**Christian Conference of Asia**

**Action Together in Combatting HIV and AIDS in Asia**

**Skill-building Training for HIV Facilitators in Asia**

**Concept Paper**

**Date:** 27 April – 1 May 2020 (including arrival and departure)

**Venue:** CCA Headquarters, Chiang Mai, Thailand

**Rationale:**

Asia and the Pacific is the region with the second highest number of people living with HIV in the world – an estimated 5.9 million in 2018. (UNAIDS 2019, The Prevention Gap Report). Three countries – China, India and Indonesia – account for around three-quarters of the total number of people living with HIV in the region.

In 2018, 310,000 people became infected with HIV in the region. It is increasingly clear that the Asia and Paciﬁc region is falling behind regions in Africa in its HIV response. 69 percent of people living with HIV in this region were aware of their status. Among those diagnosed with HIV, 78 percent were on treatment of which 91 percent were virally suppressed. In terms of treatment coverage this equates to 54 percent of all people living with HIV being on treatment and just 49 percent being virally suppressed. Although new infections declined by 9 percent between 2010 and 2018, progress has slowed in recent years and new infections are on the rise in some countries. In particular, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Pakistan and Afghanistan are facing rapidly expanding HIV epidemics. The Philippines is experiencing the steepest rise, with new infections up by 200 percent between 2010 and 2018. Over the same period, new infections rose by 57 percent in Pakistan, 56 percent in Bangladesh, 49 percent in Afghanistan and 26 percent in Papua New Guinea. The political climate in the Philippines under President Duterte, where extrajudicial killings against people who use drugs have been sanctioned and condom use discouraged, suggests this worrying trend is likely to continue.

HIV epidemic is largely characterized by concentrated and growing epidemics in key populations in several countries, particularly clients of sex workers and other sexual partners of key populations, and men who have sex with men (referred to as MSM). Low national prevalence masks much higher prevalence among these groups and in specific locations, particularly urban areas.

The epidemic varies widely from country to country and within certain countries depending on context and the region. This highlights the importance of tailoring responses and collaboration at all levels to each country’s context.

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have historically played a vital role in delivering health and social services in developing countries. In Asia and Pacific, faith and religion is imperative part in the lives of the people. HIV is not just a health issue; it has economic, social and spiritual dimensions. Faith communities have the capability to effectively deal with these dimensions. Therefore, faith-based institutions and their constituents play a significant role in reducing stigma and discrimination, prevention, care, and support of People Living with HIV in the community.

HIV and AIDS has been a special focus of Christian Conference of Asia, and several skill building and advocacy programme have been conducted to address the issues, as well as efforts to build HIV-competent churches and communities. With this, the need for CCA member churches and ecumenical partners in strengthening the partnership with the grass root level church based HIV and AIDS prevention working groups, civil society organizations and clients to avail their services and participation in advocacy programmes is highly evident.

In order to effectively respond to HIV with its member churches and councils, CCA is journeying on building capacity of its members to become inclusive and relevant for People Living with HIV through its Action Together in Combatting HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA) programme. The regional skill-building workshop will enable participants to gain skills and knowledge that will help them and others to respond effectively and advocate to HIV and other related issues.

**Objectives:**

1. To equip facilitators for HIV response in Asia,
2. To develop a Regional Strategy of Inclusiveness of Churches with regards to HIV,
3. To strengthen Churches’ HIV and AIDS advocacy.

**Expected Outcomes:**

1. Facilitators are trained to assess and make action plans with Churches.
2. Exchange of Learning on various models of good practices in the region.
3. Advocacy and networking among Churches, Councils and partner organizations.

**Methodology:**

1. Appreciative Inquiry: To understand the strengths and opportunities in the Churches and Councils
2. Assessment Tool for Churches Response to HIV: Using various frameworks that include
   1. Building Awareness and Stigma Reduction
   2. Prevention
   3. Care, Support and Treatment
   4. Outreach
   5. Inclusiveness of the Church
3. Theological Reflections
4. Presentations and workshops
5. Action Plan for Churches: Based on the assessment and learnings from other Churches

**Participants**

A total of 35 participants coming from:

* CCA member Councils and Churches
* Church Leaders
* UNAIDS, Like-minded Organizations
* PLHIV Networks

**Christian Conference of Asia**

**Action Together to Combat HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA)**

**Regional Skill Building for HIV Facilitators on Churches Effective Response to HIV in Asia**

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| **Time** | **April 27, 2020** | **April 28, 2020** | **April 29, 2020** | **April 30, 2020** | **May 1, 2020** |
| 07:30 – 09:00 | **Arrival** | ***Breakfast*** | | | **Departure** |
| 09:00 – 09:30 | Opening Worship  Welcome Remarks by Dr. Mathews George Chunakara – CCA General Secretary | Morning Prayer  Recap from previous day | Morning Prayer  Recap from previous day |
| 09:30 – 10:30 | Introduction, Orientation & Pre-test | The SAVE approach: Safer Practices and Access to Treatment | Sharing of experiences from Exposure Visits |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | ***Coffee/Tea Break*** | | |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Creating and enabling congenial environment for People Living with HIV – a theological reflection | The SAVE approach: Voluntary Counselling and Testing and Empowerment | Enabling Churches to respond and combat HIV: A Tool for Church Assessment Framework |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | The Human Immunodeficiency Virus situation: Fact sheets about HIV and AIDS |
| 12:30 – 14:00 | ***Lunch*** | | |
| 14:00 – 15:30 | The Human Immunodeficiency Virus: An overview on HIV and AIDS Situation in Asia and the Role of Churches in Responding to HIV and AIDS | Exposure Visit to PLHIV Organizations and Networks | Collaborative Engagement to Combat HIV at local levels: Action Planning |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | ***Coffee/Tea Break*** | ***Coffee/Tea Break*** |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges to Uphold Dignity: Towards overcoming Stigma, Shame, Denial, Discrimination, Inaction, Misaction (SSDDIM) | Post-test  Closing Worship |
| 17:00 - 19:00 | ***Dinner*** | | |

**Programme Schedule**