



EMPOWERMENT

APCD Newsletter

Volume 19: April 2007

Pacific Sub-Regional Training Seminar on Capacity-Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD)

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) organized a Pacific Sub-regional Training Seminar on Capacity-Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea from 12 - 16 February 2007 with the Ministry of Community Development, Government of Papua New Guinea and Disabled People's International, Asia-Pacific Region (DPI-APR), which was co-sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This Seminar, the first international seminar on disability and development in Papua New Guinea, made a valuable impact for policy formation on disability in Papua New Guinea, as well as developed the South Pacific Sub-regional mechanism in networking and collaboration among the self-help organizations (SHOs).

Resource persons and representatives of PWDs from 13 countries in the Pacific Sub-region that participated were leaders of PWDs in the region.

The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Grand-Chief Sir Michael Somare, officially opened the Seminar, along with H.E. Dame Carol Kidu, Minister for Community Development, Mr. Kanji Hanagata, Ambassador of Japan to Papua New Guinea, and Mr. Shoji Nakanishi, DPI-APR Chairperson, as well as Ms. Ormporn Nithayasuthi, Representative of the Royal Thai Government.

At the opening, the Prime Minister emphasized that this is a new era for the persons with disabilities (PWDs), to create their empowerment and shift from paternalistic models towards a rights-based approach. Minister Carol Kidu announced that the Government of Papua New Guinea would adopt a National Plan on Disability Policy after the CBSHOD, and also expressed appreciation to the Government for their allocation of a ministerial budget for disability and development, the first time for the Ministry of Community Development.

APCD adopted a process-oriented approach for the CBSHOD since its first preparation mission conducted one year prior to the Seminar. Mr. Topong Kulkhanchit, who is the Regional Development Officer of DPI-Asia-Pacific Regional Office and APCD Executive Board Member, was dispatched to research the feasibility of CBSHOD in Papua New Guinea. During the mission, he visited a fishing village, 'Pari Village', and met several persons with disabilities and encouraged them to form self-help organizations.

The second mission was conducted six months prior to the Seminar to set up an Organizing Committee for the CBSHOD, consisting of Government representatives, as well as persons with disabilities. At that time, the first self-help group was organized in 'Pari Village', where they began research on accessibility. The villagers cooperated with the village authorities, including the local church and public health unit, culminating in an accessible village.

The mission team also visited Lae, Morobe Province, to participate in the 1st National Leadership Training Seminar for Women with Disabilities and also the Fifth National Board for Disabled Persons. All participants of both meetings pledged to support the organization of the CBSHOD.

The third mission was conducted three months prior to the Seminar to implement the CBSHOD venue, program, and the detailed TOR for the Organizing Committee. Most arrangements

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March to raise awareness at CBSHOD



Ministry of Social Development and Human Security



Japan International Cooperation Agency

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were made by persons with disabilities (PWDs) along with Government Officials.

The Seminar promoted empowerment of advocacy management. It provided information on the Convention on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the United Nations and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action by UNESCAP. Each country also reported the situation of their PWDs.

Mr. Setareki Macanawai and Mr. Frederick Miller (Fiji) and Mr. John Suran (Vanuatu), shared how they created SHOs and promoted an inclusive barrier-free and rights-based society of PWDs in their own countries.

Mr. Shoji Nakanishi and Mr. Topong Kulkhanchit shared about the disability movement and human rights in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Ms. Cathy Ketepa gave a lecture on women with

disabilities and emphasized the multiple discrimination against them. She organized the National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Papua New Guinea during the Seminar since the Government invited 2 disabled leaders from each of the 20 provinces across the country. This was the first National Assembly of Leaders of PWDs in Papua New Guinea.

UNESCAP will follow up on this CBSHOD with an Expert Group Meeting on Disability in the Pacific: Strengthening Implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework in Nadi, Fiji from 28-30 March 2007, in collaboration with the Pacific Island Forum and the Pacific Disability Forum.

APCD will continue to support the enhancement of the South Pacific Sub-regional mechanism in order to empower PWDs in the isolated islands.



PORT MORESBY DECLARATION

- Summary -

The participants from 13 countries of Asian and the Pacific region declare following statement:

1. We acknowledge the commitment and efforts of APCD towards the strengthening of self-help organizations of persons with disabilities, and encourage them for their continuous promotion of the disability movement in the Asian and Pacific Region.

