



# HEADLINES

Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs ~ No. 59/ December 2006

## PHILIPPINES YMCA APPEAL: TYPHOON UTOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

### Target Community Sto. Domingo, Albay

*The devastating mud and volcanic ash flows triggered by typhoon (Utor) rains swallowed and destroyed some 1,500 villages in 100 municipalities in the Bicol Region on Thursday, November 30. The local Red Cross officials confirmed 1,080 dead or missing persons and some 14,871 residents directly hit by mudflows. The National Disaster Coordinating Centre declared that about 1.14 million people had been affected by the disaster. Power, communications and water remain out of service across the region further hampering the rescue and relief efforts. Tales and stories of the tragedy abound. Many unclaimed bodies have been buried in shallow mass graves as they have started to decompose. (ABS CBN interactive)*

The local YMCAs in the Bicol region (affected area) YMCA of the Philippines, the South Luzon Regional Coordinator, and the Association of Professional Directors, will plan and implement relief and rehabilitation programmes together with the local population. An on-site visit and community consultation to assess the situation and develop a realistic programme to address the needs of the affected people will be carried out. A short-term support will be implemented with volunteers from the University of the Philippines, Diliman. This action plan will include the education of people in disaster management, preparedness and mitigation.

#### Phase I – Intervention: Relief Distribution for 100 families

|                        |   |   |           |
|------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| Water bucket/container | - | P | 6,000.00  |
| Sleeping mats          | - |   | 8,000.00  |
| Blankets               | - |   | 10,000.00 |
| Cooking materials      | - |   | 12,000.00 |
|                        |   | P | 36,000.00 |

#### Phase II – Shelter Rehabilitation & Community Rebuilding for 100 Families (through consultation, planning and social preparation process)

|                             |   |          |                     |
|-----------------------------|---|----------|---------------------|
| Shelter Rehab Support       | - | P        | 1,000,000.00        |
| Transportation Expenses*    | - |          | 84,000.00           |
| Food Allowances/Volunteers  | - |          | 50,000.00           |
| Meetings/Social Preparation | - |          | 60,000.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                |   | <b>P</b> | <b>1,230,000.00</b> |

**TOTAL Phase I + II** P **1,230,000.00**

**US\$25,625** (1 US\$=P48)

~ CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE SENT TO THE APAY SECRETARIAT ~  
~ PLEASE REFER TO SPECIAL APPEAL LETTER ~

## 1. Selection of Alternate 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Venue In Progress

Following the withdrawal of Sri Lanka YMCA to host the 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the Officers have taken appropriate action, in view of time constraints, to select an alternate venue for the Assembly. The selected alternate venue will be circulated to Executive Committee Members for endorsement as soon as negotiations and processing of costs are completed.

The alternate venue selected should provide for the contextual and practical expressions of the theme “Spirituality, Solidarity and Sustainability”. The proposed programme design that emerged from the General Assembly Planning Committee capture the spirit and intent of the theme. Participatory approaches will pave the way to strengthen participants’ orientation and commitment to being the YMCA in transforming the individual, the community and society.

*Details of the General Assembly will be circulated to the Movements as soon as the alternate venue is endorsed by the Executive Committee.*

## 2. Faith and Worship Workshop Rescheduled to 10-14 January 2007

The Faith and Mission Workshop will be held on **10-14 January 2007** in **Chiangmai, Thailand**. Movements are invited to send creative talents with commitment to enriching our faith community through worship resources to participate in the Workshop. The Workshop will create and formulate contemporary creative liturgies and worship resources reflective of the region’s diverse cultures (including music, songs, prayers, poems, dance, etc). This workshop will also help participants to examine contemporary participatory and interactive expressions of the YMCA Mission and doing Biblical Reflections. The worship resources and related materials developed will be used at the 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and published for wider popular use.

## 3. Young Professional Home-movement Based Support for the Region

We share here a fresh initiative to developing youth leadership and participation in the region. Instead of having a young professional based at the APAY Secretariat at high costs, we are initiating the APAY Home-movement based Young Professional Programme that will entail the participation and collaboration of local and/or home movements.

