

CCA Quarterly Program Schedule

| Date | Program | Venue | Program Desk | Program category |
|--------------|---|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| April | | | | |
| 7-9 | ECOT Consultation and Foundation Board meeting | Chiang Mai, Thailand | GS | Ecumenical Relations |
| 9-12 | Follow-up Meetings on Mission | Seoul, Korea | FMU | Ecumenical Relations |
| 10-11 | WCC-REO's Meeting | Chiang Mai, Thailand | GS | Ecumenical Relations |
| 14-18 | WCC Public Hearing and Annual Global Ecumenical Network Meeting | Beirut, Lebanon | JID/MEPP | Ecumenical Relations |
| 15-18 | Northeast Asia Preparatory Meeting | Seoul, Korea | EGY | Ecumenical Relations |
| 22-23 | Religious Leaders Visit to Southern Thailand. | Southern Thailand | GS | CCA Program |
| 23-30 | Training of Trainers on Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation | Chiang Mai, Thailand | JID | CCA Program |
| 27-30 | NCC India Youth Pre Assembly | Shillong, India | EGY | Ecumenical Relations |
| 28-2 May | Laos Women Exchange Program | Chiang Mai, Thailand | MEPP | Ecumenical Relations |
| 28-2 May | South Asia Endowment Fund Meeting and visit to theological institutions | Kathmandu, Nepal | FMU/WCC-ETE | CCA Program |
| May | | | | |
| 4-28 | Youth Training on Sustainable Development | Chiang Mai, Thailand | MEPP | Ecumenical Relations |
| 14-18 | Ecology, Economy and Accountability in Asian Perspective | Seoul, Korea | JID | CCA Program |
| 16-17 | Ecumenical Forum for Peace, Reunification and Development Cooperation on Korean Peninsula: Steering Committee Meeting | Nanjing, China | JID | Ecumenical Relations |
| 23-31 | Training of Trainers on Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation | Seoul, Korea | JID | CCA Program |
| 31-7 June | World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) and meeting of WCC-ETE regional consultants | Thessaloniki, Greece | FMU | CCA Program |
| June | | | | |
| 9-11 | CCA Solidarity Visit to Myanmar | Yangon, Myanmar | JID | CCA Program |
| 23-27 | UNHCR Conference on Migration and Social Justice | Geneva, Switzerland | JID | Ecumenical Relations |
| 30-4 July | Inaugural Meeting of Regional Faculty of South East Asia Graduate School of Theology and the Network of Asian Theological Educators in Diaspora | Tainan, Taiwan | FMU | CCA Program |
| 13 | Meeting EASY NET Malaysia | Kuala Lumpur | EGY | Ecumenical Relations |
| 13 | Preparatory meeting for CCA Pre-Youth assembly 2010 | Kuala Lumpur | EGY | CCA Program |

Foreword

We are pleased to present the second quarterly program report of Christian Conference of Asia from April to June 2008. The report highlights projects implemented along with reflections and comments.

We will be glad to have your suggestions on what strengths you think we need to develop to make CCA more visible in response to the new emerging contexts and realities of Asia.

The CCA staffs join me sincerely to thank you for your concern and support in CCA's life and work. Your interest in the mission of CCA is a great source of strength and blessing for all the members of CCA and ecumenical movement in Asia. We earnestly hope for a continued partnership in this developing mission.

Prawate Khid-arn
General Secretary

From the desk of Associate General Secretary

CCA Assembly 2010- Called to Prophecy, Reconcile and Heal

CCA is Asia's oldest ecumenical organisation which draws its membership from nearly 100 churches and fifteen national councils from nineteen Asian countries, including Australia and New Zealand. It brings together from time to time participants from member churches and councils for seminars and conferences in order to equip and nurture them to go back to their countries and engage in God's mission. Once in five years CCA holds its General Assembly and gathers more than three hundred members to celebrate life, discuss and set policy to re-enact God's mission in Asia. CCA will hold its 13th General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 15-22 April 2010.

Theme of the Assembly

The theme of the Assembly is: **Called to Prophecy, Reconcile and Heal**. This is an appropriate theme and has to be reflected upon and wrestled with in light of complex and conflicting Asian realities. God's call to people to prophecy, reconcile and to be a healing community is a tremendous challenge and a call to a costly discipleship. Very often the voice of prophecy is ignored and the prophets are marginalised or expelled from churches. This type of attitude towards prophets was there during the biblical times and prevails until now.

The dominant tradition in the Bible regarding the prophetic ministry is how God selected, especially some individuals, from communities to speak God's Word of judgment, reconciliation and healing. In the Bible we discover that God's prophets called into question and challenge idolatry, exploitation of the poor, ill-treatment of the widow and the orphan. Throughout the history of the Church until now the prophetic voice has challenged and denounced the sins of racism, apartheid, patriarchy, abuse of power, both within the Church and in arenas of politics, culture and economics. Along with denouncement of all forms of individual and corporate sin God also announced through the prophets of the past and the present the need to repent and follow the path of reconciliation and healing.

Reconciliation and healing are understood in the bible as ways to mend broken and distorted relationships and building up community and relationships anew. Hence, reconciliation is not an artificial fixation of relationships or putting things right and allowing the status quo to prevail. Reconciliation looks at a transformation of the present which involves addressing root causes in order to bring about authentic and lasting renewal. The "peace" which Paul speaks about in Romans 5:1, 11 is certainly peace with God. But, it also involves transformation of human relationships and building of a just community. The radical peace which Paul speaks of is rooted in the idea of Jesus the Christ breaking down all forms of barriers and walls of hostility (Eph. 2:14). Paul's concept of peace goes beyond human relationships to embrace the whole of God's creation (Col. 1:20). According to Paul reconciliation embodies a new creation (2 Cor.5:17) and a new quality of life. An integral part of the reconciliation involves a process of healing of the body mind and spirit of the human person on the one hand, and

at the same time it also involves healing of broken relationships, communities and nations. The role of the Holy Spirit in this entire process of prophesying, reconciling and healing is to empower people and the entire creation to move towards the realization of reconciliation, healing and wholeness.

Finally, what is entailed in reconciliation and healing is rooted in the story of Jesus of Nazareth. Reconciliation is rooted and flows out of Jesus' birth, passion, death, resurrection and ascension.

Assembly theme is a reminder as well as a call to the churches in Asia to respond to God's call and engage in prophetic, reconciling and healing ministries without counting the cost.

Rev. Dr Rienzie Perera
Associate General Secretary for Finance and Relationships

General Secretariat

Religious Leaders' Solidarity Visit to Southern Thailand (22-23 April 2008)

As crises continue in Southern provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat in Thailand, CCA with World Conference for Religion and Peace (WCRP) and Cross Cultural Foundation (CCF) organised "Religious Leaders' Solidarity Visit to Southern Thailand". Twelve delegates from Buddhist, Muslim and Christian faiths participated in this solidarity visit to express support for the victims of violence to strengthen efforts of restoring peace in the region.

The solidarity visit provided delegates with an opportunity to acknowledge the closeness of spiritual values and commitment for peace-building. This was accompanied by expressing solidarity and exchanging experiences for peace and unity to deepen the values of cultural diversity and co-existence. Another objective of the visit was to promote mutual views and search ways of fostering the spirit of reconciliation.

The delegation included Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Assistant Secretary General for Religions for Peace in New York, Dr Prawate Khid-arn, CCA General Secretary, Ven. Passakon Pawitai, a Buddhist leader from Chiang Mai, Mae Che Sansanee Sthirasula, a Buddhist nun, Mr Karim Abdullah from Islamic Center of Thailand, Rev. Fr Saner Damnernsaduak, a Catholic priest, Rev. Sayam Muangsak from Church of Christ in Thailand, Dr Gothom Areeya, Director of Center for Peacebuilding, Mahidol University, Mrs. Dungkamol Suiichakul, President of Young Buddhist Association of Thailand, Dr Parichart Suwanbuddha from Mahidol University and Mr Somchai HomLaosr from Asian Institute for Human Rights.

The delegation met with local Buddhist, Muslim and Christian leaders, as well as with senior representatives of Yala provincial government, Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) and the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC). In Bangkok, the delegation met with H.E Mr Anand Panyarachun, Chairman, National Reconciliation Commission, and H.E Mr Chuan Leekpai, former prime minister of Thailand.