2. We propose that Governments in the Pacific Sub-region as well as relevant partners in the Asian and Pacific Region support and recognize the formation of a national cross-disability as well as national single disability self-help organizations of persons with disabilities in each country of the Pacific Sub-region.

3. We encourage all Pacific Island countries to actively pursue the implementation of the targets, actions and strategies of the seven priority areas of the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF), as well as to fully participate in its review and development of the Biwako Plus Five in 2007 as facilitated by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Region (UNESCAP).

4. We appeal to the countries of the Pacific Sub-region to sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006, and to ensure that persons with disabilities themselves are consulted, included and represented in this process including its implementation.

5. We declare our commitment to the building of the capacity of national grassroots self-help organizations of persons with disabilities in the Pacific Sub-region, the development of useful network arrangements among countries within the Asia and Pacific Region, and the effective collaboration of such organizations with the international disability movement. Further, we request the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) to facilitate the establishment and strengthening of Pacific Sub-regional cooperation and information sharing mechanism on disability-related concerns.

6. We strongly urge all national self-help organizations of persons with disabilities in the Pacific Sub-region to develop, support and promote future leaders both at the grassroots and national levels, and to ensure equal participation of women with disabilities as well as persons with hearing, psychiatric, and intellectual disabilities in their activities. We also recognize the potentials of persons with disabilities to actively engage in all areas and at all levels of society, including social, cultural, economical and political participation.

Further, we appeal to the Government of Papua New Guinea to consider the following recommendations to build the capacity, strengthen the participation, and improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Papua New Guinea.

7. That Papua New Guinea National Policy on Disability be adopted by the Government immediately after the CBSHOD.

8. The Government to sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with persons with disabilities in the country.

9. The Government to recognize the Papua New Guinea National Assembly of Disabled Persons (NADP) as the national representative and collective voice of persons with disabilities in the country, and to provide necessary support, including financial, technical and others.

10. The Government of Papua New Guinea and relevant stakeholders to put into place policies, plans and strategies for people with disabilities in the event of natural disaster.

(*Full content of the declaration is available at www.apcdproject.org/publications/2007/newsletter19/declaration.html)

ICT for All : Training of ICT for Persons with Print Disability

ICT for All: Training of ICT for Persons with Print Disability was held from 16 January - 2 February 2007 at APCD, Bangkok, Thailand, with 15 participants from 6 countries, namely Cambodia, China, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia and Thailand.

The objectives were to 1) understand the concept of information accessibility for persons with disabilities, 2) learn current ICT development for all and 3) produce a DAISY multimedia talking book. Participants mainly learned how to produce a digital talking book based on the DAISY standard.

Ms. Miki Azuma, JICA Short-term Expert, the main resource person taught the basic concept of DAISY, DAISY Consortium and production methods of the DAISY talking book. Mr. Monthian Buntan, APCD resource person and Executive Board member, lectured on the Convention on



Participants of ICT for All Training, study visit at Thailand Association of the Blind

the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of PWDs, and the World Summit of Information Society. He talked about how the concept of information accessibility of PWDs has developed and been endorsed by the international community; Ms. Wantanee Panthachat presented recent development on Assistive Technologies for PWDs; Mr. Raksak Chairanjuansakun taught the Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) for the DAISY book production.

Two blind assistants, Mr. Kunchit Kumfong and Mr. Chatupol Nootathong assisted the participants to make their DAISY talking books.

The training concluded with presentations of Action Plans and impressive DAISY talking books. All participants successfully made DAISY talking books in multimedia format including full text, full audio and images. Three participants from China showed exceptional performance. They clearly understood the key points and made precise summaries each day. Moreover, all participants including a Thai participant with autism worked very hard.

Participants also made practical action plans for future development and the production of DAISY talking books, action plans in collaboration with other organizations and participants in order to effectively produce books with other organizations.

APCD is confident that the participants will produce DAISY talking books to empower PWDs and promote a barrier-free environment for all PWDs including persons with print disabilities in their home countries. APCD is eagerly looking forward to hearing good news of their production of DAISY books.

