



APAY NEWS

Monthly e-Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs No. 04 / 09 ~ August 2009

1. Typhoon Morakot Devastates Taiwan ~ YMCAs' Response

Excerpt from an e-mail of Mr. David Lee, National Coordinator of the YMCAs of Taiwan...

A devastating typhoon Morakot pummelled Taiwan and dumped heavy rains; killed hundreds when it unleashed landslides and flooding. It caused wide-spread damage in southern and eastern Taiwan, especially Kaoshiung county, Pingtung and Taitung. Massive flooding destroyed bridges and roads that made it more difficult for rescuers. Government and professional rescue teams are doing the rescue work.

Our biggest concern is the long-term recovery work. All the YMCAs in Taiwan are presently assessing the appropriate way to cooperate with Christian organisations to offer human resources, funds, basic necessities and materials.

We received information and aware of the following YMCA actions:

Changhua YMCA sent 40 staff and volunteers to clean houses in some of the affected areas in Pingtung

Tainan YMCA donated medicine, clothes and mineral water to affected areas in Kaoshiung County

Kaoshiung YMCA is looking for an appropriate place for recovery work

Taipei YMCA Yongji branch donated food to affected areas in Pingtung, Jiayi and Tainan

Let us pause to remember in prayer those who have lost their loved ones...we pray for those who have suffered greatly in this typhoon Morakot and, we pray for those working to bring relief and actively engaged in rebuilding lives.

In response to the discussion with David Lee, we are making an initial appeal to support the long-term recovery work of Taiwan. We will provide details once we receive from Mr. Lee.

2. Forum on Ageing in Penang

The Forum on Ageing to be held on 27 September to 1 October in Penang YMCA will develop greater understanding of the rapid demographic changes and socio-economic implications. It will identify ways to reposition YMCA's role and relevance to address the needs of a growing older population and also prioritise follow-up activities including partnerships with local and international agencies on ageing. Dr. Christopher Beer, Former Director of the Help Age International and Y Care International will be the keynote speaker. [*\(Registration closes on 5 September 2009\)*](#)

3. Peace Forum for South East Asia YMCAs

The YMCAs in the South East Asia will meet for their YMCA Sub-Regional Peace forum on 27 September in Penang YMCA, Malaysia. They will discuss the prospects of peace building and implementation of the Colombo declaration on peace and security. It will explore future collaborations of YMCA movements for peace building and leadership development in this sub-region.

4. 27th Advanced Studies Programme ~ Update

To date, 12 participants have been selected so far for the 27th Advanced Studies Programme (ASP) from Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Philippines and Sri Lanka. The training programme will be held from 26 October to 28 November 2009.

5. Regional Workshop on Gender Concerns and Migration

On 14-17 December 2009, we will be holding the Regional Workshop on Gender Concerns and Migration to be hosted by Metro YMCA Singapore. Our YMCAs in the region have responded in different extents and degrees of involvement to the women's issues and migration for many years, in the past. We need to enrich our understanding of migrant workers and the impact on women and their families. As we reflect on the findings of the QPP progress report and the updated Gender Equity Survey, there is a need to enhance our responses on gender-related issues and commitment to create an equal partnership of women and men as our YMCAs pursue responsiveness to gender equity. (*Details will be sent to the Movements soon and will be posted on our website*).

6. Special Report on Cyclone Nargis 2008

It has been more than a year since Cyclone Nargis brought severe damages and destroyed properties, livelihoods and loss of lives in Myanmar. An urgent appeal for support was made and we received donations from 17 Movements and partners amounting to about US\$52,000. Together with other networks/partners, the YMCAs of Myanmar responded and made some immediate relief and rehabilitation works.

On July 1-4, 2009, APAY General Secretary visited the affected areas. We have circulated earlier a brief report to our donors. A 2-year rebuilding programme is being developed for the YMCAs in disaster areas to be submitted to APAY by the end of September 2009. We share with you the allocation of funds for the emergency support and rehabilitation works of Myanmar YMCAs.

