

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs  
August 2014

1. YMCA Mission Conference, June 26-29, 2014
2. 18th World Council Meetings in Estes Park, USA  
June 29-July 5, 2014
3. APAY Regional Youth Conference 2014
4. Change Agents Evaluation Report July 2014
5. Y-Pod: The echo of the YMCA Movement
6. New President of National Council of YMCA of Myanmar

Nov 3-28: 32nd Advanced Studies Programme, Wu Kwai Sha, Hong Kong

YMCA Mission Conference,  
June 26-29, 2014

A Mission Conference was held right before the World Council meeting and 150 people attended the conference. There has been a group of YMCA members who have felt that the Christian Emphasis has been weakened in the YMCA activities and its mission. Everyday morning sessions started with worship and ended the day with the evening worship. In between sessions on spiritual issues in the YMCAs were held.

The keynote address was delivered by Rev. Samuel Stephen, Former President of APAY. In his address he challenged the participants with three questions;

\* How can we fulfill the God given mission? He mentioned that the YMCA is the vehicle to fulfill the mission and YMCA as a people's movement rather than an institution.

\* How can YMCA be more productive and effective? We need to be effective and productive in changing the world. He asked if YMCA has been empowering young people rather than entertaining young people.

\* How can YMCA become more powerful and transformational rather than traditional? We need to be intimate with God as our source of power. We need to learn God's way since our thoughts and deeds should be like Jesus.

In conclusion, he said that people come to YMCA for their own purposes. The YMCA is sending them out to bring out changes in the community and people. We have to show that the power of God exist in people as we have witnessed the power of God in the history of 170 years YMCAs.

The Peru YMCA has been successful in youth leadership development using the Christian

Leadership development for three years. For age group 14-17, high school youth, one year 100 – 150 students come to YMCA leadership development program. They come every Saturday for 4 hours in the YMCA from 3pm to 7pm. Out of 150 students, nearly 100 stay for three years, and they continue to serve in the university as leaders of such groups. Some of the youth leaders are now become the board members of the YMCA.

It was good opportunity to search Christian missions of YMCA. The society is rapidly changing and young people are not much responding to the traditional Christian organizations, including the churches. Some of the concrete programs were very interesting and could be applied in many YMCAs by facilitating the trainers' trainings. I thought and I would like to propose that the similar program could be planned right before the General Assembly in September 2015 if the majority of the YMCAs feels it is necessary.

~ Kohei Yamada, General Secretary

18th World Council Meetings in Estes Park, USA  
June 29-July 5, 2014

The 18th World Council was held in Estes Park, USA. There were about 1,300 participants from 83 movements. From our region of Asia Pacific, 20 YMCA movements attended the World Council, these are Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

Group Work:

One of the new programs of the World Council was holding four group sessions in the mornings for two and a half hours from the 2nd day to 5th day. Each group had 3-4 facilitators (mainly change agents) for 15-18 members (70 some groups formed). The facilitators met every night to review the process and planned for the following day, and the Change Agents lead group very successfully. Every member was involved in vision sharing of the World Alliance especially in the area of youth empowerment. Majority of the group members attended all four sessions. It was very participatory process and many people I heard enjoyed the fellowship and great leadership of young people.

Report of the Secretary General of the World Alliance:

Rev. Johan Vilhelm Eltvik shared the New WAY to Our WAY with the following points.

\* Youth Empowerment with more Change Agents and expand our reach to young people to 5% of all youth in the world that is from 28 million currently to 90 million.

\* Resource Mobilization (resource includes fund, youth and staff capacity)

\* Property development with the existing YMCA assets of all over the world

\* Research for evidence based youth issues and youth work in order to demonstrate the impacts

\* Communication and advocacy with strong image and position and with better internal

communication flow

\* Impact assessment in youth empowerment and movement strengthening

Plenary Session (decisions made at the Council):

\* Constitutional Amendment in relation with John R Mott Fund to protect the JRM Fund initial value of 15.9 million CHF and the inflation rate will be protected.

\* Stop Poverty Campaign of Norway YMCA: jointly and collectively speak up the unjust issues of young people

\* Sweden YMCA on avoiding any kind of discrimination for youth: social inclusion and non discrimination to any kind of minorities and sexual orientation

\* Korea to stop using the overused nuclear plants in country: over used (more than 30 years) nuclear plants should not be operated for the safety reason.

