

## **YOUNG AMBASSADORS OF PEACE IN ASIA (YAPA)**

The Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA) is an initiative by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) for building communities of peace in Asia. The Asian region requires a new generation of peace activists committed to work for peace and harmony. Young people in every society have always been torchbearers of transformation and structural changes. At the same time, they are also lured into conflict situations in many places in Asia. In some cases, young people are directly involved or trapped in conflict situations, and at the same time, they are also potential stakeholders in conflict resolution and peace building. To build a peaceful and harmonious Asia, the youth can play very important and positive roles as ambassadors of peace in their communities and commit themselves to peace building, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction of conflict affected societies. One significant role that the youth can play in peace and conflict resolution, is for them to be change makers. Young people in Asia are in a better position to discover the joy of living together and fully understand the importance of peaceful co-existence. Asia's long nurtured and valued tradition of religious harmony and co-existence can more easily be practiced among the younger generation.

Bearing in mind that the young people of today are the leaders of tomorrow and are destined to guide the fortunes of the world, it is imperative that young people are brought up in the spirit of peace, justice, freedom, mutual respect and understanding. Pluralism at a social, cultural and religious level is the beauty of Asia, therefore, any ideology that harbours division and conflict should be discouraged by all. It is very timely to generate a culture of peace and a conflict-free environment. One significant role that the youth can play in peace and conflict resolution, is for them to "Be the Change" to amend attitudes towards people, traditions and religions and beliefs.

The CCA, with its 101 member churches and 17 national councils across 21 countries, can play an important role in harnessing the energy, creativity and aspirations of young people to promote peace, harmony and justice, for religious, economic and social advancement in the region. It is expected that in the next five-year period, the trained peace activists will be positioned to be peace makers in the region.

The CCA, with the cooperation of its constituencies, as well as in collaboration with regional and national interfaith organizations, is in a position to initiate interfaith networks of Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA).

The program is based on intercultural and non-formal educational approaches. The participants will be trained, complemented by learning platforms and by youth work practices in their organisations and communities. The participants will also meet to share experiences and support each other in learning best practices of inter-connectedness to act more effectively as a network.

### **Participant Criteria**

- Age between 20 and 30 (exceptions may be made on the basis of justification)
- Be able to use English language independently in both written and oral communication;
- Be available and fully committed to take part full-time during the training;

- Be actively involved in projects for peace and/or social change with an impact in their community and be motivated to implement youth initiatives for peacebuilding;
- Be motivated to learn and apply the YAPA values and approaches for peacebuilding upon return to their home countries;
- Be committed to promote peace and work towards conflict transformation through initiatives and projects involving young people;
- Those who are qualified and are intending to apply for travel subsidies should indicate the estimated amount of the cheapest and most direct international ticket costs;
- Selection will be based on competence, sub-regional and institutional representation, ability to contribute and participate in discussions at various segments of the YAPA, as well as the commitment to implement a volunteer project in peace building upon return to their home countries.