~ Feeding project expenses	: US\$6,500
~ Purchase of household materials	: US\$8,900
~ Damaged YMCA buildings	
• Yangon YMCA	: US\$4,000
• National YMCA	: US\$10,000
~ Renovation and reconstruction of schools	: US\$4,000
~ Coordination work of NCY Myanmar for the development of a 2-yr rebuilding plan	: US\$3,000
~ Continuation of rehabilitation works of YMCAs	: Remaining funds US\$15,600

We thank the YMCAs of Australia, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Manila-Downtown and Manila YMCAs – Philippines, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and USA-World Service for their support.

7. University YMCA Regional Conference Inspires Youth to Action

From 29 July to 3 August 2009, the YMCA of Singapore in collaboration with the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) hosted the 2nd Asia and Pacific University YMCA (APUY) Regional Conference. More than 100 student leaders and volunteers were gathered from 12 national movements and representatives from YMCA of the USA, making this one of the most significant events in the regional youth calendar of APAY.

Oliver Loke, Vice-Chair of the Host YMCA Organizing Committee shares...

“Be the change you wish to see in our world” served as the central theme of the conference, which highlighted the 2 key aspects of Youth Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship (SE). We were exposed to a variety of creative experiential learning approaches. A series of insightful lectures were conducted by distinguished speakers on issues facing youth leadership as well as applying social enterprise concepts, from idea to implementation. Delegates were then tasked in their workgroups to formulate and develop a viable social enterprise model, which has a high level of relevance to their local communities. Panel of reactors critiqued presentations of our SE proposals at the youth **rEVOLution**.

Community service and exposures lifted our spirits as we experienced real-life issues, interacted with the less fortunate and witnessed the transformative actions. We had the opportunity to participate in the Search Party Bazaar that launched an online sales portal for products of social enterprises. There were various innovative exhibitors selling their merchandise as well as exciting performances and displays. The conference also provided time for teams through fun-learning activities like Exploring Singapore, which saw many participating in an amazing race style program that aims to showcase Singapore’s unique cultures, food as well as landmarks.

Many delegates were inspired and also formed new networks that would contribute successfully to the work of developing University-YMCAs across the region, in countries such as Cambodia, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand. Among the tangible outcomes of the conference was the formation of the Asia and Pacific University YMCA (APUY) Alliance, an integrated channel linking national movements which focuses its efforts on 4 primary goals: capacity building, resource mobilization, regional interactions and conference planning group. We created a fan page on *facebook* for interactive sharing and updates. The Alliance will be under the auspices of the APAY Youth Participation and Leadership Development (YPLD) Committee.

The Uni-Y Pledge will be our motivation to continue the journey that we began through this Conference. We will keep each other informed of our programmes/activities and strengthen this informal network that we have developed.

This conference has been an exceptionally memorable one for many of us and we are grateful for all the support and blessings that the organizers, various stakeholders and sponsors which have made all these possible.

(Oliver will be the Moderator of APUY Alliance as YPLD Committee Member of APAY)

8. Poverty Workshop for Sustainable Development

Forty-four participants from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Y Care International attended the APAY Workshop on Poverty and Sustainable Development on 7-11 August 2009 at YMCA New Delhi, India

The key inputs in the workshop challenged the participants to re-think the definition of poverty and poverty line. The interactive deliberations critiqued the present practices and provoked the participants to shift the basic need approach towards Human Scale Development approach in poverty alleviation. The need to recognize 'Culture' as the fourth pillar for Sustainable development along with Economic, Environmental and Socio-Political pillars was also put forward for discussion. It also emphasized the need for different societies to choose different sustainability indicators according to their socio- economic and cultural conditions. Participants were also encouraged to have gender analysis of poverty and sustainable development in practice. The Manfred Max-Neef wheel of fundamental human needs was suggested as a practical development tool for action responses.

Appreciative Inquiry approach was introduced as a practical approach for maximizing the best practices in poverty alleviation and developing leadership in the community. Subsequently, competitive global funding environment was shared from a donor perspective. Skills for developing effective project proposals and systematic monitoring and evaluation were also discussed. The proposed APAY Partnership Project (APP) was shared and the concept notes from the YMCAs were critically evaluated in peer groups. The participants visited the refugee service programme of the New Delhi YMCA in partnership with UNHCR for exposure visit. They have affirmed their learnings and suggested recommendations to APAY and National Councils for further actions at the end of the workshop.