The Office Bearers who were elected, President, Mr. Peter Posner from England, Deputy President Ms. Evelyne Gueye from Senegal, Treasurer Mr. Leopoldo Moacir Lima, Brazil. Executive Committee Members from Asia and Pacific Region: Mr. Alan Morton from Australia, Mr. Roland Williams from India, Ms. Yoriko Hirose from Japan, Ms. Helen McEwan from New Zealand.

~Kohei Yamada, General Secretary

#### APAY Regional Youth Conference 2014

The APAY Youth Conference is an annual youth event of APAY. This Youth Conference is a platform for the youths of the YMCA movements of our region and share their respective national youth empowerment programs and also determine future youth action of APAY for youth empowerment. This year the Youth Conference shall be focusing on promotion Global Citizenship Education for young people and to join hands in citizenship involvement and to be effective participants in global society and redefine the new perspective of friendship, cultural pursuit and social action in the context of emerging socio-cultural, technological, economic realities in Asia Pacific region. The participants at the Youth Conference will also have a unique opportunity to experience Cambodian people & culture and to visit world heritages as well as historical places.

APAY Youth Conference will be held on 25-30 August at Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The theme will be "Youth Engagement for Sustainable Development" we are anticipating 80 youth participants from Asia Pacific region. Please contact your national movement for your participation at the conference.

~ Roger Peiris, Youth Programme Officer, APAY

#### Change Agents Evaluation Report July 2014

The Asia and Pacific YMCAs selected 44 young people staff and volunteers from 20 national movements who represented the voice of each country during this term. There were 24 (55%) male and 20 (45%) female Change Agents and 75% of them were volunteers. During last two years 26 (57%) of the Change Agents maintained communication with us successfully.

At regional level APAY organized two parallel trainings, one in 2012 in Sri Lanka and the other in 2013 in Hong Kong. The first global level training was held in August 2013 in Prague. About 270 Change Agents from 60 countries gathered there. From APAY 24 Change Agents participated at the Prague event. During the global training Change Agents discussed their plan of action when upon their return to their own countries.

\* Our Change Agents of APAY area decided to conduct the “APAY Green Challenge” 2013”. 21 Change Agents actively joined the Green Challenge.

\* The World Alliance of YMCs shall be conducting the One Million Voice (OMV) survey in 2014. From our region 13 national movements confirmed their engagement of One Million Voice.

\* Twenty Six of our Change Agents were engaged in different events in their local/national YMCAs related World Challenge 2014.

\* The E-Learning sessions were conducted by World Alliance of YMCA. The assignments were mandatory for Change Agents, 25 Change Agents successfully completed their respective assignments.

\* The World Council Meetings were held from 29 June to 6 July 2014 in Estes Park, Colorado, USA, from APAY 23 Change Agents played important roles during the World Council especially group works and future plans for youth empowerment.

\* As part of mentoring system, the Change Agents were mentored by experienced leaders of our region to provide support and counseling for this new generation YMCA leaders. The mentor accompanied the Change Agents virtually and through phone communications.

APAY has done Change Agents evaluation. We received 26 formed out of 44 Change Agents.

Total (44)  
Regional Training  
Global Training  
Active CA Local level  
Communication  
Drop Out

Male  
24 (55%)  
13 (29%)  
14 (31%)  
13 (29%)  
14 (31%)

2 (5%)

Female

20 (45%)

13 (29%)

12 (27%)

20 (45%)

15 (34%)

3 (7%)

Staff

11 (25%)

10 (22%)

9 (20%)

10 (22%)

11 (25%)

4 (10%)

Volunteer

33 (75%)

16 (36%)

17 (38%)

23 (52%)

18 (40%)

1 (2%)

East Asia

11 (25%)

6 (13%)

9 (20%)

8 (18%)

9 (20%)

0 (0%)

South East Asia

18 (40%)

9 (20%)

6 (13%)

14 (31%)

11 (25%)

3 (7%)

South Asia

11 (25%)

8 (18%)

7 (16%)

9 (20%)  
 7 (16%)  
 0 (0%)

Pacific  
 4 (10%)  
 3 (6%)  
 4 (10%)  
 2 (5%)  
 2 (5%)  
 2 (5%)

