An Overview of the Work of the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances

2012 Report

Submitted to DKA-Austria

Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD)
www.afad-online.org
Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD)

Strategic Plan

Vision
A world free from enforced disappearances and injustices

Mission
An Asian federation of human rights organizations committed to work directly on the redress for and eradication of enforced disappearances

Goals
• The Asian peoples understand, respect and advocate for the right not to be subjected to enforced disappearance (by preserving the collective memory of enforced disappearances (ED), learning lessons from the past to serve as reminder for the new generation of the dark part of their respective history);

• Improved policy and structural reforms at the international, regional and national-levels to hasten the resolution of cases, prevent or totally stop involuntary disappearances;

• Enhanced capacity of AFAD members and the Secretariat to effectively convince governments to address the issue of enforced disappearances in their respective countries and in Asia (e.g. demand for redress/reparation, restitution, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition).
A. Regional Phenomenon of Enforced Disappearances

Enforced disappearance is the worst and most complex human rights violation committed against the victim and extends to his or her family, community, support group and even the greater society. The challenges imposed by this practice in an increasing number of dictatorial and even democratic states in Asia and the rest of the world render any person vulnerable to human rights violations, specifically to enforced disappearance.

Alarmingy, Asia submitted the highest number of disappearance cases to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (UN WGEID) in recent years. Based on the UNWGEID 2012 Report to the UN Human Rights Council, there are 53,986 outstanding cases from 87 countries, 21 of which are in the Asian region. These reported cases and the generally recognized scores of unreported and undocumented victims of enforced or involuntary disappearance manifest that the phenomenon continues to exist, if not worsen.

Ironically, Asia lacks strong human rights protection mechanisms at the regional or sub-regional levels as well as domestic laws that ought to address the situation. Worse yet, judiciaries in many countries where AFAD has members are weak. This, further, results in difficulties in the prosecution of perpetrators.

Much of the cases of enforced disappearances are committed under situations of conflict, war, tyrannical or dictatorial regimes as experienced, generally, in most Asian countries and, particularly, in countries where there is AFAD presence in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kashmir-India, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Timor-Leste.

Cases, however, are also committed even in democratic governments and governments in transition. Many Asian governments still use enforced disappearance and various forms of torture, unfortunately by law enforcement officials and security forces to address peace and order issues. These proceed with complete impunity. There are also very weak, if not lacking in, concrete measures to demand government accountability.

While the number of States Parties to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons From Enforced Disappearance (Convention) was enough to lead to its eventual entry into force in December 2010, the record for Asian countries is very dismal. As of the submission of this report, out of the 39 states, only four Asian countries (Japan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Cambodia), are States Parties; while seven Asian states, out of the 92 states, are signatories to the Convention. Those that ratified the Convention have not yet fully recognized the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED). Japan, for instance, only recognized the Committee’s competence on inter-state complaints, but not yet on individual complaints.

Meanwhile, in said countries where there is AFAD presence, the commission of state-perpetrated disappearance continues up to the present, albeit in varying degrees. Thus, there is a constant need to establish enabling and empowering environment for civil society response in the search and attainment of truth, justice, redress and the reconstruction of the historical memory of the disappeared.

Despite the common phenomenon and effects wreaked by enforced disappearance in the whole region, there
are also sub-regional as well as per country similarities and particularities in terms of situation, challenges and opportunities in the struggle against enforced disappearance.

In Southeast Asia, for instance, civil society organizations continue to criticize most governments in the sub-region on the manner of handling human rights issues. In a number of governments, though, the current regimes are better compared with the previous ones due to change in leadership and developments in governance. Such is the case in Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

There are also specific developments in the fight against enforced disappearances. The Thai government provided monetary compensation to the victims’ families from the southern part of Thailand, but government accountability still remains weak and there are remaining cases which happened in 1992 and many recent cases in the deep South whose cases are unresolved. Too, many families have not yet received the reparation that they deserve. In Indonesia, the National Commission of Human Rights of Indonesia (Komnas Ham) has recently issued an inquiry report on the anti-communist pogrom or massacre that took place in Indonesia in 1965-1967, by which around 500,000 to 3 million were believed to have been forcibly disappeared, tortured, and summarily executed during the political crackdown of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) by military under the leadership of Major-General Suharto. Human rights groups particularly KontraS and IKOH are demanding for the Indonesian government not just to acknowledge that crimes against humanity were committed during this period but to take legal action too against those who are responsible for committing such abominable crime.

From South East Asia, there are, so far, three signatories to the Convention, i.e. Laos, Indonesia and Thailand, with the latter being the latest signatory in January 2012 and the latest State-party, i.e., Cambodia was the first-ever in the sub-region. AFAD members in Indonesia actively campaigned for ratification through strategic and focused lobbying in the coming months and pronouncements of its government in the last quarter of 2012. A domestic anti-disappearance law is in place in the Philippines after its passage in December 2012, and after a 16-year process in the legislative mill. There is change in leadership and realignment of government forces in Timor Leste. Mass graves were identified in Thailand and the Philippines but there is no legal framework on how to move forward while exhumation support and expertise is not yet very well established at the national and regional level.

Civil society engagement with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) paved way for a sub-regional mechanism on human rights, the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). Its establishment is said to be one of the small victories of civil society efforts. This, however, still calls for enabling and implementing mechanisms to facilitate the actual participation of the civil society with the regional group in terms of human rights concerns. The civil society organizations in the region are generally critical about the fact that the AICHR emphasizes more on the promotion rather than the protection of human rights. It is further frowned upon for its lack of independence, taking into consideration that its commissioners are being paid for by the ASEAN. It is then a challenge for civil society organizations to push the AICHR to be true to its reason for existence.

Another important opportunity in forensics application is the mutual cooperation between the Asian Forensics for Human Rights (AFHR) and the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense or EAAF) on the use of forensics tools to advance their investigations, provide adequate support for victims and their families and strengthen the credibility of human rights organizations.
As for South Asia, countries still deal with situations of repressive regimes, massive war, internal conflict and terrorism, and traces of histories of conflict. Governments are thus, in the height of committing enforced disappearance under the blanket of impunity. In Bangladesh, there is political polarization and an alarming increase in disappearance cases thereby creating a climate of fear among its populace.

The Indian government, despite being the only South Asian state which signed the Convention, remains lacking in initiative and accountability in addressing human rights violation cases and crimes against humanity committed by state security forces. The discovery of 2,000 unmarked mass graves not far from the Line of the Control that divides India and Pakistani-controlled Kashmir cannot be fully resolved because of the absence of a legal framework, as well as the commitment and support of the government to clear out the cases of these mass graves.

The previous 10-year civil war of Nepal resulted in huge number of disappearance cases. With the signing of Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006, it is in its transition to democratic system. However, Nepal is still in a state of political impasse resulting in weak if not lacking in accountability for the war crimes including disappearances committed during the conflict period. The prospects of draft legislation for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a Disappearances Commission are blurred by the view that these measures fall behind the international human rights standards.

Sri Lanka is supposed to work on post-conflict situation but it still warrants involuntary disappearances and crimes against humanity committed against the Tamils as major human rights issues. The Sri Lankan government refuses to take initiatives towards accountability. Civil society advocates for adoption of recommendations of Human Rights Commission which calls for criminalization of enforced or involuntary disappearances under its domestic penal laws.

Pakistan has perennial problems with the ongoing war, thus cases of enforced disappearances are high. The Supreme Court found strong evidence that the state-controlled paramilitary forces are responsible for the recent disappearances of at least 300 people in Balochistan province and Karachi. As such, the government established a new commission to probe disappearances case which are however put into question for failing to ensure witness protection and adequate investigations, particularly in cases where security forces and intelligence agencies were involved. Due to the alarming cases of enforced disappearances in Pakistan, the government was obliged to positively respond to the official request for invitation by the UN WGEID, which visited the country in 2012.

There is still much to be desired in advocating for the establishment of sub-regional human rights mechanisms and human rights defenders (HRDs) protection within the sphere of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The SAARC is the sub-regional formation dedicated to economic, technological, social, and cultural development towards self-reliance.

With AFAD’s expansion efforts, the formation now extends to another sub-region, i.e., Northeast Asia. AFAD has its newest member based in South Korea where more than 500 cases of outstanding abductions were carried out on its citizens by the North Korean government. The new AFAD member lobbies the South Korean government particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice to urge them to take a definitive position against enforced disappearance by signing and ratifying the Convention and has also submitted 14 cases to UN WGEID between 2004 and 2012.
The phenomenon of enforced disappearance is just one of the several human rights issues in the Asian region. But the situation, especially in countries where there are AFAD members, continues to post an imperative for AFAD and its member and network organizations to work indefatigably in achieving strong Asian peoples’ response and governments’ response. These take the form of establishment of human rights protection mechanisms in particular, convincing all states to sign, ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances and recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED), the monitoring body as set forth by Convention and to enact domestic laws for its full implementation.

B. Organizational Situation

Membership

By the end of the year 2012, AFAD has eleven (11) member-organizations in eight (8) Asian countries. Ten organizations are previous members, including two member-organizations each in Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand and one each in Bangladesh, Kashmir-India, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste. The member from Pakistan, Truth and Justice Commission, ceased to become one due to the absence of a functional organization and lack of cooperation on the part of its representative in the internal investigation supposed to be conducted by a special body within the AFAD Council.

Meanwhile a new member from South Korea, i.e., Citizens’ Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR) was accepted to the Federation during AFAD’s Annual Council Meeting in November 2012.

The year also marked the introduction of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between AFAD and individual member-organizations in the implementation of projects and program. Given this, hiring of country staff based on the requirements of the on-going projects of AFAD and these staff members are reflected in the MOA.

The official list of AFAD member-organizations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Member Organizations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>• Odhikar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir</td>
<td>• Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>• Commission for the Disappeared Victims of Violence (KontraS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>• Indonesian Association of Families of the Disappeared (IKOHl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>• Advocacy Forum (AF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>• Conflict Victims Society for Justice (CSVJ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>• Truth and Justice Commission (<em>until November 2012</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>• Families of the Disappeared (FOD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>• Justice for Peace Foundation (JPF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>• Relatives Committee of the May 1992 Heroes (RCMH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor Leste</td>
<td>• Perkumpulan HAK (The HAK Association or HAK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>• Citizens’ Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (<em>since November 2012</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFAD Council and Executive Council

The current composition of the AFAD Executive Council and AFAD Council and are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mugiyanto</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Aileen D. Bacalso</td>
<td>Secretary-General</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandira Sharma</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adil Khan</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Odhikar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parvez Imroz</td>
<td>Kashmir, India</td>
<td>Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yati Andriyani</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Commission for the Disappeared Victims of Violence (KontraS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yetti Sikumbang</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Indonesian Association of Families of the Disappeared (IKOHI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambar Raut</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Advocacy Forum (AF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janak Bahadur Raut</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Conflict Victims Society for Justice (CSVJ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farooq Niazi</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Truth and Justice Commission (TJC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brito Fernando</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Families of the Disappeared (FOD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angkhana Neelaphaijit</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Justice for Peace Foundation (JPF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boonthan Verawongse</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Relatives Committee of the May 1992 Heroes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisto dos Santos</td>
<td>Timor Leste</td>
<td>Perkumpulan HAK (The HAK Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilian Lee</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Citizens’ Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Executive Council (EC) conducted physical and electronic meetings. On January 29-February 3, 2012, the Chairperson, Secretary-General and Treasurer gathered in a physical meeting in Batangas, Philippines. As it continues to exercise oversight functions over the Secretariat, administrative and finance policies were reviewed based on the discussions and suggestions from among the Secretariat Members. An expanded organizational structure and a new salary structure was presented to and discussed with the Secretariat members. These were approved during that meeting and implemented starting February 1, 2012. Too, a proposed structure of the Secretariat was also presented by the Executive Council to the Secretariat members. This proposal will be reviewed during the succeeding Program Assessment.