Since historically friendly relations between Buddhists and Muslims in the Southern Thailand have been challenged, the multi-religious solidarity visit facilitated the way for healing, reconciliation, dialogue and common action. Religious leaders agreed to begin the process of forming national and provincial interreligious councils, consisting of senior leadership of Buddhist, Muslim, Christian and other religious traditions, as a mechanism for reconciliation and peaceful common living. The proposal of building the National Interreligious Council and Provincial Councils was welcomed by senior representatives of SBPAC and ISOC as well as by former prime minister H.E Mr Anand Panyarachun and H.E Mr Chuan Leekpai.

CCA Staff Development Workshop (6-8 May 2008: Chiang Mai, Thailand)

CCA Staff Development and Program Planning Workshop was held at the CCT Education Ministry Building in Chiang Mai. The objective of the workshop included analyzing issues and capacity development along with preparations for programs and funding request 2009. Along with the executive secretaries and consultants, administrative staff also participated in the workshop.

The program started with opening worship led by Dr Park Sungkook, Joint Executive Secretary for FMU. The scripture was taken from Joel 2:23-39 "... I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams. Your young men shall see visions". Later Mr Emmanuel Ilagan, former director of the International Cambodia Cooperation (ICC) and currently Consultant for CCA-UN/ESCAP Joint Project facilitated the workshop.

After an introduction by the General Secretary, Rev. Dr Rienzie Perera, Associate General Secretary for Finance and Relationships facilitated the discussion on CCA's response to Asian realities and ecumenical issues. "CCA is a unique organisation and our uniqueness is due to Asian context. We should be able to wrestle with the Asian realities and discern the distinctive features and issues, and listen to the people who interact with these issues, we can challenge and teach continents, churches, ecumenical partners and national governments. However we must always have the humility to learn from others too," said Dr Perera.

The challenging issues identified during discussions included unstable democracies and dictatorships; increase in oil prices; migration and human trafficking and ecological crisis. It was expressed during the workshop that these issues require strong ecumenical response, people's power and interreligious cooperation. It was stressed that CCA programs and activities do not merely carry out a program for the sake of carrying it out. Each program plan and implementation aims for sustainable society. It was emphasised that executive secretaries are called by God to take responsibility to enable, teach, prophecy and pioneer.

The second day was devoted to program evaluation, reflection and identifying focus issues for 2009 and beyond. Following concerns were identified for particular program areas:

General Secretariat (GS)

- Relationship with member churches, councils and ecumenical organisations
- Interreligious and interfaith cooperation

Faith, Mission and Unity (FMU)

- Asian theologies (theological roundtable)
- Ecumenical theological education
- Mission in the new global and Asian contexts

Ecumenical Formation, General Justice and Youth Empowerment (EGY)

- Gender sensitivity
- Capacity and leadership development for women and youth

Justice, International Affairs, Development and Service (JID)

- Poverty alleviation
- Ecological and environmental concern
- Migration
- Human rights
- Peace and conflict transformation

CCA Evaluation Team Meeting

(2-4 June 2008 Chiang Mai, Thailand)

CCA has been working as an ecumenical organisation for 50 years now and was not able to undertake a systematic evaluation to assess its organisational relevance, strengths, weaknesses and institutional capacity. In context of rapidly changing scenarios of Asia posing challenges to member churches and councils, the General Committee felt it was important to conduct an evaluation of CCA.

Specific objectives for CCA Evaluation included:

- assessing the institutional capacity of CCA as an ecumenical organisation and identifying key organisational areas requiring changes in line with the Asian contextual demands.
- assessing the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of CCA's programs as a regional ecumenical organisation in the light of ongoing global and regional reforms and challenges.
- assessing CCA's relationship with member churches and councils to suggest ways to strengthen cooperation with member churches and councils
- Identifying key challenges and possible directions for CCA for the coming years.

Members of the evaluation team namely Mr Leo Bashyam (coordinator), Mr Charlie Ocampo and Rev. Dr Hermen Shastri met with the CCA General Secretary and Rev. Dr Rienzie Perera, Associate General Secretary for Finance and Relationships in Chiang Mai. Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat Lebang another member of the team was not able to attend the meeting.

The CCA Evaluation Team revisited CCA's mission and ecumenical journey of the past fifty years. It was expected that the first draft of the evaluation will be presented to CCA by middle of 2009. The final report will be presented to the CCA General Assembly in 2010.

The Preparatory Committee Meeting for CCA 13th General Assembly

(28-29 June 2008: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

The CCA 13th General Assembly Preparatory Committee Meeting was held at the office of the Council of Churches in Malaysia (CCM) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The CCA General Assembly is held once in five years. The 13th CCA General Assembly themed “Called to Prophecy, Reconcile and Heal” will be jointly hosted by CCM from 14-21 April 2010 in Malaysia.

Ecumenical Relations

1-2 April: Dr Prawate Khid-arn participated in the Myanmar Council of Churches Roundtable Core Group meeting in Bangkok on 1-2 April 2008. The meeting was facilitated by Dr Mathews George Chunakara of the World Council of Churches, and members from Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED–Church Development Service), Christian World Service, Christian Aid, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Inter-church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO) participated in the discussions.

The meeting included updates from MCC on Myanmar’s political situation and churches response to it. It was shared that the political uncertainty still continues in the country, and democracy and freedom of expression are still the challenges Myanmar is faced with.

Rev. Mar Gay Gui, MCC former general secretary and Dr Anna May Say Pa, MCC Executive Committee member shared updates on program and financial reports from 2007. They also presented the activities planned for 2008. The program direction of the MCC were appreciated by the members of the Core Group, and it was expressed that MCC will continue its ecumenical journey with its new elected leaders in future.

6-8 April: Thirty participants, staff, ecumenical partners and friends of Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT) gathered to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of ECOT and participated in a consultation on “Transforming and Re-Forming Tourism” from 7-9 April in Chiang Mai.

As Chairperson, Dr Prawate Khid-arn in his opening message signified the role of ECOT for revisiting the dimensions of tourism in context of intercultural dialogue, and building communities of peace for all. “In a global environment marked by rising intolerance and cross-cultural tensions, often exacerbated by the economic divide between nations, tourism can foster spiritual and cultural respect among and between peoples, while creating economic opportunities to benefit disadvantaged populations,” he said.

ECOT formerly known as Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT) is an ecumenical forum established after the regional ecumenical consultation on tourism held in the Philippines in 1982 to promote people-centered tourism. The ECOT founding members include CCA, All Africa Conference of Churches, Caribbean Council of Churches, Pacific Conference of Churches, Middle East Council of Churches, Latin American Council of Churches, and the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences.

10-11 April: CCA hosted WCC-Regional Ecumenical Organisations (REOs) Annual General Secretaries Meeting from 10-11 April 2008 at the Crystal Spring House in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting was a time to identify common concerns and strengthen closer cooperation among the regional ecumenical organisations.

The issues raised for future cooperation included the impact of globalisation on churches, theological issues, migration, environmental issues such as climate change and global warming.

It was agreed to accept invitation from Conference of European Churches (CEC) to meet in April 2009 in Brussels. The meeting will focus on advocacy issues in terms of making use of CEC's relationship with the EU-ACP secretaries.

14-16 April: Dr Prawate Khid-arn along with CCA staff Rev. Freddy De Alwis and Ms Janejinda Pawadee attended the Public Hearing on "Changing Ecclesial Contexts: Impact of Migration on Living Together in Diversity" held by World Council of Churches and Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). The event took place at the Armenian Catholicosate of Holy See of Cilicia in Beirut, Lebanon. This was followed by the annual meeting of Global Ecumenical Network on Migration (GENM) held on 17-18 April.

The Public Hearing provided space for participants from Africa, Asia, Middle East, Europe and North America to reflect on the issue of migrants. The event gathered voices addressing the reasons behind the migrant issues including wars, persecution, human right violations, widespread violence, poverty and environmental destruction.

After the Public Hearing, Dr Prawate Khid-arn was invited to join Dr Samuel Kobia, WCC General Secretary and Mr Guirguis Ibrahim Saleh, MECC General Secretary to visit churches in UAE and Syria.

21-23 April: CCA's EGY Women's concern along with World Conference of Religion for Peace (WCRP), World Fellowship of Buddhism (WFB) and International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) jointly organised the "Summit of Asian Religious Women Leaders" at Asia Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. Fifty women leaders representing Buddhist, Christian, Taoist, Muslim and Hindu faiths from fourteen Asian countries participated in the event.

Dr Prawate Khid-arn in his opening speech emphasised the role of women in promoting mutual understanding, strong network for peace building and conflict transformation (More details under EGY).