TOTAL  
 44 (100%)  
 26 (57%)  
 26 (57%)  
 33 (75%)  
 29 (65%)  
 5 (11%)

In the beginning of first year after our regional trainings 18 Change Agents were dropped out. Perhaps they were not familiar with what was expected from Change Agents and what was the Change Agents entire journey. Perhaps the Change Agents program was not clear for many YMCA professional and lay leaders. Perhaps there was a communication gap between the National Council and the Local YMCA vis a viz the Change Agents. Those might be the reasons of dropping outs. Surprisingly some of these dropped out Change Agents are still active in their local YMCAs.

#### Challenges:

Some of the Change Agents working in underdeveloped areas, having the access to internet and other communication tools are very challenging there. Others are working for the YMCA in the rural areas, a long way from any modern infrastructure and modern amenities. Most of the Change Agents are dealing with real- life situations ! They plan their weddings, have to support their families and much more while finding time to take part in webinars. Language and time differences were also the hindrances which could not be avoided.

#### Recommendations:

We are now at the concluding part of this Change Agents training phase and it is just the beginning for them for a long-term commitment to serve young people. The current generation of Change Agents will continue to work fully integrated in their home YMCAs. APAY Change Agents (Youth Reps) term will end September 2015 after the APAY General Assembly. We still have the remaining 14th months to work on the Change Agents process. We will do the following;

\* Assignments for present 39 existing Change Agents for our General Assembly in Korea next year.

\* Provide other assignments

- \* Keep regular communication with APAY.
- \* Communicate & identify local/national with Change Agents
- \* Create more space in their local/national movement for addressing youth empowerment training.
- \* Invite as a resource persons at APAY youth empowerment training events.
- \* Identify potential mentors to restart mentorship.

~Roger Peiris, Youth Programme Officer, APAY

#### Y-Pod: The echo of the YMCA Movement

Some of our APAY friends at the World Council were wondering what Y-POD is. Here I have invited the podcast host—Adrian Davies, also a change agent from Kosovo, to tell us more about it.

“Y-POD is the first weekly YMCA podcast, featuring interviews, stories and comments from the YMCA movement. Recorded by two young leaders, the idea was to bring the International movement to the local YMCA’s.

The idea came about when Adrian attended an international conference and was encouraged to write a blog afterwards, a comment was posted in which people were encouraged to debate the issues at the next gathering which was months away.

After a few pilot episodes leading up to and after the Prague festival there was enough positive feedback to work on the first series, having worked together for years and despite living 2000 miles apart Adrian and Gareth Couperthwaite (YMCA England) managed to record a podcast series, using their personal contacts and friends from all over the world.

The podcast is live here:

<http://www.buzzsprout.com/23086>

<https://itunes.apple.com/ch/podcast/world-ymcas-podcast/id869291202?l=en>

The first season was 6 episodes long and counted down to the World Challenge. Work has begun on the second series that will begin in September 2014.”

Back in APAY, I am thinking that we are creating space for young people, more than in YMCA centre. The internet or other virtual media could be a new space for YMCA where young people can share and to learn together. Y-Pod can be a good platform for YMCA in Asia and Pacific region.

~ Adrian Davies (YMCA Kosovo) and Alvin Kan (APAY Youth Committee Chairperson)

#### New President of National Council of YMCA of Myanmar

U Tha Sein was elected as the President of the National Council of YMCA of Myanmar w.e.f. March 29, 2014 for 3 years term 2014-2016.

U Tha Sein was baptized in 1951 and became a member of the Baptist Church at Kyimyindine. He was an active leader in Myanmar Baptist Churches Union. He graduated from Rangoon Arts and Science University. He joined the German Company after graduation in 1964 and retired in

2002. He had the opportunity to serve as volunteer in the Church and YMCA Mandalay as its President for 18 years. At the same time he served as Vice President for the NCY Myanmar for nearly 8 years, then as Treasurer for 6 years.

Currently, he serves as volunteer leader, as the Chairman of Christian Service and Development Department of Myanmar Baptist Churches Union, Board member of Mandalay YMCA and also as Chairman of Myanmar Scouts Constitution Committee.

We wish U Tha Sein all the success in his new role.

Not interested any more?