A youth volunteer leader or staff with active involvement in the YMCA will be provided with exposure to the regional YMCA mission-oriented work and thrusts as a young professional, through coordination with the APAY Secretariat and taking APAY-related work or programme responsibilities. S/he will work under the supervision of a designated local/national Executive staff in coordination with the related APAY Executive Secretary. At the end of the one-year programme, s/he will share the experience gained with the home Movement and APAY. These young professionals will be those who are committed to a continued leadership role in the local/national YMCA.

We would like to invite applications from young people in the region and collaboration and support from Movements for this fresh initiative. The individual participant's terms of reference will be jointly determined by the APAY Secretariat and home movement based on his/her local or national YMCA experience.

Up to five (5) participants may be accommodated for this pilot programme scheduled to begin in 2007. Support for allowances, office space and participation in at least one international programme will be borne by the Home Movement.

*More details are included in the programme circular that will be sent to the National Movements before end December. Applications may be submitted until **1 March 2007**.*

#### **4. Nominations for Election as Officers in 2007**

The Nominations process for the election to the positions of President, Vice Presidents (4) and Treasurer for the Quadrennium 2007-2011 will close **by 28 February 2007**. National Movements are reminded to submit nominations as per relevant documents sent to all National Movements in October 2006. The Nominations Committee will meet on 7 March 2007 in Hong Kong to review the Nomination received.

#### **5. Returned ~ Inspired, Motivated and with Concrete Re-Entry Plans.....**

From 30 October – 3 December, 13 senior YMCA Secretaries from YMCAs in China (1), Hong Kong (1), India (1), Japan (1), Korea (3), Myanmar (2), Philippines (1), Taiwan (2) and the Gambia lived and shared their lives with each other. They “struggled” together digging deep into their wells of knowledge and wisdom to enrich and strengthen each other at the YMCA Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village, Hong Kong. The participation of the Gambian YMCA is a continuing south-south cooperation with the Africa Alliance of YMCAs.

Inspired, motivated and with concrete re-entry plans that had been presented to co-participants and the APAY Executive team, the participants are expected to begin or to continue to enhance transformation processes in their own movements. Action areas selected for their focus included: child-rights, youth participation and empowerment, community organizing, civil society building, sustainable development, health, unemployment, peace building/multi-cultural diversity and governance. These action areas proposed by the participants very much reflected their deeper and wider response to their contextual realities.

The Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong generously hosted the Graduation Celebration at the Harbour View YMCA in Wanchai, Hong Kong, on 2 December. Mr. Yeong Poh Kwan, Chairperson of the Hong Kong Council of YMCAs and Dr. Lawrence Yick, General Secretary of the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong addressed the graduating class.

We express our appreciation to the Hong Kong Council of YMCAs and the Y's Men International Alexander Scholarship Fund for their financial support towards scholarships for secretaries from movements with financial constraints.

## 6. Networking in Solidarity with Migrant Workers ~ 1-4 February 2007

The APAY Consultation on Migrant Workers in Osaka in 1996 consolidated guidelines to respond positively to issues of migrant workers in the region, particularly in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Bangladesh. A Networking Workshop in 2001 in Taipei reviewed and encouraged new initiatives. As a follow-up, the Philippines Migrant Resource Centre conducted a two-week development programme for Sri Lankan YMCAs in 2002.

Together with the Manila Downtown YMCA and the Philippines YMCA Migrant Resource Centre, the APAY will organise a South-east Asia and East Asia networking workshop in Manila from **1-4 February 2007**. The workshop seeks to bring together YMCAs in sending and receiving countries in South East Asia and East Asia to work on guidelines and actions that would address the needs and concerns of the target populations. Partnerships for joint action will also be sought at the Workshop.

Appreciation is due to the Manila Downtown YMCA and the Philippines YMCA Migrant Resource Centre for jointly working on this networking initiative. The Manila Downtown YMCA will host the workshop and provide participation support for YMCAs in sending regions of the Philippines.

## 7. Interfaith School of Peace ~ February to May 2007

The second Interfaith School of Peace of the Interfaith Cooperation Forum, joint programme of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the APAY financially supported by the EED, will take place in Bangalore from February to early May 2007. There will be 20 grassroots participants who are directly engaged in peace-building initiatives from the main faith traditions in this year's School.