17-20 May: The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) addressed the theme “Communication is Peace: Building Viable Communities in Asia” in their Asia Region Triennial Assembly held at Porn Ping Hotel in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Dr Prawate Khid-arn in his opening message signified the role of WACC in promoting peace, unity and sustainable society. “The WACC has often been described as one of the most active and visible organisation in voicing Christian concerns and playing a vital role in sustaining our societies. We at CCA acknowledge and appreciate the immense contribution of WACC for being deeply involved in the struggles of people and striving for peace to prevail in the world. We value your strength, courage, faith and tireless efforts to call for genuine peace and justice,” he said.

Ms Naveen Qayyum, CCA Consultant for Communications was elected as one of the new WACC executive committee members.

21-23 May: As representative of regional ecumenical organisation, Dr Prawate Khid-arn was invited to attend the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of the long-established “Frontier Internship in Mission (FIM). The members met at John Knox Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting took place in context of critical time in the life of FIM, as the financial support it received has declined tremendously. The ICC approved two steps- “renewal” and “phasing out” for FIM. In renewal plan, FIM aims “to secure the continuation and building viability of FIM as an international ecumenical missionary program.” The ICC agreed for a two-year transitional period from 2009-2010.

To save administrative cost, the ICC with appreciation accepted CLAI’s (Latin American Council of Churches) willingness to host International Coordinating Office (ICO) in Quito, Ecuador. The FIM-ICO will be relocated in Quito in November 2008.

1-2 June: Dr Prawate Khid-arn was invited to address the first Hindu Leaders’ Caucus on HIV/AIDS hosted by His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar at the Art of Living Ashram in Bangalore, India. The conference was organised by Asian Interfaith Network on AIDS (AINA), UNAIDS and Art of Living.

Dr Prawate Khid-arn in his speech expressed gratitude to His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for giving blessing and support to the Caucus. He reminded the audience that 2008 marks the 27th year in the international and inter-sectoral battle against AIDS and yet the disease continues to spread unabated irrespective of geographical, ethnic, social or political divides. He shared that HIV/AIDS poses physical, psychological, social and spiritual challenges, not only for those living with it, but also to family members, care-givers, support groups and people who come into contact with them. The rights of HIV positive people are still ignored in many societies and they face discrimination. HIV/AIDS continue to challenge religious

faith and practices and there is an immense need to take concrete steps to curb the epidemic.

Ecumenical Formation, Gender Justice and Youth Empowerment (EGY)

Quarterly Report for April-June 2008

CCA-EGY staff: Moumita Biswas and Adam Row

1. Summit of Asian Women Religious Leaders

(21-23 April 2008 Bangkok, Thailand)

EGY in collaboration with World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), World Fellowship of Buddhist (WFB) and International Network of Engaged Buddhist (INEB) organised “Asian Religious Women Leaders Summit” in Bangkok from 21-23 April 2008. In context of increasing violence in today’s polarised world where armed conflicts, terrorism, and extremism have escalated, destroying the fabric of society and jeopardizing human security and development, women of all faiths play pivotal role in averting violence and building just and harmonious societies. The negative impacts of climate change, tremendous inequalities associated with human poverty, health concerns including HIV/AIDS and the escalation of violence and insecurity disproportionately affect women and children. Therefore there is a need to promote interreligious cooperation on issues of common concern among women in diverse communities of faith. The summit developed networking among women religious leaders, who have tremendous capacities to mobilise their grassroots social networks in local contexts for implementation of common action for sustainable peace.

Objectives

- Strengthen multi-religious cooperation and common action for peace among women leaders across diverse religious traditions in Asia.
- Mobilise actions by religious women to confront violence in all its forms, including misuse of religion for violence.
- Launch a process of building an Asian multi-religious women’s leadership body to undertake multi-religious advocacy and action enhancing communication and networking among women leaders and practitioners from different religions in Asia.
- Develop action-oriented partnerships with governments, civil society organisations, the United Nations, and other inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Outcomes

- The summit brought together thirty-five senior women religious leaders from Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Indigenous, Zoroastrian, Taoist communities to strengthen the role of religious women as agents of sustainable change and peace.
- Strengthening already existing women’s networks, organisations and ecumenical groups.

- There were concrete deliberations towards developing action-oriented partnerships with the United Nations and civil society organisations especially on women's health issues and eradicating feminization of different forms of violence.

The summit was a landmark in CCA- EGYs' ministry to bring together women religious leaders in collaboration with partners for the first time for a joint endeavour for peacemaking. This consultation provided enormous scope for women leaders of different faiths in future to work together in building communities of peace.

2. Women's Capacity Enhancement – Training of Trainers Workshop

(16-17 May, 2008 East Timor)

The Women's Ecumenical Accompaniment for Vision and Empowerment (WEAVE) is an ongoing project of EGY which facilitates women's ecumenical leadership development for conflict transformation and promotes building sustainable peace. WEAVE facilitated women's ecumenical leadership development in Cambodia earlier till September 2007 and is implementing the same program in East Timor through a full time ecumenical accompanier. Along with various activities like organising women's Bible study caucus in different districts in East Timor, it promoted women's networking to engage in micro credit projects for women's self reliance. WEAVE also engages in capacity enhancement training programs for church women. This capacity enhancement training for ecumenical leadership was initially scheduled in Dili from 6-8 March, 2008 to commemorate the International Women's Day and evolve action plans and concrete strategies for its implementation. However due to violence in East Timor during the time of training, the program was rescheduled to be held on 7-8 May 2008.

Objectives

- Capacity enhancement of church women of East Timor to form women's caucus and engage in ministry for peace.
- Facilitate women to form common action plans for women leadership development in East Timor.
- Spiritual nurturing to deconstruct patriarchal theology and discover contextual theology of life.

Outcomes

- Thirteen women from different districts in East Timor namely Dili, Baucau, Aileu, Ermera, Bobonaro and Ainaro actively participated in this training.
- The women jointly evolved concrete action plans and strategies for promoting church women's leadership development in East Timor.
- Women's committee was elected through secret ballot and five women were elected namely Leocadia de Jesus (chairperson), Kristin Garvalho, Elen Ira Mata, Erna Lily (secretary) and Sildonia Pinto.

- A young woman Rita Costa Ballo was interviewed by the committee who while continuing her studies in university will be trained by the ecumenical accompanier to be future women's desk secretary of ITPL.
- The EGY women and gender justice secretary is further networking and negotiating with ecumenical partners like International Committee of Fellowship of Least Coin to support ITPL for women's capacity enhancement trainings in East Timor.

Northeast Asia Co-Team Preparatory Meeting

Background

CCA has been organising the "North East Asia Peace Consultation, (NEAPC)" since 1997. It is a program which brings youth leaders from Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan together to facilitate sharing and exploration on issues of conflict transformation and peace initiatives in the context of North East Asia. It also aims to examine the role of young Christians and their churches and their contribution in addressing these issues by coming up with practical and viable action plans. Accordingly, preparatory meetings are held in between each peace consultation to evaluate follow-up actions as well as to plan for future consultations.

Objectives

- To evaluate the implementation and success of national and sub-regional action plans decided upon during NEAPC 2001 as well as follow-up activities.
- To re-establish sub-regional solidarity and cooperation among youth secretaries within the sub-region
- Planning for NEAPC 2009, to be held in Japan.

Participants

The meeting was attended by members of NEA Co-team including Mr Adam Row, EGY Consultant for Youth, Mr. Wan Hoi Wing from Hong Kong Christian Council, Rev. Hidefumi Kitani, Youth Secretary for National Council of Churches in Japan, Mr. Itan Pavavalung, Youth Secretary for Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), Ms. Lai, Yin Ting, interpreter for PCT, Mr. Kang Seo Goo, General Secretary of Ecumenical Youth Council in Korea (EYCK) and Ms. Yun Jae Hyang, interpreter from EYCK. The staff included Ms. Lee Sun Ae, Program Director of EYCK and Chen Yuping, Intern from PROK-Youth and member PCT.

Outcomes

Presentations:

- Each national youth secretary gave presentations on the implementation of their respective national action plans by the participants of NEAPC 2007.
- Both NCKK and PCT have been active in increasing awareness as regards to militarization, peace initiatives and conflict transformation as well as involving their youth members in programs addressing these issues.
- HKCC has been less active, as it has been difficult to generate interest in these issues, among the HKCC youth as they are not directly impacted by its effects.

However, since NEAPC 2009 will be focusing on the theme of human rights issues, it is hoped that HKCC will be able to involve their youth more actively, as this issue is closer to home.

- NCCJ, had successfully implemented their action plans, however there was no continuity, as youth interest began waning, resulting in the projects slowly dying down.
- Rev. Hidefumi Kitani shared that the NCCJ is currently in the process of a restructuring as well as the replacement of key staff, which would only be complete by March 2008. Rev. Kitani advised that only upon completion of this process, could the NCCJ continue its support and commitment towards the NEA Co- Team and its programs.

