

Australian Student Christian Movement Inc.

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WSCF Program Report

Being an ASCM representative on a WSCF program is a great opportunity. However, it brings with it the responsibility of reporting back to the movement. This form is designed as a guide and a catalyst for your report. You may fill in the form as is, or you can use it as a starting point for a report written in your own style. Either way, make sure a copy gets sent to the National Coordinator, and an article gets to the JG Editor.

Name: Eloise Wright

Programme: Inter-regional Program on Empire; Nairobi, Kenya; August 2006.

1. Briefly outline the nature of your trip, the purpose of the program and your feelings about it now. Include:

- ▶ the highlights of your trip
- ▶ whether it met your expectations
- ▶ difficulties you faced
- ▶ reference to key decisions made, reports written, policies developed
- ▶ ideas for future programs

A basic outline of the programme as well as the two documents produced (a definition of Empire, and an International Solidarity Plan) are attached. The highlight for me was the sense of community that developed among the participants. It certainly met my expectations, as a whole. The main difficulty was cutting my elbow and having to get it stiched up at the hospital, but Georgine (Africa Region Secretary) was very helpful. I didn't experience any particular difficulties in the program itself, beyond what I would consider normal communication difficulties between people of many different cultures and languages.

2. How has your attending the program changed your perspective on:

- ▶ Australia
- ▶ your own life
- ▶ the Movement

I feel less different from and more connected to the rest of the world. A large part of the programme was about synthesising the participants' experiences of Empire in different contexts. Because of this, I can now see more clearly how the challenges and struggles that we (I) face in Australian society are related to those of other parts of the world. I also have a much stronger sense of the ways in which we as a worldwide movement can support each other in our individual and local struggles.

3. What do you think ASCM can learn from your experience with respect to:

- ▶ briefing and debriefing of future participants
- ▶ our own programs and activities
- ▶ policies or decisions to be implemented

Briefing: I was not really sure what level/kind of briefing to expect, so I was not surprised or disappointed by what I got (even though, as I understand it, I could have expected more). On the positive side, throughout the whole process, I felt comfortable that I could ask either the WSCF liason or anyone else any questions. Also, in the end I did not feel underprepared by ASCM. Debriefing was adequate.

There are a number of suggestions for activities for local and national movements in the International Solidarity Plan. I think the ones most appropriate for ASCM are:

- Build alliances with churches and other local groups that work to respond to Empire. [At the women's conference the point was made that because of our size we (like SCMA) can be more effective working with other groups than on our own.]
- Organise events . . . to create spaces of resistance to Empire for people inside and outside the movement. [In many ways I think we already do this, especially 'for people inside the movement.']
- Study the issue of Empire from a contextual, Biblical and theological perspective.

4. What have you already/are you now able to offer the ASCM in:

- ▶ your home state
- ▶ other branches, states, and National projects
- ▶ other bodies (e.g., churches, ecumenical bodies, social justice groups)
 - Materials for discussion that we produced, particularly the definition of Empire (local branch has already used this as a springboard for a fruitful discussion).
 - JG article
 - International solidarity plan, which includes ideas for local and national movements
 - Contacts: one of the founders of the Miss Koch project (from Korogocho slum in Nairobi – we visited this project on exposure), Otieno (Ben) Wandei, is living in Perth, I have phoned and emailed him, and passed his details on to the WA staff worker. Also one of the women, Anastacia Njeri, from the Institute of Sports and Social Arts, Kibera (another youth group in a slum, which we visited on exposure) was going to visit Brisbane. We had begun to make arrangements for her to visit SCM there, but in the end she was unable to get a visa.
 - I have lots of background reading material for anyone interested.

5. Any other information about your experience you would like to share with the Movement.