Another opportunity for EC meeting was in July 2012 when the Chairperson attended and co-facilitated the AFAD Secretariat Mid-year Assessment and Planning in Cebu City, Philippines. The EC members conducted a Skype meeting in view of the absence of one of its members, the AFAD Treasurer.

During the last quarter of the year, the AFAD Council conducted a physical meeting on November 28 - December 1 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It was an opportunity for the Council to review the Federation’s Vision-Mission-Goals
and assigned the Executive Committee to reformulate it to make it more attainable to assess the work planned, discuss social, political, organizational and human rights situations focusing on enforced disappearances in different countries and to conduct planning for 2013. The AFAD Effect-Chain introduced during the 2011 Council Meeting and based on Outcome and Impact Orientation of the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED), presently Bread for the World/Protestant Development Service was reviewed and served as basis for the introduction and approval of a reporting format/template for the continued program and project implementation.

Secretariat
There were also some changes and additions in the AFAD Secretariat members. The Project Assistant of the ICAED Focal Point was renewed on a part-time basis in January-April 2012 and then on a full-time basis between May-September. A General Services Staff under the direct supervision of the Administrative Officer was hired in February 2012. An Assistant to the Secretary-General was hired and started working in April 2012. Meanwhile, two new staff members were employed by AFAD: a new ICAED Project Assistant in September 2012 and a Regional Campaign Officer in October 2012.

In total, there are now 11 members of the AFAD Secretariat: 6 full-time female members, (including the Secretary-General); 4 full-time male members and 1 female member working on a part-time basis. During the reporting period, four student interns were accepted at the Secretariat Office.

Organizational Financial Statement
The 2012 AFAD financial statement is reflected in the attached Organizational Audit Report.

Project and Program Funding
The following projects and partnerships comprised AFAD funding in 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Partner</th>
<th>Project Implementation</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DKA-Austria</td>
<td>Last year of the Project for Administrative Support Development, submission and approval of a new 3-year project for Administrative and Organizational Support</td>
<td>2009-2012, 2013-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misereor-Germany</td>
<td>Last year of the 3-year Philippine project for documentation, campaign and public information Development and submission of a new 3-year Project</td>
<td>2009-2012, 2013-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s World Day of Prayer-German Committee (WWDP-GC)</td>
<td>Last year of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Project</td>
<td>2011-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT)</td>
<td>Round-up of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Project</td>
<td>2011-Mid-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Embassy in the Philippines</td>
<td>KaSaMa 2011 Indie Film Project</td>
<td>2012-2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED)</td>
<td>First year of a new 3-year funding from the for regional and international campaign advocacy</td>
<td>2012-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAK Foundation</td>
<td>First year of the Project for institutional support, documentation and research, campaign and lobbying</td>
<td>2012-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim For Human Rights for ICAED</td>
<td>ICAED Work</td>
<td>2011-present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. AFAD in 2012: Year-long Work

A. Campaign and Lobby

**TARGETS:** The establishment of a politico-legal environment that is favorable to victims and families of the disappeared and to the greater society, and where:

- Asian states adopt policy mechanisms for the protection against and prevention of enforced disappearance
- Asian peoples and civil society organizations advocate for increased human rights protection and prevention of enforced disappearance

as indicated by:

- Increasing number of member Asian states where mechanisms are in place and implemented;
- Increased awareness and understanding of the issue of enforced disappearances; and,
- Resolution and reduction of disappearance cases in (at least) Asian countries with AFAD presence.

**RESULTS:**

Human resources support to campaign was enhanced through the hiring of Campaign Staff members (CS) by member organizations in Indonesia, Nepal, Timor Leste and are coordinated at the Federation level by the AFAD Regional Campaign Officer (RCO).

AFAD’s flagship program of campaign and lobby resulted in the following developments:

Thailand became a signatory to the Convention on January 9, 2012. While on June 10, the Thai government committee overseeing compensation and rehabilitation for the victims of the southern unrest chaired by the Minister of Justice agreed to provide compensation in the amount of 4-7.5 M Thai Baht to the families of victims in Southern Thailand. Too, the government through the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is now in the process of amending the local provisions in the criminal code as part of its preparations to ratify the Convention. The efforts of AFAD member-organization, Justice for Peace Foundation (JPF), resulted in the continuous support to the MOJ in information gathering and providing suggestions/recommendations and in the recognition of the committee of the right of the family to file a case in court in relation to the disappearance of Somchai Neelapaijit.

Through the lobby and monitoring efforts of civil society in Indonesia, including AFAD members, the government has released a supportive statement and verbal commitment to address enforced disappearance from governmental institutions. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights and Ministry of Foreign Affairs committed to cooperate in civil society’s efforts to urge the State to ratify the Convention, as indicated in the 2011-2014 National Action Plan for Human Rights.

The Presidential Advisory Council is formulating a plan to address gross violations of the past committed by the New Order/Soeharto’s Regime and committed to accelerate preparations towards ratification. Moreover, the National Commission on Human Rights of Indonesia (Komnas HAM) has issued an inquiry report on the anti-communist pogrom that took place from 1965-1967, by which around 500,000 to 3 million are believed to have been forcibly disappeared, tortured, and summarily executed during the political crackdown of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) by the military under the leadership of Maj. General
Suharto. The Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was said to have processed its documents for submission by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the president so that the latter could already bring the matter on the ratification of the Convention to the urgent attention of the Parliament.

In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 10353, otherwise known as the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Act of 2012 was enacted and distinguished as the first of its kind in Asia. It aptly adopts the definition of disappearance in the Convention and emphasized the participation of families of victims of enforced disappearances in the consultation and information dissemination processes for the drafting of the law’s Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) and its actual implementation. AFAD, for its part, contributed to the advocacy and will continue to do through its local, regional and international network.

AFAD members in Bangladesh (Odhikar), Indonesia (IKOHI and KontraS), Sri Lanka (FOD), Timor Leste (Perkumupalan HAK), Thailand (JPF and RCMH), Nepal (AF) and Kashmir (APDP) have still to find sponsors to draft domestic anti-disappearance laws and lobby for this in their respective parliaments.

Local coalitions that work to address enforced disappearance have been established. In Indonesia, AFAD member organizations KontraS and IKOHI facilitated the establishment of a national coalition, Indonesian Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances, composed of 7 organizations that provide positive support to advocacy and information activities in promoting the ratification of the Convention. A similar formation in the Philippines was reactivated under the name, Coalition Against Enforced Disappearance (CAED). With AFAD’s active participation, the CAED has conducted joint activities to advocate for the domestic law and other mechanisms to address enforced disappearance in time for the commemoration of important dates for the desaparecidos and in coming up a Civil Society Report on Human Rights as inputs to the Philippine Government’s Report for the Universal Periodic Review which was conducted in May 2012. In Nepal, a wide membership of a national coalition with 15 members, including AFAD member organizations, has been active in holding meetings with relevant entities on the prospects of setting up transitional justice mechanisms vis-à-vis the adverse political climate. They successfully blocked the approval of the attempt to promulgate a draft Ordinance merging the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with the draft law on enforced disappearance and whose purpose is to forge an unprincipled reconciliation between victims and perpetrators.

The efforts of AFAD member organizations yielded results in terms of public information and dissemination. There remains much to be done, however, in the concrete targets of campaign and lobby in terms of establishing country, sub-regional and regional level mechanisms; getting signatures and ratifications for the Convention and enacting domestic anti-disappearance laws.

At the international level, the Federation, having assumed the Focal Point of ICAED, was made all the more visible during a series of activities of the Coalition held in Geneva, Switzerland. In 2012, there were one (1) signatory, six (6) new States-parties to the Convention, two (2) States-parties that recognized Articles 31 and 32, and two (2) domestic laws passed. These are in part, but not solely, attributed to the work of the ICAED and its vast network in the midst of the challenge of universal protection from the scourge of disappearances.
The Coalition, under the coordinatorship of AFAD, was successful in being recognized by the newly established Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED), formed after the entry into force of the Convention, during its first meeting. The AFAD Secretary-General, who is also the ICAED Focal Point, served as the spokesperson of the Coalition in all the meetings it attended in Geneva in November 2012.

**ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Regional, Sub-regional and National Levels**

The AFAD undertook series of activities in relation to two (2) sub-regional lobby tours, which sought to knock on government offices and present to them the situation of enforced disappearances through general situations and individual cases and the imperative for accession to the Convention and enactment of a domestic legislation criminalizing enforced disappearances. For the tour, the Federation invited experts from other Asian countries and from the international community to accompany the local lobby team composed of leaders of the AFAD member-organizations and families of the disappeared in the respective countries. Targets of lobbying included Offices of Heads of States; Foreign Offices and other relevant government agencies; Houses of Parliaments and National Human Rights Institutions.

1.1 The Southeast Asia leg of the lobby tour coincided with the commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared and culminated with the 14th AFAD Anniversary.

1.2 In the Philippines, the lobby groups comprised of local and international experts, including AFAD Secretary-General, FIND Chairperson, Nilda L. Sevilla, and Prof. Jeremy Sarkin, Extraordinary Professor of the University of South Africa and Former Chair and Current Member of the UN WGEID who led in the following activities: Consultative Dialogue among authors of anti-disappearance domestic bills and members of the Legislative Committee on Human Rights, representatives from the Commission on Human Rights and victims’ families, Human Rights Forum with some 82 stakeholders from the government, diplomatic community, civil society organizations and advocates, academe and the media to discuss latest developments and concerns on enforced disappearance, and Media events to drumbeat the campaign for ratification of the Convention and enactment of a domestic law. The lobby activities in the Philippines were also timed with the schedule of the country’s second cycle of UPR.

1.3 In Indonesia, the AFAD Secretary General and Prof. Sarkin were joined by AFAD Chairperson Mugiyanto and Mr. Marczyński from Amnesty International, for a series of lobby activities including: Experts’ Meeting; National Conference on the Progress of Ratification of the Convention;” attended by around 100 participants from various background including the state institutions, embassies, NGOs, victims’ families and journalists; issuance of open letter and press releases; follow-up meeting with Ministry of Law and Human Rights; and, a sharing session among the international lobby group and the victims that served to further strengthen the victims and their families.


1.4 Thailand was visited by the AFAD Chairperson Mugiyanto. AFAD, through its member organization, the JPF in cooperation with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ),
organized a panel presentation which highlighted key recommended actions for the
government and other stakeholders to better protect all persons from enforced
disappearance. It also served as venue for a discussion of the report on “Enforced
Disappearances in Thailand” a study of the pattern of enforced disappearance in Thailand.
Implemented by JPF and published in cooperation with AFAD, the study reveals the direct
impact of government policies to enforced disappearances, groups of people that are
permanently vulnerable to enforced disappearances, the methods used to disappear a
person, the additional violations the disappeared person experiences and the Thai
government’s failure to provide remedies, both judicial and non-judicial.

1.5 Part of sub-regional lobby activities, on June 20-21, the AFAD Chairperson participated
in a workshop on ASEAN Human Rights Declaration organized by Forum Asia, SAPA Task
Force on AHRD and Malaysian organization SUARAM Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. After the
workshop, he sat in an official consultation of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on
Human Rights (AICHR) which drafted the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) together
with international, Regional and National NGOs.

1.6 The South Asia lobby tour leg was timed during the commemoration of the International
Day of the Disappeared and kicked-off with public campaign and government lobby
activities in Nepal, which will be elaborated in Section 2.2.

