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 **ICA East Africa Conference**

In May of this year, twenty-three colleagues from East Africa and around the globe came together in Mto Wa Mbu, Tanzania, for the the 2015 ICA East Africa Conference. The gathering was organized by ICA-USA and ICA-Tanzania.

In 2011, ICA-USA staff visited several East African ICA's and discussed what they thought the most crucial items to building their capacity were. Methods training for newer staff, and increased connections among ICA's were high on the list. Thus the idea for the conference was born.

Although a gathering like this is not new in ICA's longer term history, in more recent history, the practice of gathering has been overlooked due to limited capacity and time of ICA's to come together to share.

The gathering was five days long, and saw colleagues from Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Togo, Canada, Guatemala, and the US. There were two main components to the conference design; training and skill sharing, and strategic planning for the region.

Some notable mentions from the gathering:



- The use of open space to plan the trainings/workshop components of the conference allowed for both enough flexibility and enough structure
- There was an energizer before any new presenter, this kept the group alive and gave participants plenty new things to add to their energizer toolkit.
- End of the day and beginning of the day reflections were led by someone new each time.
- The conference was funded by late ICA-USA donor Ruth Reames, and from a mini grant from ICAI.
- During the strategic planning session for the region, it was helpful to have facilitators from outside the region, so that all local parties could participate
- There was a lot of requests to get clarity on what values all ICA's share. Event facilitators shared a [4x4 Introduction to the Organizational Wisdom of the ICA handbook](#) created by colleague Terry Bergdall to start the conversation. More specifically, the row of '[What ICA thinks](#)' column of the document. The conversation was a powerful one that could have continued a long time and conference attendees wanted to schedule more time in the future to be able to continue the dialogue.
- The conference ended with a celebratory evening, including local dancers, and an exercise where everyone pulled a name of someone else and had to say something they had come to learn and enjoy about them in the past week.
- A WhatsApp group has since been established for the region, to enable participants and others to share reflections and photos and to stay in touch and to facilitate peer-to-peer support and collaboration.

To learn more about and read the East African Conference report, click [here](#).



ICAI Board Meeting in Tanzania

In May, the mainly virtual board of ICA International had an invaluable opportunity to meet face-to-face, in conjunction with the East & Southern Africa ICA regional gathering. Board Members traveled for up to 39 hours to be hosted in Tanzania, from Tokyo, Guatemala, Toronto, Chicago, London, Kiev and Lome.

The last time the ICAI board was able to meet face to face was at the 2012 ICAI Global Conference on Human Development, when three of the current members were at the beginning of their terms. At the beginning of 2015, five new members joined the Board, and it was decided that a face to face meeting was in order to facilitate the creation of a cohesive team, and get all board members on the same page.

The specific aims for the meeting were:

- for board members to get to know one another
- build team spirit and commitment
- deepen the collective understanding of ICA and ICAI history and current role
- agree strategy and plans for how the board will work together 2015 -16.



The board applied ICA's ToP Participatory Strategic Planning process and the four levels of ORID to structure the week, and members shared the role of facilitating the sessions.

Day one was about sharing objective level data. Using the historical scan method, the board shared history of ICA and ICAI, and then reviewed the 'State of the World' of ICAI membership by continent, our global governance and finances, global ICA mission & values and the ICAI vision, and 'peer-to-peer' approach articulated by the ICAI General Assembly in 2010.

The following three days were focused on articulating the contradictions to that vision (reflective level) and developing strategic directions (interpretive level) and action steps and implementation plans (decisional level). Members confirmed their roles on the board, and reviewed role descriptions as a prelude to implementation planning. The meeting was successful in reaching all of its aims and energizing the board to work dutifully on fostering peer to peer spaces for member ICA's.



ICAI Board Members in Mto Wa Mbu

ToP Locally & Globally

At the same time the ICA International board was meeting in Mto Wa Mbu, Tanzania, [ICA Associates](#), [ICA-USA](#), and the [ToP Network](#) came together to be the Summit Strategist Sponsors for the [IAF's North American Conference](#) in Banff, Canada.

