCA movements and affiliate service organizations, groups and individual contributors.

To share with you an update, the work in this new area in the community of Tapacon has already started with the construction of the new YMCA Center. To follow are the ceiling and electrical installation at the Jovita Alfaras-Rivera High School, Tapacon Elementary School and Guintapaguin Production and Livelihood Center. The medium term livelihood response on hog-raising has already been launched for 60 recipient household heads with two piglets each and feeds housed in their respective self-made pig shelters. This enterprise is expected to continue through different cycles with a component capital build-up plan to make it self-sustaining. Other on-farm projects will also be planned out along with the operationalization of the YMCA Youth Skills Training and Livelihood Center and other capacity building programs

for long term and sustainable impact.

The program beneficiaries in the area thank the YMCA for inspiring them once again to work hard and strive further to turn around their already difficult situation which has been aggravated by the recent calamities.

~ Eloisa Borreo, Executive Secretary

APAY welcomes Maria Cristina Miranda

We welcome our new Executive Secretary for Resource Mobilization & Programs, Ms. Maria Cristina Miranda. Currently, she is involved with Transitional Shelter Program and WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Humanitarian Response for the survivors of Typhoon Haiyan in the Municipality of Palo in Leyte, Philippines. She has been working in YMCA of Makati. She was actively engaged in the APAY and the World Alliance of YMCAs as a Youth Leader & which gives her a total of almost twelve years of YMCA experience in local and national arena.

Cristina graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication at Saint Louis University, Baguio City and post graduate Master degree in Community Development at the University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City.

Cristina will soon be working with us by mid of November 2014.

MOVEMENTS UPDATES:

Timor Leste appoints new General Secretary

The YMCA Timor Leste has appointed Mr. Antonio BS da Silva as its new General Secretary with effect from July 1, 2014. Antonio worked in various organizations for the past 20 years such as Marcelo's Schools at Comoro, Community Development Faculty of Universidade Nacional Timor Loro Sa'e, Care International Timor Leste, Sensus Unit of UNFPA Timor Leste, Synod Protestant Church in Timor Leste, Adventism Development Relief Agency, National Statistic Directorate Timor Leste & Central Bureau Statistics, Dili Timor Leste. He was also actively involved voluntary activities at YMCA Timor Leste, Student Christian Movement & Federation of Christian Student at Timor Leste.

Antonio graduated with a Bachelor of Agriculture in National University of Timor Loro Sae, Dili and Master degree in Extension Development in Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Java.

Sri Lanka has a new National General Secretary

We congratulate Mr. Anil Fernando for being appointed as the new National General Secretary of the National Council of the YMCAs of Sri Lanka with effective from October 18, 2014. He is a Chartered Accountant by profession and also a committed Christian.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (FCA) and an Associate Member of the Institute of Certified and Management Accountants (ACMA) with 12 years' experience in financial planning, taxation, auditing, financial accounting, management accounting, financial management, project management, strategic planning, compliance, procurement and corporate finance in leading organizations in Sri Lanka.

Our warm congratulations to both of you!

Sharing Knowledge to Empowering Young People -
YMCA of the Philippines National Academic Olympics 2014

With the theme, “Empowering Young People”, the gathering was able to give opportunity to the young people to develop themselves holistically in a wide spectrum and bring them together for a mutual sharing of experiences, insights and visions toward making the mission of the YMCA more responsive to the needs of the time. The National Academic Olympics 2014 was held at the YMCA of Manila Downtown, Binondo, Manila on October 25-26, 2014 in the three YMCA Youth Club levels namely Red Triangle Club (Elementary), Hi-Y Club (High School) and College-Y Club (University/College).

The Olympics which features academics, art, literary and musical contests was composed of 7 different events such as vocal solo, on-the-spot drawing, oratorical speech, extemporaneous speaking, English essay, team quiz contest, hip hop, ballroom and YMCA dance contest in every level where the talents of the youth were fairly developed, harnessed and sustained. Two hundred forty (240) students/participants who won as the champions from eleven (11) different local YMCAs in the Philippines joined and competed with the spirit of sportsmanship and camaraderie with the guidance of their respective youth club advisers/teachers. The YMCA of Manila was declared as the over-all champion followed by YMCA of Pangasinan being the 1st runner-up and YMCA of Makati as 2nd runner-up.

The event was made possible through the intense effort of the Association of Professional Directors (APD) with the leadership of its President Mr. Dominador Calonia and Immediate Past President Thelma Juntereal with the supervision of the National General Secretary Pablito A. Tabucol together with the National and Local YMCA Staff and support of the YMCA Manila Downtown as the host of the event. The National Academic Olympics has served as SPACE for the young people to enhance their talents and potentials wherein they experienced the process of TRANSFORMATION through the opportunity it provides which results IMPACT into their lives and community we seek to serve.

~ Marvin Tapiador, Change Agent, YMCA of the Philippines

Not interested any more?