1.7 In Sri Lanka, ten (10) organizations in Vavniya, Northern Province commemorated the
International Day of the Disappeared through the initiative of AFAD member, Families of the
Disappeared (FOD). Activities included a religious ceremony at Vavniya Buddhist temple, a
protest in front of the bus stand and then a public rally at Municipal hall of Vavniya
attended by 600 people. This was the first ever protest of the families since the war. Despite
a campaign from the main Tamil political party not to attend it, people attended. The
government’s secret service questioned some individuals who came. This activity helped
FOD build contacts with the families of the disappeared in the North especially in Mannar
district. Tamil papers carried news items with an editorial. Sinhala daily and two other English
papers also carried the news. In September, the “Mannar Citizen Committee” was
organized and through this, FOD was able to talk to 45 families in small groups and five
individuals to listen to their views about the issue of disappearance. Major TV and
newspapers carried stories on the event, in English, Tamil and Sinhala languages. There was
no reaction from government. [See link http://passionparade.blogspot.com/2012/10/disappearance-is-crime-against-
humanity.html]

1.8 In Bangladesh, AFAD, through its Secretary General, the AFAD Council member in Sri
Lanka and Odhikar, its member organization in the country, conducted lobby meetings in
September with key government officials. This was done after the two-day conference on
the accession to the Convention organized on September 15-16 in Dhaka. Dr. Rainer Huhle,
Member of the UN CED was the special guest who came upon AFAD’s invitation. In that
conference, the rising incidents of enforced disappearance and the imperative of the
government of Bangladesh to ratify the Convention were discussed. In attendance were
representatives of diplomatic missions, international and local organizations and human
rights groups and shared examples and situation in other countries such as Germany,
Argentina, India, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand and on how consistent resistance
movements on enforced disappearance have successfully put an end to the crime of
secret detention in Argentina, Chile, and other Latin American countries during the ‘70s and
‘80s. They urged the people of Bangladesh to build resistance towards enforced disappearance. It was attended by top level officials from the judiciary, police, civil society and media, not only from Bangladesh but also from India, Thailand and Sri Lanka. [See link: http://www.newagebd.com/detail.php?date=2012-09-16&nid=23833#.UXpPmqKSb_V and http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=250062 ]

1.9 In commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared, HAK, the member-organization in Timor Leste partnered with International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) in organizing the Missing Peoples Photos Exhibition on the history of past crimes in Timor-Leste. The exhibition was brought to Baucau, Manufahi and Dili Districts in November and December. There was strong media coverage and HAK received positive feedback from the people. There were suggestions to produce pamphlets to share information with children and youth, who were unable to attend and not familiar with the history of Timor-Leste.

1.10 In Bangladesh, Odhikar organized district level activities, including rallies and human rights defenders’ (HRDs) meeting with 100 HRDs and some of the victims’ families in Chittagong. The meeting discussed the issues of enforced disappearance and allied violations of torture and extra-judicial killings and violence against women. For the meeting, a pocket-sized handbook on these issues and directories of relevant offices or organizations were distributed. As a result, one HRD used it to address a case where Odhikar was able to immediately respond.

1.11 In November 2012, the AFAD Secretary General spoke in a seminar entitled “Cases of Abductions in South Korea and Philippines: Domestic and International Resolution Strategies” upon the invitation of Citizens’ Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR) and Handong International Law School (HILS). A meeting with the Ministry of Justice was also done to seek support for the Convention. It was also an opportunity for expansion of AFAD, since the sponsoring organization, NKHR was accepted by AFAD as its newest member. A meeting with some families of the victims were separately conducted, which was recognized by the NKHR as a significant source of hope for the victims’ families.

1.12 AFAD also engaged in letter writing campaigns to pressure concerned government agencies to act on demands of the families of the disappeared. Through AFAD/ICAED Focal Point’s country-of-the-month campaign of ICAED, local, regional and international networks of AFAD and ICAED participated in the sending of a letter urging the Indonesian government to ratify the Convention. The members in Indonesia issued an Open Letter to Mr. Amir Syamsuddin, Minister of Law and Human Rights to demand for the ratification of the convention of enforced disappearances. Also, statements to government of Nepal regarding the decision to rescind investigation on murdered journalist were also sent out.

1.13 The AFAD Secretary General/ICAED Focal person together with the ICAED team conducted embassy visits (Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, European Union, France and the United Kingdom and Indonesia) in Manila to drum up support for the ratification of the Convention in July and October. In as far as Indonesia was concerned, this was done as part of ICAED’s country of the month campaign. AFAD also sent a letter to the Philippine President, Benigno Aquino III during the anniversary of the assassination of his father, Sen. Benigno Aquino II. It was meant to encourage the president to sign the then anti-enforced disappearance draft law and to sign and ratify the Convention. AFAD, through its Secretary-General, also visited the Philippine Ambassador in Dhaka, Bangladesh
and apprised him of the state of enforced disappearances in the country. Moreover, through the AFAD Secretary General and Regional Campaign Officer also visited the Philippine Consulate in Colombo. The consul was apprised of the human rights situation in the Philippines and Sri Lanka and the need for the Philippine government to ratify the Convention.

2. Country-Specific Projects
2.1 Philippine Project
Effective implementation of AFAD’s first-ever country-specific project strengthened the capacity of the Federation to continue its efforts to make the issue of enforced disappearance a societal concern but has elevated it to higher degree of engagement not only with the government but with civil society and the general public as well. The project is also viewed as complementary to the work of national human rights organizations in the Philippines working directly on the issue of enforced disappearance and cannot create great impact without these organizations’ support and cooperation. The Philippine project has established AFAD’s niche in the human rights movement in the Philippines. The Philippine project being a pilot project of the AFAD Secretariat can be a model for replication of other AFAD members. One of the significant outcomes of the campaign and lobby in the Philippines came in December 2012, as Republic Act 10353 or the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Act of 2012 was signed into law.

2.1.1 During the year, AFAD had conducted university fora and hopping during traditionally-commemorated activities and in time with other out-of-office trips.

In commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared (IDD), a Public Forum was held in the in partnership with the local families’ association, FIND and the academe, University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights (UP IHR). More than 80 participants from 20 non-government organizations (NGOs), 5 government organizations, 3 embassies, media organizations and families’ association.

Incidental to the assessment session in Cebu City in July, the AFAD Secretariat organized fora in three universities: University of San Carlos; University of Cebu; and St. Alphonsus Seminary where the issue of disappearance in the Philippines and prospects of anti-disappearance instruments such as the Convention and a domestic law were discussed among law students, professors, seminary students and university administrators. Distribution of campaign materials and gathering of signature campaigns were also done.

A similar event entitled “Martial Law: Philippines in the 70s and Its Other Side” was done on September 21, in time for the remembrance of the Philippine Martial Law Declaration at the PATTS College of Aeronautics. Attended by 500 students from different colleges and year levels, the forum was made possible through the cooperation of the Social Science Society.

On October 10, a forum cum campus radio Interview which focused on enforced disappearance as one of the pressing human rights issues was held at the St. Scholastica’s College, Manila. The activity was jointly organized by Social Science and Mass Communication Departments with 10 classes or more or less 300 students in attendance.

In commemoration of the International Human Rights Week and observance of the National Day of Prayer for the Disappeared, AFAD conducted two-day activities at the De
La Salle University (DLSU), Manila. On December 3, a candle lightning and lantern parade ceremony with 100 students opened the human rights week celebration. On December 4, a forum entitled, “When Human Rights Went Wrong: A Forum on the Human Rights Situation and the Phenomenon of Enforced Disappearance in the Philippines and other parts of Asia” was attended by 150 students from different colleges and year levels. AFAD partnered with the DLSU Department of Political Science in hosting the activities.

2.1.2 Organizing of media events, issuance of press releases and statements were also done to heighten the call for ratification of the Convention, enactment of the Philippine anti-disappearance law and to increase public awareness on the issue of enforced disappearance. A Roundtable Discussion entitled “Break Impunity: Anti-Enforced Disappearance Law Now!” was held with media on December 10 in Manila, Philippines. AFAD had a radio Interview @ Ratsada in Radyo Inquirer-DZIQ on August 25. AFAD undertook issuance of AFAD Statements and Solidarity Messages merited some online and print media hits.

2.2 Nepal Project
The partnership of AF and CVSJ with AFAD was highly appreciated by the families of the victims and stakeholders. Further, the programs and activities for the families of the disappeared have been effective in making these families be relieved of psychological pressures as there is support in exerting pressure to the government to address enforced disappearance.

2.2.1 Member organizations in Nepal, AF and CVSJ carried out multi-level lobby meetings with the Prime Minister, political parties and members of the bureaucracy and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) regarding the country’s Universal Periodic Review. Throughout the reporting period, seven meetings were also held on the prospects of setting-up transitional justice mechanisms vis-à-vis the adverse political situation.

In February, a press meeting was organized to oppose the political consensus to merge the two commissions.

In March, AF organized a peaceful sit-in at Singhadarbar, Kathmandu to pressure the government of Nepal to pass the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission of Inquiry of Disappeared (DC) Bills, while CVSJ, during a local festival in Baglung, Nepal, did a signature campaign against the government action regarding general amnesty to perpetrators.

Eight community-based discussions were held in four different districts of Mid-Western and Far Western Region, including Banke, Bardia, Kanchanpur and Surkhet, with three discussions in Banke, one in Bardia, two in Kanchanpur and two in Surkhet. The discussions were basically targeted to create platforms for victims’ families (of disappeared), to share their experiences and to inform them about the insistent movement of the government to establish TRC and DC. 210 victims and their family members participated in the discussions.

The CVSJ, on the other hand, has 40 district level victims’ committees actively involved in the activities. About 50,000 individuals signed in support of the victims’ campaign.

Advocacy Forum and the Asian Legal Resource Centre held a special event at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on July 4, 2012, to discuss the need to develop the
Council’s ability to address chronic human rights situations in a way that would enable tangible and sustainable improvements. Human Rights Watch, the International Commission of Jurists and the International Service for Human Rights supported the event.

In August 2012, AF, taking lead from Accountability Watch Committee (AWC), a loose national network of individuals and organizations working on human rights and rule of law, lobbied with the chief of major political parties, including United Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN-M), Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), separately to establish two different bills as it was planning as TRC and DC.

The AF visited the leaders thrice, respectively in June, August and October 2012, in different times along with the negative progress developed in connection to victims’ rights. It also met with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Office of the Prime Minister and discussed about the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations received from the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in July 2012.

2.2.2 The AF carried out the production of a video-documentary culled from the experiences of four enforced disappearance cases perpetrated during the conflict in Nepal. The documentary was launched as an effective education and lobby tool on August 30 to coincide with the International Day of the Disappeared (IDD) and South Asia lobby tour. Entitled “The Last Message”, the film later won the highest award in the Kathmandu Short Film Festival competition last 13 April 2013. [See link: http://www.advocacyforum.org/]

The documentary reflected the situation of the families of the disappeared victims and discusses the indifference of the government to the issue of enforced disappearance. The necessity of enacting a national law was also emphasized in the production. Aside from the video documentary, AF’s district offices have identified strong cases of disappearances for the 7 video documentations which were produced during the project period.

2.2.3 In terms of production and dissemination of campaign materials, member organizations in Nepal regularly contribute articles and stories to The Voice. In the initial discussion for the content of the current issue of the magazine, an article on the development on, status of and blocks to the enactment of pieces of national legislation on protection mechanisms and the corresponding response of the civil society in untangling these blocks. A Primer on the Anti-Disappearances Convention was translated into Nepali and published.

2.2.4 During the eve of the Commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared, (29 August 2012), AF and CVSJ jointly organized various programs in 20 different districts. These included: 1) an interaction program titled "Unheard Voices of the Conflict Victims: An Interaction Program" organized by victims’ groups on 27 August; and, 2) a public hearing and documentary release program at Tripureshwar in partnership with Ujyaalo Network Nepal (nationwide covering F.M. radio). Around 150 participants including family of the disappeared, human rights defenders, journalists, AFAD representatives and political leaders attended the program.

2.2.5 Media was utilized in the campaign through the organizing of media fellowships consisting often (10) journalists/region in which journalists were required to carry out research-based articles on disappearances in Nepal. As a result, “media fellows” were able
to publish their articles in national newspapers. The fellowship was a constructive and productive activity that focuses on the mission to see the country without disappearances.