Dr. Park Jai Chang, President of the APAY inaugurated the workshop. Dr. Christopher Lakra, Executive Director ISI, Dr. David Selvaraj, Executive Director, Visthar, Dr. Chandi P Chapagain, Plan International, Nepal, Mr. Kohei Yamada, GS APAY served as the key facilitators.

We thank the New Delhi YMCA for hosting the workshop and our appreciation to the National Council of YMCAs of India for its support for the successful conduct of the workshop.

9. South Asia YMCAs Focus on Peace Building

Peace building is the immediate need of South Asia. This was emphasised by Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs of India, keynote speaker of the South Asia YMCA Peace Forum at the New Delhi YMCA. He further said, "Even though many consultations are done in this respect, concrete efforts by NGOs and civil society organizations are lacking". He commended the inclusive character of the YMCA and its efforts for Peace and Development at the global level.

The Forum re-affirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Colombo declaration on peace and security and expressed deep concern on the increasing conflicts, terrorism and human right violations in South Asia (SA). The National movements of Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka shared their plan of actions. Dr. David Selvaraj provided an analysis of conflicts within the sub-region and provided a framework for relevant actions on peace building. Displacement, discrimination and alienation were common issues of conflicts

identified. Some strategies addressing these issues were formulated focusing on empowering the victims and advocacy programmes. Capacity buildings for livelihood through community-based programs, peace education, conflict resolution etc are to be taken as specific actions for peace building. This should start at the local focus group using a process-oriented approach.

National movements in SA have agreed on intensifying their engagements on peace issues and also to organize sub- regional School of Peace (SOP) for youth and training for YMCA Secretaries and programme staff.

Our APAY President, Dr. Park Jai Chang presided over the forum. Mr. K. John Cherian, President of NCY of India, Mr. Vijai Sewak, President of New Delhi YMCA and Prof. P.J. Oommen, APAY Vice President spoke on the occasion.

10. New Leadership for Indonesia YMCA

At the recently concluded meeting of the National Council of Indonesia YMCA, Dr. Alphinus Kambodji, incumbent President of Malang YMCA was elected as its new National President. Dr. Kambodji, a former Student Christian Movement (SCM) President is a medical doctor and has been involved in various health issues campaign and works with international agencies like Save the Children. He has been a member of the National Board since 2005.

Ms. Margaretha Andoea of Salatiga YMCA was appointed as the new National General Secretary at the same meeting. She is a lawyer and a women's rights activist being involved in migrant workers, citizen's rights issues and with the Legal Advocacy for Women (LAW).

The meeting held in Wisma Yakoma, Jakarta gathered representatives from 7 YMCAs out of the 14 movements. Our APAY General Secretary attended this important meeting held last 28-31 August 2009.

Our congratulations! Our prayers are with you as you continue the revitalization and strengthening of the Movement.

11. News and Updates from our Movements...

Basic Training Programme for YMCA Professionals in Sri Lanka

The National Council of YMCAs of Sri Lanka is currently conducting its Basic Training Programme for YMCA Professionals that started last August 20, 2009. Twelve staff from local YMCAs are attending this programme which is patterned after the APAY's curriculum training design. It includes experiential learning approaches and thematic inputs that are relevant in carrying out YMCA responses to the Mission. The 2-week long training programme will end on August 30.

YMCA Day @ the Opera Promotes Intergenerational Exchange ~ Singapore YMCA

On 17 August 2009, 350 youth volunteers came together and spent a memorable day with more than 700 needy elderly folks for a Cantonese opera extravaganza performed by the Hong Kong based Fung Ngai Cantonese Opera Troupe. This is part of the continuing efforts of the YMCA of Singapore to serve the community in need and to provide a platform for the youth to be socially responsible. The YMCA Day at the Opera aimed at promoting

intergenerational exchange for two different age groups was a kick off programme to embark on regular and structured intergenerational initiatives to enrich the lives of the elderly.

