

Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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July 21-26: Disaster Preparedness, Management & Risk Reduction Workshop, Kallar, Sri Lanka

Aug 23-28: YMCA Regional Youth Conference 2013, Tamil Nadu, India

Aug 30-Sept 5: ASYG 2013, Metro Manila, Philippines

Nov 4-29: 31st Advanced Studies Programmes

Advance Training of Trainers in Gender Mainstreaming

The Advance Training of Trainers in Gender Mainstreaming was held on 3-10 June 2013 at Bangkok Christian Guest House, Bangkok, Thailand. This was participated in by 16 staff and volunteers, 12 women and 4 men, from seven (7) national movements including Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Ms. Mercy Kappen ,Directress for Programmes of Visthar, a social organization in India, was the main facilitator and resource person and Dr. Liza Lamis, Acting Coordinator of Asian Women's Resource Centre for Culture & Theology (AWRC), provided inputs and challenges on ecumenical Christian perspective and daily biblical reflections. From the basic training of trainers in gender mainstreaming held in November 2012, it was strongly recommended that a follow-up be conducted to further develop capacities of staff and volunteers who will be trainers in gender mainstreaming in their respective local and national YMCAs.

During this advance training of trainers, the participants affirmed that gender mainstreaming is not simply a sector's issue but more of an overarching issue of patriarchy and gender inequality. The participatory, creative and problem posing method helped the participants understand the issues, concepts, principles of gender mainstreaming. The same were internalized through the 'teaching learning community' where participants became more sensitive, conscious about their behavior with the group as they journey together in a more inclusive teaching and learning community. The 6-day workshop covered a wide range of training modules and components including: worship and biblical reflections and challenges to YMCA perspective as Christian

Ecumenical Movement, developing norms, role allocation, gender profile of participating movements, issues and challenges, gender concepts, social relations, institution and construct, deepening on gender analysis, gender mainstreaming perspective and strategies. The participants gained teaching skills through their module presentations and training events using “codes” for an effective gender sensitization and awareness raising towards gender mainstreaming in their respective YMCAs.

There are so much to learn from this learning opportunity and, without doubt, the participants have been affected through the experience. They will hopefully carry their concerns and plans forward for the benefit of their YMCA colleagues, friends, program partners and beneficiaries, thereby influencing their own YMCAs’ culture as a gender sensitive and inclusive movement.

Eloisa Dukha Borreo

Orientation of Bangladesh YMCA Secretaries

It was a memorable experience for me to facilitate a Training Program for the Secretaries of the local YMCAs of Bangladesh, primarily who were appointed afresh in the YMCA and required orientation about the YMCA.

The primary objective of the Training Program in Bangladesh was to give orientation to the participants about the history, mission and the present thrust of the YMCAs. Capacitate them with basic skills to develop their respective YMCAs, develop good governance in the YMCAs, encourage them to involve the members and youth in the YMCA activities and also help them to be self-sustaining YMCAs.

The training commenced on 19th of May and concluded on 28th of May, this was held at the YMCA Training Center, Savar, Dhaka. On the initial day, the history of the YMCAs and the YMCA Mission was discussed. The participants were explained the Paris Basis, the Kampala Principles and the Challenge 21, their historical context and how these could be contextualized and interpreted in contemporary situation and environment.

Subsequently, the Global Operating Plan, the three pillars of GOP, the Mission Clarity, Institutional Viability and the Social Relevance was elaborately discussed. The equal importance of three pillars in the operation of the YMCA was a challenge for the participants. The participants realized that each of their respective YMCAs lack some aspect in each of these areas, as such they resolved to work developing all these three areas.

The constitution of the YMCA was also discussed on this day. Special emphasis was given on the role of the Members, Board Members, Office Bearers and General Secretary were discussed, Regulatory & Statutory Obligations of the General Secretary, enrollment and cessation of membership, procedures of amendment of constitution, etc were also discussed.

The introduction to the Organizational Review gave the participants the realization of the actual situation of their YMCAs, especially in terms of good governance in the YMCAs. The participants were introduced through the process of preparing a SMART Strategic Plan for their own YMCA.

On 27th May the Lay Leaders of the YMCAs, who are under the MS process joined the workshop for subsequent two days. On the first day, an overview of resource mobilization, especially the need of mobilizing local resources was discussed. Group works were done for drawing up effective finance campaigns. The issue of Good Governance was discussed, the role of the Board Members in the YMCA, the code of good governance of APAY for the Board Members were also appraised to the participants.

On the final day, the participants went through various exercises, were involved in identifying the issues each of these YMCAs were facing and they contemplated on the possible ways and means to overcome those. The participants of these YMCAs were determined to regularize the various aspects of good governance in the YMCA and also ensure the participation of members and youth in the YMCA.

Finally, I would like to mention a note of thanks to the National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh for extending their warm hospitality during my stay in Dhaka. I would like to thank Y-Care International U.K. for providing financial support for holding this training session.

