



APAY NEWS

Monthly e-Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs No. 03 / 09 ~ June-July 2009

1. University YMCA LEADS in Revolution...

Preparations is well in progress for the 2nd Asia and Pacific Uni-Y Regional Conference which will be held from 29 July to 3 August 2009. The YMCA of Singapore, host and co-organiser, led by its Uni-Y Singapore members (local host youth committee) has planned several innovative experiential learning events/programmes. This includes show of best practices through community service/exposures; unique approaches and groundbreaking ideas that help youth develop the necessary skills to start their own social enterprise.

University YMCA LEADS (Leaders for Entrepreneurship, Advocacy, Development and Service) in Revolution will be the keynote speech to be delivered by Dr. Guat Tin, Associate Professor of Policy and Leadership Studies, Nanyang Technological University. As a concrete outcome of the Conference, it is expected that participants would be able to gain better understanding of how social entrepreneurship can be a creative solution to address social needs. It will not only provide economic opportunities for youth but raise awareness on their social responsibility as change agents of their own communities.

There will be more than 100 youths from 13 countries participating in this Conference ~ YMCAs of Cambodia (2), Hong Kong (22), India (5), Japan (4), Korea (5), Malaysia (2), Myanmar (3), Philippines (15), Taiwan (8), Thailand (2), Vietnam (2), USA (2) and more than 30 Uni-Y'ers/youth working committees from our host YMCA. The Senior Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Mr. Teo Ser Luck, will be the Guest of Honor at the Opening Ceremony.

We express our sincere appreciation to YMCA of Singapore, host and co-organiser of this Conference for securing some grants from its partners and making the fees more affordable for students' participation.

2. Poverty Workshop Hopes to Build Partnerships through the New APP

The Regional Workshop on Poverty and Sustainable Development from 7-11 August 2009 at the YMCA of New Delhi will explore on the contextual challenges on poverty and sustainable development. The workshop will begin with an appreciative inquiry on the impact of the current global challenges on poor and vulnerable. Good practices from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Philippines will be presented. The participants will have the opportunity to visit the action responses of the New Delhi YMCA in the community as part of the exposure visits.

It will focus on enhancing capacity of the YMCAs in effectively implementing poverty alleviation projects with renewed skills. Mr. Matthews Dylan, Director for International Programmes Y Care International will facilitate the training session on Project Development. We hope to develop and build bilateral and multilateral partnerships through the new APAY Partnership Project Scheme.

Dr. Christopher Lakra, Director Indian Social Institute, Dr. David Selvaraj, Director, Visthar and Dr. Chandi P. Chapagain, Imagine Nepal will serve as the resource persons.

3. Understanding our Differences ~ International Youth Peace Camp 09

Into its 4th year, the International YMCA Youth Peace Camp to be held in Timor Lester from 4-10 August 2009 will focus on “Understanding Our Differences”. Youths from Korea and Japan YMCAs will be participating. As these international volunteers, together with the Timorese youths work with the community, they will facilitate and initiate community peace programs that will promote respect for diversity. The “Peace School” concept, as one of the program’s component is an innovative approach to building peace and living together in harmony as a process of peace and reconciliation.

This Youth Camp is in line with our Quadrennial Thrust of peace and justice, and a multi-lateral partnership program of the YMCAs of Japan, Korea, East Timor and APAY.

(Programme information available on our website)

4. Forum on Ageing

The APAY Forum on Ageing will be hosted by the Penang YMCA from 27 September to 1 October 2009. The participants will discuss issues pertaining to ageing and develop plans for proactive engagements by the YMCAs. There will be opportunities to share some best practices and innovative interventions in addressing the challenges faced by the ageing society. *Details of the programme can be downloaded from our website. Registration will close on 5 September 2009.*

5. YMCA Sub-regional Peace Forums in New Delhi, in Penang

Furthering the thrust of QPP on Peace with Justice and translating into action the Colombo Declaration on Peace and Security, 2 Sub-regional Peace Forums will be organised as follows:

- **YMCA South Asia Peace Forum on 7 August 2009, New Delhi YMCA.** Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Honorable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of India (former Under Secretary General of UN) will address the forum.
- **YMCA South East Asia Peace Forum on 27 September 2009, Penang YMCA.**

Both forums will discuss on the prospects of peace building in their sub-regions and how YMCAs could make their own meaningful interventions. It will also create an opportunity to share the National/ local Plans based on the quadrennial thrusts of the APAY.

6. 27th Advanced Studies Programme

Invitations for participation for the 27th Advanced Studies Program (ASP) from October 26th to November 28th 2009 has been sent to all Movements. So far we have received 12 confirmed participants and hope to get another 5 before the July 31st deadline. The ASP is an APAY development program for YMCA professional secretaries. It aims to help the professional staff for movement building and to strengthen the professional leadership in the YMCA's aspirations in social transformations in today's context.

The Registration fee is US\$250.00 and the participation fee is US\$1,650.00)
Programme Information can be downloaded from our website.

7. Reminder! Surveys...Surveys...Surveys...

This year, we are conducting surveys on gender equity, youth participation and information about national movements. We hope to get to know you and understand the Movements in our region better through these surveys. By learning the real situation of our YMCAs, we hope to effectively respond and support each other as one YMCA family.

Updated Gender Equity Survey 2009

"Lack of understanding", "seen as women's issues", "not equipped to handle the issue", "our constitution and by laws" are the most common observable gaps that our YMCAs face with regards to the issue of gender gathered from the 18 respondents to our survey. A more in depth analysis of the survey results, how to respond and make practical actions will be included in the Gender Workshop on 14-17 December in Metro YMCA Singapore.

Youth Participation and National Movements

We hope to receive responses to these surveys before 30 July 2009. Please send all your completed survey forms to the APAY Secretariat (*Attn: Cristina Dalope*)

8. Alternative Tourism Workshop Develops Guidelines for GATN

The Regional Workshop on YMCA Global Alternative Tourism developed guidelines and implementation plans for the YMCA Global Alternative Tourism Network (GATN). Twenty-nine participants from New Zealand, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Thailand and Singapore participated in the three days programme. The workshop looked at Alternative Tourism in the perspective of Global Citizenship and Social Responsibility, and also explored the possibilities of using it as a tool for resource mobilization and mission accomplishment for the YMCA. Together with the resource persons, the participants underwent a cross-fertilization of concepts, ideas and experiences on Alternative Tourism. A field trip was made to the Mae Wang district in Chiangmai, where the participants were presented a broad framework on Community Based Tourism.

The workshop suggested, "Go With YMCA, Make a Change" as the brand theme of GATN. Dr Park Jai Chang, President of APAY inaugurated the workshop. Mr. Caesar D Mello, Executive Director, Ecumenical Coalition of Tourism (ECOT), Dr. Weerapon Thongma,

Dean, School of Tourism, Majo University, served as the key resource persons. The YMCA of Chiangmai hosted the workshop from June 27-30, 2009.

9. Raon-Atti Junior ~ New Initiative for Youth Global Citizenship Education

On 25 July to 5 August, fifty (50) young teens, mostly high school students will be engaged in a week-long community service activities under the *Raon Atti* Junior – Young Friends of Asia programme. This is a new initiative for youth global citizenship education thru through the IVS (*International Volunteer Service*) and the ISL (*International Service Learning*). These very young volunteers are expected to have service learning on "green tourism" that includes community livelihood, cultural diversity, and environment; cultural exchange with local teens and homestay with local families.

Four local YMCAs have been identified to be the hosts for this programme ~ Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Chiang Mai (Thailand), Ho Chi Min (Vietnam) and Albay (Philippines), and Babpo (Cambodia) NGO.

The *Raon Atti*, a partnership of the Kok Min Bank (KB) and the Korean YMCA is concurrently having the 2nd project of “YMCA-KB *Raon Atti* Friends of Asian Peace in 8 Movements. Both programmes will end on 5 August 2009. The *Raon Atti* Junior is supported by KB through Korea Community Chest Foundation.

10. YMCA Youth Volunteer Service Camp in Earthquake-stricken Sichuan

Joy...Love...Service...the theme of the YMCA International Service Camp to the affected communities of the devastating earthquake in 2008 will gather about sixty young volunteers from YMCAs of Japan, Korea, Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong and Mainland China. Several activities and service programmes for students and elderly people have been planned to engage the young volunteers in the identified service areas of Ning Qiang and Shi Fang counties.

The National Committee of YMCAs of China together with Xi'an YMCA and Chengdu YMCA & YWCA will be organizing this youth camp to be held on 1-10 August 2009.

11. Japan YMCA Launches Youth Global Citizenship Project 2009

The National Council of YMCAs of Japan is launching its “YMCA Youth Global Citizenship Project 2009” with a week long summer training in Tozanso, Japan. Aside from input presentations, there will be workshops on development education, field study and action planning. This project aims to deepen the participants' understanding of global citizenship, which the YMCAs are promoting. The summer training is an action response of the 3rd China-Japan-Korea Peace Forum to organize a “Peace Forum for Global Citizenship”. Youths from North-East Asia were invited to join this training on 22-28 August 2009.

The global citizenship project will be a one-year programme for the Japanese youths through national and international trainings/exposures and fieldwork in the communities.

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

EASY Net Holds National Coordinators Training

Representatives from nine National Ecumenical Teams (NETs) participated in the National Coordinators Training held at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 2 – 8 July, 2009. National Coordinators, the main facilitators of EASY Net actions and initiatives in their respective countries shared and evaluated their NETs leading towards a strengthened network. The training was an avenue for collective study on ecumenism, challenges and prospects of the ecumenical youth movement. Other topics discussed included organizing and networking of ecumenical communities, gender perspective, exposures and thematic workshops on migration, interfaith and peace & reconciliation.

Together with the Core Team, the National Coordinators planned for this year's EASY Net Week Celebration from 18-24 October. "Strengthening the NETs" will be the main objective of the regional network for 2008-2012. They have discussed their 2-year plan at the same training.

National Ecumenical Teams are organised in Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka. Ms. Cristina Dalope, our Executive Secretary for Programmes was one of the facilitators at the programme.

Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) Meets in APAY

On 13 July, our General Secretary Kohei Yamada met with Prawate Khid-arn, General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and Mr. Max Ediger, ICF Coordinator at the APAY office here in Hong Kong. Mr. Max Ediger shared the background and work of ICF since its inception in 2003 and its plans for the future. An important part of the discussion involved transferring responsibility for the second phase of the project for the years 2009 to 2011 from CCA to APAY beginning on 1 October 2009. The staff members of APAY, CCA and ICF also attended the meeting. *(by Bruce Van Voorhis, APAY Coordinator for Interfaith Programs)*

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) is a joint interfaith initiative of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the APAY and the Church Development Service (EED) of Germany.

Regional NGOs Meeting in Hong Kong

Twenty representatives of regional NGOs based in Hong Kong met at the Chinese YMCA Conference Room on 13 July 2009 hosted by APAY General Secretary, Mr. Kohei Yamada. The NGOs met to strengthen their network and to further collaboration on common issues that will bring them together. The meeting included sharing of some their programmes and activities. Those who attended included the Asian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC), Asia Centre for People's Progress (ACPP), Hong Kong Industrial Christian Committee (HKCIC), World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) – Asia Pacific, Asian Students Association (ASA), Asian Migrant Centre (AMC), Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) and the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY).

13. Congratulations! Changes in National Leadership

New National President for New Zealand

Russel Leech has been appointed National President of the National Council of New Zealand YMCAs. Mr. Leech, an accountant and a businessman is the President of the South Canterbury YMCA. He has been associated with the YMCA for almost 30 years. The new President started as a tutor of Timaru branch on a skills development education programme for better employment.

Mr. Leech said that each of the 16 YMCAs in New Zealand has its own focus and they can choose what sort of activities they wish to run. One of the challenges he is looking forward to is building partnerships between the separate groups, without preventing each group from using its own imagination to develop ideas. *(Source: The Timaru Herald, YMCA South Canterbury local newspaper)*

Mr. John Varughese Appointed NGS of India YMCA

Mr. John Varughese, the Chief Coordinator of the India Tsunami Response Program has been appointed the National General Secretary of the National Council of YMCAs of India by the National Board at their meeting on 11 July 2009. Over the last 28 years, he served in different capacities with the National YMCA such as the Regional Secretary of the North East India Region, the Regional Secretary of the South West Region, the Assistant General Secretary of the YMCA Indian Student Hostel in London and the Secretary for Movement Strengthening. He attended the Advanced Studies program of APAY in 1991. He will assume office from 1 August 2009.

14. National Movement's Updates!

Sri Lanka YMCA Annual Youth Conference

Recognizing the active participation and the role of young people in strengthening and building the Movement, the National Council of YMCAs of Sri Lanka, has been conducting its Youth Conference. This year, the National Youth Committee organized this annual event at the Diyagala Boys Town in Ragama last May 22-24. Fifty-six participants from 16 YMCAs took part in this gathering and deliberated on issues affecting youths both in the YMCA and in society. The challenges and aspirations of the present day youths led them in the formulation of pro-active responses and practical actions addressing youth issues, peace building and strengthening YMCA youth work. *(Report by Mr. S.T. Thoumian, Chair, Youth Committee, NCY Sri Lanka/APAY YPLD Committee Member)*

National Forum on Global Citizenship, Philippines

Providing an orientation on the concept of globalization based on the Tokyo Forum Statement and responding to the call of developing practical actions on the issue of global citizenship in the national context, the YMCA of the Philippines held a National Forum on Global Citizenship from July 16-18, 2009. A total of 51 youth club advisors, program staff and youth leaders from various local YMCAs and educational institutions participated in this forum. The participants had a clearer understanding of the current social dynamics in

globalization and of the Regional YMCAs perspective of Global Citizenship. The Forum also explored on the current issues of global peace, justice and safety.

Thematic workshops/seminars on multi-cultural society and international migration, clean and honest elections, imperatives to good governance, poverty and sustainable development, healthy lifestyles, and environmental advocacy were held. Specific and practical responses towards being responsible transformational leaders in the globalized world were formulated after the thematic presentations. This national gathering provided an opportunity and inspiration for the participants to achieve the aspirations of the YMCA in providing a better future for the young people. Dr. Francis Lee, a peace advocate from Korea, Mr. Jose Varghese from APAY and a number of prominent local experts were the resource persons. *(Report by Mr. Pabs Tabucol, Assistant Program Secretary for Movement Strengthening, YMCA Philippines)*

15. New General Secretary of LACA

We extend our warm congratulations to Mr. Mauricio Diaz Vandorsee for being appointed as the new General Secretary of Latin America and Carribean Alliance (LACA) effective 1 May 2009 for a four-year term. Concurrently, he is the National General Secretary of the Brazilian Federation of YMCAs, a position that he will maintain during his tenure as Area Secretary. *(Source: YMCA World-June 2009)*

16. Forthcoming Events/Meetings

DATES	EVENTS	VENUE
29 July to 3 August	2 nd Asia & Pacific Uni-Y Regional Conference 2009	Singapore YMCA
31 July to 2 August	23 rd Asia Area Convention of Y's Men International	Sri Lanka
7 August	YMCA South Asia Peace Forum	New Delhi YMCA, India
7-11 August	Regional Workshop on Poverty and Sustainable Development	New Delhi YMCA, India
11 August	APAY Officers' Meeting	New Delhi YMCA, India
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 Gender Workshop	Metro YMCA Singapore

17. From the Desk of the General Secretary.... *My First Month at APAY*

It has been more than a month since I assumed the office as General Secretary of APAY. It was an interesting first month.

During this period, I tried to communicate with some of the weaker or isolated movements. Over the past several years, we have not heard from Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tahiti, Fiji, and lately Nepal.

