



The Peacebuilders

"Keeping the ICF Circle informed; Connecting with Community of Interreligious Peacebuilders"

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Vol. 1, No. 2 Bi-monthly E-Newsletter of the Interfaith Cooperation Forum of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCA **Sept-Oct, 2018**

ICF's School of Peace 2018 completes its first month

ICF's flagship two-month program, School of Peace started on October 2, 2018 at Pusat Pengembangan Spiritualitas of the Fakultas Teologi of Universitas Kristen



Duta Wacana (UKDW) in Yogyakarta. The opening liturgy, indigenous Javanese music, and a traditional ritual of *tumpengan* welcomed the sixteen (16) participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Timor Leste who will stay until November 28, 2018.

The participants are composed of 7 females, and 9 males from Buddhist, Christian and Muslim traditions, who were recommended by YMCAs, church, and peace networks.

Four participants were not able to come arrive because of some challenges such as passport issues, the tsunami in Palu, Indonesia. One simply did not appear, without any explanation. One got a 60-days Indonesian visa but was harassed by immigration officers who did not allow him to board his plane.

The curriculum for SoP was tailored to give the participants an opportunity to examine the conflict situations of their respective countries. Then, deepen



Tumpeng, a mound of yellow rice surrounded by different food. *Tumpengan* is the act of cutting the mound cross-section, and invite people to partake of the food.

their understanding of their own religious traditions, examine practical issues and gain some skills.

For the first time in the history of SoP, the story and development of YMCA was discussed. This aimed to help
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ICF held Thematic Workshop in Timor Leste

In partnership with the National Forum of Timor Leste, ICF organized a workshop on August 26 - September 1, 2018 around the themes on Human Rights, Gender Justice and Planning. It was held in IS-MAIK, Dare, Timor Leste. Thirty enthusiastic young people came; sixteen of

them males and fourteen were females. The presence of six Muslims - three from Indonesia and three from Timor Leste - has enriched the experience as the rest of the participants were Christians. The workshop was grounded on ICF general objective, which is to "strengthen and equip

the youth movement network for peace with necessary knowledge and skills."

Mr. Antonio da Silva, the NGS Timor Leste, shared the history and program of YMCA. Giving the keynote address was the Hadji Ali Al-Ayyubi, the president of the Islamic Organization of Timor Leste, during

ICF held thematic workshop in Timor Leste . . .



Ms. Nina Nayoan, Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro with Leo Gamboa and the Core Officers of ICF-TL in their Dili Office behind the ruins of a destroyed mosque.

the opening ceremony.

The topics discussed in lectures and workshops were human rights, children's rights, religious pluralism and interreligious harmony facilitated by Mr. Manuel Monteiru, Ms. Marilia da Silva Alves and Prof. Bernardo Leto, respectively.

Ms. Nina Nayoan, a seminary faculty in Manado facilitated the sessions on Gender Justice. She expressed appreciation that at

its early stage, Timor Leste signed the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Children's (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The session on planning started with a brief review in understanding peace—positive and negative peace—and of direct and indirect violence. It was done as basic in plan-

ning for a peacebuilding program. The facilitator, Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, pointed out that conflict analysis must precede planning, whether one follows the log-frame approach, effect chain, or any other approach. She also introduced the RPP or Reflecting on Peace Practice approach in analyzing the conflict and planning. Then the participants attempted to make a plan based on their con-

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ICF, Shanti Nepal organized workshop in Bhaktapur



The participants of the workshop in Bhaktapur, Nepal.

Shanti Nepal organized a thematic workshop on Human Rights, Peacebuilding and Non-Violent Communications on September 9-15, 2018 in Bhaktapur, Kathmandu in partnership with Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) of APAY. Shanti Nepal is newly registered and is composed of the School of Peace alumni from 2007-2017. Eight School of

Peace alumni came, along with eight participants from non-government organizations such as Sanjal, Help Society Nepal, Health Station Nepal, and others. The participants come from different faith traditions such as Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism. The facilitators were Shree Ram Chaudhary, Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, and Amina Mambuay,

who was accompanied by her husband Nathaniel.

