

AGEING



....Y for all ages

Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

Preface

The Ageing world is fast expanding. The increase in the number and percentage of older persons has raised number of social issues. Ageing today has gone beyond the realm of welfare concern to a developmental challenge. The change in population structure has huge implications on the global economy, society, social and development policy.

The ageing process is part of God's plan for life, with the good news of Christ's redemption giving hope and purpose. As a faith based organization, concern for older persons in the YMCA is theologically grounded in the doctrine of Creation and the mission calling of the YMCA as agent of redemption and restoring abundant life for all. The *Challenge 21* also urged us to seek to share the Christian ideal of building a human community of justice with love, peace and reconciliation for the fullness of life for **all** creation. This encourages us to be an advocate for the elderly who is an integral part of the society. The skills, knowledge and experiences of the older people can't be ignored or excluded. The APAY Forum on Ageing challenged the YMCAs to develop strategic actions that ensure positive utilization of the human resources of older population and ensure quality of life for the older persons. It also called the YMCAs to work towards the emergence of a *society of all ages*.

I hope and wish that this monogram would give some insights for the YMCAs who wish to initiate or strengthen actions on ageing at different levels.



Kohei Yamada
General Secretary

Issues of the Older People that the YMCAs are aware in Asia Pacific

Physical

- High cost of medicines and medical care & inadequate access to health care system;
- Inadequacy of pension or insurance coverage for intensive personal health care and long term caring for acute/chronic medical cases such as dementia; and
- Committing of parents into poorly administered institutions.

Economic

- Dependency prone/ underprivileged Older People;
- Lack of job opportunities; and
- Lack of opportunities for receiving continuing education such as IT.

Social/Spiritual

- Public amenities such as public transport inaccessible or not user friendly;
- Older people's expertise/experience not/underutilized;
- Increase in suicidal cases;
- Loss of dignity/Sense of Insecurity;
- Lack of spiritual nurturing support and programmes;
- Inter-generational gap;
- Breaking down of values system/loss of traditional values;
- Neglect by family, marginalized by Community, socially deprived/isolated;
- Lack of database on Older people;
- Lack of awareness/support from Government Agencies;
- Service Resources not utilized due to lack of awareness or availability of such; and
- Inadequate counseling and care for the emotional and spiritual needs of Older People.

Political

- Inadequate lobbying or raising of issues/concerns relating to Older People so as to bring about Legislative and other changes to improve the provisions of amenities, healthcare, insurances, pensions, etc.



APAY Penang Response to Ageing

We the 48 participants from YMCAs of Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Pakistan, gathered for Forum On Ageing from 27th September to 1st October 2009, at the Penang YMCA, Malaysia.

We gathered to deliberate and to respond to the mission of the YMCA in relation to the issues surrounding the Ageing in our context, so as to realize our spiritual and social responsibilities as Global Citizens in promoting Peace with Justice and Sustainability of Life.



We emphasized inputs from Resource Persons, participation and learning from the diverse and multi-faceted experiences of those YMCAs who are already engaged in programmes or carrying out Projects relating to meeting the needs of the Older People.

We reflected on the local, national and regional needs, sought to address those needs and explored avenues for partnership with fellow YMCAs, other Organizations or people of other Faiths and responded by developing framework for plan and action and making recommendations

Recommendations to YMCAs

- Gather information and develop effective educational modules to increase the knowledge and understanding of the needs of the Older People;
- Review existing policies to enhance services to the Older People;
- Recognize the professional and other capabilities of the Older People and utilize their expertise in various YMCA programmes;
- Motivate young people to visit the Older People and engage them in frequent dialogues and interaction;
- Encourage local YMCAs to integrate the Older People in their community activities and programmes;
- Create Resource Persons database on their different specialization so that they can be tapped and mobilized for different kinds of training in responding to the needs of the Older People and youth;
- Prioritize the local needs of the ageing population of the local YMCAs for project development;
- Organize and conduct forums on ageing population at the national level as a follow through to this process; and
- Prioritize programs for support and action as identified by local movements.



Frameworks for Action Response

A: Establishment of Information Centre for Older People

- Provide **Resource Centre** for information accessibility on Rights Issue, Healthcare and Helpline;
- Provide **Platform** to advocate issues pertaining to care for the Ageing. Essential to start inculcating the right value systems to the youths;
- Build **Network/Partnership** amongst YMCA movements and with local NGOs or governmental body; and
- Provide **Older People-based programmes** such as Radio Programmes/ Talks for Older Persons (Tagline: For Older People By Older People) – to equip Older People to be potential facilitator to share issues pertaining to active ageing etc.