74-year-old Madam Lim Ah Cheng, from Moral Neighbourhood Link, was only too happy to have the youths around. She said: "My own grandchildren are busy working or studying, and have no time for me. I'm old and can't really go anywhere easily, so being here and having the youths as my grandchildren. I really enjoyed myself."

A 14-year old secondary school student-volunteer Si Hui said: "I heard that there will be elderly from homes and that they're lonely sometimes. So I thought that this would be a good chance to communicate and lend them a listening ear" (Source: <http://www.ymca.org.sg>)

Lahore YMCA Brings Relief to Gojra Tragedy Victims, Pakistan

As we have witnessed from the reports and e-mails received, religious minorities are profoundly shocked and hurt by the terrible acts of destruction and casualties of the innocent citizens in Pakistan especially Christians. The incident in Gojra is just one of the examples of abuse of the Blasphemy Laws and its far-reaching consequences: it has been abused to justify violence on the others, as well as spread disharmony and intolerance.

The YMCA in Lahore, Pakistan immediately organised a team to go and condoled with the victims. The Gojra tragedy resulted to 9 deaths, scores injured and 200 houses were set on fire. The local YMCA team comprised of the General Secretary with other staff, Board members and volunteers mobilized local resources and carried out emergency relief actions. The team distributed food essentials of flour, rice, dry milk and stoves to the affected families. YMCA is now looking into rehabilitation of the affected by providing them supplies and basic needs of their shelters/houses. Pakistan YMCA is thankful to the APAY and other YMCA's for their prayers and support. (Report from Samuel Pervez, GS of Lahore YMCA)

India Holds 6th National Women Assembly

"Role of Women in Building Peace and Just Society" was the theme of the 6th National Women's Assembly participated in by 125 women delegates representing all the nine Regions of the National Council of YMCA's of India. The assembly took place in Alwaye YMCA Campsite last 24-26 April, 2009. There were 3 major sessions on the sub themes; Empowered for Mission: Women's Perspective; Ecumenism in the present day Context; and Togetherness Beyond Religious Boundaries. Exposure programmes were organised on the issues of Environmental Pollution and its impact especially on women and children, Senior Citizens Home for the Aged and Home for the Children in Crisis. Both the National Standing Committee and the National Women's Forum which comprises of the Regional Women's Forum Chairpersons met and presented their reports.

The 3-day gender workshop ended with the adoption of a 5-point Resolution: (1) Strongly reiterate the opening of Women's Full membership at all the local YMCAs in all the 9 Regions of India (2) To organize Gender Sensitization Programmes at the Sub-regional, zonal and local level (3) To set up a Women's Desk in all the YMCAs to encourage women's membership and participation at the decision making level and programme level. (4) To form Sub-regional Women's Forum (National and Regional Women's Forum are existing) and (5) To have one continuous outreach Gender Advocacy Programme in every Region. (Report by Dr. Ann Thomas, Chairperson, and Gender Concerns Committee of NCY India)

Bangladesh YMCAs Response to the Victims of Cyclone 'Aila'

The severe Cyclone 'Aila' hit the South-western coast of Bangladesh on 25 May 2009. More than a million families were directly affected. Vast areas of land and agricultural crops were washed away and half a million homes were destroyed. The YMCAs of Barisal, Gopalganj and Kaligram are situated in the affected areas. These YMCAs had immediately taken up emergency relief program to the cyclone-affected people living in their vicinity. Volunteers of these YMCAs rendered emergency food relief to 2,100 families so far. Each family was supported with 10 kg of rice, 1 kg of *dal* (lentil) and a kg of salt.