Participants' Interview Corner

ICT for All: Training of ICT for Persons with Print Disability 2007



CHINA

After I get back to China, I would like to do a summary of the whole training course including what I have learned as well as how DAISY standards are applied in Thailand and other developing countries. I will also give suggestions to organizations and persons who work on the production of Digital Libraries and some other projects to promote DAISY.

The DAISY topic is quite new for me but it is useful to develop disabled peoples' lives. I will share knowledge from this training with persons with disabilities in my country especially blind persons to be able to access information more equally.

LAO PDR



THAILAND



Prior to this training, we had a little idea of what ICT for All is and the word DAISY. Now we realize the importance of it especially for persons with disabilities. So we have planned to promote DAISY, for example, by teaching our colleagues and volunteers as well as conducting a workshop or seminar. We also believe that materials can reach persons with different disabilities through DAISY.

Refresher Training to Strengthen Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) through a Participatory Comprehensive Approach

The Refresher Training to Strengthen the Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) through a Participatory Comprehensive Approach was organized by APCD in Bangkok from 27 February to 15 March. The course was designed for APCD's high-profile ex-participants, who had developed their CBR projects or Self-help Groups (SHG) of People with Disabilities (PWD) in their localities after their first training with APCD. The 18 participants came from five countries, Cambodia, Laos PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam (CLMV) and Thailand. The main purpose of this training was to strengthen CBR projects in these countries by enabling the above target group to:

1. Nurture their insights and attitudes to be effective managers of the CBR projects;
2. Equip themselves with practical managerial and training skills; and
3. Formulate strategies and action plans to ensure localization and sustainability of their CBR projects.

To promote their practical learning, APCD arranged field visits to Pon-ngam Sub-district, Chainat Province and Jodnongkae Sub-district, Khonkaen Province, where CBR projects have been effectively implemented through the collaboration of stakeholders. In addition, APCD conducted a one-day seminar on a CBR sub-regional network, in which the training participants and invited Thai NGOs working for CBR shared their challenges and future visions, and agreed to initiate their network to further their experiences and learn from each other.

Field Visit to Chainat: SHG of PWD and Excellent Collaboration among Stakeholders

The field visit to Pon-ngam Sub-district, Chainat Province on 3 March was very successful; participants could learn about a comprehensive CBR approach through collaboration among various sectors and empowerment of PWD through SHG.

Due to the recent decentralization of the Thai domestic administration, a Sub-district Administrative Organization (SAO) consisting of village representatives has the authority to make relevant decisions on their policies and budgets, and takes an important role to implement a CBR programme. The SAO in Pon-ngam works closely with professional service sectors such as health and education, and facilitates these organizations to cooperate in supporting PWD and their families in the community. For example, the Provincial Special Education Centre promotes inclusive education for children with disabilities (CWD) by providing supplemental educational assistance to the CWD and technical support to regular school teachers while it also refers some CWD to special schools and educates them at the Centre according to each child's capacities. Also, the Community Health Centre develops a family and community health portfolio, which includes the number of PWD and their disability types, in order to provide appropriate medical/health care and prevent causes of disabilities.

Approximately 10 SHG of PWD have been formed in the Sub-district so far. For instance, a SHG led by a person with physical impairment is engaged in embroidery; another SHG consists of blind masseurs. The members seemed to enjoy their SHG activities since they could communicate with other PWD, be financially independent through their income generative tasks and become more confident and content. The SAO has been supporting SHG by setting a policy and allocating a budget to strengthen them. Also, community volunteers support the development of SHG. These volunteers went through a basic training course organized by the Provincial Office for Social Development and Human Security. They have been active in home-visits to PWD who seldom go out of their home, provide information support for PWD and encourage PWD to form their SHG with income generative activities.

In the Pon-ngam Sub-district, the SAO, service providers, volunteers and SHG of PWD work well independently and cooperate with each other.