B: Encourage, Train, and Build Up Pool of Volunteers

- Enhance public awareness about Home based Care for the older persons
- Motivate, Recruit and train volunteers for caring the older persons.
- Strengthen GO-NGO cooperative mechanism for the Implementation of Home based Care Programs



C: Promote Life long Learning

- Establishment of the educational opportunities for older people to promote the message of continuous learning and encourage elders to make the best use of their time and to keep pace with the times through acquiring new knowledge and learning new skills. Facilitate learning platforms for older persons that can identify new objectives in life and enhance their sense of achievement and self-confidence in dealing with the changes in daily life. Offer space for elders to share their knowledge, demonstrate their creativity, serve the community and continue to make contribution to our society.
- Build collaboration and the ties among tertiary institutions, NGOs and local community.



Good Practices by YMCAs in Asia Pacific

1. Volunteer Based Home Care for Older Persons Project in Myanmar

This project is to improve health and social conditions of the poor, frail and lonely older persons to a certain level by motivating volunteers. It is a cost-effective and beneficial program and is carried out by Myanmar YMCAs in five centers. There are altogether 603 older persons and 507 volunteers. Myanmar YMCA collaborating with Department of Social Welfare in implementing Home Care for older persons through four partner organizations, such as Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAF), World Vision (Myanmar) and Help age International in 24 areas, including Nargis affected two areas.

Older people

- Appreciate services provided by volunteers, morally up lift.
- Appreciate health care services rendered by medical staff

Volunteer

- Receive service minded mentality.
- Found cooperation among them.
- Satisfied with their performances.

Community

- Received awareness how to look after older people and why they should participate in activities.

Family members

- Appreciate and interested in the project.
- Acknowledge the value of the project their burdens were lightened and pay respect to the volunteers.



MAIN ACTIVITIES

To recruit volunteers
Training for volunteers
Monthly meeting with
Volunteers
Field trip by field coordinator
Medical field trip
OP gathering
Volunteer's retreat
Volunteers refresher course

2. Long-Term Care in Tainan YMCA, Taiwan

The Tainan YMCA is extending their service to the elderly through day care and Nursing home services. Through these projects the YMCA aimed to

- Respond to the requirements of elders across actions
- Integrate Day service and Nursing Home that provide continuous care
- Assist with elders accomplishing returning to community and family
- Making elders obtain dignity and happy life

Nursing home is based on the concept

- 1) To fulfill unit-care system
- 2) To accomplish group home
- (3) Continuing and expanding community life
- (4) Integrating and working on community resources
- (5) Medical care connection
- (6) To emphasize family interaction
- (7) Multi-services of Day service, Nursing home and Home service
- (8) Promoting elders' healthy life

The Home Service contents:

- (1) Physical care service
- (2) Housework service
- (3) Document work service
- (4) Medical care service
- (5) Spiritual support service



3. MY Elderly Services *bring a smile to the elderly*

Responding to the raising needs of the older persons in the Singapore community, the Metropolitan YMCA of Singapore initiated several community outreach programs which includes

- Y Manna Store - supplies basic groceries (ie. rice, canned food, cooking oil, instant noodles etc) and toiletries monthly to needy families; many of whom are lonely elderly persons or needy families staying in one room rental flats and barely have enough to live by.
- MY Clean & Paint with Love – a project to spruce up the poor living condition of elderly by the YMCA Volunteers
- MY Mobile Hair Cutting Service to the elderly by the YMCA Volunteers

As part of the effort collaboration was made with 12 MYMCA childcare centers and student care to involve children and their families to reach out to the recipients in MY Manna Store; the partnership promotes volunteerism and the spirit of giving and care in our young pre-schoolers and at the same time, strengthen family ties as they are involved in the programme for a good cause. Corporate organization and schools were roped in to participate and scale the MY Manna programme and other initiatives.



4. Elders Academy for life long education at Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong

The Elders Academy of the Chinese YMCA aims

To promote active ageing so that elders can enjoy fruitful lives through engaging in learning.

To encourage elders to engage in lifelong learning through the award scheme.

To maintain the physical and mental well-being of elders through participating in different area of domains.

To foster a sense of worthiness and develop potential among elders.

To build up social support network among them



Course Structure

1. Completion of a course with 80% attendance scores 5 academic points;
2. Academic year starts from April 1 every year to March 31, total academic score would be accumulated in the academic year only when the course is completed;
3. There is no limit on the year of study, at the end of each academic year, the total score would be counted, and the required score would be deducted for the award, and the remaining score could be carried over for the next year.

