

Church Leaders Address Pastoral Training Issues in Costa Rica ~

Major denominational leaders met recently to address issues related to pastoral training in Costa Rica. They represented around 70% of the evangelical population of the Central American nation. Of particular concern was the growth and desertion impacting the evangelical church in the country.

Leaders within the WEA related Costa Rican Evangelical Alliance met at the International Institute for In-Depth Evangelism (IIDEF) in San Jose. *IINDEF* is a *TOPIC* partner ministry. The *TOPIC* Consultation was convened by Otto Kladensky Jr. (*TOPIC* Senior Associate for the Americas), and was co-sponsored by *RREACH* (a *TOPIC* founding partner).

In 2002, *TOPIC* held an Iberoamerican Consultation in San Jose, Costa Rica. The challenge to equip 80% of unprepared pastors by 2012 was presented. Now it was time to remember that challenge and make a repeated call to knit together a national network for pastoral training. The day started by an exposition of the state of pastoral training in Costa Rica by the local WEA Executive Secretary Eduardo Chinchilla. This was followed by a presentation of a five Hispanic country consolidated profile of a trained pastor based on previous *TOPIC* consultation findings.

With that profile in mind, the leaders addressed the question of what training is needed? Research data from a 1999 study of Costa Rican pastors by Dr. Duane Anderson was shared (Anderson is Pres. of Christ for the City International / *CFCI* - another *TOPIC* founding partner). The question: "How can we help Costa Rican pastors by meeting their need for theological training?" was addressed. Accessible, quality training is an obvious answer, but what and how are also important. Dr. Jorge Gomez Executive Director of *IINDEF*, presented how pastoral training, or lack thereof affects church growth and desertion, based on his 1996 thesis. Consultation style sessions were held throughout the day, including a total of 10 segments. The output / findings / can be requested from Pastor Otto Kladensky Jr., at: ottotopic@racsac.co.cr

Pastoring of Pastors Workshops in Mozambique ~

Five 'Pastoring of Pastors' Vision Workshops were recently conducted in Manica Province, Mozambique. These were organized by Pastor Pereira Gama of the Apostolic Faith Mission of Mozambique, these interdenominational gatherings explored the need for pastoral leaders to not just give pastoral care – but to receive it as well. Over 130 participants considered issues of their own health from a personal and biblical view, and committed to next steps in being involved in pastoring of pastors. In each workshop community, local facilitators were elected to facilitate next steps with participants, in anticipation of a two-day follow-up training, to be held later in 2009. The primary workshop facilitators were Pastor David Bulger (Executive Director, *TOPIC* Southern Africa) and Pastor Josenildo Müller (Coordinator, *ACTOS* Ministry). For more information, please contact Pastor David Bulger at: TOPIC@topicsa.net

Praise God for the Brazil TOPIC Consultation – held Aug. 25-28, 2009 in Manaus, in Amazonas State. Forty – eight pastoral trainers participated, coming from Northern Brazil, especially Amazonas. The Consultation focused on those equipping emerging pastoral leaders who serve the growing churches of the Amazon Region.

Some of the participants traveled six to eight days by river-boat in order to participate in the Consultation. Speakers and facilitators included: Pastor Juracy Bahia, (*TOPIC* Brazil Executive Secretary), Dr. Joao Batista Cavalcante (*SETECEB* Seminary), Dr. Henry Tan (*TOPIC* Board member), Col. Rocindes Correa (*Asas de Socorro/MAF* Brazil) and Rev. J. Paul Landrey (*TOPIC* Int'l Director). For additional information, please email: executivo@topicbrasil.org

School of Workers (SOW) Training Held in Myanmar ~

SOW Training in Myanmar ~ More than thirty pastors and pastoral trainers participated in the School of Workers (SOW) Level One training, recently in Tamumyu, Myanmar (Burma). All of them were excited, saying that these kinds of seminars were needed in Myanmar.

- One of the participants, who is serving in the Myanmar Army, stated at the conclusion of the seminar: "I wanted to resign voluntarily from my Army job and go for full time ministry. But, after attending the SOW Level One seminar, I have come to know that God has sent me to the very place and job where I am working. I recognized that this place where I am working is exactly my area of influence, where the Lord wants me to evangelize and bear fruit for Him."
- A lady missionary from Kalemyu, Myanmar was about to go to Bangladesh as a missionary volunteer. After attending the SOW Seminar, she stated, "Now I have understood that we have so much work here itself [in Myanmar], God has sent me here to bear fruit and also to wait for the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

There were twenty-one participants who traveled not less than five to twelve hours in order to attend the Seminar. About nine came from the local city of Tamumyu, itself. Included in the participants were: pastors from Tamumyu, the General Secretary of the Myanmar Baptist Association, pastors from Assembly of God and Methodist Churches. All have requested this training be given to pastors and pastoral leaders in each association of pastors. Pastor George Pega (from Sikkim) and Elder Robby Rai (from Kathmandu, Nepal) were the facilitators for the SOW Level One training in Tamumyu.

SOW Training in the Himalayan Region ~

490 pastors and leaders have received the SOW Level One and Two modules in Nepal. As a result 49 churches throughout Nepal have established Local Church Based Training Centers. 500 pastors from various parts of Sikkim have been trained. Over 300 pastors from 10 denominations have been trained in Darjeeling, W. Bengal, India. 40 pastors and leaders from Meghalaya State (NE India) from 5 denominations have been trained in Level One. Pastors and leaders from other NE India regions have also received training, including: 30 in Imphal, Manipur; 30 in Nagaland; 30 in Siliguri, W. Bengal and 30 in Arunachal Pradesh. Also, 50 pastors and leaders have received SOW Level One training in Bhutan. For additional information, please contact Pastor George Pega (SOW Training Coordinator for the Himalayan Region), at: gspega@yahoo.com

Praise God for the CORE 300 Graduation & Commencement ~

held Sept. 8-10, 2009 at the Christian Development Centre, Tagaytay, Cavite, Philippines. 208 pastoral trainers graduated. Guests and spouses brought the total number of participants to 430. Speakers and facilitators included: Dr. Philip Flores (*TOPIC* National Coordinator), Bishop Cesar Punzalan (PCEC Deputy National Director), Dr. Ramesh Richard (*RREACH*), Dr. Herman Moldez (MentorLink Philippines), Rev. Mike Harrison (OMF), and Rev. J. Paul Landrey (*TOPIC* Int'l Director).

CORE 300 is *TOPIC* Philippines' strategic plan to "equip the few to reach the many." This five-year effort culminated with 346 CORE pastors participating and 208 qualified to graduate. CORE = **C**ommunity **O**f **R**egional **E**quippers. All 16 regions of the country are represented in the CORE. For additional information, please email: philip_flores46@yahoo.com.ph

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