Evaluation of NEAPC 2007

- The language barrier remains a key difficulty as the sub-region does not have a common language. This poses a problem for effective communication, as well as causing time delays, as interpretations are necessary. As of yet there seems to be no concrete solution beyond structuring the program workshops to allow for more time for communication between participants.
- Another challenge that was faced at NEAPC 2007 was the lack of in-depth understanding among the participants about the contexts of home churches. To avoid this issue for the next NEAPC, each national youth secretary committed to hold a preparatory program for their participants in their home countries, prior to attending the next NEAPC. In this way more meaningful discussions, and practical action plans can be carried out as all the participants would be well versed in the issues to be discussed, as well as be able to share effectively regarding their own national situations.
- The location selected for the exposure trip was too far from the program venue, resulting in an overly tight schedule. Accordingly it was decided that for future NEAPCs the venue and exposure trip location should be of an acceptable distance from each other. In this way time can be utilized more efficiently, as well resulting in lower costs, as regards to transport and accommodation.

Planning for NEAPC 2009

- The venue for each NEAPC is rotated among the members of the NEA Co-Team, thus Japan is scheduled to host NEAPC in 2009.
- The workshop themes were finalised, as well as a draft schedule.
- The overall program theme will focus on demilitarization, human rights and practical applications for being a peacemaker.
- As Rev. Hidefumi Kitani was unable to procure the necessary information regarding logistics and venue, it was decided that a follow up meeting is to be held in December 2008 to finalise all details, and complete a funding request proposal.

National Council of Churches India, Youth Pre-Assembly 2008

The Quadrennial Assembly of NCCI was held at Shillong, India from the 30 April - 5 May, 2008 based on the theme, "Together in Mission Empowering: Local

Congregations”. In line with this, the NCCI – Youth Desk organised a Youth pre-Assembly from the 27 - 30 April, bringing together youth leaders from all over India. The pre-assembly was also held in Shillong, and was graciously hosted by the Presbyterian Church of Shillong. The local church youth served as stewards for the program, as well as helping with logistical assistance, while various church members opened up their homes and families to house the participants. Over 50 youth representing different churches, as well as participants from the Student Christian Ministry came together to share their different experiences as well as to plan and strategize the direction that the NCCI Youth would focus on for the upcoming four years.

The opening session was styled as an open forum, to allow participants to share and discuss their current concerns and the issues and challenges being faced by the youth in their home churches. The following sessions were presented as a series of workshops touching on topics varying from ecological issues, to AIDS, and gender discrimination issues. Each evening, a special worship service was held by the Presbyterian Church of Shillong, allowing various young leaders to share God’s Word during the pre-assembly. Finally at the end of the program, the participants came together to draft a unified statement expressing their views and goals, which was then presented during the main assembly to senior church leadership.

Faith, Mission and Unity

Quarterly Report for April - June 2008

CCA-FMU staff: Hope S. Antone

WCC-CCA ETE Activities

1. Regional Committee on Theological Education for South Asia

(28 April – 2 May Kathmandu, Nepal)

The Programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) of the World Council of Churches, together with the Christian Conference of Asia, organised the Regional Committee meeting on the Solidarity Fund for Theological Education in South Asia in Kathmandu, Nepal on 28-30 April. Present were representatives of National Councils of Churches and theological colleges from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and the president of the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College in India (BTE-SSC). Participants amended the draft “Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the South Asia Endowment Fund for Theological Education” and agreed on new work and accountability procedures. Master development plans for theological education will be worked out by each National Committee for Theological Education in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal in cooperation with their NCCs. Participants shared concerns to enlarge the Solidarity Endowment Fund Network to include Bhutan in the near future.

The meeting was hosted by the National Council of Churches in Nepal at a time when Nepal’s government was in transition from Hindu monarchy to republic, with the Maoist party gaining majority seats in parliament at the recent elections. Representatives of NCCN and a few Bible schools shared case studies of their struggles. Institutions of theological education are sprouting in Nepal just as churches are, following the opening of the country to foreigners. NCCN has played a significant role in bringing the churches of Nepal together and forming regional Christian councils throughout the country. NCCN’s vision includes strengthening the social involvement of Christians through interfaith dialogue and interaction between church and society, and the gospel and culture in Nepal.

Following the Regional Committee meeting, the Rev. Dr. Dietrich Werner of WCC-ETE and Dr. Hope S. Antone of CCA-FMU and ETE visited the office of the NCCN, which played a very significant role in the historic cease-fire talks, in lobbying for human rights, and in preparing the way towards a constitutional assembly. NCCN had to do all this in the face of an anti-ecumenism propaganda from the more conservative churches against the whole ecumenical movement. On May 1, Hope Antone visited two theological institutions in Nepal, namely the Nepal Institute of Theology (NIT) and the Nepal Ebenezer Bible College (NEBC). Using an opportunity to preach at NEBC, she shared about what is ecumenism and why it is much needed for living in today’s world.

2. Fourth Congress of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI)

(28 May-6 June Thessaloniki and Volos, Greece)

The fourth congress of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) was held in Thessaloniki and Volos, Greece on the theme, “Theological Education: A Radical Reappraisal.” Formally established in 1992, WOCATI was conceived in the late 1980s with the participation of the WCC Programme of Theological Education (forerunner of WCC-ETE) to serve “the twin goals of contextualization and globalization in theological education.” Theological associations present affirmed that ecumenical theological education is vital for Christianity in the 21st century and the continuation of the ecumenical movement.

Hope Antone participated in this Congress as WCC-ETE consultant for Asia. The 50th anniversary of WCC-ETE program was also celebrated at the congress with a panel of former and present ETE program staff and regional consultants sharing about their work, challenges and visions. WOCATI and WCC-ETE will be working closely together to pursue common goals.

3. Education and Ecumenical Formation Executive Meeting and ETE Meeting, (11-16 July Bossey, Switzerland)

The WCC Education and Ecumenical Formation Commission held an executive meeting to deal with matters related to programs of the P5 cluster. These programs include the ETE program, Ecumenical Institute, Scholarships, and Nurture and Lay Formation, which were treated separately, with ETE scheduled on July 14-15. Prior to the executive meeting, the regional consultants and staff of the WCC-ETE met to go over the projects lists from the regions.

As consultant for ETE in Asia, Hope Antone shared the list of proposals from Asia and reported on her recent work in the region to the EEF executive. The big demand from the regions for support for faculty development, library development, and ecumenical formation continues to be felt through the amount of requests that are received each year. However, given the existence of strong associations of theological education in Asia and Latin America, the decision of the ETE meeting was to prioritize Africa in the succeeding years.

1. ATESEA/SEAGST Regional Faculty Meeting and Networking of Asian Scholars

Part of the responsibility of the FMU executive secretary cum regional consultant for ETE in Asia is to relate with theological associations in the region, accompanying them in their programs, ensuring that the vision of ETE (which is basically contextual and ecumenical theological education) is remembered and upheld. The Association of Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA) organised this meeting that brought together the regional faculty of its South East Asian Graduate School of Theology (SEAGST), which includes Asian theologians in Asia and those at large (in diaspora). Of the 19 invited to the meeting, 15 were present. Of this number, 6 were not ethnic Chinese; and 6 came from USA.

The idea of a regional faculty came about within ATESEA to have a pool of Asian scholars and theologians who can be called upon to help in the SEAGST doctoral program. FTESEA also wants to have a network of Asian scholars and theologians between those at large and those in Asia. The two concerns were brought together in this one meeting in Tainan. The meeting was a time to clarify the role of the regional faculty knowing that while theologians may be personally committed to helping SEAGST, they also have their own professional and institutional commitments. The meeting also was a time to clarify the relationship between the regional faculty and the area faculty (within ATESEA and in Asia), and the relationship between the regional faculty and the wider network of scholars.

In order to concretize the responsibilities of the regional faculty and the wider network of scholars, a strategic planning group was named – consisting of Huang Po Ho, Wong Wai Wing, Anna May Say Pa and Hope Antone from Asia; and HS Wilson, Wan Szekar and Seow Choon Leong from FTESEA.

2. Meeting on the Re-shaping of SEAGST

A meeting “for the exploration of structural re-engineering of SEAGST for the new era of theological education in Asia” was set by the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA) at the Sabah Theological Seminary in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Indonesia on 25-29 July. SEAGST is the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology of ATESEA. Hope S. Antone attended the meeting and was part of the panel of ecumenical partners to respond the concept paper on the re-shaping of SEAGST.