Field Visit to Khonkaen: Community's People's Participation and Sustainability

From 7 to 9 March 2007, APCD arranged another field trip to Jodnongkae Sub-district in Khonkaen Province to learn about their CBR practice which has been recognized as an excellent project on Health Insurance for People with Disability by the Thai Ministry of Public Health this year. The CBR project in Jodnongkae Sub-district was initiated by its SAO late in 2003. They organized a seminar for representatives from SAO, the Health Center, schools, monks, PWD, their family members and other relevant community people to set up an action plan toward an "inclusive community". After the seminar, a CBR Committee was established with various stakeholders including PWD, their families, and village leaders who have become volunteers. Currently the CBR project in Jodnongkae serves 98 PWD and pursues its mission to improve the quality of life of PWD concerning their medical, educational, vocational and social aspects.

Since its inception, the CBR project has involved PWD, their families and village leaders as volunteers, and their participation has become a driving force to sustain all the positive changes occurring in the community. PWD and their



A Vietnamese Participant in the Khonkaen Field Work

families have been capable of articulating their needs and the community is also able to respond to their needs utilizing their local resources and with appropriate referral.

During the visit to Jodongkae, the CBR Committee gave a presentation and APCD participants visited PWD; participants could clearly see how sustainability of CBR and active participation of various community people are related. The participants were also engaged in field work to enhance their skills as effective facilitators and trainers at the community level. They were divided into three teams

and spent 2 days with their respective target groups such as village volunteers, parents of CWD, and SHG of PWD. Teams of the APCD participants analyzed the learning needs of each target group and conducted sessions to share relevant knowledge/skills according to their learning needs.

The villagers appreciated the learning sessions organized by the APCD participants while the participants treasured this opportunity to learn about CBR practice with a participatory approach in Jodongkae.

CBR Network Seminar: Forum among CLMV and Thailand

In order to share CBR experiences among organizations of the APCD participants and other relevant NGOs in Thailand, and to build up a network among them, a CBR Sub-regional Network Seminar was conducted as part of the APCD training on 13 March 2007. Besides 10 organizations joining the forum, there were special observers from the UN ESCAP, WHO and JICA. In the morning, a panel discussion was organized among representatives of five countries with relevant topics: challenges in their CBR projects, how to sustain CBR activities in community, how to empower PWD and strengthen the community, etc. Concerning their challenges, for example, the panelists raised issues such as insufficient information and resources, lack of the government policy and their support, people's attitude toward disability and needs of a paradigm shift from the medical/charity model of disability to the social model, a holistic support for PWD, a systematic network among local stakeholders. In the afternoon, the participants had a group discussion to develop an appropriate manner for their sub-regional networking. They agreed that a network among them would promote the CBR movement in this region and improve respective CBR projects if they could regularly exchange relevant information and diversified experiences through their network. They concluded their discussion with concrete steps for their networking: setting a common goal, writing the term of reference of their network, developing a communication channel, setting up a basis for networking (e.g., via website), sharing of information and experiences, conducting meetings among members, field visits to members' projects, monitoring this CBR network, etc.



Panel Discussion in the CBR Network Seminar

Throughout the Refresher Training, the participants developed significant insights on how to improve their CBR projects and are ready to take concrete actions by applying knowledge, commitment and network among the participants. As the APCD Director mentioned in the Closing Ceremony, APCD anticipates seeing all the participants sharing their learning with relevant people in their countries, and fully utilize what they gained to improve the quality and quantity of CBR in the Asia-Pacific region. APCD looks forward to an inclusive and barrier-free society through the continuous effort by these participants and their various partners.

Interview with WHO's Focal Point for CBR Mr. Chapal Khasnabis

"They should not be treated differently because of their disability"



Mr. Chapal Khasnabis, technical officer of the World Health Organization's (WHO) disability and rehabilitation team was a guest lecturer for APCD's Refresher Training to Strengthen the Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) through a Participatory Comprehensive Approach 2007 and shared the United Nations and World Health Organization's perspective on CBR.

From your perspective, please give us a brief definition of CBR

Mr. Chapal: I would say that there is no one concrete definition of CBR. The way CBR is introduced today will be different tomorrow. There will be many changes but we believe CBR is a community action or community initiative to ensure people with disabilities and their families have equal access to opportunity and rights like other citizens in the community.