The conference theme was: Innovating, Promoting and Applying! Seeking New Facilitation Heights and Insights.

- Innovating - learn about new trends, research, and creativity in facilitation
- Promoting - communicate and market facilitation profession and services
- Applying - learn, practice and improve facilitation skills

The conference wove three learning streams of Face-To-Face, Graphic (Visual), and Virtual Facilitation through the conference themes.

ToP Network members presented the following sessions:

- Making Organizational Change More Sustainable: Change Management Essentials - Melanie Chase
- Virtual Facilitation: A Cutting Edge Tool for Inclusive Participation & Social Change - Barb MacKay
- Master Images: "religious" experience of facilitation - John Miller
- Facilitating the Attack of the Unexpected when You're the Facilitator: Dealing with Difficult Situations; Exploring Multiple Paths to Breakthrough Thinking - Ann Epps
- Transformational Practices to cultivate facilitator authenticity & deepen impact - Sharon Almerigi
- Facilitating with Digital Mind Maps - Paul Penny
- Applying a Magic Facilitation Toolkit - Jo Nelson
- Facilitating Groups From Breakdowns Through Breakthroughs - Nadine Bell
- Transformational Practices to cultivate facilitator authenticity and deepen impact - Barbara MacKay & Sharon Almerigi

A team of ICA Associates and ToP Network colleagues coordinated and planned for each of these opportunities; they are John Miller, Suzanne Esber, Jo Nelson, Janice Weber in cooperation with IAF reps Helen Wythe and Trevor Sinclair. ToP Network members designed a ToP facilitated session - Peer Rendezvous' - for the opening reception. Network members also provided goodie bags with sample Focused Conversations and a description of the Flip Chart Consensus Workshop method. Participants were encourage to apply these methods during their peer-to-peer meetings.

This sponsorship and working together represented an opportunity to deepen ICA's and the ToP Network relationship with IAF. At the East African Gathering, (article above), the African Director from IAF attended for a day, and great conversations about collaborative efforts took place there, as they did in Banff.



Facilitation graphics on contracting for successful engagement



Stunning views from inside the conference in Banff, Alberta Canada



Plenary Session



ICA Nepal Updates

ICA Nepal started out on relief activities right after the second day of the earthquake by visiting various affected areas of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur.



Activities like blood donation and distribution of water bottles were immediately undertaken in the areas of Bhaktapur and Bungamati (Lalitpur). Post-earthquake activities were carried out in different phases beginning with immediate relief works. ICA-Nepal reached out to hands of various people in different villages like Challing, Nala, Sangla, along with most affected districts like Gorkha and Dhading with the relief materials. Mostly food packages, tarpaulins, clothes, medicine and blankets were distributed by ICA Nepal team.



food packages for earthquake victims

Along with the relief work, training and facilitation programs were organized for the local community and school/colleges for coping with psychological and emotional trauma caused by the earthquake. Social Artistry training for the trauma relief purpose was conducted in village of Changu Narayan and two educational institutions in Kathmandu.

Additionally, with the help of national and international volunteers from India and USA, ICA Nepal constructed a house using earthbag technology for 82 years old partially blind man in Changu Narayan.

ICA Nepal is currently working on reconstruction and rehabilitation of the earthquake victims in coming days. Exploring all the potential support to the victims, ICA Nepal, supported NGOs, individuals and schools. Listed below is a broad outline of the activities planned by ICA Nepal post-earthquake.

Ist Phase: Immediate Emergency Relief

- Support to People Living with Disabilities (PWDs)
- Support to Entire Power in Social Action
- Support to Disabled Service Centre (DSA) and Nepal Integrated Blind Development Association (NIBDA)

II Phase: Recovery

- Training and Facilitation

III Phase: Reconstruction and Rehabilitation

- Leadership Development Program
- Micro Grants Project through Social Artistry Leadership Program
- Sustainable Village Development Initiatives

To learn more about the Earthquake click [here](#), or for a more detailed version of ICA Nepal's future plans, click [here](#).



ICA Chile



Check out this video of the amazing work our colleagues in ICA - Chile have been doing!

