

## **ASIA AND PACIFIC ALLIANCE OF YMCAs**

### **WORKSHOP ON POVERTY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**7-11 August 2009, New Delhi YMCA**

#### **1. Executive Summary**

Forty-four participants from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Y Care international attended the Regional Workshop on Poverty and Sustainable Development on 7-11 August 2009 at YMCA New Delhi, India organized by the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs.

The key inputs in the workshop challenged the participants to re-think the definition of poverty and poverty line in terms of calorie consumption and income per capita, as it is not inclusive of a socially integrated life. It was observed that Globalization process accelerates social polarization and its impacts leads to neglect of the agriculture sector, increase of unemployment, migration, displacement, loss of small-scale industries and urban poverty. It was also noted that the prevailing unjust social orders and caste systems also contributed to the increase of poverty amidst economic growth in the developing countries. 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.

The interactive deliberations towards responding to the keynote presentation critiqued the present practices and provoked the participants to shift the basic need approach towards Human Scale Development approach in poverty alleviation. They are 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 concepts notes from the YMCAs for the proposed APAY partnership project were critically evaluated in peer groups.

After four days long theoretical and practical inputs by the facilitators, hearing and sharing of experiences from action responses on poverty alleviation, interactions in groups and witnessing actions in community, the participants affirmed the following learnings from the workshop and suggested recommendations for further actions.

## **2. Learnings from the Workshop**

1. Renewed the understanding on the concept of Poverty and Sustainable Development and the need to shift approaches from addressing basic needs towards holistic needs for poverty alleviation in marginalized communities.
2. Realize the need for taking both economic and non-economic indicators for quantitative and qualitative dimension of poverty and thus enabling diversified responses in relation to the contextual realities in each country.
3. Increased the understanding of the holistic human needs and the relevance of different response patterns, such as welfare, developmental, liberal reforms, liberation and transformation in responding to poverty alleviation, leading towards functional changes and structural changes for alleviating poverty.
4. The need for developing skills and capacities of staff and volunteers at all levels was realized for the effective implementation of the strategies towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
5. The opportunity to apply 'Appreciative Inquiry' was realized as an approach for community leadership development, with an emphasis on the 4D Model – Discovery, Design, Destiny and Dream.
6. Broadened the understanding of diversified strategies and practices of various YMCAs and also the commonalities among the national movements in their work for alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development.
7. Improved knowledge and skills on project development, evaluation of concept notes, monitoring and evaluation of programs. .
8. An understanding on the new Global Funding Environment, common quality gaps in Project proposals and donor perspectives and requirements in project proposals.
9. Witnessed refugee issues and the action responses by the New Delhi YMCA in partnership with United Nations High Commission for Refugees in India.
10. Knowledge was gained on the APAY Partnership Project that provides opportunities for the local YMCAs/ Projects in developing countries in the region to initiate local action programs in line with Regional Thrust and build inter-movement partnership in YMCA mission.

### **3. Recommendations to APAY**

1. To integrate training on project development and development education to the existing training programs of the APAY for the Executive staff from the National Movements for furthering the actions on poverty and emerging development issues.
2. To assist the National Movements to develop capacities of the local YMCA program staffs involved in poverty alleviation and sustainable development activities and provide priority for poverty alleviation projects of the local YMCAs under APP.
3. To create common platform through regular forums, workshops and E Groups, for National Movements and Partner Organizations/ YMCAs for learning and sharing insights and experiences in their work.

### **4. Recommendations to National Movements**

1. National Movements are encouraged to take initiatives to formulate strategic approaches for Poverty alleviation and Sustainable Development in their own National context through organizing follow up workshops and forums.
2. National Movements to develop network of YMCAs involved in poverty alleviation and sustainable development activities for learning and sharing of good practices.
3. National Movements to encourage local YMCAs to develop and implement programs in partnership with their respective local governments or alignment with the Governmental Schemes.
4. National Movements to network with other organizations including corporate establishments involved in poverty alleviation and sustainable development and help local YMCAs to benefit from this.
5. National Movements to give more focus on improving professionalism in the YMCA movement to address poverty related issues effectively, by assessing training needs and developing capacity building programs for the volunteers and staff and promote AI approaches in leadership development.

*(Adopted at the closing plenary of the workshop on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2009)*