

INTERNATIONAL RURAL CHURCH ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION

Adopted at meeting held 18th. Nov. 2002 in Chennai

VISION

Being a voice for Rural Community worldwide.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Association affirms the central truths of the Christian Faith as expressed in the Bible and historic creeds.

The Association believes the whole creation belongs to God – the land, the waters and all creatures. We believe that God seeks all creation to be cherished.

The Association affirms that in Jesus Christ incarnate, God's love for all humanity is expressed. We believe that people in rural areas can be encouraged by the knowledge that Jesus stands beside them in their struggles and is power for personal, social and economic transformation.

As the whole creation groans for its fulfillment the Holy Spirit works to bring order out of chaos. We believe the Spirit inspires the church to cooperate in this mission.

The Association acknowledges that there are different emphases within the various Christian denominations and recognizes that some denominations more than others are at ease in drawing on the insights from secular theory and practice.

OBJECTIVE and PURPOSES

As God's people we are committed: -

to sharing the faith, values and hope of the Kingdom of God in Rural Communities worldwide;

to encouraging and promoting the Christian ministry and mission of local congregations through local, regional and national ecumenical gatherings of the Christian Church.

On a worldwide basis, in cooperation with other appropriate entities, to:

1. Facilitate the sharing of ideas, information and insights.
2. Offer mutual support and fellowship.
3. Represent the needs and concerns of rural communities, churches and institutions to both secular and ecclesial decision making bodies.
4. Encourage and initiate research, writing and the production of other resource materials relevant to rural life and ministry.
5. Arrange continuing programs for conferences and seminars.

STRUCTURE

1. A leadership group of between 5-10 persons composed of representatives from each continent or worldwide acknowledge geographical region (eg. Oceania) will be formed, one of whom shall be the chairperson. It is anticipated that all persons nominated will have their nomination to those positions endorsed by the regional or national governance of their church

2. The Leadership Group will encourage (a) each member to develop an associate IRCEA group in their own country and (b) seek to encourage other countries to develop associate IRCEA groups.
3. The Leadership Group will appoint a Secretary and seek to obtain *secretarial* support from a church organization of whichever country in which that person is resident.
4. The Leadership Group will communicate regularly using all forms of communication as appropriate.
The establishment of an IRCEA Web Site linked to other rural ministry web sites may greatly assist communication.
As finances permit the group will be expected to meet together, face to face, at least once between conferences or other major organized events.
5. A major task of the Leadership Group will be to seek from Christian and other sources funding to enable the IRCEA to continue this ministry.
6. The IRCEA will seek to plan conference activities or meetings every four years.
7. The IRCEA in conference shall seek the Spirit's guidance in the selecting of ongoing leadership. e.g., a Chairperson, a Secretary and the Leadership Group.

Job Description for Chairperson:

- To Chair meetings of IRCEA
- To encourage and support Office Bearers and Association members in responsibilities and tasks
- Represent IRCEA to Regional, National, Denominational Councils and leaders
- Do other tasks from time to time as appropriate.

Job description for Secretary.

- General correspondence.
 - Regular liaison with representatives.
 - Liaison with host for next conference.
 - Arrangements for mid-term meetings.
 - Managing minor administration finances.

The Secretary/Treasurer will need to oversight small amounts of finance but it is anticipated that the full financial management for future conferences will be the responsibility of hosting countries.

- Liaison with Councils of Churches – Nationally and Regionally.
- Prepare a newsletter if appropriate for group communication needs.