

## **Report of Asian MK/TCK Planning Forum September 2-3, 2011**

The Asian MK/TCK Planning Forum was held at OMF IHQ in Singapore, September 2-3, 2011 to discuss Asian MK/TCK<sup>1</sup> needs. There were 20 participants at the forum, including MK/TCK care personnel representing Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. An important feature was that six adult Asian MKs/TCKs, from Hong Kong, India, Korea and Singapore were intentionally invited to ensure we were not just talking about Asian MKs/ TCKs, but listening to them.

### **Background and Purpose of Asian MK/TCK Care**

The International Conferences on MKs (ICMK) in 1984 (Manila), 1987 (Quito), and 1989 (Nairobi) were watersheds in the understanding and care of MKs/TCKs, and indeed a primary catalyst for the whole membercare movement in missions. The focus on MKs/TCKs then was children of missionaries from 'western/ Old Sending Countries'. It was only at the 1989 conference that recognition was given to the emergence of MKs/TCKs from non-western missionary families.<sup>2</sup>

*'Whereas God the Holy Spirit has sovereignly raised up a powerful missionary force in the two-thirds world, and they have their own particular family and MK needs, the delegates of ICMK Nairobi recommend naming a task force of ICMK and the WEF Missions Commission to convene a consultation for the two-thirds world missionary family needs.'*<sup>3</sup>

Since the 1980s, the face of global mission has changed dramatically. We are excited to see a tremendous growth in cross-cultural mission in the 'New Sending Countries' from Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Asia, the growth is obvious in Korea (from 100 missionaries in 1980 to 20,000 in 2010), yet the growth in countries like India is less well known (India Missions Association increased from 40 mission agencies in 1980 to 210 in 2010 with over 40,000 missionaries)<sup>4</sup>. The increase in the number of missionaries, at the same time, has brought a sudden dramatic increase in the number of MKs/TCKs from Korea and India and other new sending countries

### **Eight Main Asian MK/TCK Needs**

At the forum, participants shared and discussed the needs of Asian MKs/TCKs. EIGHT main needs have been identified and endorsed.

**1. Spiritual and Church Life.**

To teach, promote and formulate MKs/TCKs' spiritual life grounded in Christ and to include a proper understanding of the church (on field and at home) as the body of Christ.

**2. Research, Publication & Writing.**

To articulate and raise awareness of the uniqueness, issues and resources of Asian MKs/TCKs through research, publication and writing.

**3. Adult Asian MK/TCK Camp/Consultation/Get together.**

To gather adult Asian MKs/TCKs together for interaction, encouragement, fun and fellowship - mentoring each other for outreach by utilizing their multi-cultural resources.

**4. Pastoral Care of Asian MKs/TCKs.**

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Missionary Kids (MKs)/ Third Culture Kids (TCKs), defined as: 'the children of missionaries of Asian origin, regardless of where their parents are serving'.

<sup>2</sup> Bowers, Joyce M., ed. *Raising Resilient MKs: Resources for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers*, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> "Resolution VII" - Resolution passed by the delegates to ICMK Nairobi, Nov 26-Dec 1, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Korean Research Institute for Mission (KRIM), and India Missions Association (IMA).

To provide resources and support for MKs/TCKs on field and at home. Prepare them for transitions, be aware of their needs and be their advocate in churches and mission organizations.

5. **Education of Asian MKs/TCKs.**

To facilitate the best educational option for the total development of the Asian MK/TCK well-being. To emphasize long-term educational planning. To advocate MK education as essential part of mission, and to recruit, support and train MK educators.

6. **Identity of Asian MKs/TCKs.**

To help bring awareness, understanding and appreciation of their God given Asian MK/TCK identity, as well as to embrace the privileges and challenges of their unique identity.

7. **Wholistic View of Ministry.**

Recognizing that a family is a God given gift and stewardship, and healthy family is a powerful witness in cross-cultural ministry, it is critical we approach mission holistically that see both ministry and family as equally important.

8. **Preparation for Cross-cultural Life and Ministry**

Recognizing the impact of cross-cultural life upon MKs/TCKs, we the sending churches and mission agencies are committed to adequately preparing parents, MKs and their constituencies. We are also committed to establish structures that ensure MK's healthy growth that fulfil their God given potential in this challenging world.

The group endorsed all these but THREE were chosen as priorities for immediate action and three working groups were formed to carry these priorities forward:

1. Preparation for Cross-cultural life and Ministry
2. Adult Asian MK/TCK Camp/Consultation/Get together.
3. Research, Publication and Writing.

### **Other Sharing and Open Meeting**

Besides the discussion, representatives from the different countries briefly shared accounts of MK/TCK support and activities in their respective Asian countries and regions. On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, a public meeting was held in a local church for the wider Christian community, pastors and mission personnel. Adult MKs/TCKs from Singapore, Korea and India shared their experiences growing up on the mission field. The feedback was very encouraging with requests for more, including sharing by parents.

### **Conclusion:**

This Asian MK/TCK Forum is historical in that it was the first time representatives from so many different Asian countries came together to share and discuss Asian MK/TCK issues. There was a strong sense of God's presence and leading throughout our discussions and a sense that this is the beginning of something very significant in the care of Asian MKs/TCKs.

### **By Polly Ho & Belinda Ng – on behalf of the participants:**

Belinda Ng (Singapore); David D (Singapore, Canadian MK); Dorcas Tirhas (MK, Singapore); Joanne Tan (MK Singapore–Open meeting); Kim Teo (Singapore); Moh Leng Tan (Singapore); Cindy Loong (MK, Hong Kong); Polly Ho (Hong Kong); Winnie To (Hong Kong); Daniel Lim (MK, Korea); Esther Kim (Korea); Momin Kim (MK, Korea); John B (India, Australian MK); Michael Israel (MK, India); Remo Paul (MK, India); Philip Chang (Malaysia); Yap Heong-Mong (Malaysia); Yoko Sugaya (Japan); Chiyon Huh (Philippines); Youngmee Shin (Philippines); Yoyit Roldan (Philippines).