

Highlights of the 2016 World OMEP Assembly and Conference In Seoul Korea.

The 2016 World Assembly officially began on the 4th of July 2016 at the EWha Woman's University in Seoul, Korea. There were representatives from 42 countries in attendance. The venue of the assembly and the conference was The theme of the conference was ***Transforming Early Childhood Systems for Future Generations***. The outgoing world president Maggie Koong gave a speech. She reported that we should pay attention to improving our current practices, and also aim high and look far ahead. Emphasis were put on the ***Incheon Declaration*** adopted at the World Education Forum in 2015, and required that the global community endeavor to transform and enhance the quality of early childhood systems to ensure the higher quality of early childhood education and optimal learning of young children.

The small-scale partnership agreement between OMEP and UNICEF's WASH in Schools Unit is finally going to become a reality. This will enable a better implementation and extension of OMEP's WASH from the Start project. The response this year was said to be very exciting with 430 proposals submitted from 42 countries. The 2017 World Assembly and Conference will be held in **Croatia** in **June**.

President elect Eunhye Park stressed the importance of the special consultative status of OMEP within the United Nations with its representation in **New York** and **Geneva**. There is dire need for free and compulsory pre-primary education. It is also important to ensure that all girls are enrolled in these schools. National committees were given points of focus and priorities.

FOCUS FOR NATIONAL COMMITTEES

National committees were encouraged to observe international days.

- **Global Hand Washing Day** which takes place on **15th October** each year was to be observed. OMEP's project **Wash From The Start** should then aim at raising more clean hand in schools. National committees should then forward their submissions on Handwashing Activities to Eunhye or Martines.
- Activities celebrating **World Biodiversity Day (May 22nd)**, the **International day of literacy (Sept. 8th)** and the **International Play Day (May 28th)** can all be observed at National level.

Links:

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/globalhandwashing/>
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/biological-diversity-day>
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/literacy-day/>
<http://www.pgpedia.com/w/world-play-day>

Report from Working Groups

- WASH

It is necessary for National Committees to write to Government officials about WASH in school.

- ESD – Reported by Glynne Mackey

It was reported that it was necessary for those involved or targeted in this area to understand the terminology within sustainability. It is also important to work more with teachers to achieve the objectives of ESD. Suggestions were also made about using the media and technology more to enhance the campaign.

- Play and Resilience

It is important to research on play and resilience and come up with focus areas and strategies to achieve objectives in this area. Focus in this regard would be;

- *Developing indicators.*
- *Cross cultural studies.*
- *Survey on play concepts and practices.*
- *Play symposium.*
- *Seeking sponsors and collaboration with other NGOs.*
- *Coming up with a new curriculum.*

- Next Step OMEP

There is need for financial strategy to have low payments. OMEP is seeking partnership with governments, which will see it contributing to policy formulation and review. A need to improve content delivery and to build on strengthening OMEP was also reported.

Regional Committees Meetings

These meetings were held on 4th July 2016. The African regional Committee meeting was chaired and reported on by the Regional Vice President, **Mrs. Abimbola Are**. Among matters that were discussed were;

- *need to strategize towards increasing the regional membership.*
- *Sending national committees' activities and work to the regional website.*
- *Sending national committee history*

Membership

Myanmar, Pacific Island and Bosnia were promoted to **National Committees**.

There is need to seek more funding in order to review national committees' membership fee. If this is achieved, the **10%** increase of each year will be dropped. A 4-level fee structure was introduced by voting and was adopted.

An OMEP conference for the Africa Region is planned for May 2017. OMEP Ghana have agreed to host this conference.

Financial Report

Financial report was given by the outgoing World President, Maggie Kong on behalf of the outgoing World Treasurer Nirmala. The **2017** budget was endorsed through a majority vote.

Elections

Elections of World president, treasurer and honorary members were conducted. They will officially assume office in December 2016.

Conference

The conference was officially opened on **6th July 2016** with above **600 members** in attendance. All invited speakers comprising of **Arjen Wals**, **Samuel L. Odom** and **Sharon Lynn Kagan** were in attendance. They made their **Keynote Speeches** on various topics relating to early childhood education. **ESD Awards** were also presented on this day. **Project Presentations** by award winners were done on **7th July 2016**. The conference officially ended on **8th July**, with a closing ceremony.

2017 Conference

Planning is underway for the **2017 OMEP World Assembly and Conference** to be held in Croatia in June.

Lilian Atieno Okal

President OMEP Kenya

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