Sometime during the meeting, the strategic planning group on the regional faculty and wider network of scholars also met. [*More will be shared on this after the fact of the meeting.*]

Justice, International Affairs, Development and Service

Quarterly Report for April-June 2008

CCA-JID staff: Tony Waworuntu and Freddy De Alwis

1. Training of Trainers: School for Peace Building and Conflict Transformation in Southeast Asia

(23 – 30 April 2008 Crystal Spring House, Chiang Mai, Thailand)

Ten participants from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines and East Timor attended the training. Three resource persons from CCA delivered lectures and presented in the training sessions. The School of Peace for Training of Trainers for Peace Building and Conflict Transformation in South East Asia has been conducted for the second consecutive year held in Chiang Mai from 23 – 30 April 2008.

Program content

The curriculum of the Training of Trainers focused on action/reflection rather than long theoretical inputs. The case studies and story sharing made the modules practical so participants can think more creatively about the relevance of the content to their local situations. There were twelve modules in the course including win-win approach, creative response, empathy, appropriate assertiveness, cooperative power, managing emotions, willingness to resolve, mapping the conflict, designing options, negotiation, mediation and broadening perspectives.

The supplementary subjects included “Spirituality for Conflict Transformation and Peacemaking,” “Biblical and Theological Reflection on Peace Building and Conflict Transformation” and “Roots of conflict in Southeast Asia”.

During the training, participants enhanced their understanding by engaging in the process actively. Several questions were addressed and debates were initiated within the training time frame. A daily schedule was set but was flexible, allowing for changes to fit the needs of participants and resource persons. Generally, each day started with morning devotion by one of the participants. Through these reflections, participants shared what they feel their faith brings to the process for building justpeace. Following the reflections, the two participants were made responsible for documenting the previous day’s events and share their reports with others. Specific time was allocated for the participants to add or correct the report.

Evaluation

At the end of the week participants shared, “to build and promote peace is although a very hard task; it’s still not only a dream, this is an action that can be achieved”. The participants shared that the training was significant for them as they got equipped with skills and knowledge that helps them to be more creative in dealing with conflict situations. They shared that they will make efforts to maintain and develop their skills and knowledge, so that they can have initiatives and quick response to the conflict situations. The training proved to be very significant for church workers in dealing with

peace and conflict issues, therefore it was recommended that such trainings should continue for churches.

Strengths and weaknesses

The training was evaluated to be well organised with good training facilities, accommodation and food. The resource persons were influential and their approach was systematic. The content of the training was diverse and created good impact among the participants. The group had good communications and reputation with each other, and the learning process was positive.

One of the weaknesses in the training was the lack of time to go into in depth study of the resource materials. There was also absence of participants from Thailand and Vietnam.

Recommendations and follow up

It was recommended that CCA should carry on and continue this kind of trainings in future. National councils and local churches should utilise their own resources to conduct such trainings in their own countries.

2. Training of Trainers: School for Peace Building and Conflict Transformation in Northeast Asia (23 – 31 May 2008: PROK Academy House Seoul, Korea)

Fifteen participants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and the Philippines participated in Training of Trainers: School for Peace Building and Conflict Transformation in Northeast Asia in Korea. Six resource persons from India, Korea, the Philippines and CCA facilitated the sessions. The training was jointly organised by CCA and Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).

Background

The program was initiated in context of search for peace in Asia, where churches and communities have a shared history and need to be in solidarity with one another realizing common concerns. During the training participants learnt how to engage in the process of peacemaking actively. Numerous questions were raised regarding conflict transformation in reference to the Korean situation. Resource persons encouraged debates and discussion within given time frame. The structure of the training session was more activity oriented and participants were positively involved in the learning process.

During the training participants worked on current conflicts experienced by them and shared reflections from their own backgrounds. Sharing of practical experiences was especially valuable as they engaged participants in moving repeatedly between concepts and actual behaviours. The training also included summative tests, quiz and reflections after each topic been discussed and at the end of the training there was a review on the overall process of the training.

Courses content

The course content included win-win approach, creative response, empathy, appropriate assertiveness, co-operative power, managing emotions, willingness to resolve, mapping the conflict, designing options, negotiation, mediation and broadening perspectives.

The supplementary subjected included understanding conflicts from socio-political perspectives, theological understanding/reflections on peace building and conflict transformation; ecology and peace, and economic justice as an essential part of peace.

During the training the participants had two day exposure trip, where they visited National Cemetery for the April 19th Democratic Revolution, Frontiers – Peace Building in Conflict Area, Seodaemun Prison History Hall and Panmunjom. Panmunjom is the venue for negotiations between North and South Korean government officials and United Nations Command (UNC) and North Korean military officers.

Evaluation

The training equipped the participants with appropriate skills and attitude that could help them get involve with any conflict and transform it into peaceful situations. The training was significant as the participants gained the knowledge to be more creative in dealing with conflict situations. The commitment from the participants was expressed to maintain and develop their skills and knowledge, so that they may have initiatives and quick response to a conflict situation in their own contexts.

The training helped participants to work as peace-builders in the midst of complicated conflicts, enhancing their deep knowledge, skills and understanding about the conflict areas. As a whole the training proved to be significant for church workers in dealing with peace and conflict issues, and it was recommended that such trainings should continue at all levels of our churches.

Strengths and weaknesses

The training was well organised, and training facilities, accommodation, food was appreciated. The resource persons were positive and influential in terms of learning for the participants. The training content had a systemic approach and the program was creative and dynamic.

The weakness of the training was insufficient time to get into in depth with the materials. There was a lack of participants from Japan, North Korea and China. The exposure trips were too tight and exhausting. Communications barriers were experienced during the training

Recommendation and follow up

- It was recommended that CCA should carry on and continue this kind of training in future;
- National councils and local churches should utilise their own resources to conduct such trainings in their own countries

3. The Ecumenical Forum for “Peace, Reunification and Development Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula” Steering Committee Meeting

(16 – 17 May 2008 Nanjing, China)

JID Joint Executive Secretary Tony Waworuntu attended the Ecumenical Forum for “Peace, Reunification and Development Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula” Steering Committee Meeting. Participants of this meeting included Dr Matthews George Chunakara from WCC, Rev. Kwon Oh-Sung from National Council of Churches in Korea, Rev. Ri Jong Ro from Korean Christian Federation (KCF), Ms Bern Jagunos from United Church of Canada, Ms Stefanie Elbern from Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED), Rev. Kenitchi Otsu from National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ), Rev. Heawon Chae from NCCK, Ms Patricia Bruschweiler from WCC and Mr Choe Kil-Hyun from KCF. This meeting was hosted by the Amity Foundation in China.

It was explained that the steering Group had agreed to hold this meeting in Nanjing on these dates since three members of the Steering Committee, namely, Matthews, Stefanie and Bern, would be coming to Nanjing for a meeting of the Amity Roundtable Core group and the Steering Committee had urgent business to decide. As well, it is easier for North and South Korean members to come to China. The proposed agenda was approved.

The Terms of Reference were reviewed to ensure clarity about the goals, objectives and functions of the Forum to guide in the discussions and action planning of the Steering Committee.

Situation update

Rev. Kwon gave an update on the situation in South Korea.

- President Lee Myung Bak has reversed the policy of the previous administration on peace and reunification in the Korean Peninsula. This will set back the gains made in the past ten years on peace and reunification in the Korean Peninsula. His government is taking an antagonistic and confrontational attitude toward North Korea, following the U.S. emphasis on the issue of the denuclearization of North Korea. Lee Myung Bak has declared that if North Korea undertakes total denuclearization and opening, economic assistance and cooperation from South Korea would ensure that North Korea will attain a per capita income of \$3000 a year. Lee Myung Bak’s condition will be an obstacle in the dialogue with North Korea.
- Lee Myung Bak’s new policy does not reflect the sentiment of the South Korean population who strongly support dialogue with North Korea. Rev. Kwon believes that Lee Myung Bak’s policy on North Korea will not last because of pressure from the South Korean people.

It was agreed that the forum in collaboration with WCC will send an appeal to Forum and WCC members to write letters to President Lee Myung Bak of South Korea expressing concern about his government’s antagonistic and confrontation attitude and policy towards North Korea and call for dialogue and engagement with North Korea.