The implementation of the emergency food relief program was made possible through the generosity of the YMCAs that responded to an APAY appeal ~ NCY Australia, Japan, and Taiwan, Metropolitan YMCA Singapore, Tokyo YMCA, YMCA of Singapore, USA and Y Care International. We express our indebtedness for their wholehearted support. *(Report by Mr. Duncan Chowdhury, National General Secretary, NCY Bangladesh)*

YMCA Vocational Training and Community Centre for Tsunami Victims in Kerala

The newly constructed YMCA Vocational Training and Community Center dedicated for the Tsunami affected communities in Kerala, India was inaugurated last 13 August 2009. Leading the list of guests was Dr. Park Jai Chang, APAY President who inaugurated the function with Mr. K. John Cherian, NCY India President and Mr. Kohei Yamada, APAY General Secretary. The centre was built with the support of the Y Care International and other partner YMCAs under the India tsunami response programme. Community-building activities are continuing since 2005.

12. Ecumenical News...Our Partners...and Networks

ICF Opens Application for School of Peace 2010

Applications are now open for the third School of Peace (SOP) of the Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF), a joint programme of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the APAY, financially supported by the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, Germany (EED) scheduled from 1 February – 14 May 2010 in Visthar Resource and Learning Centre Bangalore, India. The SOP is designed to encourage young people from around Asia to become agents of transformation in the task of building cultures and communities of justpeace. Interested applicants are requested to contact Mr. Max Ediger, Coordinator, ediger.max@gmail.com

Human Rights Workshop in Philippines

Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) held a human rights workshop in Cotabato City in Mindanao in the southern Philippines from Aug. 3 to 8, 2009. There were about 30 participants from the Moros or Muslims communities with the EASY Net regional coordinator Cristina Miranda and young activists from Nepal, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. In addition to presentations about the U.N. human rights system, the participants learned about the struggle for self-determination of the Moro people and the discrimination they face today. The group also visited a camp for internally displaced people (IDP) by the war between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The camp has been home for at least a year for some of the 600,000 IDPs by the fighting in 2008—the most in the world, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC). *(Report by Bruce Van Voorhis, APAY Coordinator for Interfaith Programs)*

13. Reminder! Surveys...Surveys...Surveys...

We are still waiting for your responses to the Youth and National Movement's Surveys. Please send all your completed survey forms to the APAY Secretariat (*Attn: Cristina Dalope*)

14. World YMCA/YWCA Week of Prayer and World Fellowship 2009

November 8-14 marks this year's Week of Prayer with the theme that coincides with the upcoming YMCA World Council, "Striving for Global Citizenship for All." In our rapidly globalising world, we face new challenges as individuals and as a Movement. Let us take this time to find guidance and encouragement from Christ's teachings as we respond to these new challenges and barriers to ensure that global citizenship is accessible to all. The weeklong prayer culminates in the celebration of YMCA Peace Day on 14th November. This joint week of prayer is a tradition dating from 1904 (*Source: YMCA World, June 2009*)

15. Striving for Global Citizenship for All – World Council 2010

The 17th World Council of YMCAs will take place in Hong Kong on 19-24 July 2010 to be hosted by the Council of the YMCAs of Hong Kong. About 800 participants from 124 countries are expected to join next year's World YMCA gathering. It will engage participants in dialogue and sharing on some of the most critical challenges within and outside the Movement. It will also be a time to worship, pray and reflect on our mission under the theme of "Striving for Global Citizenship for All". Prior to the World Council will be a 3-day International Youth Forum (IYF) from 17-19 July. The main site for both world gatherings is the Wu Kwai Sha YMCA Youth Village. Details have already been sent to National Movements. (*see WAY website, www.ymca.int for more information*)

A 2-day APAY Youth Forum is also planned to take place right before the IYF. More information shall be announced later.

