



Thursday 18 July Regional meetings

The day commenced with an opportunity for delegates to attend regional meetings. All 5 regions had solid attendance and addressed issues of concern to their context. The focus on priorities for IFHE underpinned the discussions. Conversations about the 20 year anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2014) featured, along with achievements and strategies related to the UN Millennium Development Goals. Retaining and growing membership of IFHE was also reported to be a topic that was discussed widely.



Africa



Americas



Asia



Europe



Pacific

Plenary



Dr Gwang-Jo Kim

Delegates were privileged to be addressed by Dr Gwang-Jo Kim, Director UNESCO regional bureau for education in Asia-Pacific. Key trends and patterns were presented. Inspirational initiatives were shared, including the Barefoot College in India strategy to educate semi-literate grandmothers to become solar engineers in 6 months, in order to bring light into communities. Grandmothers were targeted as they were stable members of the community. The project brought light to 130 000 people. The importance of having light then benefited all generations, with young people able to study and become educated at night, as during the day they work. The potential to change communities through sustainable education practices is hence achieved. Dr Kim also introduced the concept of World Wide Woes .

Yukiko Kudo



The second keynote address was presented by Chief Senior Specialist for Home Economics, Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, Yukiko Kudo, from Japan. The very real story of the 3/11 east Japan great earthquake was a focus for this presentation. The loss of 15 000 lives, with 3000 still missing and millions

affected, highlighted the breadth of impact of this natural disaster. Three important messages were shared. First, the challenge to individuals and society as a whole when unexpected natural disasters occur. Secondly, how to overcome problems and creatively move forward was considered. Finally, a focus on the role of home economics to contribute in such circumstances was shared. The loss of a sense of safety was highlighted in this moving presentation and a sharing of the concept of tsunami tendenko was shared. Empowering people to make their own judgment for survival was explained, with a focus on developing autonomy, with capacities for creative problem solving identified as critical for sustaining life. A renewed emphasis on the value and purpose of life left a poignant message.

Home visits

More than 70 home visits were hosted for 300 plus congress delegates. The focus on sharing the local lifestyle and food was for many people the highlight of the congress. As home economists we like nothing better than a chance to see how people experience their daily lives.