Course Content

Literature : Chinese Language, Oral English, Environmental Studies, Religious Studies

Sports and Arts : Sports, Music, Dancing, Arts, Ball games, and Hand Crafting

Social Science: Information Technology, Psychology, Civil Education, Mental Health Studies, Social Service, Economics

Awards

- 1) Certificate: those with a total academic score of 20
- (2.) Higher certificate: those with a total academic score of 50
- 3) Diploma: those with a total academic score of 100
- (4) Higher diploma: those with a total academic score of 150
- 5) Degree: those with a total academic score of 200
- (6) Active participating award: enrolled in over 50% of courses
- 7) Attendance award: those who had an attendance rate of over 80%
- (8) Evergreen award: the eldest participant

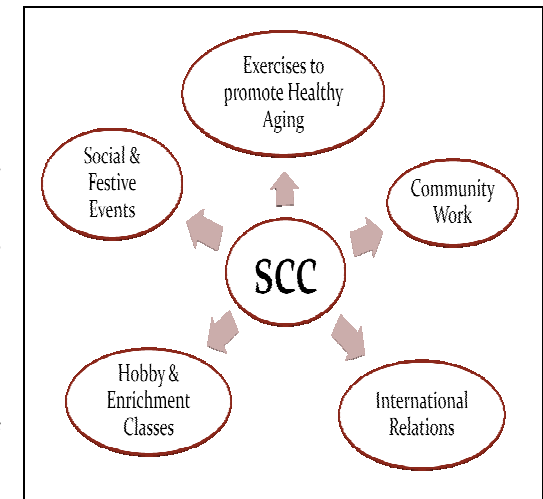


5. YMCA Senior Citizens Club in Kuala Lumpur builds Young At Heart

The YMCA SCC aims

- To develop and organize activities and Programs for the benefit and well being of the members
- To harness the members' experiences and utilize their services whenever regained.
- To hold seminars and talks beneficial to the members.
- To promote better fellowship and understanding among the members.
- To arrange trips and tours to places of interest inside and outside the country.
- To raise funds by way of subscriptions and donations to be used for the benefit of members and also to disburse to charitable organizations such as old Folks Homes and other welfare organizations.

The Senior Citizens' Club (SCC) organizes dinner and dance events to raise funds by way of subscriptions and donations to benefit the members and also to disburse to the welfare organizations



6. Older People programme of the Chiangmai YMCA Empowering the elderly

Chiangmai YMCA seeks to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged older people in community by working with and for older people to address their physical, psychological, social, education and economic needs.

The focus of the programme is

- To raise awareness of the importance of caring for disadvantaged older people in the community
- To advocate for increased care services/programs for older people in the community, especially the disadvantaged.
- To empower the elderly to continue to contribute to the economic well being of their families through income generating programmes.
- selves to contribute to the development of



Religious and Social Activities * Economic care and Skill Training
Community Care * Health Care.

7. Thumpamon YMCA in India serving rural elderly women

The program includes

- Health Seminars and medical camps
- Counseling service
- Micro Entrepreneurships for Women Groups
- Training on Handicraft, Soap, Candle making
- Spiritual Retreat
- Pilgrim Tour
- House Visits by YMCA Volunteers
- Participation in YMCA services and Programs



Learning's from YMCAs Involvement on Ageing

- The current engagements of the YMCAs focused on positive ageing through volunteer based as well as community-based activities. It also provides care and support through institutional approaches.
- It addresses the health, psychological, educational, social, spiritual and cultural needs of the older generation apart from providing opportunities for socializing.
- The challenge faced by the older generation varies from country to country and it requires a multifaceted approach with diverse actions to suit the local context.
- Youths are taking part as active volunteers in the various outreach programmes.
- There is a greater need for mobilizing volunteers and providing training to them on caring for the ageing
- Local partnership and networking are the major components in the successful implementation of the ageing programs. Governmental and non-governmental partnership needs to be explored for the sustainability of such programmes.
- Activities like healthy exercise and sports could attract several older people and could contribute to healthy ageing
- Promoting life long learning opportunities through elderly educational academy could enhance active ageing and provide a sense of achievement and self worth.
- Income generating activities for the older people could contribute to the economic well being of their families as well as to the development of the community.
- Skill training on computer literacy allows the elderly to gain new technology information



Points to Ponder

1. YMCAs, in seeking to develop their involvement, need to establish the “felt needs” of older persons in their community. Draw down the experience of older members and users of your YMCA, but broaden the debate to include local organizations of older people, and age-care agencies
2. Ensure that older people are involved in shaping policy and programmes
3. Respect the diversity of ageing population(s) – no one programme will suit all
4. Find ways of ensuring that your YMCAs are “age friendly” in terms of access to buildings and facilities, but also in terms of attitudes and inclusive practices
5. Encourage inter-generational contacts and opportunities – an obvious role for most YMCAs
6. In piloting home-care programmes seek advice and counsel from those in the region with age-care expertise before setting out.
7. Start small – don't create ambitious programmes which will fold in a year or so through lack of funding or expertise
8. Be a prime mover in working to create effective coordination and cooperation between agencies. Often older people are unaware of what services they can call on for help, and a good YMCA programme should ensure that it includes a good advice and referral facility
9. Establish ways of monitoring progress, standards and quality of services specifically targeted for older persons and to ensure that general services remain “age-friendly”



Three Concepts to Focus

Active Ageing – engaging older persons to be socially active. Forming groups / associations to advance their cause; building their self-confidence

Productive Ageing - development of new skills, community involvement

Rights of an older person – supported by NGOs at all levels; creating awareness and protective legislation on older person's issues

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