For further details of interviewing on CBR Training is available at APCD Website:
<http://www.apcdproject.org/trainings/2007/cbr/interview.html>

International Conference on Tsunami Preparedness of Persons with Disabilities

The International Conference on Tsunami Preparedness of Persons with Disabilities was organized by the DAISY Consortium in collaboration with APCD and several organizations working in both the disability and disaster prevention fields from 11 – 12 January 2007 at the Royal Phuket Hotel in Phuket, Thailand. Approximately 100 participants from 12 countries, namely Bangladesh, Denmark, France, India, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand and the United States of America participated.

Mr. Tri Akaradecha, Deputy Governor of Phuket Province gave the opening remarks followed by presentations by resource persons from various countries; presentations included the Asian tsunami 2004, the World Summit of Information Society (WSIS), tsunami evacuation, disaster & disability, disaster warning/prevention technologies, etc. Two men from the Morken tribe, victims of the Asian Tsunami 2004 shared their experiences with the tsunami disaster.

The Phuket Declaration 2007 was adopted and states that the tsunami disaster can be prevented by:

1. sharing knowledge and best practices on tsunami and other disasters,

2. a strong commitment and active participation for contribution of all stakeholders including in particular persons with disabilities to eliminate the loss of lives,

3. local community-based initiatives for disaster preparedness and infrastructure building including an early tsunami warning system at all levels to disseminate timely disaster warning to all people concerned.

For the full text of Phuket Declaration, please check APCD Website: <http://www.apcdproject.org/publications/2007/newsletter19/tsunami.html>



A group photo of all participants and staff at Patong Beach, Phuket

APCD Missions

Mission to Malaysia: 5-10 January 2007 “Training of Trainers on Disability Equality Training (DET)”

The APCD Mission Team participated in the “Training of Trainers on Disability Equality Training (DET)” organized by the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) from 6 - 10 January 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Fifteen participants from Malaysia participated as well as three Thai APCD Assistant Resource Persons, Ms. Manisara Palawat, Mr. Kunchit Kumfong and Ms. Natagamon Roongtim. The DET trainer was Ms. Sue Rickell from the London Boroughs Disability Resource Team, England.

Ms. Jirat Wachirasereechai, HRD Chief of APCD and Ms. Varaporn Yuphavathana, Chief of Administration of APCD observed DET for APCD’s strategy development.

The purpose of this course was to train persons with disabilities to be DET facilitators. Participants were introduced to the idea of Disability as a Rights issue. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, other related Conventions, and the definitions of disability were reviewed. The medical and social models and many other important issues were also discussed. All participants

were trained in the skills and roles of trainers and practiced being facilitators.

The APCD mission team gained an understanding of DET and the skills for being effective trainers as well as developed a network with Malaysian participants of DET and their organizations.



APCD Assistant Resource Persons at DET Training

Mission to Myanmar: 5-8 February 2007

Since APCD's inception in 2002, Myanmar has been prioritized as one of the target countries and has strategically developed human resources in the fields of Self-help Groups/Organizations of People with Disabilities (SHG/SHO of PWD) and Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR). Totally, 29 persons, including 2 deaf persons and 4 teachers from the schools for the deaf in Yangon and Mandalay, participated in the training of these fields at APCD, Bangkok.



Unity for a Standardized Myanmar Sign Language Project

Since APCD has had a trust relationship with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) as a Focal Point and former deaf participants shared their needs for a standardized Burmese sign language, APCD linked them with the JICA Myanmar Office to consider possible relevant cooperation. In 2006, APCD advised the DSW to draft a project proposal for a standardized sign language to promote social participation of the deaf community and facilitate closer cooperation among various stakeholders (e.g., DSW, schools for the deaf, deaf people) through their collaborative work. APCD had facilitated former deaf participants and their deaf peers to be involved in the project formulation and work closely with DSW.

The Director of APCD and a JICA Expert were dispatched to Yangon and Mandalay from 5 - 8 February 2007 to participate in a series of meetings between a JICA HQ Mission Team and the Burmese authority/persons concerning a new domestic project entitled "Project for Supporting Social Welfare Administration: Promotion of Social Participation of the Deaf Community". This project is

noteworthy since it is the first time for the DSW to implement a project with international cooperation by JICA, and that non-governmental stakeholders such as deaf persons representing their SHG/SHO have been participating since the project formulation began. The JICA Headquarter Mission included deaf resource persons recommended by the Japanese Federation of the Deaf.

