

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

June - 2019

Annual Appeal 2020 for Ablution Facility for Girls' Dormitory at Tabaka Rural Training Institute



With support from the Methodist Church people around Aotearoa New Zealand, Mission and Ecumenical was able to complete the 2019 project by May 2019. The Board at its meeting in May resolved to launch the 2020 Appeal for the building an ablution facility for girls at the Tabaka Rural Training Centre as the first stage. It is appalling to find 104 girls staying in the institute having to use only two toilets and an open shower facility. The second stage will be to build a similar facility for boys in 2021.

Your ongoing assistance in this project will enhance the quality of the students life in the institute.

We at Mission and Ecumenical Board look forward to your support.



A plaque placed by the volunteers who built the institute for 20 boys in 1992. Their good work is helping to train over 250 young boys and girls each year in a profession of their choice to earn a living.

The WCC Executive Committee Statement: Concern and Solidarity for West Papua 27 May 2019

Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5: 24 (NRSV)

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Bossey, Switzerland, on 22-28 May 2019, recalls the many initiatives and expressions of concern about the situation in the Indonesian provinces of Papua and Papua Barat (together referred to herein as “West Papua” or “Tanah Papua”) by national, regional and international ecumenical and church-related organizations over many years. Since the joint World Council of Churches (WCC)/Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) delegation visit to Indonesia (including West Papua) in 1999, the WCC has repeatedly lifted up issues related to human rights, environmental degradation, and economic justice in West Papua, particularly from the perspective of the Indigenous Papuan people. The same concerns were raised through the Living Letters team visit to Indonesia in July 2008, and the WCC General Secretary’s visit to West Papua in June 2012, and underlined in WCC governing body statements (including by the executive committee in February 2012, and by the central committee in June 2016).

The WCC central committee called in June 2016 for a solidarity visit to West Papua by an international ecumenical delegation, to demonstrate the ecumenical movement’s accompaniment of the churches in the region, to hear the voices of the victims of violence and human rights violations, and to pursue the pilgrimage of justice and peace in this context. The executive committee accordingly welcomes the fact that in February this year 23 members of an ecumenical Pilgrim Team Visit (PTV) to Indonesia visited four separate locations in West Papua (Jayapura, Wamena, Merauke and Manokwari), in what is believed to be the first time that such a large and diverse international delegation has visited the territory since its integration into Indonesia in 1969.

The WCC executive committee expresses its sincere appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for enabling the PTV members unfettered access to West Papua, as a positive sign of increased openness by the government to such visits to the territory.

Nevertheless, we are alarmed that the observations by the PTV members in West Papua indicate persistently high levels of violence and human rights violations, including recently in the Nduga Regency resulting in the displacement of many people from remote communities in this Highlands area. PTV members remarked on the very heavy military-security approach of the Indonesian authorities in the region,

and its consequences in terms of conflict and associated human rights violations.

We are also gravely concerned by reports of the accelerating deforestation and environmental degradation in West Papua, especially in light of the importance that these forest areas have for Indigenous Papuan people's traditional livelihoods and culture, and their global significance with regard to the challenges of climate change and extinction of species.

The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in West Papua, and the disproportionate impact of the conflict and human rights situation in the territory on women and girls, are matters warranting further specific attention by the ecumenical movement and national and provincial authorities.

Overall, reports received and observations made by the PTV members indicate that the present situation in West Papua exhibits clear characteristics of systemic marginalization – including through transmigration and demographic shifts – and discrimination against the Indigenous Papuan population, and of their exclusion from the development process currently taking place in their own territory, which is in any event unsustainable and destructive both of the environment and traditional livelihoods.

It is also apparent from the testimonies and reports received by PTV members in West Papua that the 2001 Special Autonomy Law for West Papua has not been fully or consistently implemented by the Government of Indonesia, and has failed to reverse the process of marginalization and exclusion of Indigenous Papuans in their own land, or to fulfil their aspirations with regard to the realization of their human right to self-determination.

The executive committee notes that the PTV received a joint pastoral appeal from the heads of four churches in West Papua – the Synod of the Christian Evangelical Church in Tanah Papua (GKI-TP), the Fellowship of Baptist Churches of Papua, the Synod of KINGMI Church in Tanah Papua, and the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Indonesia – calling inter alia for a “dignified and peaceful dialogue between the government of the Republic of Indonesia and the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP)” in order to resolve the political issues of the territory.

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches:

Expresses its thanks and appreciation to the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), the Christian Evangelical Church in Tanah Papua (GKI-TP), the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) and Roman Catholic partners Franciscans International and Vivat International for their collaboration and participation

in the Pilgrim Team Visit to Indonesia, including West Papua, in February 2019;

Urges the Government of Indonesia immediately to open access to the Nduga Regency for national and international humanitarian organisations to provide food and health services for affected Indigenous communities and IDPs in the neighbouring regencies;

Calls on the Government of Indonesia to provide full and unimpeded access to West Papua, including to the Nduga Regency, by international human rights organizations, journalists and others;

Requests the Government of Indonesia to ensure that development undertaken in West Papua, and throughout Indonesia, respects commitments to environmental sustainability and the human rights and dignity of Indigenous and local communities, and promotes gender justice and equality;

Supports the joint appeal of the four church leaders in West Papua for a comprehensive political dialogue between the Government of Indonesia and the ULMWP;

Calls on President Joko Widodo to fulfil his commitments to engage in comprehensive dialogue, and to ensure a just resolution of the Papuan people's concerns;

Commends all church-based and civil society efforts to advocate for justice and peace in West Papua based on humanitarian and human rights principles;

Invites all WCC member churches to pray and act in support of the witness of the churches in West Papua – and that of PGI, PCC and CCA – for justice and peace in the region.