The “Voice of Nepal,” a nationwide FM radio program aired in Kantipur was utilized to discuss 13 cases of enforced disappearance. The senior leaders of the political parties, families of the disappeared, and the officers of government authorities have been invited in the talk shows. Live interaction with the listeners was done through phone calls to its guests. It was effective to seek the solidarity of the people from all sectors of society. Basically, the radio program has been effective to inform the conflict victims and the people in general about the progress made at the policy level concerning the 1) criminalization of enforced disappearances; b) setting up of a Transitional Justice Mechanism; and, c) ratifying the International Convention. This was implemented as a result of the media planning and fellowship spearheaded by AFAD members in Nepal.

3. Breaking Impunity Campaign
3.1 Nepal
A Case submission has been made to the Special Rapporteur of the UN on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-recurrence regarding the recent political developments including updates on Truth and Justice Mechanisms on August 23. The document has depicted the critical development of the issues mentioned.

The government withdrew cases which were running in the district police office and court against the people implicated in serious breach of human rights violations. In response, AF mobilized national and international human rights organizations, including diplomatic agencies, in order to seek immediate intervention to pressure the government to retract its decision. The long standing practice of impunity of the government was even seen in its sheer strength during the reign of the current Maoist led government. AF, protesting such move of the government, released press statements condemning the activities of the government. AF visited the President, leaders of Political Parties and the diplomatic Communities in order to seek immediate intervention on such systematic steps that further helped promote the culture of impunity. It was also in the forefront working to put the issue of disappearance in the main agenda by empowering families of the disappeared and also by reminding state stakeholders about the plight the families of disappeared and the state obligation.

3.2. Jammu and Kashmir
From July to December, AFAD member APDP continued to ask the government to furnish the records about the total number of disappeared persons in Kashmir. The association wrote letters to the officials in the administration to furnish information under Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act – 2009. The association also submitted many applications to the government on why the concerned authorities have failed to provide the information about the cases of enforced disappearances. Furthermore, APDP reminded the government about the orders passed by the State Information Commission, a competent intervening body, which after processing the case, had directed police to provide information to APDP.

APDP has also filed some new applications seeking information about some individual case of enforced disappearance. On the second week of September, APDP highlighted the government’s indifference in dealing with a case of disappearance of three persons and their subsequent murder by the police. The case was initially taken up in the J&K High Court.
by APDP, but the case was dismissed as one of the accused was serving as the chief of Police in Jammu and Kashmir (reportedly interested to the post of Chief Vigilance Commissioner). The association filed a complaint before the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC).

A landmark study of 214 cases of human rights violations was carried out by the International Peoples’ Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir [IPTK] and AFAD member, Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP). This is viewed as positive contributions in the efforts to undertake case procedures as the report identified 500 individual members of the Indian army, police, para-military and State-supported militants with their corresponding ranks as perpetrators in these cases.

In addition, the representatives of APDP met with Dr. Christof Heyns, UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, and Arbitrary Executions from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights during his visit to Kashmir on March 26, 2012. APDP representatives submitted dossiers and case studies and updated the Special Rapporteur about the situation of enforced disappearances and extra-judicial executions in Kashmir.

Since March 2012, the APDP has also submitted nearly 50 disappearance cases and petitions asking the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), Jammu & Kashmir High Court and various District and Sessions Courts to conduct investigations and render recommendations for appropriate relief and compensation to the relatives of the victims of more than 500 disappearance cases. The legal professionals linked with the association urged the judiciary and state human rights commission to investigate into the cases filed and also prayed for speedy justice to the families including appropriate relief and compensation. In a number of cases, the SHRC ruled in favor of the families, some of whom have already received monetary compensation from government in the form of benefit and ex-gratia relief of 100,000 rupees under statutory rules and orders of the state.

3.5 Bangladesh
The Odhikar, the AFAD member-organization in Bangladesh submitted two cases to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (UN WGEID) using the latter’s standard communication form to consider taking action under the ‘Urgent Appeal’ and ‘Urgent Action’ procedures. It also carried out five fact-finding missions regarding incidents of enforced disappearance during the second quarter of the year.

3.6 Philippines
The AFAD Secretariat attended a case Dialogue on the Prosecution of Torture, Enforced Disappearance, Sexual Abuse and Extra-Judicial Killings in the Philippines organized by the Medical Action Group (MAG) in November. It also regularly attended meetings with the Philippine Human Rights Commission, an office under the President. It participated in the general assembly of United Against Torture Coalition held on December 5, 2012, and the meeting concerning the Assessment on the Performance of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights from the point of view of CSOs held on December 14, 2012.

3.7 International
On 29 October, through its Chairperson and Secretary-General, AFAD met with the members of the UN WGEID to: submit general allegation from the APDP on the presence of unknown, unmarked graves in Jammu and Kashmir and the need for investigation on the locations of said sites and from Indonesia about the non-compliance of the state to the
Declaration in relation to cases of disappearances of activists in 1997-1998; and, submit new cases, e.g. 13 from Indonesia who disappeared from 1997-1998; four from Nepal who disappeared in 2002-2006; three from Philippines who disappeared in January 2012; follow up cases submitted by Bangladesh and 11 cases submitted by the Citizens’ Alliance of North Korean Human Rights (NKHR); and, submission of the problem of travel documents of APDP human rights defenders. Except for Bangladesh, whose two cases are in the 2012 Report of the UN WGEID, the other cases are not reflected in the said report because they were submitted in November, when it was too late to include in the latter’s annual report. These will however be reflected in the succeeding report.

During this time also, AFAD, in its capacity as ICAED Focal Point and upon authorization of the El Salvadoran organization and ICAED member, Pro-Busqueda, followed-up on the 500 cases submitted by the latter.

4. Public campaign and information dissemination

Campaign and information materials were produced and various media were utilized to disseminate the issue of enforced disappearance in many organized public events of AFAD and its members and in cooperation with network organizations.

4.1 Audio Visual Production

A regional video documentary to highlight the situation of enforced disappearance in Asia is being produced. During the reporting period, location shoots were done in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and Timor Leste to highlight country-specific situations. The regional and country-based documentation staff members were involved in the production and location shoots of the video. There are also on-going efforts to re-produce and disseminate the video documentary “Unsilenced” with different language subtitles. The video now has versions with subtitles in English, Spanish, French, Russian, Italian, Korean, and Japanese. The Spanish, French, Russian, Italian and English versions are available in DVD copies and can also be accessed in YouTube, with search entries-Unsilenced.

4.2 Production and dissemination of AFAD’s official publication and other campaign materials

4.2.1 AFAD Magazine

One thousand five hundred copies of AFAD Magazine, “The Voice” were printed and released in August 2012. Entitled “Hope Springs Eternal,” The Voice copies were disseminated to members and networks as well as during lobby visits, school hopping and related public events. Meanwhile remaining copies are still being disseminated. AFAD Secretariat members who have opportunities to go abroad brought copies of The Voice, while copies were mailed to members which were not visited. Some were also sent to various contacts in the region, diplomatic missions in the Philippines, libraries of schools and embassies, and funding partners and relevant international human rights bodies. An electronic copy is available in the Resources section of the AFAD website and other AFAD social media accounts.

In November 2012, AFAD commenced the conceptualization and planning for the new issue of “The Voice.” Facilitated by the RCO, a brainstorming session to discuss themes, articles and contributions to reflect the continuing struggle against disappearance and sustainability strategies was conducted during the Council Meeting in Sri Lanka.
4.2.2 Primer on the Anti-Disappearances Convention
AFAD and its members undertook production, translation to local languages and dissemination of updated editions of the Primer on the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. During the reporting period, the 7th edition of the Primer, as well as Bahasa, Bangla, Nepali, and Sinhala versions were produced and disseminated.

4.3 Utilization of Media in the campaign
4.3.1 AFAD issues media releases, briefs, statements on current and urgent cases of enforced disappearance and allied violations and on traditional commemorations of relevant international, regional, and national events at the level of the Federation, international coalition, and through its member-organizations. These are aimed to inform and form public opinion on the issues related to enforced disappearance and establish a wider scope in favor of the campaign against disappearances. A press statement on the case of disappeared persons was issued by the member-organization in Timor Leste, and published in print and electronic media. The commemoration of Massacre Assassination of Marabia-Dili in 1980 was publicized in media, e.g., TV and newspapers. In Nepal, a media fellowship was conducted and a weekly radio program is being conducted in one of the biggest radio stations. In Bangladesh, campaign, reports and press releases were disseminated to the media while articles and updated information on disappearance were also published in the newspapers. In Kashmir, the APDP issued a press statement regarding the role of the Supreme Court in the case of Pathribal extra-judicial execution of three persons killed in a staged encounter after their disappearance. The Supreme Court ruled that the cognizance may not be taken by a court without prior sanction from the Indian government.

4.3.2 There are regular invitations for actual media coverage and participation of media practitioners in activities organized by the Federation and members. These media events contribute to the projection of the event and of the issue of enforced disappearance and the call for establishing domestic and international protection mechanisms. For instance, TV and newspaper coverage of the regional lobby activities in Bangladesh forced the government to issue a statement on the disappearance situation in the country.

4.3.3 The AFAD website www.afad-online.org was launched with its new design, while updates are constantly lodged in AFAD’s Facebook and twitter accounts. Updates include events, campaigns and statements and other useful information on enforced disappearance and other human rights issues which are also promoted and disseminated online under AFAD account in Facebook and Cause to Support the Convention on Enforced Disappearances. To date, there are 5,000 friends in Facebook and 7,365 Cause members who share and benefit from updates and information on enforced disappearance.

4.3.4 In Indonesia, the Petition : SBY, Carilah & Temukan Bimo Anugerah dkk, that called on President Yudhoyono to find and find those 13 activists who are still missing for 14 years already. This was launched in July through www.change.org website. As of reporting period, it generated 1,212 signatures by end of December.

4.3.5 During the time of this report, the ICAED Focal Point released three (3) issues of its electronic newsletter distributed to ICAED members. During the International Day of the Disappeared (IDD), AFAD, being the focal point of the ICAED, launched an international
media campaign urging people to change their Facebook profile pictures and use a proposed poster depicting a disappeared as a tribute to all the disappeared people of the world.

5. International Lobbying

5.1. Participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Processes and other UN Processes

Through the international lobby component of the Nepal Project, the Advocacy Forum and the Asian Legal Resource Centre held a special event at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on July 4, 2012, to discuss the need to develop the Council’s ability to address chronic human rights situations in a way that would enable tangible and sustainable improvements. Human Rights Watch, the International Commission of Jurists and the International Service for Human Rights supported the event. The experience of Nepal, notably in view of the recent closure of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights’ (OHCHR) Nepal office, was used to illustrate and assess the challenges faced by the international human rights system in translating “crisis intervention strategies” into concrete, lasting advances such as the strengthening of national mechanisms and institutions to enable effective protection of human rights.

5.2. Participation and Interventions in International Fora and Advocacy

**Geneva, Switzerland:** AFAD Secretary-General and ICAED Focal Person attended a series of events and delivered oral interventions in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in Geneva, Switzerland from October 29 to November 2, 2012.

The AFAD Chairperson also participated in the presentation of cases and follow-up of general allegations submitted by Philippines and Nepal during the ICAED meeting with the UN WGEID.

AFAD, as focal point of ICAED, and in cooperation with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and the Permanent Mission of France to the UN in Geneva organized a side event with the theme, **Respect the Right Not to Be Disappeared: Universal Accession and Implementation of the Convention Against Enforced Disappearances.** It was graced by the French Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, His Excellency Nicolas Niemtchinow, who delivered a welcome note emphasizing the imperative of the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Convention). Mr. Olivier de Frouville, Chair of the UN WGEID spoke about the value of both the 1992 UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention. In the same meeting, the AFAD Secretary-General also presented the importance of the Convention to families of the victims.