As it is now a standard to give an introduction of the history of YMCA in any ICF activity, Orevillo-Montenegro shared the story of YMCA and the development of APAY programs. She also introduced the new curriculum of the School of Peace.

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Refugee Activists across Asia celebrate 10 years advancing refugee protection

BANGKOK, 26 October 2018

Over 50 civil society groups, international Observers and Human rights Defenders from Across the Asia-Pacific Region have met in Bangkok for the 7th Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR7). The event provided an opportunity to celebrate and

reflect on what has been Achieved through the APRRN network in its first 10 years, and also to plan, Strategize and structure how best to continue to Advocate for increased Refugee protection in the region.

The consultation drew together individuals from 24

Countries in the region Including Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. APRRN's Programme Coordinator Evan Jones noted that "the Asia Pacific

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ICF's School of Peace 2018 completes . . .

the participants to recognize that Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) is a program of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY).

The participants examined the situation of their respective countries. They identified and analyzed the problems or conflicts of their countries by using the different tools of conflict analysis. They were introduced to the peacebuilding framework of conflict transformation of John Paul Lederach, and Johan Galtung's Transcend approach

through conflict transformation.

The next two weeks of October saw the participants deepening their understanding of their own religions and indigenous spiritualities, highlighting on the religious teachings on peacebuilding.

The participants also learned some principles on photography as a tool for advocacy was also given to the participants. The weekends were spent visiting temples, masjid, a church in

relation to the study on religions. The participants also went for an overnight stay in an Islamic boarding school. The month was capped by a three-day home stay in Dusun Ngiringin, a farming village in Batur, Salatiga. For most participants, it was their first time to experience to do farm work with their respective host families.

After one month of School of Peace, everyone felt like time flies so fast as it moves to its second month. ❧❧❧



One morning meditation . . .



Visiting the oldest masjid in the area—the Masjid Mataram in Kota Gede.

ICF held thematic workshop in Timor Leste . . .

conflict analysis outputs.

On the day Timor Leste was commemorating its Referendum Day, the group visited an orphanage that takes care of children with disability, and proceed to the community of Orasio Mendes, a YMCA board member, to witness the youth celebration. The community visit was capped by a climb up to the

big statue of Cristo Rei overlooking the sea.

In one of the morning meditations, Umi Farida introduced yoga. Films also were shown in the evenings, such as "What is Human Rights?", "The Occupation of Timor Leste by Indonesia," "Girls Rising," and "Chicken a la Carte," a documentary of society's wastefulness manifest in the

fast-food culture and the poverty of many people.

The ICF-Timor Leste national forum, as they call themselves, is led by a core group with Leo Marçal Gamboa at the helm. They screened more than fifty young people interested to attend the thematic workshop, and accepted only thirty. ❧❧❧



Opening Ceremony of the Workshop in Timor Leste

Shanti Nepal organized workshop . . .

Lawyer and SoP 2006 alumnus, Shree Ram Chaudhary, discussed the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), its sources, the covenants on economic, social and cultural rights, universal declaration of human rights, and obstacles to human rights. He also showed that the human rights outlined in the UNDHR is enshrined in the

Nepalese constitution. He also discussed the nature of the international humanitarian law.

Orevillo-Montenegro, ICF Coordinator, pointed out that conflict analysis is a crucial step in peacebuilding. She had the group analyze experiences of community conflicts to be mapped following the Reflecting on Peace Practice approach.

The RPP approach seemed new to the participants, and thus, more time was needed to go through the process.