Persecution of Christian communities in Asia

This is something Christians in Aotearoa never experienced as it was and is the religion of the majority. Except for the Philippines. Christianity is a religion of a minority in all other countries of Asia. In many contexts, Christians are persecuted because of the religion. It also raises the question of “Why they are persecuted?”. On the other hand, where Islam is a religion followed by a minority is also under persecution.

The World Council of Churches Executive Committee issued a statement condemning attacks and persecution of Christian communities in Asia on 27 May 2019.

“Throughout history, religious communities living in contexts in which other religions predominate have been among the most vulnerable groups in society,” the statement reads. “In many parts of the world today, Christians in such contexts are among the most persecuted communities.”

The statement acknowledges that, in in some contexts, Christian communities are unfairly or

mistakenly linked to the colonial histories of their countries. "They are frequently scapegoated in the context of prevailing geopolitical and religious undercurrents and narratives of retaliation, and their dignity and freedoms violated, often with impunity," the statement reads. "And they are increasingly targeted in brutal violent attacks."

The violence occurs in the context of systematic marginalization, unequal citizenship rights, and discriminatory and blasphemy laws, the statement continues.

"In many contexts, the vulnerability of Christian communities is accentuated by their socio-economic situation, race, ethnic and or caste identity, and lack of access to land, resources, and education," the statement reads. "Women are particularly vulnerable, being subjected to physical, and sexual violence, rape, abductions, forced marriages, and in cases of conversion, also to shaming, shunning, forced divorce and denial of custody of children."

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-statement-condemns-attacks-persecution-of-christian-communities-in-asia>

Plight of stateless and trafficked people draws increasing concern 23 May 2019

A statement from Christian Conference of Asia



Photo: Meemeeh Htun/CCA

An international ecumenical consultation held in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 20-23 May, gave serious attention to the plight of stateless and trafficked people, and how to better preserve their human rights.

The consultation, organized by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), drew participants from various parts of Asia. They learned about the plight of stateless people and the link with human trafficking in the Asian context.

"Statelessness is a legal anomaly that disenfranchises millions of individuals and

communities around the globe," said Semegnish Asfaw, WCC programme executive. "As Christians and as churches, the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace calls us to work for the transformation of this unjust world that is putting on the margins the vulnerable, the trafficked, the stateless."

Addressing statelessness and human trafficking has been one of the priorities of the Christian Conference of Asia for several years, said Dr Mathews George Chunakara, general secretary of the CCA. "The increasing number of stateless and trafficked people poses serious questions and challenges to humanity and to the tenets of the international law and its principles," he said. "As transnational migration has increased in recent years, more stateless people are also smuggled or trafficked in Asia and they are forced to work in hazardous jobs in different Asian countries."

Bongkot Napaumporn, a protection associate with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees noted that the commission recognizes that faith-based organizations can play an important role in communities and can provide important social, physical and spiritual support for people who are stateless. "We stand ready to work with faith-based organizations and other agencies in their work so that together we can all tackle statelessness," said Napaumporn.

Participants in the consultation, titled "Statelessness and Human Trafficking in Asia: Prevention, Reduction, and Protection," noted that there is a clear link between statelessness, forced migration and human trafficking.

There are over 10 million stateless people in the world, 40 percent of whom are in Asia. Of the 36 million people who are trafficked in the world, more than 23 million of them are in Asia. ***

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Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Annual Appeal 2020

Ablution and Shower Facility for Tabaka Rural Training Centre



No	COURSES	COURSE ENROLMENT NUMBER	YEAR		GENDER	YEAR 1 & YEAR 2		No
			1	2		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	
1	AGRICULTURE	36	18	18	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	7
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	29
2	BUSINESS	18	9	9	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	11
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	7
3	CARP/BUILDING	68	32	36	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	68
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	NIL
4	ELECTRICAL	55	26	29	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	45
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	10
5	LIFESKILL	29	13	16	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	NIL
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	29
6	MECHANIC	34	21	13	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	30
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	4
7	TOURISM/HOSP	44	31	13	M	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	19
					F	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	25

TOTAL ENROLMENT STUDENTS:
 YEAR 1 & 2 MALE: 180
 YEAR 1 & 2 FEMALE: 104
 TOTAL → 284

Tabaka Rural Training Centre was started by a group of volunteers from the Methodist Church of New Zealand in 1992. It was established to train youth in a skill which would enable them to earn a living. Over the past 27 years this centre has grown to technical institute with over 250 students, boys and girls receiving technical training in eight different areas.

The work of the institute has expanded, but not the facilities for the youth who live in the dormitories. There is no proper toilet and shower facility for the students. During the annual visit of the Mission and Ecumenical director and the team in consultation with the principal decided to act immediately to build a toilet and shower facility for the Girls' Dormitory as the first stage and to build a similar facility for boys the following year.

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Board appeals to all to become partners in mission by supporting the **ANNUAL APPEAL 2020 to raise \$ 35,000 in 2019**

Mission and Ecumenical Fund is registered with the **Charities Commission**.
Registration Number CC51048. Receipts will be issued for tax rebate on the donation.



ANNUAL APPEAL 2020 - TABAKA ABLUTION FACILITY FUND

<p>Please send your donation by cheque in favour of Mission and Ecumenical Fund to:</p> <p>Rev Prince Devanandan(Director) Mission and Ecumenical Board Private Bag 11 903 Ellerslie Auckland 1542</p> <p>Alternately, do a bank transfer directly to: 02-0800-0766004-03 stating reference as "Tabaka Fund 2020"</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Please remember to send this cover slip for a receipt when you make a deposit.</p> <p>Amount: \$ _____</p> <p>Name -----</p> <p>Address -----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>
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