Furthermore, the AFAD Chairperson and Secretary-General spoke in a Side Event on Enforced Disappearances with focus on the value of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, which was organized by the Geneva for Human Rights. They both presented the importance of the Convention from the perspective of the victims.

AFAD’s presence in Geneva was also maximized to organize a physical meeting of the ICAED Steering Committee held in October.
**Washington D.C., USA:** The Secretary-General and concurrent ICAED Focal Person participated in the Torture Survivors’ Week organized by ICAED member Torture Abolition and Survivor Support Coalition (TASSC) in June 2012.

**Paris, France:** The Secretary-General was invited to discuss the importance of the Convention and the role of families’ associations in the drafting and negotiation during the International Conference on Enforced Disappearance jointly organized by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearance (CED), the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (UN WGEID) and the University of Paris in May 2012. The Secretary General took the opportunity to have informal meetings with the CED members and establish contacts with the new secretary of the CED.

**Ethiopia, Africa:** The Secretary-General and Treasurer participated in the UN WGEID-sponsored Experts’ Conference on the Gender and Enforced Disappearances in April 2012. Ms. Bacalso delivered an oral intervention in the panel on the role of women as actors of change in the fight against enforced disappearances. She said that wives of disappeared were labeled as half-widows in the South-Asian context, and that they and their children, particularly daughters, suffered numerous forms of discrimination, stigmatization and violence. Women victims of enforced disappearances in Asia had become a formidable force and, refusing to be cowed by the horrors of enforced disappearances, transformed themselves from pathetic victims to human rights defenders. [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12713&LangID=E](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12713&LangID=E)

### 5.3 Country-of-the-Month Campaign

Initiated by AFAD as the current Focal Point of ICAED in mid-2012, this international campaign involves letter-writing to relevant government officials and embassy visits within a period of one to two months for particular countries whose position is closer to signing or ratifying the Convention or is scheduled to undergo Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

As the ICAED Focal Point, the AFAD prepares template letters addressed to government authorities of selected countries. The Focal Point then requests all 50 members of the ICAED to send letters which are made available in three languages: English, French and Spanish. Sample letters were drafted, circulated in English, French and Spanish versions, signed by the representatives of member and network organizations and sent to the authorities of government of particular countries. Selection of the country-of-the-month was done by the ICAED Steering Committee members composed of 10 international NGOs and federations and associations of families of the disappeared from different parts of the world. From May 2012 to February 2013, the focus was on the Philippines, Indonesia, El Salvador, Burundi and Guatemala. An average of 15 organizations per month from different countries participated in this campaign.
CAMPAIGN AND LOBBY SNAPSHOTs

SOUTHEAST ASIA LOBBY TOUR

PHILIPPINES—To commemorate the International Week of the Disappeared, AFAD partners with FIND and the local Coalition Against Enforced Disappearance (CAED), in organizing activities with the victims and their families and representatives from government, civil society, the media and international experts.

INDONESIA—The Southeast Asian lobby tour group sits in various activities such as the National Conference (above) and meeting with some victims and their families.
THAILAND---Previous lobby efforts of families of disappeared and missing persons and their local, regional and international network resulted in granting of government compensation, (news links below). Inset, Ms Angkhana Neelaphajit is the chairperson of AFAD member Justice for Peace Foundation (JPF) and wife of a disappeared human rights lawyer in Thailand.

THE FLAME OF STRUGGLE---The Southeast Asia Lobby tour coincides with the celebration of AFAD’s 14th Founding Anniversary on June 4.
NEPAL---In commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared, AFAD lobby tour commences through a forum protesting against the merging of the Anti-disappearance Bill and the Truth and Reconciliation Bill as the government’s attempt to falsely reconcile victims and perpetrators. The Nepali version of the Anti-Disappearance Convention Primer was also launched that day.
SRI LANKA --- On the International Day of the Disappeared in 2012, families of the disappeared in Sri Lanka give tribute to their disappeared loved ones through public events.
BANGLADESH---UN CED Member Rainer Huhle (top and leftmost) urges the Bangladeshi government to ratify the Anti-disappearance Convention; AFAD Sec Gen and local experts join him in the lobby tour.
COUNTRY-LEVEL CAMPAIGN AND LOBBY

INDONESIA---AFAD Chairperson (2nd from left) leads a Public Discussion which resulted in recommendations to the Government for the formation of an Ad Hoc Human Rights Court; search for 13 persons who are still declared missing by National Commission on Human Rights; rehabilitation of and compensation for the families of the disappeared; ratification of the Convention.

AFAD through member-organizations IKOHI and KontraS and local Coalition lobbies with the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights (above) and in front of Indonesia’s Presidential Palace, as part of Thursday protests of AFAD members (below).
NEPAL---Families of the disappeared participate in a Public Hearing on enforced disappearance with Parliamentarians and the National Human Rights Commission in Kathmandu.
NEPAL--- AFAD members, Advocacy Forum (AF) and the Conflict Victims Society for Justice (CVSJ) conduct public events on 10 December to protest against the on-going climate of impunity in Nepal.
PHILIPPINES—A National Human Rights Forum gathers disappeared victims’ families and stakeholders from the civil society, government, academe, media, and the diplomatic community.
SRI LANKA---Families of the Disappeared gather within the halls...
...and out in the streets to demand truth, justice and accountability for their loved ones.
Violence payouts boosted

News / Asia
Thailand Announces Compensation Plan for Southern Violence
Link: http://www.voanews.com/content/thailand-announces-compensation-plan-for-southern-violence--139206779/152021.html

AFAD supports the publication and launch of JPF’s country report on 40 incidents that involve disappearance of 59 people.
TIMOR LESTE—Representatives from 4 regions participate in public discussion to develop a lobbying strategy for domestic mechanisms that address enforced disappearance.

Families from 13 districts attend Consultation Meeting to discuss two laws on enforced disappearance that will be tackled by the New Parliament.
TIMOR LESTE---The HAK seeks state commitment on the cases of disappeared persons through interviews with government officials, e.g., Foreign Minister and the Ombudsman.

Family members of the victims of the Marabia-Dili Massacre Assassination in 1980 support each other’s struggle for justice as they commemorate the anniversary of the tragedy.
KASHMIR, INDIA---Relatives of the disappeared express their demands for the government to conduct investigation of cases of disappearances and comprehensive forensic investigations into all unmarked and mass graves in Kashmir during monthly-sit-ins.

SOUTH KOREA---Part of regional lobby and expansion efforts, AFAD through the Sec Gen served as resource person in a public forum on Cases of Abductions in South Korea and the Philippines.
AFAD as the ICAED Focal Point launches an international social media campaign urging people to change their Facebook profile pictures with the image above for the International Day of the Disappeared...

...and organizes side event during the official session of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances.
JUNE 2012—AFAD Sec-Gen and concurrent ICAED Focal Person attends solidarity and lobby activities the Torture Abolition Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC) International Torture Survivors’ Week in Washington DC and visits AFAD network and partners in the USA.
APRIL 2012---AFAD Sec-Gen and concurrent ICAED Focal Person (3rd from right) delivers an intervention during the Experts Meeting on “Gendered Impacts on Enforced Disappearances” in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

MAY 2012--AFAD Sec-Gen and concurrent ICAED Focal Person sits as one of the speakers at the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) Meeting in Paris, France.
AFAD members intensify campaign for ratification in Nepal through a video documentary.

AFAD website @ afad-online.org and other social media accounts serve as online campaign platform.
AFAD publishes an updated version of the Primer on the Anti-Disappearance Convention...

... while member-organizations prepare Nepali and Bangla versions (above) as well as Bahasa and Sinhala versions (below).
B. Research and Documentation

TARGETS: Establishment of access to human rights information particularly concerning enforced disappearances in Asia through the development and management of a regional database for reporting and monitoring of disappearance cases and as basis for review and evaluation of AFAD interventions. This is indicated by:

- A systematic documentation of enforced disappearance cases in Asian countries especially where there is AFAD presence that will serve as bases for the rest of the interventions of the Federation;
- AFAD’s regional data-base to the synchronized ARMS system and use the results as an integral content of a regional human rights situation.
- Capacity of AFAD members on managing the regional database system and skills on documentation, research, monitoring and reporting of enforced disappearance cases.
- Conduct of researches

RESULTS:
The Federation was able to extend human resources support through the hiring of Documentation and Research Staff members (DRS). Seven (7) AFAD member-organizations facilitated the hiring of DRS who took charge of country-level field documentation and case encoding in the AFAD database. Contracts of the following staff members were drawn with the organizations in the respective countries and are coordinated by the AFAD Regional Research and Documentation Officer (RDO). These personnel underwent capacity-development activities related to documentation work.

The formal establishment of AFAD’s regional database served as an opportunity to ensure the global visibility of the theme of enforced disappearances. Also, international visibility of the issue of enforced disappearance was ensured through the submission of cases to the Asia Human Rights Monitoring System (ARMS) website. The same system was adopted in establishing AFAD’s regional database.

In 2012, AFAD continued and completed the partnership with the Southeast Asian Centre for e-Media (SEACeM) for the Asia Human Rights Monitoring System (ARMS).

The Federation currently maintains a regional database system referred to as the AFAD Accumulated Database which is linked to nine databases managed by the member organizations in eight countries.

The database was developed by former Executive Director of the Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, International (HURIDOCS), Mr. Manuel Guzman to be a system for documentation, monitoring and reporting cases of enforced disappearances using an Open Events System (OpenEvsys).

The AFAD Accumulated Database system became operational in 2012. The OpenEvsys-run system follows an events methodology format for documenting violations using the “who-did-what-to-whom”. The system has the following features:
- allows for the multiple entries of different victims, types of violations committed, perpetrators, sources of information and intervention in one event. The said event can also be linked to another related event.
- can run from a web server which is an advantage if an organization operates in various locations.
- provides a powerful search-filter system wherein a user can search for various information such
as events, violations, victims, perpetrators and interventions.
• contains 200 fields and 48 thesauri which can be easily modified or customized based on the needs of an organization
• allows data encoded to be reviewed through easy linking of charts and maps to the events.
• prescribes user-permissions, e.g., information encoded can be strictly set to a particular user.
• provides multilingual interface and thesauri of OpenEvsys or translation into different languages such as French, Arabic, Spanish, Khmer and Bahasa Indonesia.

Field documentation was also crucial to the documentation and research staff’s work at their respective countries. From this documentation work, AFAD’s documentation system has, to date, 142 entries from Bangladesh, India (Jammu & Kashmir), Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Of these entries, more than half or 74 are already reflected in the regional database.

Reporting of cases of enforced disappearances was also among the accomplished tasks during the implementation of the documentation work. Case submissions were submitted to the UN WGEID from Indonesia (27), Sri Lanka (1), Nepal (3), Philippines (3); Follow up on previous communication Bangladesh (5); and a General Allegation submitted from Jammu and Kashmir (1) and from Indonesia (1).

**ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Capacity development of country documentation and research staff**
   To orient the documentation and research staff members in the conduct of documentation work and to equip them of an understanding of associated work related to the documentation project, e.g., database utilization, discussion of security assessment, conduct of forensic investigation, among others, a regional training workshop was organized, also discussed in detail in 4.3.2. The training also substantiated contents and modifications of the database system with the active participation of trainees.

   Too, part of the capacity development is the procurement and provision of necessary equipment such as laptop computers for DRS and digital camera and laptop computer for the Secretariat to complement the demands of their work at the field and regional level. In Sri Lanka, there were two training programs organized for 6 field workers to develop their capacities for data collection and documentation of enforced disappearance. The consent of the families has been given to support to collect 600 cases in Mannar.

2. **Round-up of Submission of cases to the ARMS portal**
   In 2012, the AFAD completed the compilation and encoding of cases for encoding in the Asia Human Rights Monitoring System (ARMS) database. Data and information were from documentation of cases from member organizations and online research for cases in Asia. It also involved establishment and maintenance of the AFAD-ARMS online portal link to the AFAD official website and to network organizations in the Philippines.