A certified NVC coach, Amina Mambuay facilitated the session on non-violent communication. NVC is basically a frame of engaging that seeks to remove obstacles to honesty. The work-

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In the village of Khokana

**A
durable
peace
must be
based on
justice.**

PEPP Statement: “Keep Doors of Peace Talks Open”

On September 21, the whole world will observe the annual International Day of Peace. Thirty-seven years ago, in 1981, the United Nations issued the “declaration on the right to peace” which affirmed peace as a sacred right of all people and a primary prerequisite for the material wellbeing, development and the progress of countries. The UN also underscores that the preservation of the right

of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each state.

This year, the theme for the International Day of Peace is “The Right to Peace - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70”. The theme celebrates the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which underlines the importance of the

respect for human rights in the attainment of a just and lasting peace.

In the Philippines, the quest for peace in relation to the decades-old armed conflict has become elusive again as the peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) are stalled. With the breakdown

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Md. Sabbir Talukdar trying to learn how to transplant broccoli seedlings.

SoP Participants reflect on their 3-day immersion in Salatiga

I like the simple life of this village, it made me feel relaxed. I like this community because they practice organic farming.

-Sirikanya “Kwang”
Chaiwongkaew, Thailand

I learned to be grateful with my life and to share with others. I also learned how to live with people of different religions.

- Rina Krebru, Papua

I felt comfortable with my host family. They treated me like a daughter. Their life is simple but full of happiness. There, I realized that I am truly a Buddhist.

- Ranny Rith, Cambodia

It was a good change to observe the village living in harmony. But time was short to observe deeply about their difficulties and

needs, and how they live without conflicts.

-Sai Kyaw Than, Myanmar

Language is not a barrier in community immersion. There are many ways to communicate. We can make use of sign language as a way to begin creating good relationship among people of other religions.

- Baidido Saganding Philippines

*“The land
is our
property,
and our
life as
well.”*

-- Ashoj Maharjan,
Khokana

ICF, Shanti Nepal organized workshop . . .

shop focused on the four basic elements on how to express one’s observation, feelings, needs, and request. They tried to learn the ways to a life-connecting talk and to move away from the life-alienating talk.

The participants visited Khokana in Lalitpur. There, people are still trying to recover from the damage caused by the 2015 earth-

quake. But now, the village sees the Nepali government’s development plan as a threat. This plan includes the building of the fast tract road that would cut across the village’s fields, a smart city, among others. This project will destroy the farms, rice fields, and the people’s livelihood. Ashoj Maharjan from the Khokana community said that the

local people know everything about the land and their own culture. They value the “living stone” that is a symbol of the community’s resilience, and the ancient crafts of weaving and the mustard seed milling for oil. He said: “The land is our property, and our life as well.” Development must be

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PEPP Statement: “Keep Doors of Peace Talks Open”

of the peace talks in June 2018, significant increases in armed encounters between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the New People’s Army have been recorded and there were many recorded violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

This is really sad since 2018 also marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law

(CARHRIHL) on March 16 by the GRP and NDFP peace panels. It became binding and effective on both Parties when it was signed by Mariano Orosa, NDFP chairperson on April 10, 1998, and President Joseph Estrada on August 7, 1998. Last September 1, was also the 25th anniversary of the Hague Joint Declaration which is the foundational document and framework that paved the way for the peace talks between the said parties.

Both the Hague Joint Declaration and the CARHRIHL remain relevant to the situation of armed conflict in the country today and in the observance of the International Day of Peace. The Hague Joint Declaration ensures that through the negotiations on the Comprehensive Agreement of Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) and the other remaining substantive agendas, a more wide-

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Founded in May 2007, PEPP seeks to call on the GRP and NDFP to resume the peace talks. It is a platform of 5 church institution, namely the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCC), Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP, Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), and the Ecumenical Bishop’s Forum (EBF).

Refugee Activists across Asia celebrate . . .