Discussion on common projects

KCF was asked to propose project ideas for the Forum members' support. Rev. Ri Jong Ro proposed the following:

1. Support for KCF's operating costs for the noodle factory, bakery and greenhouse. Expenses include salary of 15 staff each for the noodle factory and bakery, transportation and distribution, electricity, heating of the greenhouse. Estimated cost is \$20,000 per year.
2. Building of bridge near Bongsu Church. The Methodist Church offered to repair the road. However it was flooded a few years ago and made the river impassable. The approximate cost of building of the bridge is \$200,000 to \$300,000.

It was suggested that KCF consider installing a solar panels at the noodle factory and bakery in order to ensure stable power supply in the long term. Mr. Ri points that this might be difficult because it involves bringing in materials from outside North Korea and this requires approval by another government agency.

Ecumenical visit to North Korea

A team visit to North Korea was proposed during the first Steering Committee meeting. The objective of the visit is to build and strengthen ecumenical solidarity for peace and reunification in the Korean Peninsula in line with the Tozanso spirit.

At the 2004 meeting in Arnoldshain, there was also an invitation extended to WCC to visit the DPRK. In principle, the invitation has been accepted by the WCC. WCC plans to organise a consultation on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Tozanso in 2009. This will be preceded by visits of a WCC Living Letter teams to North Korea, South Korea and Japan. The team to visit North Korea will be lead by the WCC General Secretary. All the teams will participate in the Tozanso 25th anniversary consultation.

Rev. Ri affirmed the importance of ecumenical visits to North Korean to promote the goals of the Tozanso process. Although there has been some thinking about holding the consultation marking the 25th Anniversary of the Tozanso Process in Pyongyang and this would have been ideal, it would be logistically very difficult. Mr. Ri also reminded that the permission and arrangements for visits require at least 2 months, so this has to be kept in mind in planning the visits.

25th Tozanso Anniversary Consultation in 2009

For the past several years, the global ecumenical movement in support of Peace and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula appeared to have weakened. WCC had less capacity to provide coordination. On the other hand, bilateral contacts between churches in South Korea and North Korea have increased. There has been in recent years, renewed interest to renew and strengthen the ecumenical cooperation for peace and reunification in the Korean Peninsula. Mr. Ri stressed the importance of the Tozanso process. KCF is concerned that the Tozanso process appears to be invisible over the past many years. The Tozanso process needs to be revived and so the international consultation planned by the WCC is very important for KCF. The WCC is committed to hold an international

ecumenical consultation to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Tozanso process and to work in coordination with the Forum on this.

It was agreed that the international ecumenical consultation to mark the 25th anniversary of the Tozanso process will be held in Hong Kong in November 2009.

A total budget of \$28,039 was approved for 2008. And at the last item of the meeting Matthews George Chunakara from WCC was confirmed as chair of the Steering Committee.

1. Ecology, Economy and Accountability Conference

(13 – 18 May 2008 BoRyung, South Korea)

A four day conference on Ecology, Economy and Accountability was held in South Korea, with the participation of Asian ecumenical partners and concern activists from other NGOs from 13-18 May 2008. This long felt need for the Asian ecumenists in the region was initiated by JID and the National Council of Churches in Korea, who graciously incurred all the (local) conference expenses and organised the event. A total number of twenty seven delegates, including nine women and eighteen men from eleven countries participated in the conference; where the delegates were stimulated and challenged for interaction, especially among discussion groups for a sustainable purpose to be fulfilled in the Asian Church. Biblical reflections provided cutting edge fundamentals, to break the Asian ecumenical movement's long silence, in this regard. In addition, the country presentations, and the exposure visit to the Oil Split coastal area of the Southern Korean Sea, exposed the participants to a greater magnitude. Further, the Action Plan was formulated on the final day, setting precedence to a formidable and ecumenical eco-partnership in Asia.

Objectives

The objectives of the conference was to create awareness among the present day generation and challenge the ecumenical constituencies, to treasure the earth as a habitable or rather as "habitat earth", in order to preserve it for the future generation.

This included gathering of key ecumenical people from all walks of life, cultures, creed, race, gender and calibre; in order to enable them to identify; that mankind on the habitat, are accountable to the creation of God, where they could become promoters of peace on mother earth, which is already groaning.

Outcomes

Outcomes and responses were approached in terms of a series of building blocks, in the categories of funding, specialisation of resource personnel, advocacy, lobbying, workshops, networks, action plan and dissemination. Funding included the content and quality of concept papers, theological reflections, accommodation and travel.

As objective achieved could be stated as; bringing together ecumenical leaders, ecologists and environmental activists; to explore and decide on the cause of "Action Plan" to build

up local campaigns; to pressurise their own governments, authorities and implement awareness raising and advocacy programs, at national and regional levels.

Implementation of the Action Plan was evaluated during the final day of the conference and can be measured as one of the significant achievements, during a very short time of theological discourses and group interaction. Finally, the value of good networks, and the necessity to have strong emphasis of eco-centrism amongst the ecumenical organizations, like minded people, activists and authorities was measured as a successful accomplishment.

Evaluation forms revealed a generally high level of satisfaction, in the areas of content, selection and expertise of resource personal and logistics; although the benefits of some sessions were reduced by the limited time allocation. Every delegate seems to have experienced maximum fulfilment of the conference after the hands on experience with the exposure visit. The tangible benefits from the conference will only be attained by the commitment of participants, to refine and implement the Action Plans drawn up on the final day. JID will be assisting in this process.

2. Fact finding mission visit to Myanmar (9 – 12 June 2008)

Following the three-day fact finding mission visit to Myanmar, JID was emphatically challenged to equip the local churches and build capacities through “Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness – Workshop”. The immediate priority of the program included Trauma Counselling (Training of Trainers in context of sustainable development will be followed as part of the second round of trainings), given that Myanmar’s survivors need focus and attention. The initiative aims to uplift the marginalised and vulnerable people, who are challenged to look beyond the catastrophe and learn to overcome the present fear psychosis which has engulfed their whole being.

The fact finding mission visit to Myanmar was organised under the auspices of the National Christian Council of Myanmar, JID had the opportunity to meet with several heads of churches. During this period, JID represented itself simply as a church body and not necessarily as NGO or another relief agency with colossal amount of funds to be dispersed. JID discovered that there are so many unsearched and untouched areas without aid, which could be identified as “Gulf Areas” in the cyclone hit five provinces. In addition to aid, there were so many churches that are anxiously waiting to receive transitional assistance, temporary shelters, trauma counselling and trainings and disaster mitigation with maximum volunteers. In this regard, JID decided to extend cooperation and solidarity, at every possible level to local bodies; who are already engaged in the process of relief and other mitigation activities. This will prevent CCA becoming parachutes or invaders in the disaster struck nation with “Aid Syndrome”.

3. Ecumenical Solidarity Response and Donors’ Meeting to Support Myanmar Survivors of Cyclone Nargis (5 July 2008: Bangkok, Thailand)

The Ecumenical Solidarity Response and Donors' meeting was held on 5 July 2008 at Bangkok Christian Guest House in Thailand to discuss the 1st year Project Proposal and budget for Myanmar. Representatives from churches and ecumenical organisations participated in the meeting included Lee Seung-Youl from Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK), Kim Jong-Geng from Korea Christian Service, Kwon Oh-Sung from NCC in Korea, Shin Seung-Min from Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, Lee Sang-Youn from Korean Christian Service; Ralph Lee from Hong Kong Christian Council; Shu-Wen Chiang from Asian Church Women's Conference, Taiwan, Sam Victor from Australia, Saw Shioe Lin and Saw George Shay from Myanmar Council of Churches, Ji Wen Chong from Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), Chang Meng-ye from PCT. From CCA Joint Executive Secretary for JID Freddy De Alwis and Associate General Secretary for Finance and Relationships Dr Rienzie Perera participated in the meeting.

JID presented the Project Proposal draft "Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness – Workshop" for one year and elaborated on the urgency of commencing the project soon. The project proposal was produced by JID in consultation with MCC, to be implemented by MCC and JID acting as facilitator. This was decided that given the responsibility and policy, JID will only be facilitating programmes and not implement projects. This was clearly explained to the body. However, JID will take the overall responsibility in facilitating the proposal, and providing assistance in making this a successful, credible and a sustainable project.

The following critical questions were raised and discussed:

- Implementation of the programme: As the bureaucrats could clamp down at any moment, it was suggested that a low profile must be maintained by MCC, in order to avoid unnecessary situations.
- MCCs' capacity in handling a mammoth project of this nature: The concerns in the areas of financial transparency/accountability through regular project updates, timely target achievements, competent personnel in regard to project management were discussed.
- MCC expressed that it is possible for them to open a separate ledger account for all the funds sent regarding this project (DMP/TOT and Rehabilitation). They only need a competent person as Project Overseer or Manager, who could relate to stakeholders, update the ecumenical donor community regularly and who could liaise with them on implementation aspects. It was assigned to JID and MCC to look for and appoint such a person.
- Livelihood development: After discussion, it was decided to make additional explanations on the small-scale projects such as self help, self reliance and income generation.
- Project rationale: Many queries were raised to verify whether the project concern is only for the Christian community. In reply, MCC said that since all the church members are located among interreligious communities, surely this should integrate other faiths as well.