3. **Documentation of Enforced Disappearance Case**
   Field documentation is a vital component of the documentation and research work in their respective countries. Project coordination among the Regional Research and Documentation Officer and country-based Documentation and Research Staff members was undertaken through regular electronic correspondences and scheduled electronic conferences as well as physical visits to the area.

   Too, three (3) country visits were done and maximized as venues for DRS and AFAD documentation personnel to assess and plan project activities, provide orientation on the effect-
chain framework as basis of assessment and planning in advocacy work, and to facilitate field interviews and documentation and local coordination for the video documentation of statements of disappeared victims’ families. The video-documentation formed part of the AFAD regional and country-level documentaries.

**Indonesia**
Information on 23 cases from the 3rd period of enforced disappearances, e.g., the disappearance of pro-democracy activists from 1997-1998 and the Mei Riot of 1998 were encoded in the database.

Documentation of the data for 288 cases of enforced disappearance from Aceh has been completed.

Regular communication and meetings with the organization composed of the 1965 victims’ families were held with the DRS and the member-organization.

Since January 2013, verification of documentation has been completed from the 1st to the 4th period and data are being encoded in an intermediary form before they are encoded in the database.

**Nepal**
From March to December 2012, the DRS documented 19 cases of enforced disappearance, seven of which were new and committed during the reporting period.

**Sri Lanka**
Thirty (30) cases were encoded in the database. Four cases were committed in North Sri Lanka while 26 cases were from the disappearances in the 1980s.

The DRS visited the Mannar area with the two lawyers assisting the documentation of the enforced disappearance cases for the UN WGEID. 15 cases were documented and awaiting for the families’ consent and signature for the preparation of the case submissions to the UN WGEID. Data collection is continuing in the Mannar district where field workers have submitted sample forms of questionnaires completed with translations.

4. **Researches of AFAD members**

4.1 **Indonesia**
A research on the best practice in campaigning and lobbying for the Convention went on full scale in 2012. Data gathering, report writing and initial editing were conducted within the period and results in Bahasa version were already launched as of this writing. The research will be an integral reference and basis in the continuing campaign and lobby efforts for the ratification of the Convention.

4.2 **Jammu and Kashmir, India**
The report was prepared over two years using information gleaned mostly from official State documents, in addition to witness testimonies. It portrays the impunity prevalent in Jammu and Kashmir. Where identities of individual perpetrators of crimes are known, the report seeks a process of accountability for institutional criminality. This report is a breakthrough, since this is the first ever report that courageously looks into the perpetrators of enforced disappearances in an area where security is such a huge problem. It will hopefully go a long way in serving as concrete bases for the continuing campaign for truth and justice in Kashmir. See the link for the full report: http://www.pratirodh.com/pdf/alleged_Perpetrators_report_IPTK-APDP.pdf

4.2 Thailand
AFAD member, JPF completed writing and editing of its research on enforced disappearance in Thailand. The report, which contains the context of enforced disappearances in the country; the legal framework related to disappearances, the present phenomenon, existing remedies and recommendations with an annex of individual cases documented by the JPF, was launched within this period. It was attended by diplomats, media, government officials and other stakeholders. Victims of the disappeared from around the country were invited.

4.4 Nepal, Sri Lanka
A research on the level of awareness on enforced disappearance (ED) is being conducted by AFAD members in Nepal and Sri Lanka. Through a meeting with the Regional Campaign Officer with Council members, a leveling off on the objectives of the research and a brief sharing on the requirements of a research, measuring the level of awareness and suggestions on possible scope and limitations of the research per country concerned were done.

5. Documentation results as bases for lobbying, actions and filing of cases
5.1. Reporting of enforced disappearance cases
From Indonesia, 13 cases from the Tanjung Priok incident were submitted and rewritten using the UN WGEID submission form.

AF and AFAD submitted three cases of enforced disappearance victims in Nepal to the UN WGEID. The reporting and lobbying work at the UN WGEID by both AF and AFAD included discussions about the present situation of enforced disappearances and the government’s indifference to the issue. The Chief of the UN OHCHR was visited and the issue of the Ordinance for Truth Commissions was raised particularly its setbacks involving immunity of perpetrators. A press statement was issued by the UN OHCHR after the engagement. A report was also submitted to the Special Rapporteur of Truth, Reconciliation and Justice regarding the situation of the victims’ movement in Nepal.

The DRS in Sri Lanka submitted one case to the UN WGEID in 2012 with the facilitation of the AFAD secretariat.

In addition, three (3) cases from the Philippines, five (5) follow-up on previous communication from Bangladesh, one (1) General Allegation from Jammu and Kashmir, and one (1) General Allegation from Indonesia were submitted to the UN WGEID.

Country situation reports for Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka were submitted and formed part of the compilation of reports on the situation of enforced disappearances in countries where AFAD is operating.
The report from Sri Lanka discussed in detail the cases of enforced disappearances occurring during the war and post-war situation.

5.2 Assistance to campaign and lobby and public information

These took the form of: provision of information and preparation of materials to be used in the following advocacy and research-related events; submission of country situation report on the context of disappearances in the country; provision of data and documentation results as reference for campaign materials and to further substantiate the research on best practice on advocacy of ratification the Convention; and, organizing of field interviews and provided local coordination for the video documentation of statements of the disappeared victims’ families.

Urgent appeal letters and statements were also issued by AFAD in response to requests by member-organizations and in support to calls for investigations of disappearance and killings; issuance of fact sheets to document cases and incidents; issuance of statements to express the Federation’s demands to government authorities regarding specific cases of enforced disappearance.

Urgent cases wherein human rights defenders, families of the disappeared and other civilians are at risk e.g., harassment, violent dispersals, arbitrary arrest, etc. were referred to AFAD’s network organizations such as Forum Asia, Frontline Defenders and internally among member organizations for solidarity actions.

Documentation results provided supplementary audio-visual material for the country campaigns through the production of country-specific documentaries in Bangladesh, Jammu and Kashmir-India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

A compilation of country situation reports is currently being edited in preparation for its publication in 2013. The documentation reports have been researched and prepared by documentation and research staff members and other invited writers wherein the context of their respective countries are discussed with specific patterns of enforced disappearances mentioned together with figures of enforced disappearance cases documented at the country level. The said publication shall also have a country-level launch to be scheduled by the member organizations.

The DRS also provided information on cases featured in radio programs which were launched during the project period. Starting April 2012, the Voice of Nepal airs nationwide in which cases of enforced disappearances were discussed in the program. By December 2012, 13 victims’ cases were discussed in the show while from January 2013 to the present, there were six (6) cases presented in the radio program. All the episodes are preserved in an electronic format for further dissemination.

Information on cases in Sri Lanka was provided for meetings with key persons from the North and South Sri Lanka during the war and post-war situation. Among the key persons met were the political leaders, religious leaders (Catholic priests and Buddhist monks) and civil society organizations; and preparations for the setting up of the Mannar focal point. The data collection form has also been modified through the results of the discussion of the Mannar group.
RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION SNAPSHOTs

FIELD AND VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

INDONESIA

Diyah Sujirah or Sipon is the wife of missing artist Wiji Thukul. Her husband disappeared around 1998.

Suyadi, brother of disappeared victim Suyat. Suyat was arrested on 12 February 1998 by members of the military and remains missing to date.

Mr. Paiah Shaan, the father of Ucok Munandar Siahaan who disappeared on 14 May 1998.
Nurhasanah, mother of disappeared victim Yadin Muhidin.

DRS David Fau interviews Sri Wahyuni who was only 18 years old when her father, Cokrosumarto, was taken away by the police in 1965. She is now 65 years old.

DRS interviews Harsono, 54 years old, whose father, Yusri, went missing during his detention. Yusri, was one of the famous puppeteers in Java at the time and was taken to Ambarawa Penitentiary called Beteng Pendem.
At the mass grave in Gebugan village, Ambarawa, the witness describes all four areas of mass grave.

A witness points to the area where many victims were executed by the military apparatus in 1966.
Fort Willem I (Beteng Pendem/Ambarawa Penitentiary). The main building of Beteng Pendem in 1965 to 1967 was used as a detention facility for political prisoners with association as PKI members. Many victims went missing after being detained in Beteng Ambarawa.
SRI LANKA

Fr. M.V.E. Ravichandran, the mentor of the disappeared Fr. Jim Brown.

Parents of disappeared priest Fr. Jim Brown.
Sandya Ekneligoda, wife of the missing journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda.

Ananthi Sasitharan, wife of LTTE leader Elilan who disappeared after he surrendered to the Sri Lankan army.

Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratna, Founding member of the Committee to Investigate Disappearances (CID).
NEPAL

Yubraj Dhungel, father of the victim, Ramesh Dhungel, who disappeared in the hands of state security forces during the conflict. The father tells details of the incident to an AF colleague from Jhapa district on 20 September 2012.

On 16 January 201, AF lawyer Sarala Kumari Pandey documents the case of Aita Singh Magar, who was disappeared by state actors during the conflict. The photo displays the son of the victim.

Photo of a victim, Baburam Thapaliya, from Jhapa district, who was abducted by the Maoists during the conflict. Photo was taken on 18 February 2013.
C. Psychosocial Rehabilitation

TARGETS: Families of the disappeared have undertaken another level in AFAD’s psychosocial rehabilitation programs through the provision of psychosocial peer support to other families, indicated by:

- Empowerment of women-victims through the development of their healing capacities;
- Development of pools of local women healers each in 3 Asian countries, Indonesia, Nepal, Kashmir-India who were expected to conduct peer-counselling to disappearance victims and their families; and,
- Increased awareness on health, gender roles and equality in the struggle for justice for victims of disappearance.

RESULTS:
The implementation of psychosocial rehabilitation program, for the year resulted in the current pool of ten (10) local peer-counsellors in Jakarta, Indonesia; pool of twelve (12) local peer-counsellors in Kashmir, India; and pool of nine (9) local peer-counsellors in Nepal. These peer-counsellors, mostly from among the women-victims were receptive to both the informative and practical aspects of the sessions and workshops. They expressed interest in hearing about other conflict situations as these allowed them to find some commonality with survivors of human rights violations elsewhere. In so doing, they feel a sense of inter-connectedness and oneness in the same pain, in the same struggle and in the same hopes for a better society.

Also, with the knowledge and zeal obtained by the participants, there was a full commitment among them to counsel other victims. The project helped the trainees and the victims’ families to understand the importance of support and the role that they can play as members of the Circle of Healing. For them, the project had brought about positive changes within themselves as well. Thus, the proponent and implementing organizations can more confidently claim that the program has been able to ventilate the victims’ and victims’ families’ deep-rooted anguish from their inner heart. The interventions from the project had been successfully psychotherapeutic for the victims to heal from their pains. The project has further proved that the victims, as peer counselors, can effectively help other people through empathic listening – a strategy introduced by the project and which was not previously utilized by the victims.

The persons who served as companions of the peer-counsellors, in turn, developed a motivation to also provide psychosocial assistance to other victims. The companions are encouraged to learn the basics of psychosocial assistance to enable them help the victims of human rights violations.

The project has added one layer of commitment on the part of the participants to be in the frontline of the struggle for justice by realizing their aches and anguishes of the conflict. A related but equally important result of the project is that project implementers in the three countries became more active and visible in campaigns and lobby activities. These aspects enhance the capacities of victims and their families to undertake advocacy and legal interventions against enforced disappearances.

In terms of federation-building, a contribution of the program is that it was appreciated as a solidifying factor for families of victims and a renewed involvement in the organizations. The workshop evoked among women-victims the same feeling of sufferings, on the one hand, and conviction, on the other, to continue the struggle in achieving justice. This has also effectively continued the established levels of psychosocial and rehabilitation interventions as part of AFAD’s Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program. This intervention also provided basis for the
improved capacity of the member-organization in Nepal and Indonesia to undertake direct fund sourcing for its rehabilitation and psychosocial program. Conversely, this project will continue to present an opportunity for replication for other members of the AFAD.

**ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Trainings/Review of Skills and Individual Psychological Assessments**

1.1 The two trainings for peer counselors conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal involved nine participants from different districts of the country. The urgency for victims and their families to be given psychological counseling was emphasized during the training.

1.2 In Kashmir, India, some selected members of AFAD member Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) were given training on overcoming psycho-social problems through a psycho-social support system. The participants underwent two workshop sessions, one in February and one in June 2012. Participants gained knowledge and skills on the following: methods in identification of symptoms of the problems (mental health conditions) to identify corresponding remedies; techniques were revealed before the participants on how to identify the symptoms that bring about anxiety, depression, aches in different parts of the body, phobia, sudden crying or weeping, going nostalgic when discussed about the tragedy, etc. and importance of self-management of stress while searching for the exact diagnosis.

1.3 A similar review of skills training was conducted in Indonesia in the previous year. For 2012, the relevant activity included “Identifying the Client” or an assessment that sought to identify and prioritize the victims who were most in need of psychological services. These participants underwent psychological services for six months. A local counsellor was identified on the basis of input from the victims who have received previous psychological services, while a companion from the area was assigned to accompany and assist the peer-counsellor during the home visits.

2. **Field Work and Group Sessions**

Through the workshop groups, the participants’ sharing helped in understanding the problem of each participant-family member and in determining the corresponding coping and support system aimed to address the needs of each of the participants. The series of workshops were an integral part of the various coping strategies that intended to alleviate the emotional distress of the participants. Further, the training and skills acquired by the participants were intended to be utilized to counsel other family members of the disappeared.

Trained peer-counsellors undertook field activities which included counselling sessions. These served as opportunities for the peer-counsellors to also talk to and interact with victims’ families who are not members of the association. There were also efforts of the peer-counsellors to invite these family members to become members of the association, when the situation warrants.

In particular, the trained counsellors made three (3) field visits and interacted with around ten (10) families in different areas of north Kashmir. In Indonesia, the counsellors have already visited four (4) families of victims of enforced disappearance and have provided services to 15 family members. Counselling was done every week for one month, schedules done in agreement with the victim’s family. In Nepal, all nine peer counselors were scheduled to meet other families and individual victims with a ratio of one counsellor is to victims or family members (1:15 or 1:20). Due to the severity of the pain, in some instances, counseling took seven (7) days to counsel an individual. Based on monitoring observations and reports, the family members who received counselling are now feeling better as they have a venue to share their pains.
Simultaneously, field visits were also maximized for some fact-finding missions and case documentation, where applicable. During the interaction of the peer-counsellors, these family members made efforts to convince them for collective struggle and explained the importance of joint fight for justice. It was apparent that the participants, who received training from the earlier workshops, were successful in their efforts to encourage these new family members.

3. Consolidation of the trained peer counselors
The workshops also served as venue for this as well as for solidarity. Based on the experience of AFAD psycho-social rehabilitation program, co-victims could serve as the best healers to other victims because they could counsel from the voice of experience. They become more credible as they can give a sense of solidarity to and empathy with co-victims.

Regular meetings were also conducted to brainstorm on ways to address the obstacles they encountered during mentoring and peer-counselling as well as the burden they felt as a result of the demands of economic assistance for the victims as well as the difficulty of probing for answers from victims about their emotions as the impact of past abuses.

4. Role analysis and women equality and empowerment.
The design of the psychosocial support project through the capacity development of women-counsellors is in itself, a significant manifestation of empowerment. This is also evident in the transformation of women-members from victims to healing agents especially in India where women are treated lowly by society. The intervention of the project developed in them self-confidence to also process healing among co-victims and survivors. These aspects on gender roles and women empowerment, though, need more follow through in similar succeeding interventions because self-confidence has to be strengthened through constant practice of newly learned skills.

5. Regional and international experience sharing on psychosocial rehabilitation
5.1 Project proposals for a region-wide the Also, available funding calls for psychosocial rehabilitation projects were referred to member-organizations which have the capacity to apply for grants and to implement such projects.

5.2 The AFAD Council, in its meeting in Sri Lanka in November 2012 decided to hold the Third World Conference on Psychosocial Support in the Search for Truth and Justice for Victims of Enforced Disappearance, Torture, and Extra-Judicial Killings in the Philippines, after a year of waiting for developments for the initial decision to convene it in Nepal. The AFAD then started efforts to prepare for the Conference. Electronic coordinative and consultative meetings regarding the proposed conference structure and concept were conducted with the Latin American organizations which were involved in the two previous conferences. Before the end of 2012, the AFAD started to touch-base with and invite Philippine human rights organizations to co-host the conference.
Snapshots of Project Participants in Indonesia

PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION SNAPSHOTS
AFAD member-organization APDP implements Psychosocial Rehabilitation Project in Kashmir. APDP Focal Person, Parvaiz Matta (Photo below: standing, second from right) joins the training participants (mothers, wives, daughters of victims of disappeared and 1 male member).
Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Khan, project psychologist is engaged as the resource person during the training-workshop in February 2012 and for the year-long program.

Participants discuss in groups during the workshop sessions.
Mr. Kartik Murukutla (left), in the session on June 4, 2012, highlights the need for mechanisms in providing psychosocial support to victims and their families due to the slow-paced litigation process in Kashmir.

Project participants share with co-victims stories of grief and coping mechanisms.
D. Organizational, Administrative and Finance Management

TARGETS: Organizational strength of AFAD manifested in the increased capacity of AFAD leadership, membership and Secretariat for program management, implementation and coordination in advocacy and federation work at the national, regional and international levels.

RESULTS:
In as far as the leadership is concerned, the AFAD Council and Executive Council did what they could to guide the Federation carrying out its much avowed mission, vision and goals. Membership is developed and maintained through efforts at expansion, resource generation, capacity development and solidarity work. The day-to-day work of the Secretariat as the center for service and coordination has, as always, been an indispensable part in ensuring the implementation of AFAD's work at the national, regional and international levels. Consciousness in ensuring regular planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects and personnel both through internal efforts and with the help of external facilitators helped much in the attainment of the work of the Federation. This program on organizational, administrative and finance management were vital to the results and activities of the other programs, thus support for this program was indeed of key value to the general advocacy and federation work of AFAD.

ACTIVITIES:
1. Membership expansion and up-keeping, solidarity, and networking

In 2012, the members of the Executive Council targeted and to a certain extent, explored prospects for membership expansion in South Korea, Pakistan, Cambodia and Burma.

The AFAD accepted the Citizens’ Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR), an organization based in South Korea that works for the protection of lives and human rights as the newest member during the AFAD Council Meeting in November 2012.

During the same meeting, however, the Council decided to terminate the membership of Truth and Justice Commission (TJC) and targeted to explore membership with another group from Pakistan.

AFAD, through its Chairperson, had conducted a meeting with a Thailand-based prospective member working on Burma/Myanmar human rights issues. In fact, a representative from the Network for Human Rights Documentation-Burma (ND-Burma) attended the Council meeting as an observer. ND-Burma is a network of 13 human rights organizations which documents human rights violations in Burma and advocates for human rights promotion in Burma.

Too, AFAD has continued to work on improved organizational relationship with the national relatives’ association in the Philippines, the FIND. This is manifested in part by the conduct of joint advocacy actions and project development and implementation through the Misereor Philippine Project as well as through the membership of AFAD in...
CAED, in which FIND is the lead organization, and membership of FIND in ICAED, in which the AFAD serves as the focal organization.

Networking for forensics applications was undertaken through the formation and reactivation of the Asian Forensics for Human Rights (AFHR) in two network meetings held in January and July 2012. The network works on a coordinative level with the initial unities of the member-organizations included in the work of documentation and research staff. These unities included networking with identified forensic experts and practitioners at the country level and liaison work with organizations for fact-finding missions, etc.

As the current Focal Point of ICAED, continuing networking with similar formations, e.g., families associations and international human rights organizations resulted in the expansion of ICAED membership from 40 in the year 2011 to 50 members in 2012.

2. Fund-raising
Relevant activities of the Federation included establishment of directory of funding partners, exploring new partners, appointments with international partners and other funding organizations incidental to response to funding calls and preparation of proposals, as well as responses to inquiries as well as reporting and other requirements of current funding partners.

During assessment and planning, a review of fund raising strategy and identification of funding priorities were done. In 2012, proposals for two 3-year projects; one 1-year project and 1 activity-based were approved by existing or previous funding partners. The challenge in getting support from new funders was recognized during the assessment.

3. Capacity Development
3.1 Skills for Public Speaking, Advocacy and Lobbying Training (SPLATR)
Jointly organized by AFAD, FIND and ICAED, the SPLATR was held on April 24-25, 2012 in Quezon City, Philippines. It benefitted members of the AFAD Secretariat, ICAED project staff and staff members of the FIND in undertaking individual and joint advocacy and lobby actions and prospect in developing a joint advocacy plan which can be spearheaded by the local Coalition Against Enforced Disappearance (CAED), in which AFAD is an active member.

3.2 Regional Training Workshop on Documentation and Monitoring of Enforced Disappearances
Held on June 12-15, 2012 and aimed at strengthening the Federation’s documentation, monitoring and reporting capacities, the training workshop covered the following topics:
1. Training Workshop and Project Orientation
2. Human Rights and Enforced Disappearances Regional Context and International Standards and Mechanisms
3. Human Rights and Enforced Disappearances Documentation, Monitoring and Reporting including forensic sciences applications in documentation work
4. Introduction to the Regional Database System
5. Security Protocols and Guide to Field Documentation including risks faced by human rights defenders (HRDs), risk assessment tool and available services and assistance
6. Documentation and Research Planning Session

A total of nine representatives from member-organizations and Secretariat in the Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jammu-Kashmir in India, Thailand, Timor-Leste participated and are expected to re-echo key training highlights, particularly on the reporting and monitoring of information on disappearance and other human rights violations cases, to each of their organizations.

3.3 National Human Rights Training Program (NHRTP)
Three members of the AFAD Secretariat participated in the program as participants and resource speaker in November 2012. Aside from the knowledge and skills gained from the training, it also provided a networking opportunity for AFAD to collaborate with other human rights organization through a joint development of project proposal for submission to the Canadian Embassy as one of the outputs of the training program.

3.4 National Capacity-building activities
Member-organizations also design and implement local capacity-building activities for campaign and lobbying strategies as part of the federation-wide project and based on the notion that the member-organizations are in the best position to design the interventions necessary in their respective areas.

3.5 Secretariat team-building and development sessions
The AFAD Secretariat, as the service and coordination center of the Federation, participated in a three-day team-building activity in Baras, Rizal, Philippines. The team-building focused on personal-level reflections, staff inter-relationships, and organizational values orientation. This was especially significant with the entry of new secretariat members and commencement of new projects to be implemented. Also, the AFAD engaged the services of external organizational development experts and spiritual directors in the conduct of sessions on organizational management, Effect Chain Framework, as well as on personality and spiritual development to enhance service-orientation in the advocacy work for the cause of the disappeared.

4. Organizational Management and Administration

4.1 Management and Oversight Functions. In the exercise of these functions, the Executive Council, composed of the Chairperson, Secretary-General and Treasurer, undertook the following relevant activities in supervision of the Secretariat: regular review and finalization policies and guidelines; review of organizational structure, job description, salary structure, and evaluation results. The EC likewise provided oversight functions in the Federations’ financial management.

4.2. Council Meeting. The EC members undertook preparation and facilitation of the Council meeting in Sri Lanka as well as reviewed the agenda, discussions and outcome of this meeting. The AFAD Council met in November 2012 in Sri Lanka with representatives of eight (8) member organizations, two (2) secretariat members, one (1) observer and one (1) organizational development (OD) expert as consultant. Some
Council members were not able to attend due to unavailability of schedule and travel restrictions, particularly of the member whose passport renewal was and continues to be blocked by the Indian government. The member however, participated in the reporting through electronic means. The Council reviewed its Vision-Mission-Goals and assigned the Executive Committee to reformulate it to make it more attainable. Through reports from members, the Council was apprised of the social, political and organizational environment that impacts on its work. Its strategic goals, plans and indicators were also reviewed with some suggested amendments, based on the Effect-Chain Framework.