I found out that Papua New Guinea decided to close the YMCA there after the death of the former General Secretary and the loss of interest among their board members.

We have completely lost contact with the Samoa YMCA and unless we have some assistance from external movements, they may loose their interest and energy to keep going due to the small isolated islands and limited resources there.

I have tried unsuccessfully to contact the Tahiti YMCA.

The Auckland YMCA, New Zealand, is trying to assist the Fiji YMCA who has been struggling but some of their YMCAs are reportedly doing fine.

We have not seen the Nepal YMCA represented at our area meetings the last couple of years, but we managed to establish communications with them and managed to get some information of their situation. With some local contribution they appear to be self-supporting. I will find out more when I meet up with them at the Poverty Workshop later.

The Bangladesh YMCA had gone through a very difficult time during their leadership struggles but they managed to resolve that and have very quickly recovered and are back with their routine work. The big cyclone hit the southern parts of the country in March, and we are glad that a few YMCAs in the area have been providing food and milk for the affected families there. We are proud of the efforts in rehabilitation work shown by the YMCAs of Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Japan (including the Tokyo YMCA). The Y USA and Y Care International also contributed to this cause.

I personally visited the Macau YMCA, which is a 50-minute boat-ride from Hong Kong. They have one YMCA with three locations with 99 full-time staff. They provide a dormitory for juveniles who are first time offenders as one of their core programs. It is a very unique program – it shows that the government and the community trusted the YMCA! I also visited the two YMCAs in Hong Kong, and they have so many branches and programs here. The Chinese YMCA alone has 40 sites, and increasingly the Hong Kong Government is requesting the YMCA for more facilities to run their programs for youths, the elderly, etc.

The workshop on Global Alternative Tourism and Network, held in Chiangmai, Thailand, at the end of June, 24 participants from 9 countries attended. Among the topics raised included, “What kind of tourism helps the local community as well as the tourists?”, “How can the YMCA create such opportunities and how can the Y global network be utilized?”, “What would be the differences in the YMCA tours compared to others?”.... Throughout the workshop, I realized that the Y is more than what we do. The Y is a real transformation agent of people and communities. The new president of the New Zealand YMCA, Mr. Russell Leech said, “...that the Y is much broader than gyms and camps. It has a deep mission and roles with community needs...” I totally agree with him.

I had the chance to visit the Bangkok YMCA for a day. As you may recall, they underwent a very difficult time several years ago and they had to sell the Bangkok YMCA hostel building to overcome their financial problems. They are now landed with two legal entities – the Association and the Foundation – under the same board and staff leadership. Their work is very focused on serious social problems that Thailand faces, such as, urban poor, children’s home for parents of HIV/AIDS, children’s home for high risk trafficking and abuse, etc. Their work is widely supported by many groups both domestically and internationally.

I also made a visit to Myanmar. Although the cyclone Nargis hit the southern part (delta areas) of the country in May 2008, it appears that the people have resumed their regular

lives but the livelihood lost due to the disaster was still obvious during my visit. The National Council of Myanmar as well as some local YMCAs has been actively engaging in rehabilitation work and child care programs especially in the poor remote areas. They had received support from Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, as well as the USA and Canada. We are thankful for the solidarity among us.

I have sent a survey for the YMCA movements in this area as well as a survey for the youths. The gender survey has been completed. The surveys are for us to get to know the situations of our fellow movements for supporting or for learning from each other. I believe that if the 27 movements (including China, Cambodia, Mongolia, and East Timor) in the area feel the YMCA global dynamics and take advantage of this great network for our daily work, it will make a big change in your movement. Our thinking globally and acting locally will make history in the YMCA. To have a holistic picture of the YMCAs in our region would help in our global mind and the nature of our global work. Your inputs and responses are requested and we hope to be able to show you the whole picture in a few months time.

I am very encouraged to see the active and devoted work for the children, the poor, the victims of disasters by the YMCAs and our global supporters.

God bless us and our works in the YMCA!

Kohei Yamada
General Secretary

Cristina A. Dalope & Jose Varghese
Executive Secretaries

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