

10th World Assembly Asia Regional Consultation

March 4-7, 2019 Yangon, Myanmar

Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network

Some 30 Women of Faith from 12 Countries in the Asia-Pacific Region met for a Two-day Workshop to reflect on the theme and sub-themes of the 10th World Assembly scheduled in Lindau, Germany in August 2019. After intense sharing of experiences and problems in the context of their own communities, the women of faith made the following commitments and recommendations.

1. Working for sustainable and integral human development

- a. RfP is asked to strongly promote and advocate for institutionalized peace education in primary and secondary schools in tertiary institutions and in informal education settings. That this education be based on the six principles to educate for a culture of peace. These being:
 - Dismantling the culture of war
 - Living with justice and compassion
 - Promoting human rights and responsibilities
 - Building respect for cultural and religious diversity, reconciliation and solidarity
 - Living in Harmony with the Earth
 - Cultivating inner peace

Such peace education needs to include women's rights and political empowerment, ethical and family values and multifaith education.

- b. National Chapters are asked to consider conducting multi faith sessions on healing and counselling for those who suffer from psychological issues due to violence against women.
- c. Regional/National chapters of RfP develop an easily accessible database on women's issue so that women of faith can share their best practices.
- d. RfP working together with affected countries develop training on how to investigate, educate, lobby, and advocate at a local, national and international level against human trafficking.

2. Promoting just and harmonious societies

- a. Men and Women of faith need to have accurate knowledge of their scriptures in order to practice their religion. There need to be religious /ethical education in the home and in religious institutions, so children learn to care and share with others. There need to be education to raise awareness of cultural violence in order to change people's mindsets and in so doing peace can be institutionalized. There need to be spaces and opportunities for women of different faiths /traditions to work together on issues such as promoting human rights and respecting cultural and religious diversity.
- b. Religious communities and religious leaders to advocate for enacting the relevant laws and policies to protect basic rights of women and children.
- c. RfP International prepare pamphlets relating to the rights guaranteed to women and children under different religious scriptures.

- d. After the pamphlets are completed the text is used via video clips of prominent male religious leaders giving these women's and children's rights. This is then to be sent and shared widely on social media.

3. Advancing Positive Peace

- a) There is a strong need for all people to learn to live together. There is a need to empower and increase the equal participation of women and youth in the political life of the nation by promoting and practicing UN Security Council resolution 1325
- b) That RfP & RfP Asia train in TOT (Training of Trainers) model some representatives of the Executive, Women/ Youth on how to strategically use social media to promote harmony and peaceful coexistence.
- c) Due to the issue of corruption limiting human development and as a way of promoting peace, RfP should consider forming an active partnership with relevant organizations such as *Transparency International*.

4. Protection of the Earth

- a) RfP members are strongly encouraged to make spiritual reflections and public pledges on the need to protect of our environment.
- b) RfP should consider the use of environment friendly practices to reduce its carbon footprint in all its conferences and meetings.
- c) Every time RfP and RfP Asia have a conference there be a public tree planting ceremony in the host country at the time of the conference. This ceremony is then to be promoted locally and world-wide.
- d) RfP should do media campaigns on awareness on waste pollution advocating the principle of reduce, reuse and recycle.
- e) RfP women should share best practices on climate change mitigation by making short video clips and post them on social media.
- f) Due to the urgency of Climate Change that RfP strengthen its partnership with Green Faith and its Living the Change initiative for religious people (<https://livingthechange.net/index.html>) and similar organizations.

5. Transforming conflict

- a. There is a need to respect others' "otherness" and to learn to use dialogue and non-violent action to transform conflicts. There is also a need for training in non-violent communication and human rights and a need for collaboration amongst state and non-state actors.
- b. RfP International and Asia when necessary will provide support and expertise on mediation conflict resolution in conflict affected areas.
- c. RfP members use mindful language and abstain from hate speech when making statements on controversial and difficult situations.

Prepared by the APWoF committee
May 7, 2019, Yangon

This was not in the main report

Case Study (reports from Indonesia, Philippines and Indonesia- these insolences are increasing)

In the Shan State women and children are being trafficked to China where they are used as domestics, in the sex industry or as forced brides (as there is a shortage of women due to a preference for male babies). Cases have also been reported of children being used for organ parts and women returning with AIDS.

In parts of Indonesia young uneducated males and females have been trafficked to be male labourers in palm oil plantations in Malaysia and the women can be tricked to work in the sex industry. These young people are lured by cash, sold by; their families, community leaders and in some instances by their religious leaders. Many young people do not return home. The ones who do are often ill or have AIDS. A few are 'resold' home in coffins (for example 28 returned coffins in Jan and Feb 2019). If such coffins are opened it can reveal that body parts have been taken from their loved ones. * It appears in some incidents ethnic groups who have what is considered 'beautiful women' are being targeted