4.3. Executive Council Meetings. Through the coordination of the Secretary-General, physical and online meetings among Executive Council members have been regularly conducted to get updated, review of the plan and activities, budget, funding, staffs issues. During the year, four (4) physical meetings of the EC were held in Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, in time with other activities such as regional lobby tours and Council meetings where EC members were present.

4.4. Bi-Annual Assessment and Planning Sessions
At the beginning of 2012, the AFAD Secretariat underwent its annual Internal Evaluation and Individual Performance Review with the help of an external evaluator. Key outputs of the sessions were: assessment report, program plans for 2012, discussion and proposal for an organizational structure of AFAD that takes into consideration the additional program and project personnel.

A midyear Program Assessment and Planning session was held on 30 July – 5 August to monitor the process, progress and results of the work and to address areas of recommendation and improvement of project implementation. It also served as venue to discuss, prepare and make adjustments of plans for the rest of the year.

Program accomplishments, lessons and recommendations were discussed in the sessions that guided the Secretariat in reviewing and finalizing program plans. These are significant inputs to program and project reporting particularly for those projects that are in its end-phase. The assessment and planning provided materials for continuing project and program development and fund generation and for the Federation’s annual report.

Members of the Executive Committee, particularly the Chairperson and the Secretary General attended this meeting. They also utilized it as an opportunity to discuss management issues with the AFAD Treasurer through a separate skype meeting.

Too, by the end of 2012, preparations for the Individual Performance Review of Secretariat members and year-end Assessment and Planning were conducted. Assessment guide and program as well as reporting formats were presented by an external evaluator and discussed among the Secretariat members and the Executive Council. Secretariat members also started reviewing each of their work according to the guide and format suggested by the facilitator in preparation for the assessment.
AFAD Chairperson presides (left) and Sec Gen reports (right) during the Council meeting held in Negombo, Sri Lanka on Nov. 26-Dec. 2, 2012

Council members, staff and facilitators in full attention

Members from Nepal and Timor Leste report on their work
Guest from Burma (left) shares their work

Council member from Jammu & Kashmir whose passport was not renewed reports via skype

Sharing stories and ideas over food
Hugs and simple dinner to celebrate the birthday of Brito (in white shirt), Council member in Sri Lanka and host of the meeting.

All smiles for Council members, Secretariat members and facilitator.
ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

Members of AFAD Executive Council and Secretariat assess implementation of programs and projects during the year-end assessment and planning.
During the mid-year assessment, AFAD Chairperson (rightmost) and Secretariat members engage in plenary discussions...

...and workshop sessions in reviewing and updating program, project and plan implementation.
The year 2012 continued to bear witness to the alarming state of disappearances in Asia. This state-perpetrated crime is still being committed, albeit in varying degrees, under situations of conflict, war, tyrannical or dictatorial as well as democratic regimes and under a wide blanket of impunity. Ironically, this continent lacks domestic laws and strong human rights protection mechanisms at the regional or sub-regional levels that ought to address the situation.

The phenomenon of enforced disappearance is just one of the several human rights issues in the Asian region. The human rights advocates and defenders in the region, especially in South Asia, are also subjected to various threats and security risks with such recent cases of violations against human rights defenders from AFAD members in Kashmir, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Notwithstanding the common phenomenon and effects brought about by disappearance in the region, there are also sub-regional as well as per country similarities and particularities in terms of situation, challenges and opportunities in the struggle against enforced disappearance.

These conditions continue to serve as bases of interventions, results, challenges and opportunities in the unrelenting work of AFAD and its member and network organizations towards achieving strong Asian peoples' response and governments' response. There is also the imperative of coming up with breakthroughs in punishing perpetrators and of learning from the victories of other regions in the search for truth and justice.

The Federation implemented all of its programs and projects on the basis of the plans of the members through the management of the Council and the Executive Council and coordinated by the Secretariat. Program implementation and corresponding results, fund management and sourcing and Federation-building benefitted from the continued capacity of the leaders and member-organizations and in the increased number of Secretariat members.

The lone signatory to the International Convention, one (1) new state party from Asia, the breakthrough of the 16-year campaign and lobbying for the first-ever domestic anti-disappearance law in the region, developments in state ratifications and filing of cases of disappearance, as well as the establishment of national coalitions against disappearances fuel the year-long work of AFAD’s core program of campaign and lobby.

Despite the gains and developments, the campaigns AFAD, however, remain inadequate. Too, the challenges and opportunities of the changing national political environment are a crucial factor for AFAD and its member organizations to achieve concrete results. Finding or building champions within the government bureaucracy who will facilitate or support AFAD’s lobby efforts is also important to push for genuine protection mechanisms and environment favorable to disappeared victims and their families.

The call for the signing and ratification of the Convention needs intensive campaign, at the national, sub-
regional, regional and international levels. The Federation ought to capitalize on the inspiration of the first domestic law in Asia and pursue the prospects of broader campaigns of families’ associations and civil society coalitions and of sustained lobbying in the sub-regional, regional levels and with Asian governments – especially for those that have substantial promise close to ratification through government pronouncements.

Intensive country-specific campaign and lobby work, such as what is being done in the Philippines and Nepal, is very important and has good potential for other members with the capacities to implement the work. Resources for the continuing work for the Philippines were secured for the next three years, while for Nepal, for another year. However, necessary resource base for similar interventions in other member countries have to be ensured.

This can be complemented and enhanced by garnering concrete support of other national sectoral and multi-sectoral organizations; developing and maximizing networking opportunities and linkages with regional, sub-regional and international human rights organizations, inter-governmental formations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), among others. It is necessary for the Federation to engage with activities of NGOs related to ASEAN, being a body in Southeast Asia that has an Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights Declaration. While seen by civil society with skepticism, the role of civil society to push it to serve its very purpose is crucial. One possible opening is to knock at doors of the ASEAN is to bring to their attention, for instance, high profile cases in Southeast Asia, e.g. Jonas Burgos, Somchai Neelaphaijit and Sombath Somphone. Another equally important matter is to bring to their attention the imperative of signing and ratifying the Convention and recognizing the competence of the UN CED.

The Federation, having assumed the Focal Point of ICAED, has maximized its presence in international campaign and lobby. The six (6) new States-parties to the Convention, two (2) States-parties that recognized Articles 31 and 32, one (1) signature and two (2) domestic laws passed were in part, but not solely, attributed to the work of the ICAED and its global network in the midst of the challenge of universal protection from the disappearances. The Coalition was successful in being recognized by the newly established Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED). The Coalition’s charter review and finalization presents an opportunity for consolidating organizational and campaign gains of the Coalition. AFAD also needs to obtain concrete benefits from ICAED in terms of its regional campaign in Asia.

Too, the continuing benefits and prospects from the establishment of and access to human rights information in Asia, particularly concerning enforced disappearances, through the on-going researches and the management and utilization of fully operational regional and country-level databases should serve their purpose in the Federation’s review and evaluation of the relevance of its interventions. The Federation ought to take the full advantage of the opportunities presented by the management and utilization of human rights information through
documentation, monitoring and reporting of disappearance cases; regular updates in country- and regional-situation, assistance in the overall advocacy work, networking for documentation-related works such as forensic applications and human rights security, membership expansion and capacity-development interventions of the Federation among its units. This information will also help the Federation in considering and exploring other dimensions of disappearance which can be regularly developed for its advocacy messages.

The strength of AFAD’s advocacy work as well as program and project implementation depends on the organizational strength of the Federation – its leadership, membership and Secretariat. There is, therefore, a need to strengthen further these units of the Federation by way of relevant capability development activities.

The capacity of the Federation, through some of its members, in pursuing another level in its psychosocial and rehabilitation program is a manifestation of the direct gains of the primary beneficiaries and partners, the victims and families’ associations in terms of psychosocial support through their struggle against disappearances. The enhanced capacities in receiving and providing psychosocial support under the “Circle of Healing” and “Empowering Women-Victims-Turned-Peer-Counsellors” directed the Federation to a strategy that puts the development of this program directly under the members. While this presented an important opportunity for some of these member-organizations to pursue direct fund-sourcing for its respective rehabilitation program, a review of this strategy, however, needs to be done for other member organizations which have not yet undergone the initial levels of psychosocial interventions or of which capacities for fund-sourcing have yet to be developed.

A necessary opening for the Federation in this regard is for a regional experience-sharing on psychosocial rehabilitation program which will serve as venue for AFAD members to exchange and learn from experiences, capacities and strategies on this program and to plan for a more unified regional rehabilitation plan taking into consideration the various resources and capacities of individual member-organizations. Also, the opportunity for Asia in advancing focus on psychosocial support standards and interventions in the region is present as AFAD takes the lead in planning for and organizing the Third World Conference on Psychosocial Support in the Search for Truth and Justice for Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Torture and Extra-Judicial Killings envisioned to be held in 2014.

Human, material and financial resources of AFAD are being raised through fund-sourcing and capacity-development strategies and activities. Identification of fund-raising and capacity development priorities is done in close coordination with the AFAD Council, members and Secretariat. For this year, the Federation including its members have secured two (2) three-year and two (2) one-year funding support from four organizations, DKA-Austria, Misereor-KZE-Germany, Open Society Foundations and UNVFVT for member in Nepal. The AFAD also has to contend with the challenge and target of getting new funding partners.
Also in terms of Federation-building, alongside the development of AFAD programs, there should be development of capacity of relevant personnel and units of the Federation. In general, program, organizational needs as well as individual capacity needs assessment should be the bases of a capacity development plan for the Federation. A distinct development of AFAD in the year 2012 was the sudden increase in the number of Secretariat members working on various projects and the increase in the number of partners that assisted the Federation in its work. These present both challenge and prospect for AFAD to continue and sustain these developments.

The prospects for inter-program meetings and consultations should be maximized at all levels and units to improve on strategies to ensure consultative and participatory programmatic orientation in implementation, monitoring, evaluation and fund generation and management. The AFAD Council, being the leading and highest policy-making body of the Federation in between Congresses, has to exert more efforts in concretizing and asserting its leadership in AFAD programs both during and in between its meetings.

In particular, the leadership of AFAD Council and the full cooperation of the members are imperative in the huge challenge of AFAD in convening the Third World Conference on Psychosocial Support.

The prospects of full implementation and completion of two on-going major projects - book and film on disappearances in the Philippines and a regional coffee table book project will go a long way towards sustaining the momentum of the campaign against enforced disappearance in the Philippines and will have contagious effect on other countries.

The following present opportunities for further AFAD’s organizational development: summing up of the 15-year work of AFAD; support of partners and networks at various levels; on-going re-organization of the AFAD Secretariat that enhances AFAD’s strategic relevance and program orientation; resource generation and preparation for the conduct of the 5th AFAD Congress which will be convened based on an on-going process of summing-up; sustainability prospects and plans, particularly for the development of the Federation’s resource base in terms of human, material and financial resources, and organizational capacity in program development, planning, implementation and evaluation.

As AFAD ushers into its 15th year, it faces the need to strike a correct balance at various levels of work and functions of various units of the Federation and the imperative to learn lessons from previous evaluations. These challenges and opportunities will continue to motivate the Federation in the coming years towards its vision of a world without disappearances and injustices, at which time such a formation as AFAD will be rendered irrelevant.
The Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD) is a regional federation of organizations working directly on the issue of involuntary disappearances in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jammu and Kashmir-India, Nepal, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor Leste. Founded in 1998 to promote solidarity, lobby, communications, networking and advocacy among its member organizations and network, the Federation works with international, regional and national formations from other countries. AFAD also serves as the Focal Point of the International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED).