

## PEERS TO PEACE LEARNING SEMINAR JULY 2017

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, members of SCI Malaysia along with several members from other SCI branches from all over the world and current members of the IEC came together to participate in a Learning Seminar on Knowledge Management and Fundraising that was organized by Service Civil International and hosted by SCI Malaysia under the “Peers to Peace” project at the Bodhi Heart Sanctuary Penang.

As there were quite a number of delegates from the Asian branches, an Asian Platform Meeting was held in parallel to the seminar and had provided the participants from Asia to join and discuss topics specifically relevant in the region.

The Seminar also provided a chance for the IEC to conduct a separate meeting also in parallel to the seminar and also to engage with the representatives of the network.

Following the main objectives of the seminar such as to collect and share existing knowledge and materials on the key topics relevant, mainly knowledge management and fundraising and also to build upon existing skills/tools in knowledge management and fundraising, the week was packed with brainstorming activities and teambuilding events regarding the two topics.

We officially started off the week on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July with some welcoming words by the SCI President Malgorzata Tur, and the presidents of SCI Malaysia Stephen Nah and SCI Penang Athimulam Arjunan (Athi). We then continued the day by getting to know our peers and also gaining a bit more understanding about the parallel meetings that were to happen in the following days of the seminar.

Throughout the week, besides brainstorming and knowledge exchange sessions plus teambuilding activities, we had guest speakers and also participants to share information regarding the topics of knowledge management and fundraising. Among the many speeches and presentations, Ms. Sharmila Kanagalingam’s presentation, our venue host and manager Mr. Hor Kwei Loon strategies for fundraising and Prof. Anwar Faizal’s infinite torrent of information shared with us were some of the most impactful and inspirational ones.

A week of constantly having to use our brain to digest information and to come up with new ideas was really strenuous to us, which is why we are grateful for the small breaks we had in between sessions and also the energizers our facilitators-- Steffi and Natalie whom always made an extra effort in incorporating energizers to freshen up our mind and body whenever the energy level is low among the participants.

Having said that, it wasn’t like the whole seminar was all work and no fun. Even in the tight schedule, we managed to cram in some free time in which the participants would rest and relax or even engage in bonding games in order to better understand our peers. On one fun night, our Scottish participants taught us the Scottish Dance and it’s safe to say we had quite an entertaining time. In one of our bonding sessions, we played a game called “speed dating” that had provided us a one minute long meeting with people whom we didn’t have a chance to communicate with during the week.

A crucial part of the seminar was the food, and it’s amazing how each time it was absolutely delicious and fulfilling. Special thanks to the kitchen team for preparing them for us. We were also lucky enough to have a meditation master to come over and teach us meditation in the early morning too. It was truly a full body experience.

Overall, the week-long seminar was definitely a success as not only did the participants went home with an amazing amount of shared knowledge and best practises from other branches, we also went back with a better understanding of what SCI is along with some great friends and memories made during that period of time, which was what made the parting at the House Party on the last day extra bittersweet. We are grateful for this eventful and eye-opening experience and hope to see the participants again in the future. Till next time then!

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Member of SCI-KL