Refugee Rights Network has provided a critically important platform for refugees, Advocates and thought leaders in the region to come together and think strategically about how best to address the challenges facing refugees and displaced people in the region. Now, more importantly than ever, we have to act collaboratively on opportunities for in-

creased rights and access to livelihoods and dignity.” Yiombi Thona, Chair of the APRRN network and a refugee himself, commented that central to the discussions across the consultations was highlighting the agency of refugees in the region and around the world. “Refugees are agents of positive change not only in their own lives

but also in the societies and host communities that they find themselves in. We must continue to strive to ensure that refugees are welcomed, have legal status, and the right to work, so they are best placed to continue to contribute.” Preceding APCRIR7, the

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Source: <https://www.google.co.id/search?q=sayings+on+refugee+in+asia&safe>

ICF, Shanti Nepal organized workshop . . .

done in response to local people’s needs.

From Khokana, the group visited the office of an NGO led by Val Krishna. Then they proceeded to Patan Durbar Square in Lalitpur, which is a historical, social, and spiritual center of the city. On that day also, the Hindu women celebrated the Teej festival, by wearing red clothing, to dance and pray for the long

life of their men – the husbands. Single women pray to find a fine groom in the future.

Reflecting on the workshop, Srijana Shahi, SoP 2008, saw the importance of feelings as a way of self-understanding and learning, of connecting self-analysis and conflict analysis. Shree-ram Chaudhary, SoP 2006 pointed out that communication is an art to be applied

to life. Muhammad Rahaman, a Red Cross volunteer, was pleased to know that YMCA and the Red Cross have the “same father” in the person of Henry Dunant. Encouraged by the understanding that health is a peace issue, Kabin Maleku gave a one-hour helpful input on ways to keep the body healthy.✍

-Muhammad Rahaman, SoP2017
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Ms. Amina T. Mambuay,
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"Keeping the ICF Circle informed; Connecting with Community of Interreligious Peacebuilders"

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum is a program of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs. It values the significance of interreligious understanding and unity. Thus, it offers opportunities for study and appreciation of the different perspective of religions on peace, and discern the role of religion in peacebuilding. Yet, considering that unpeace is brought about by many factors, including the onslaught of neoliberal economic globalization, more people experience poverty, internally displaced people are increasing as communities are destroyed, native wisdom and values are overrun by Western and consumerist outlooks, patriarchy and racism persists, and climate change is now felt as the destruction of the Planet Earth seems unabated.

Peace is celebrated as a gift from the Divine, yet, we, the earthlings have the responsibility to make peace a reality. Although its contribution may just be like a drop of water into the lake, ICF seeks to equip young people of different religious traditions, especially from the marginalized communities of Asia and Pacific, to make waves of peacebuilding actions.

Refugee Activists across Asia celebrate. . .

Inaugural Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees was held in Bangkok with over 30 refugee leaders and change-makers in attendance. A further 40 refugees joined the meeting via video link from Malaysia, India, Indonesia and Australia. This event highlighted the leadership that refugees are taking in advocating for their rights and those of their communities. A key outcome of APCRR7 was the formation and action plan development for a number of key thematic and geographic working

groups for the next two years' work. These included key focus areas of refugee leadership and participation, regional protection, legal aid, durable solutions, and immigration detention.

About APRRN:

The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network is a network of over 350 civil society organisations and individuals from 28 countries in the Asia Pacific region committed to advancing the rights of refugees, through joint advo-

cacy, capacity- strengthening, resource sharing and outreach.

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Note:

Thanks to Aruna Shanta
Nonis for sharing this
statement.

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PEPP Statement: "Keep doors of Peace Talks Open"

ranging and all-inclusive range of rights will be respected along with the rights stipulated in the CARHRIHL.

It is in this spirit that the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP) calls on the GRP and the NDFP to join the whole world in this historic occasion by returning to the negotiating table and together put an end to fur-

ther human rights violations and the loss of life as a result of the conflict.

Let us all join in prayer on this day so that all our people should live in peace and security and share justly in God's bounty.

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without

uncertainty or insincerity. And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."
James 3: 17-18.



Signed by the 5 church federations' representatives—
AMRSP, CBCP, EBF
NCCP and PCEC