



COMMACT

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Dear Friends and Colleagues

COMMACT International – the Common Wealth Network for People-Centred Development - is pleased to announce the launch of the **COMMACT Solidarity Partnerships Program**.

COMMACT Solidarity Partnerships

- The *COMMACT Solidarity Partnerships Program* seeks to establish practical and ongoing collaboration efforts between not-for-profit organisations in developed nations with on the ground organisations in developing nations.
- A core element of the proposed partnerships is for partnering organisations to help each other develop the effectiveness of their on the ground practice in People-Centred Development (PCD).

How Would COMMACT Solidarity Partnerships Operate?

COMMACT is currently planning a COMMACT International Conference to be held in Brisbane, Australia from 28-30 October this year. The overarching Conference theme will be: **Advancing People-Centred Development - Constructing sustainable alternatives from the Grassroots.**

- We are hoping to facilitate up to 30 individual Solidarity Partnerships involving Australian, British, Canadian and New Zealand not-for-profit organisations and counterparts in a range of developing nations – such as India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, South Africa, Malaysia, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Caribbean nations, and Pacific Island nations.
- Each Developed Nation organisation will be asked to sponsor one participant from a Developing Nation to travel to Australia to attend this Conference. Sponsorship for the International Conference is likely to cost each participating Developed Nation organisation in the region of AUD\$3,000-5,000 (dependant on cost of airfares).
- Each participating Australian organisation will also be asked to provide an opportunity for their partner's delegate to visit their organisation either before or after the Brisbane Conference.
- By the end of the October Conference, we expect that individual partners will negotiate a draft ***Solidarity Partnership Agreement*** which signals what each partner would like to achieve and contribute to make an effective partnership.

- Each partnership will also be encouraged to produce an annual *Solidarity Partnership Report* on what has happened to build the partnership; what each organisation has learned from each other and what the partnership has done to strengthen the people-centred development effort of each partner. These Reports would be published on the COMMACT International website.

These Agreements may include anything that partners wish to be included and may involve things like:

1. Staff Exchanges and Cross-Organisation Visits;
2. Exchanges of stories of efforts made by the partners individually and collectively in pursuit of international solidarity;
3. Practical support for each other's People-Centred Development effort.

Making the Most of a Partnership

- The most important objective of the Program is that **each partner organisation will contribute equally to the work of their partnership** – even if organisations in developed countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and Singapore make larger financial contributions to the partnership. This is a “help each other” approach rather than a more one-sided aid donor-recipient arrangement.
- Our second objective is that **each partner organisation gains tangible benefits** from the partnership. It will need to be focussed with a mutually agreed plan of action and concrete Programs to learn from and contribute to each other's successes.
- Initially, we want **each Partnership to be based on a three-year commitment**. Partners may agree to continue their partnership beyond this initial timeline and we hope they do so.

Expressions of Interest

We would like Expressions of Interest from both Developed and Developing nation organisations interested in committing to a Partnership. An Expression of Interest form may be completed at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=s1fFOELRauqtaV1BIV0s6g_3d_3d

For Developed Nations

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zKEjz7YaFCckB_2bRd5G7gog_3d_3d

For Developing Nations

A full Conference Agenda and Registration form will be distributed shortly. We will also keep you updated through regular email Conference Bulletins. Any email communications concerning the International Conference or the Solidarity Partnerships Program should be directed to commact@ja.com.au.

We hope your organisation will support both the International Conference and the COMMACT International Solidarity Partnership Program. Please also check out the new website at www.commact.com.

Regards



David Thompson AM
Chairperson
COMMACT International
15 April 2008