Through meetings, a Project Design Matrix developed which included:

Overall Goal: Promote full participation of deaf persons in society in Yangon and Mandalay.

Project Purpose: Strengthen joint planning and implementation of activities between social welfare administrators and the deaf community.

Expected Output:

- 1) The deaf community acquire the capacity to assess the vocabulary of the existing standardized sign language (SSL).
- 2) The SSL grammar development through the initiative of the deaf community.
- 3) That deaf persons and their families, prospective sign language interpreters and teachers at the schools for the deaf acquire SSL.
- 4) Improved awareness among community members (general public) of deaf persons.

According to APCD Project's Terminal Evaluation in October 2006, APCD needs to make further effort in accommodating a variety of disability groups in its future activities. A draft proposal for the APCD Project Phase II includes further cooperation with deaf stakeholders. Although the details of the Phase II Project will be discussed further, the following options seem possible for APCD to collaborate with the above New Project in Myanmar:

- 1) Inviting the New Myanmar Project personnel to relevant regular training courses at APCD.
- 2) Organizing training in Myanmar (Thailand) especially for the New Myanmar Project personnel.
- 3) Relevant information support and exchange.

This Mission opportunity enabled APCD to monitor former deaf participants with in-depth information, and it is strongly hoped that former APCD participants will continue to actively participate in the project.

Mission to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan: 2-10 March 2007

The APCD dispatched a mission team to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from 2-10 March 2007 to create a sub-regional mechanism on disability and development. Due to time constraint and transportation difficulties, the mission was unable to include Tajikistan.

Kyrgyzstan

The APCD mission paid courtesy calls to the Office of the Prime Minister in Kyrgyzstan, where Mr. Stalbek Asakeev, Expert of the Social Department and the Minister expressed a willingness to support a Seminar on Capacity-Building for Self-Help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) in Central Asia in the future and to invite three other countries.

The mission team visited self-help organizations, including the Independent Association of Disabled Women (Ms. Asipa Musaeva); the Union of Young Disabled People (Mr. Shamyrbek Ydyrysov); the Association of Parents of Disabled Children (Ms. Tamara K. Dyikanbayeva); a blind lawyer (Mr. Tolkunbek Isakov), who organized legal support services for persons with disabilities called "Independent Life" with 13 organizations to promote human rights and advocacy for PWDs; and the Young Disabled People's Movement (Mr. Mirbek Asangariyev). The Public Fund DAO (Mr. Alexander Dubina) in Tokmok City, is a grass-root organization to promote civil rights for PWDs and cooperation with other civil rights movement groups.

The Mission also visited the Children's Rehabilitation Center and Public Mental Health Center (Ms. Aigul Kyzalakov), that coordinates social and legal support for persons with psychiatric disabilities, and also the Association of Deaf and Blind (Mr. Kalyk Mambetakunov).

There are many self-help organizations (SHOs), as well as community-based self-help groups in Kyrgyzstan, that are seeking a more inclusive society and social security based on human rights. APCD is encouraging all SHOs to unite, support each other and form a National Assembly to promote a barrier-free and right-based society.

APCD is seeking the possibility of holding a Central Asia CBSHOD in Bishkek in the future and would support the organization of a Preparation Committee including all stakeholders if CBSHOD would be held in Kyrgyzstan. The expected outcome would be a National Assembly of cross-disabilities of self-help organizations, as well as the supporters.

JICA Resident Representative in Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Satoshi Nakano, expressed keen interest in supporting disability and development by inviting a JICA Expert for 2-3 years who would collaborate with APCD/CBSHOD.



APCD Mission Team with Minister for Labour and Social Protection, Kyrgyzstan

The Mission Team also visited the Japan Center, which conducts computer courses for persons with a hearing disability. The Mission also met the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, who was assigned to the National Rehabilitation Center and the Special Education Center for information exchange.

Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan, the Mission Team visited the Ministry for Labour and Social Protection of Population and met the Minister and high-ranking Government Officials, including the Vice-Minister and discussed possible collaboration with APCD in the future.