Accountability and monitoring of funds: On behalf of the ecumenical community which pledged support for the project, JID was assigned the task of receiving and channelling money, according to the progress of the work, to MCC. MCC will maintain a separate

ledger page in their accounts, and appoint another additional licensed auditor, in addition to the existing auditor for this purpose. MCC was requested to make readily available any data pertaining to the project, for the appointed Project Manger / Ecumenical Representative's visit at any time.

Programme mechanism: For smooth flow of the Project, it was agreed that MCC in conjunction with JID would be directly responsible to the Ecumenical Solidarity Donor Community. JID and MCC will appoint a relevant person as liaison officer between the Ecumenical Donor Community, JID and other stakeholders locally or internationally, with a relevant portfolio. The MCC will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with JID on behalf of the Ecumenical Donor Community. Progress Reports, Project Monitoring and Evaluation, Maintenance of Budget Lines, apply controls, are some of the key functions of the person to be appointed in the above linking capacity.

Mekong Ecumenical Partnership Program (MEPP)

Quarterly Report for April - May 2008

CCA-MEPP staff: Janejinda Pawadee

Laos Women Exchange Program (28 April – 2 May: Chiang Mai, Thailand)

The Laos Women Exchange Program took place at the YMCA International Hotel in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The main objective of the programs was to improve the capacity of Mekong women through micro credit and income generating programs. This was accompanied by promoting equality and empowerment of women in the Mekong communities. Also to encourage Mekong women to share their experience and best practice with their groups and networks. Around seven women from Laos PDR participated in the program. The resource persons for the program included Ms Panomwan Yoodee and Ms Paramaporn Jaisaard from Young Men Christian association (YMCA) and women leaders from villages. The facilitator was MEPP coordinator Ms. Janejinda Pawadee.

The Women Exchange Program is planned for grassroots women leaders in three Mekong countries including Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. The first group comprised of Laos's women leaders from LEC. Seven participants aged from 39-56 attended the training. Among seven participants, there were three government officers from Laos's Women Union, while the rest were church women.

Program content

MEPP was requested by women leaders from Laos Evangelical Church (LEC) to organise an exchange program on micro credit and income generation in Thailand. MEPP worked in collaboration with YMCA Northern Development in Thailand to implement the exchange program. The program was able to develop participants' skills through micro credit and income generation programs. During the training participants were able to share experiences and learn lessons from study tours of churches and communities.

To improve or develop participants' capacity through micro credits and income generating programs, resource persons helped participants know how to set up business, organise business operations and manage product development and marketing. Participants also had a chance to visit income generating groups such as cotton weaving and cloth product groups, fruit preservation groups, Y Corporation (YMCA design and products) and micro credit saving groups and credit unions.

Resource persons from YMCA helped participants understand marketing techniques and strategies. Participants were able to share experiences, learn lessons and draw best practices from training and visits. They shared that Laos's women saving group have amounts but the possibilities of loan are limited. If these women want to start micro credit and income generating programs, they have to arrange for a loan and encourage the saving group members to take a lone.

Participant's evaluation

The participants expressed their gratitude to MEPP and YMCA for providing them with an opportunity to learn more about micro credits and income generating programs. They also mentioned that they were happy to share experiences with village women. The participants gave rank 5 (very good) to the training's content, methods use, exposure trips and sharing sessions.

It was expressed that the program was able to promote unity among women groups in the villages and their cooperation. Women participants were able to take part in the decision making and management process in their group while doing business. The participants had direct experiences on fruits preservation, production and use of local materials/resources for fruits preservation. Another lesson learnt among the women included the aspect of marketing and exploring channels to increase family income.

Women leaders from churches shared their plan to support women groups in their congregations to learn and practice more on fruits preservation. Ms Souphone Voravong Vice President of Vientiane Capital Women Union, who was one of the participants, expressed her gratitude on behalf of Laos's women for all the exposure and training. She shared that through their networks they will encourage Laos women to establish small enterprise to increase their income.

Strengths

The program was able to provide the grassroots women leaders with an opportunity to have experience of learning from Thai women working on micro credits and income generate programs. Most of the participants were women leaders from government offices and Laos's urban churches. Laos Evangelical Church negotiated to have the government officers in the team for future cooperation. It will be a good chance for LEC to have cooperation with government through the women exchange program as they joined the group together. Due to the program church women and government officers had an opportunity to build relationships and seek future cooperation.

Another strength of the program was language, as the training was conducted in Thai and participants from Laos were able to communicate well. Therefore understanding of the training, exposure visits and sharing was strengthened due to better communication.

Weaknesses

LEC was slow in communicating with the MEPP women exchange program regarding participation from members and women groups from difference churches. The exchange program was unable to take place in March as planned due to no progress in participant's selection process.

2. 5th Lay Mobilization Training (7-9 May: Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia)

The 5th Lay Mobilisation Training was held from 7-9 May at Phom Thmei Church, Chrey Thom Commune in Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia. Around twenty-six participants took part in the training. The training was organised by MEPP to engage national church bodies and institutions in theological education in context of lay ministry and mobilisation. The training aimed to develop effective systems of lay leadership training for the churches of the Mekong sub-region and encourage ecumenical community to reflect on the issues of lay leadership mobilisation. The resource person and facilitator for the training was Rev. Mike Fucella, MEPPs' fraternal worker.

Program content

MEPP was pleased to have new president of Kampuchea Christian Council (KCC) Rev. Som Chanboth for the opening worship of final module of the training programme. Rev. Chanboth shared that he was delighted for the success of the programme and hoped that the learnings can be organised for communities in other provinces of Cambodia as well. A colleague of his shared his testimony with the participants.

Feedback from the participants

Almost after six months since the previous meeting MEPP held a meeting in the training. In the meeting participants were given the opportunity to share how God had been working in their lives since the last meeting. One participant shared how he believed a new well near his home was God's provision and also testified how God answered his prayers by healing a child from ailment. Another participant shared how despite being desperately poor her child was able to matriculate to university and also how there had been reconciliation between herself and her mother. A third participant shared how through the CCA funded agricultural training programme she is now growing vegetables and is able to feed her family with some security.

Training content

The training for the first module was mostly activity oriented. The objective of the module was to help participants understand the significance of the "Word of God", how it relates to the social realities and how we interpret scriptures according to our own contexts. In this module the difference between teaching and preaching was explored and related strategies were developed. The participants spent ample time in groups preparing sermon outlines thematically, according to the biblical exposition. Participants also analyzed the inductive biblical study methods and did a model study on the first chapter of Mark's Gospel.

After the last module participants closed with "an exam" or review of the resource material. Participants were presented certificates and polo shirts celebrating the "Whole People of God – Responding to His Call" programme.

Participants' evaluation

Participants expressed their wish to have regular trainings like these twice a year facilitated by KCC. It was also suggested to have these trainings organised in the same location for participant's convenience. It was recommended that final development of the curriculum for this project should be implemented with close participation by KCC staff and the facilitator. The outcome of this activity could be to produce a booklet with all the material covering the five modules that local leadership could use to train others. Another resource that was recommended in this module was a guidebook for preachers. It was suggested that such a guidebook can have themes for teaching and preaching of scriptures.

General observation

This training constituted the fifth and final module of the "Whole People of God – Responding to His Call" Lay Mobilization Project for KCC. The emphasis in this module was on capacity building in the area of teaching and preaching. The number of participants was lower than expected due to an economic downturn in the region with high increase in rice prices. Many who had previously participated in the project and were due to complete it in this module found that they had to migrate to the city to find work to feed their families until the next rice harvest and therefore missed out on the training.

Once again holding the training in the local area proved to be a positive experience. Though it meant more travelling time for the facilitators, however for the participants it meant that they were closer to home and were more comfortable in the settings. For the local church which hosted the event it was a capacity building experience for organising food, accommodation, budgeting and accounting for these things.