16. Let's Stay Connected ~ Share News and Information

National Movements are invited to share programme stories, news and information. Please send us your articles/news reports by the 3rd week of every month. (*Attn: Cristina Dalope*)

17. Forthcoming Events/Meetings

DATES	EVENTS	VENUE
27 Sept – 1 Oct	Forum on Ageing	Penang YMCA, Malaysia
27 September	YMCA South East Asia Peace Forum	Penang YMCA, Malaysia
26 Oct – 28 Nov	27 th Advanced Studies Programme	Wu Kwai Sha, Hong Kong
14-17 December	Regional Workshop: Gender Concerns and Migration	Metro YMCA Singapore
14-17 January 2010	Global Warming Workshop	To be announced later
9 March	Natl General Secretaries Meeting/Officers Meeting	Hong Kong
10-11 March	Resource Mobilisation Workshop	Hong Kong
11-13 March	Executive Committee Meeting	Hong Kong
14-18 March	Global Citizenship Education for Youth	Macau

18. From the Desk of the General Secretary.... *Disasters and the YMCA...*

My sharing with you this month is about my meaningful travels from the end of July to middle August. Starting off with an inspiring Uni-Y Regional Conference in Singapore, I headed to Colombo, Geneva, New Delhi and Kerala of India for meetings, programmes and visitations to our member movements. I appreciate sincerely the hospitality and care extended to me. Sleeping well and eating well in any place, but do not over do it are part of the lessons I learnt from this journey. It was also strange for me to feel so relaxed and at home upon returning to Hong Kong having 15 hours of sleep on the day of arrival. Well, this is not important but rather, let me share with you more of my feelings and the impact of my travel activities.

Nearly 5 years ago, a horrifying Tsunami greatly affected Sri Lanka and India. I was able to visit and saw the outcome of the various YMCA Tsunami response programmes to the affected communities and the YMCAs.

In Sri Lanka, I visited the Negombo YMCA, a small local YMCA of a fishing community near the seashore. This YMCA building was badly hit by the Tsunami, a lot of people died and lost their properties. That was December 26, 2004. *YMCA responded*. Legal service was provided for those who lost properties... micro finance program was initiated for fishermen who lost their boats and nets that have been continued to 60 families at present...vocational trainings were opened such as computer education and language education for the many people who lost their jobs. Those have become their main programmes today. YMCA membership has been tripled compared to the figure before the Tsunami. The partnerships with the YMCA outside the country continued and strengthened. I was glad to see how they have overcome this difficult situation, and at the same time how it has resulted in capacity building of the YMCA itself.

Moving on to India, I visited the town called Ayiramthengu nearby Kanniyakumai YMCA. The Tsunami hit this small fishing village affecting many villagers and visitors. I visited a local Catholic Church with over 400 victims from among their church members. I could still see how disastrous the Tsunami was in various places in this town.

Initially, Indian Government made the national policies and plans for its huge amount of relief work. Only selected NGOs were allowed to take part in this rehabilitation work and the YMCA of India was officially chosen. With the amount of donations received from YMCAs, they implemented housing and livelihood projects. They formed women's self help groups (SHGs), provided vocational training centers and micro finance programs, etc. These programs are still sustainable in small centers and houses. At Ayiramthengu, I found a big and newly opened Community and Vocational Training Center by the YMCA. A new YMCA was formed by the continued support of people in the area.

In relation with this disaster response work, I need to mention the work of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008 in Myanmar. A special report was made as part of this e-news. I have to apologize for this late report to the 17 donors. Bangladesh was also hit by a big cyclone that caused disasters in the southern part last May 2009. Three YMCAs in this area started the relief work immediately. We received 16,000USD from 7 movements. We have a brief report in this issue. Just a few weeks ago, a big typhoon Morakot caused over 500 deaths in the southern remote villages of Taiwan. The Taiwan YMCAs have started assessing the areas and their

recovery work. The rehabilitation programme plan will be made available soon and they will appeal for international cooperation.

Asia has been known for the number of disasters and I heard that 70 % of the disaster related deaths in the world happened here in the last 20 years. We are not a disaster relief organization. We are a community based and people-centered organization with many volunteers including youths and children. Sharing the pain and sorrow with people in a disaster area is what we do naturally. This should be our natural response as an extension of our regular activities.

I am very happy to witness such transformational changes in the communities and in the YMCA's life and works. Let us continue building and rebuilding lives and communities. As the YMCA, we are called to care, to heal and to work together towards building sustainable communities....

May God bless us and our works in the YMCA.

Kohei Yamada
General Secretary

Cristina A. Dalope & Jose Varghese
Executive Secretaries

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