The APCD team visited an associate organization, the Youth Social-Legal Rehabilitation Center for Disabled People – Millennium, which organized several self-help organizations related to persons with a physical disability, blindness, women with disabilities and, youth and culture groups of persons with disabilities. Ms. Mahmadkulova Guljahon organized a half-day session of information exchange with those stakeholders. The National NGO Association showed a keen interest to cooperate with APCD. All non-governmental organizations have to be members of the National NGO Association to report their activities.

The Mission Team visited the World Vision Japan (Mr. Hans Bederski) to exchange information on the community-based rehabilitation in Tashkent, which will be supported by the JICA grass-root partnership program for three years.

Finally, the Mission Team visited the Japan Center to observe computer courses for deaf persons. The JICA Resident Representative, Mr. Noriaki Nishiyama, agreed to support the APCD Project and seek the possibility of translating the APCD Newsletters into the Russian language once a year since most of the Central Asians are unable to read English. This is APCD homework for future information support with local languages.

Mission to Lao PDR: 13-16 March 2007

APCD mobilized resource persons to participate in a seminar "The Legal Framework on Disability in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic from 14-15 March 2007.

Resource persons included Mr. Nghiem Xuan Tue, Director, National Coordinating Council on Disability of Vietnam (NCCD), Mr. Monthian Buntan, APCD Board Member/President, Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB), Royal Thai Government's delegation to the United Nations *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Ms. Sunee Saisupatpon, Director, Bureau of the Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Royal Thai Government.

The National Committee on Disabled People (NCDP) of Lao PDR organized the Seminar in collaboration with the Lao Disabled People's Association (LDPA), and it was sponsored by the Netherlands Embassy in Bangkok, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA-Lao PDR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and APCD.

The objectives of the seminar were to know the global situation of the legal framework on disability, especially the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; to know the ratification process of conventions in Lao PDR and the Vietnamese situation and drafting process of a legal framework on disability issues, as well as the Thai situation.

Participants included representatives from the Government level such as the Ministries of Labour and Social Welfare, Foreign Affairs, etc. as well as representatives of other organizations such as ILO, JICA, UNDP, etc.

Mr. Phetsavang Sounnalath, Chairman, anticipates completing the draft of the Disability Decree by May 2007 so that the Government of Lao PDR can report its achievements for the UNESCAP Mid-term Evaluation of the Biwako Millennium Frame for Action (BMF).

A representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Department of International Treaty and Legal Affairs, along with an UNDP Expert on Good Governance, expressed interest in ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Many questions and answers were exchanged on the Convention and the Vietnamese Government's decrees and policies on disability since the Lao PDR has a similar political and organizational situation as Viet Nam.



Seminar on Disability Legal Frameworks

Mission to India and China: 18-24 March 2007

APCD sent a mission team to India and China from 18-24 March 2007 to strengthen the system of information networking, gather information on disability and monitor how information from APCD is being utilized in India.

The mission team met with Mr. B.N. Yugandhar, member of the Planning Commission, and visited the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and met with Ms. Veena Chhotray, Secretary of the Ministry, to discuss implementation of the SHG project in India.

The mission team also observed accessibility of Delhi Metro, a new subway system in Delhi, with Mr. Sanjeev Sachdeva and Ms. Anjlee Agarwal, representatives of Smarthya and former APCD training participants of the Non-handicapping Environment 2004. They said that the subway station was designed accessible for disabled, pregnant and elderly persons.

The mission team visited the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) and National Association for the Blind where former APCD training participants and resource persons are working. In NCPEDP, we met with Ms. Niveditta Datta, Programme Officer of the National Disability Network to discuss information networking. NCPEDP agreed to help update the APCD country profile and would like to join the APCD mailing list for information sharing on disability in the Asia-Pacific region. At the National Association for the Blind (NAB), we met with Mr. Dipendra Minocha, Director of Education and exchanged information of visually impaired persons and followed up on ICT training participants.



Ms. Anjlee and Mr. Sanjeev at New accessible Delhi Metro

In China, the mission team visited China Disabled Peoples' Federation (CDPF) in Beijing and met with Mr. Eric Zhang, Director of the Department of International Affairs and representatives of the CDPF Information Center, and associations of deaf, physically disabled and intellectually challenged persons.



Mr. Eric Zhang and Representatives of CDPF

APCD discussed collaboration on information exchange and suggested promoting accessible information through an accessible website and a DAISY talking book on the occasion of the upcoming 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games. CDPF agreed to exchange information on disability with APCD and promote accessible information in China.