3. Regional Youth Training on Sustainable Development (Chiang Mai-Thailand: 4 - 28 May)

Regional Youth Training on Sustainable Development was held at the YMCA International Hotel in Chiang Mai to provide capacity building training for church leaders and young ecumenists in the Mekong sub-region (Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos). The training aimed to strengthen the role and capacity of churches to address the issues related to sustainable development. This was also accompanied by assisting member churches in the Mekong sub-region to translate sustainable development strategies into concrete local actions through the exchange of experiences. The training was able to enhance ecumenical networking and cooperation of churches and related organizations in the Mekong sub-region. The event also enabled opportunities for theological reflection on the holistic nature of sustainable development for communities.

Thirteen participants from Cambodia, China, Vietnam, Myanmar and Thailand attended the training. There were no participants from Laos. Most of participants were church pastors, assistant pastors, Christian NGO workers and youth leaders. There were only two women participants who attended the training. Five resource persons along with the facilitators from villages and churches participated in the training. MEPP coordinator Ms. Janejinda Pawadee was also one of the facilitators.

Program content

The first part of the training from 5-7 May included theological reflections, concept of sustainable development, sufficiency economy and relevant practices. The second part from 8-10 May and 19-22 May contained weekly exposure visits to Project on Forest and Water Resources Preservation and Integrated Agriculture Promotion, Foundation for Education Development of Rural Areas (FEDRA), Metta Naree Handicraft Center and micro business of Ban Khaew women. This was also accompanied by exposure to the participants about fruit preservation process.

The second week of exposure included learning about social concerns, good governance and networking. An exposure visits was organised by YMCA to visit NGOs and governmental offices. The participants also had a chance to visit street children, child worker project and their networks. They participants learnt about the role of Local Administration Office (LAOS) to promote development, visited child care centres, women participation for garbage management and alternative energy.

The third part of the training from 12-17 May was facilitated by Dr Jasmine Mi-Kyeng Geong. The content addressed the questions such as what is economics and economic activity, what are the new market changes, how sustainable development projects can be built. The participants learnt on how they can be involved with such project or program, how to do market researches, what is a sustainable project or program, why we need to participate in sustainable development activities, introduction research design, develop new projects (practice project planning), revise the planning proposals, market research design, market research practices and group discussions.

The fourth part included church visits to development projects in Chiang Rai province. Participants were divided in two groups to visits six difference churches where they learnt about development and income generating programs. The participants had positive experience and learnt about church projects such as saving groups, cooperatives, rice bank, cow bank, organic garden and organic fertilisers.

Participant's evaluation

The participants shared their positive experiences of learning from the training. Most of them mentioned the session with church visits in Chiang Rai as best learning exposures. This made participants learn about churches' efforts in Thailand to help member churches to be sustained. They shared that they wish to apply these learnings in their own contexts and communities.

All participants understood more from biblical teaching by Rev. Thaworn Sutyka at the first day of the training that: spiritual and physical must develop together. Some participant understood more that church ministry are not only evangelize but has to take care of people's physical need.

Training outcomes

The training went very well, and YMCA was of great support in organising exposure trips for the participants. The number of participants was less than what was expected, however the ones present were much involved and benefited from the training. The repute and fellowship among the participants was very positive and it enhanced an environment of sharing and learning in training sessions.

Weaknesses

The national councils were slow in their response of nominating the participants for the training. The program had to be delayed due to no progress in the selection process of the participants. The councils also did not give any consideration to the gender balance while nominating the participants; therefore not many women were able to participate in the program. Many times the name of women candidates were changed by the councils, and MEPP could not reject the men participants recommended by the councils. Few churches did recommended women participants; however the ones who could not expressed the lack of English speaking/understanding among the participants as a reason.

CCA – UN/ESCAP Project
Strengthening of Life Skills for Positive Youth Health Behaviour
Quarterly report for January – March 2008

CCA-UN/ESCAP staff: Emmanuel Ilagan

For all the targeted countries of CCA/UNESCAP, the staff designed a suggested format of conduct for focus group discussions among peer educators and monitoring of changes in youth behaviour. At the same time there were continuing capacity building and development of life skills local training networks for long term sustainability of the interventions.

In Cambodia, questionnaires for youth monitoring were translated into the Khmer language, and 10 youths were identified to participate in the monitoring process. New stakeholders were identified and given orientation. Due to national elections there was a ban on government sponsored activities, so for one month there was not much that could be done by the counterpart organization Ministry of Education of Youth and Sports.

In Sri Lanka there were continuing monthly training meetings for peer educators led by Salvodaya. Peer educators continued their activities in the communities. The Salvodaya is developing a “100 Question and Answer” booklet on sexual matters in collaboration with another NGO, Family Planning Association.

There were positive changes observed among youth behaviour in Sri Lanka including as illustrated by:

- Increased awareness regarding unhealthy behaviours and HIV and AIDS among youth.
- Change in perception among youth that smoking and drinking are cool and necessary for having fun; instead youth have developed a more positive self-image where one’s personal strength and life enjoyment need not depend on unhealthy behaviours such as drinking and smoking;
- Changes in behaviour of children, as shown by their sharing the milk with other members of the family and more verbalization of complaints to the adults of problems, such as sexual and physical abuses.

In the Philippines, peer education training continued, initiated primarily by faith based organisations and youth organisations in coordination with village officials. Six senior life skills trainers joined in coming from faith based organisations.

To help ensure program sustainability the program was tied up with other interventions for out of school youth. One of these was the Bayanihan Lights Center (BLC) where members were grouped into 20 to 30 individuals who entered an agreement to meet weekly and save an agreed amount per week. The group is governed by officers voted by the members themselves. The integration of programs for out of school youth is under the

city government effort to localize the UN's Medium Development Goals. A new manual has been designed which will be used during the BLC meetings.

With regard to mobilizing and working with other members of civil society the major program under this was the conduct of regular coaching and monitoring of members of the project management team, senior life skills trainers, and the city's program for children at risk, and a program for helping families in slum areas. The city government is integrating UN-related programs under its MDG localization agenda, such as the UNESCAP Life Skills Program for Out of School Youth and the UN Habitat/UNDP family based actions for children and their environs in the slums.

HIV/AIDS Program

Quarterly Report for April - June 2008

CCA-HIV/AIDS Program staff: Fr Philip Kuruvilla

CCA's initiative to support the Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI) and National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) to formulate an HIV and AIDS Policy was accomplished in a meeting in Kolkata, India in 2007. After several preliminary meetings, the NCCI brought out a **Draft Policy Document for the Churches** in India at the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Bangalore in March/April this year. The CCA's AIDS Policy was used extensively during its formulation and formatting.

The NCC-India held its Quadrennial General Assembly at Shillong in Meghalaya from 2-5 May 2008. This Assembly passed the **AIDS Policy for Churches in India** making India the first member to conclude a country AIDS Policy. This was in conformity with CCA's attempt to persuade at least two churches a year formulating HIV/AIDS Policy. Indonesia - the second country is still working on their final draft for churches. CCA's Consultant for HIV/AIDS Concern Fr Philip Kuruvilla took a session on AIDS for the 150- plus youth who gathered in Shillong for the Youth Pre-Assembly on 29 April 2008. The youth from all over India were made more aware through an interactive session which empowered them.

The Asian Interfaith Network on AIDS (AINA) is the brainchild of CCA, and part of its networking policy. As a direct result of CCA's interfaith initiative in Colombo, Sri Lanka (prior to the ICAAP 8 last year in August), AINA organised the "Hindu Leaders Caucus on HIV and AIDS" at the Art of Living Campus in Bangalore on 1-2 June 2008. The General Secretary of CCA delivered a message on behalf of AINA Chairperson at the Inauguration, attended by over 160 faith leaders, and the Consultant moderated a session on "The role of FBO's", where spokespersons from the World Council of Religions for Peace (WCRP), International Network for Religious Leaders Living with and affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA), UNAIDS, and the Hindu Leadership of South Africa took part. CCA's involvement and guidance, in this historical step for Hindu leadership was appreciated.

Rescheduling of programs

The National Training Program scheduled to be held in June in conjunction with the NCC in Sri Lanka was cancelled by its General Secretary, citing current political uncertainty as the reason. However, a member-church of CCA has evinced interest in conducting this program. Negotiations are on, and it is rescheduled after September.

The Pre-UNGASS meeting planned for May was also rescheduled due to lack of sufficient interest in UNGASS in Asia. Instead a decision to hold an Interfaith Child Rights Pre-Mexico Conference was planned for July, in conjunction with AINA, with the idea that the Statement that emanates will be read at the Pre-Conference at Mexico.

It was also decided to call a meeting of Strategic Task Force of CCA to work on the future plan and policy of CCA from 2009-2014. Part of the reason for this change came from countries like Nepal who were designated to bring out a country Policy on AIDS in 2008, but who asked for a postponement in view of political developments there.