Duncan Chowdhury

YMCA of Timor Leste -

YMCA Changing My Life

Francisco was only 13 years old when joined YMCA football (soccer) training in 2007. He loves football and comes to Terra Santa YMCA every week for the training. The Program Center of Timor Leste YMCA is in the locality of Terra Santa. Two of his brothers also joined the YMCA Football Team. When I visited Timor Leste YMCA in last June, I saw him there involved in football coaching for about 20 children. Timor Leste YMCA has 250 football members and they have formed 8 football teams. The football field is entirely occupied from morning 6:00am till evening 18:00. I also learnt from the staff that he is not only coaching the YMCA Children Team but he himself is a National Football Team Player now. During the break I could talk with him. He told me that he came from large family with eight brothers. Three are now playing at YMCA Football Team. He got a chance to visit other countries in Asia and representing Timor Leste. Moreover, he is now studying at the university majoring in Sports. He got full scholarship and is in the third year. He is only 19 year old and has a long way to go. He pays back the YMCA by coaching other less fortunate children who has interest in football like him. We hope and pray one day Francisco will become world class soccer player. I was overwhelmed to learn from him that YMCA Soccer Class so far has produced another four National Players in Timor Leste under the age of 14. They too got opportunities to visit overseas countries representing Timor Leste Football Team. Their pictures are everywhere in Dili promoted by the sponsors. Great Job !! Timor Leste YMCA.

Football (soccer) was introduced to Timor Leste YMCA by Mr. Ishibashi in 2006. (He is now working at Osaka YMCA). YMCA conducts YMCA Peace Cup Tournament annually, which is supported by Y's Men Club of Yeosu from Korea.

Richard Kaing

Tools for Transformation

All of us write something every day, most of us take photos regularly and a good number of us take video from time to time. While we may not be expert at these activities, we might find enjoyment and relaxation in them. But how often do we think about writing, photography and video as tools for transformation?

From June 9 to 15, 2013, a group of SOP alumni gathered in Siem Reap, Cambodia to explore how these tools can effectively be used to inspire marginalized people to tell their stories, analyze their issues and join together to build communities of interfaith justpeace. Ms. Victoria Rue from the USA helped a group of five budding ICF writers reflect on how to see, feel and

empathize with the life of someone struggling for justice. Through her guidance each one wrote a reflective monologue or story through which they became the individual they had interviewed so that the story could be heard.

Mr. Michael Bade, working with Mennonite Central Committee in Cambodia, gave opportunity for a group of five participants to experiment with storytelling through videography. Thought time was limited they worked on video techniques such as lighting, camera angle and how video can be used to raise awareness.

Photography was coordinated by Max Ediger who introduced three ICF photographers to photos as codes for raising awareness and mobilizing people for action. Various composition techniques were explored with focus on how we can take photos that make the viewer feel, think and then act.

On the final evening, each group made a presentation of their achievements during the few days together and also shared their ideas of how the tool they work with could be used to help the marginalized tell their own stories and build their own movements.

Participants will now return to their home countries to continue working with the special tool they learned. With the goal of using these tools to improve our community organizing activities, ICF looks forward to feedback and new ideas from participants on how we can more effectively build communities of interfaith justpeace using these tools.

Max Ediger

General Secretary Message

I heard this speech three years ago in Tainan YMCA, at its 55th anniversary event. Mr. Chen Chin-Seng, then the chair person, spoke something interesting but very confusing.

“People become richer while countries become poorer.”

“Fewer Young people read books while more students go to colleges”

“Less number of children while more number of elder people”

“Not married, more divorce, less children....”

“Rapid changes in society while values become less clear”

“Weather changes globally.....”

Those strange but real trends and phenomena are true and I feel the same. Mr. Chen said in his speech, “YMCA may have lost its characteristics as YMCA”. He concluded saying, “it is time for our YMCAs to change and time to provide community change programs by being creative and innovative”.

Today I read another article from a newspaper (Asahi, June 19). The article questioned that what is going on in our world in this 21st century. We have become possessing a lot of materials, things in our daily lives. This is what we have worked hard for in our countries. Now many developing countries are also following for the same richness with a lot of materials. While many of us have started seeing the limit of our world supporting such richer and more materialistic lives for all. There are limits in fuels, in the capacity of our earth, and many countries experiencing more and more elderly. The article questioned to us, “don’t we start feeling that this is likely our changing point of lives, our values, our quality of life?”

I do not have answers to this question but I feel something we, YMCA can do, or we should challenge to respond for the future trends of our lives. Innovation, creativeness, new thinking and new actions are necessary. The World Alliance as well as APAY believes that YMCAs could be the change agent in this sense. The youth in YMCA is the change agent. We have

started investing 240 change agents in the world. Those change agents are selected from 80 countries. APAY selected 45 from 21 movements. What are they thinking and what will they do? What will they propose to our YMCAs for the next generation? YMCA is providing them a space and opportunity to think and act in this changing society. We need to give trainings and give them a chance to think and talk together. We are challenging them and hoping them for creating and innovating a new program based on new human life for more sustainable world and environment.

Global Citizenship, Social Enterprises, Entrepreneurship, Interfaith cooperation, Green actions, and Global action with Change agents..... I think we are in the right truck!!!