## 8. Upcoming Events ~ January to March 2007

| DATE              | PROGRAMME                                                                       | VENUE                             |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| January 10 – 14   | Faith and Worship Workshop                                                      | Chiang Mai, Thailand              |
| January 26 – 31   | Tsunami Response, Sri Lanka PCG (Meeting/Site Visit)                            | Colombo, Sri Lanka                |
| February 01 – 04  | YMCA Networking Workshop: Working with Migrant Workers, Focus on Host Countries | Manila Downtown YMCA, Philippines |
| March 07 AM<br>PM | - APAY Nominations Committee<br>- NGSS Meeting                                  | Chinese YMCA, Hong Kong           |
| March 08 – 10     | - APAY Executive Committee Meeting<br>- Standing Committee Meetings             | Chinese YMCA, Hong Kong           |
| March 25 – 30     | Tsunami Response, India PCG (Meeting/Site Visit)                                | Chennai, India                    |

*The Proposed Partners' Solidarity Visit (11-15 March) to the YMCA Mongolia has been moved to May to tie in with their 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 6 May. The new dates will be announced as soon as they have been fixed.*

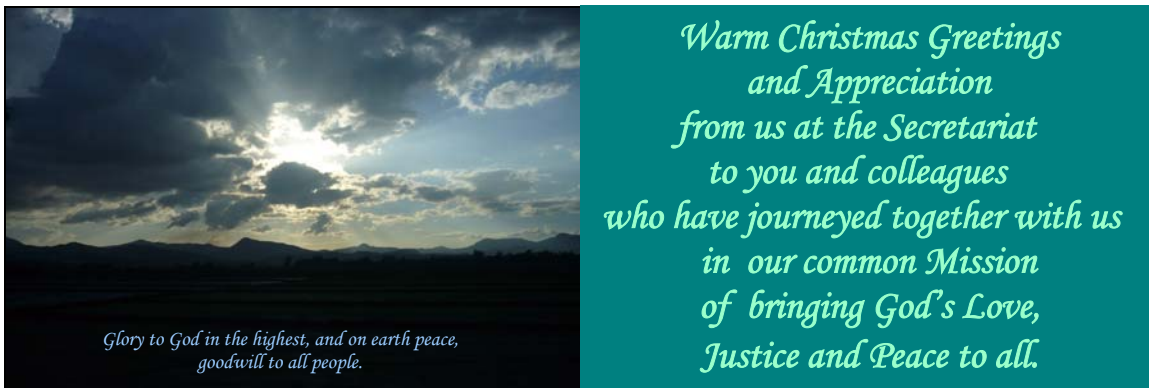
## 9. Concluding Remarks ~ Empty, to be Full

We have journeyed together in expressing the Mission in our contexts for almost a year. We had our ups and downs. We look back with diverse feelings ~ of achievement, frustrations, hopelessness, hope, discomfort, comfort at what we have not been able to do or able to do. As we look back, we see that our daily, weekly and monthly routines have kept us busy - kept our minutes, and hours full. Perhaps kept us from sensing the movement and life around us? Perhaps we have forgotten how to be mindful of all that is around us?

During the recently concluded 35-day 24<sup>th</sup> Advanced Studies Programme, the concept of “emptiness” kept emerging in the discussions. For example, in the studies on Contemporary Theological Perspectives, we discussed the need to empty in order to be filled by the spirit of God. In our discussions on YMCA mission, we were taken into the Mokpo YMCA’s (Korea) concept of “3-Bim” (3-emptiness) *empty mind, empty bowl and empty hand* – the Korean word “bim” has three different meanings, representing *prayer, empty* and *seeing* ..... We need to see our own and the community’s cluttered life, see with the eyes of the Christ empty ourselves through our own spirituality to be transformed, to be a new vessel, a light for Christ in the world today.

We need to take on the attitude of “seeing the beyond”, to empty ourselves in order to be filled again and to be socially relevant. As we prepare for the future to meet the community needs beyond the present, does our vision need resetting? Or our Mission renewing? Our structures reorganising?

The Lord bless us and keep us as we journey together, emptying ourselves that we may be filled to do the Mission as we draw closer to renewing our oneness with the Christ.



Yip Kok Choong  
*General Secretary*

Shella Quezada-Zagada  
*Executive Secretary*

Lakshan Dias  
*Executive Secretary*