



Increase Association Pan-Asia Conference

From 13-17 November nearly 170 Christian leaders from across Asia and the world gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, for the Increase conference 'Empowering Churches, Equipping Disciples'. They shared a vision for "churches equipping all Christ's followers in their contexts, so that many millions are discipled and empowered for mission, ministry and leadership."

Asia today is seeing unprecedented Christian growth, with several million new followers of Christ each year and many thousands of new churches. From Egypt to Indonesia and most countries in between, indigenous movements are responding to the need to make disciples and equip local leaders. They are linked through the Increase Association and comprised most of the conference participants, along with some visitors from Africa, the Americas, Europe and Australasia.



Increase General Secretary Rev Dr Tim Green explained: "We come from nearly forty countries across the world, we are a demonstration of the body of Christ." Dr Theresa Lua, General Secretary of the Asia Theological Association, expressed her warm support for church-based theological education complementing residential education.

During the busy five-day conference, participants described how God is using church-based learning movements to bring transformation in and through Christ's followers across Asia. Mostly they use TEE, which is Theological Education by Extension but more easily understood as 'Tools to Equip and Empower'. TEE is seeing renewal in Asia today, with new courses being written for contemporary contexts. One quarter of the conference participants were from Central Asia and Russia, and they described how TEE groups can thrive even in contexts of persecution.



Church leaders, theological education institutions, mission agencies and supporters of TEE heard great news of God at work across Asia, took part in practical training workshops and declared their commitment to work together for the discipleship of diaspora believers worldwide.

Key issues highlighted were:

- The importance of clear and systematic discipleship for first-generation believers;
- How church-based training sustains and equips Christians living in politically- and religiously-sensitive areas;
- The opportunity for church-based training to support diaspora populations worldwide, with discipleship in their mother tongues.



At a 'Discipling the Nations' gala dinner, special guests from local Chiang Mai churches and mission organisations joined the conference delegates to hear more of how God is using church-based training in Asia today.

The Conference closed with a great sense of gratitude to God.

For more information on the Conference or the work of Increase, please visit increaseassociation.org or contact increaseassociation@gmail.com.

A selection of high resolution photographs from the Conference are available and a report is forthcoming.



Notes to Editors:

The Increase Association, also known as "Increase", connects and strengthens TEE and other church-based training movements across Asia and beyond. Its members work in partnership to achieve more together for God's kingdom than each could achieve alone. Increase also interacts with Christian educators beyond its own membership for mutual sharing of resources, good practice and innovation.

www.increaseassociation.org