Kohei Yamada

Regional Youth Conference

23-28 August 2013 in India

The Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs is convening the Regional Youth Conference 2013 at YMCA Yelagiri Camp, India on 23-28 August 2013. The Theme of the conference will be Celebrating friendship, Cultural Pursuit and Social Action.

The National Council of YMCAs of India celebrates the Golden Jubilee (1963-2013) of the establishment of the UNI-Y movement in India by hosting the APAY Youth Conference.

The APAY Youth Conference 2013 will be a platform for young people from Asia and Pacific countries to celebrate and share the joy of friendship, Culture pursuit and Social action. This Year we expected 100 youth from the Asian region, in addition 60 local youth from India.

The Youth Conference participants will also have a unique opportunity to experience India's Socio- Economic, Culture Diversities and new trends of Young Indians life that shape "Incredible India".

Early bird registration fee is single US\$ 160 & group registration (maximum three people) US\$ 150 early bird registration will be closed 10th July 2013 after July 10, 2013 registration fee is US\$ 175. This will cover 5 nights' accommodation, all meals during the conference; all transport arrangement during the conference. Registration will be closed 30 July 2013. Green Funds US\$ 15 shall be paid all international participants to the Asia Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY).

The Participations are Welcome from any youth group members of YMCAs. The APAY strongly encourage all the National movements to send their youth delegates for the YMCA Youth conference this year.

Roger Peiris

31st APAY Advanced Studies Program

It is about time to remind you all about the commencement of our Advanced Studies Program. We are glad to inform you that the 31st APAY Advanced Studies Program will be held this year from 4th to 29th November at Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village, Ma On Shan, Hong Kong.

This is an training for the Senior YMCA Secretaries who have several years of YMCA job experience and are actively involved in program planning & implementation and who are committed to the YMCA. We invite the National Movements of our region to nominate appropriate candidates for this program. The detailed program information are hosted in our website www.asiapacificymca.org or can be obtained on request to office@asiapacificymca.org The deadline for receiving applications are on 31st July 2013.

Activities of Youth Participation and Leadership Development (YPLD) Committee

This is my fifth year at YMCA. In the first two years, I was in charge of the language section and day camp program for the children with learning disability at Yamate Community Center, Tokyo YMCA. The Center has many kinds of programs for children, youth and elderly. It is "YMCA" for everyone.

Now, I am part of the National Council of YMCAs (NCY) of Japan to organize Global Citizenship Project for youth. These international programs are a great opportunity for the youth to get to know the world. The Secretary General of the World Alliance of YMCAs, Rev. Johan Vilhelm Eltvik attended the 2nd National Conference of the NCY of Japan at International Youth Center Tozanso from 14-16 June. To my surprise, one third of the attendance was youth. It was the first time to have so many youth at the conference! We had a good opportunity to share our idea about YMCA. It is very important to connect youth in Japan to the worldwide YMCA movement. I would love to encourage them to engage in upcoming APAY Challenge 2013, World Challenge 2014 and other international programs! ~ Misaki Nagaoka, Japan

YMCA Regional Youth Conference 2013 will be held at YMCA Yelagiri Camp, India from 23-28 August 2013 with the theme of "Celebrating Friendship, Cultural Pursuit, Social Action". The National Council of YMCAs of India celebrates the Golden Jubilee of the university student YMCA (UNI-Y) in India, which has touched and transformed the life of thousands of young people across India and inspired them as agents of social change.

The conference will be a unique opportunity to experience India's cultural diversities and new trends of young Indian life that shapes "Incredible India". On behalf of APAY youth committee, I welcome you all to India! ~ Betsy Williams, India

Before I came to YMCA, I was just a normal person with a college diploma working at a private company. I could care nothing but my work and personal life.

After joining the YMCA, my life and attitude toward it has totally changed. It is not only because the vision of pursuing world peace and equitable society, but the works we do truly bring impact on the staff and volunteers. I have been through camps, APAY conferences, flea market and fund raising, international volunteer work as well as community college at Taichung YMCA. I got to meet friends of different age and cultural background.

I think YMCA change young people by providing more cultural exchange and eye-opening opportunities. I am glad to be at YMCA! ~Zoe Hsiao, Taiwan

In April 2013, I volunteered in northern Thailand. I met four RaonAtti from Korea – Pla, Kun, Doi and Nam (no wonder these are their Thai names). And "RaonAtti" means "friends of Asia".

During the time at YMCA of Chiang Rai, we taught in children day camps, visited hill tribes' families, renovated YMCA centre, fund-raised on the street for cleft-lip and cleft-palette project. We experienced the hard work together and shared the fun together. As one of the slogans of RaoAtti goes, we "think globally, act locally". To me, it was not just a field work but rather a down-to-the-ground self-reflection experience. I am so thankful that I am in the big family of YMCA.

I must again thank YMCA of Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai and all the supporters for this good learning opportunity.

Want to know more about RaonAtti?
Please visit <http://www.raonatti.org/>
~ Alvin Kan, Hong Kong

Not interested any more?