The mission team also visited the China Braille Press (CBP) and met with Mr. Han Zhongyi, Vice-president and Mr. Ji Hong, the Director and observed their activities. CBP provides Braille and Audio books for 13 million visually impaired readers across China free of charge.

The Tianjin Disabled Persons' Federation invited the mission team for a field visit to disabled peoples' organizations in Tianjin City. Mr. Zuo Tie Chang, Vice-chairman of the Board and Mr. Jiang Yan, Director welcomed the mission team. The mission team observed community activities in Tianjin, such as volunteer service for a self-help organization for persons with disabilities in the community and also visited a homecare project for children with intellectual disabilities and autism.

The mission team received a variety of information from both China and India, and expects to further collaborate with them. APCD looks forward to working more closely with both countries.

APCD Project Activities

APCD Activities in Brief (January - March 2007)

Networking and collaboration has been APCD's highlight in this quarter. APCD collaborated with various external organizations to organize training courses to empower persons with disabilities in the region. The big event was the Pacific Sub-regional Training on Capacity-Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) held in Papua New Guinea to expand the disability network with the South Pacific Sub-regional countries. Tremendous outcomes were expressed from the regional training. In addition, APCD networked with other disability-related organizations to fully support the International Conference on Tsunami Preparedness of Persons with Disabilities held in Phuket.

Apart from trainings, APCD followed-up with focal point and associate organizations in several countries to monitor activities implemented. APCD's stakeholders were impressed with the networking and collaboration to empower persons with disabilities in Malaysia, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Lao PDR, India, and China.

As for APCD's training courses, APCD has succeeded in hosting the ICT for All: Training of ICT for Persons with Print Disabilities, Refresher Training to Strengthen Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) through a Participatory Comprehensive Approach and the CBR Network Seminar with participants from Cambodia, China, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.

In this quarter, APCD networked with disability-related organizations in China and India to expand the development of the information networking. From this, APCD has received fruitful coordination to exchange information and improved the techniques to localize disability-related information to the grassroots organizations.

APCD has also promoted and support our stakeholders the highlights and the ratification procedures of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Tentative APCD activities for the next 6 months (April - September 2007)

April

- Newsletter Volume 19
- 30 April - 2 May ● Seminar on Networking for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities *

May

- 15 - 18 ● Seminar on Peer - Counseling *
- 21 - 30 ● Training on Education Material Production *

June

- 6 - 8 ● UNESCAP-APCD High-level Stakeholders' Workshop on Empowerment of People with Disabilities and a Barrier-free Society through Networking and Collaboration
- 11 - 15 ● Training on Non-handicapping Environment *
- 20 - 21 ● Meeting of Disability Equality Training (DET) Curriculum Designing *
- 25 - 29 ● Training of Trainers on DET *

July

- 12 ● Newsletter Volume 20
- 24 ● The First Seminar on DET *
- The Second Seminar on DET *

August

- 6 ● The Third Seminar on DET *
- 16 ● The Fourth Seminar on DET *
- 29 - 30 ● DET Evaluation *

* Training for Thai persons only

Tentative Activities	April	May	June
Newsletter 19			
Seminar on Networking for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities *	30 Apr - 2 May		
Seminar on Peer-Counseling *		15 - 18	
Training on Education Material Production *		21 - 30	
UNESCAP-APCD High-level Stakeholders' Workshop on Empowerment of People with Disabilities and a Barrier-free Society through Networking and Collaboration			6 - 8
Training on Non-handicapping Environment *			11 - 15
Meeting of Disability Equality Training (DET) Curriculum Designing *			20 - 21
Training of Trainers on DET *			25 - 29
Tentative Activities	July	August	September
Newsletter 20			
The First Seminar on DET *	12		
The Second Seminar on DET *	24		
The Third Seminar on DET *		6	
The Fourth Seminar on DET *		16	
DET Evaluation *		29 - 30	

APCD Counterpart Training in Japan

Ms. Manassawee Rawiwan, APCD Information Support Officer, attended the Counterpart Training in Japan, 4-10 March 2007 in order to understand information management for NGOs and study the way to collect/disseminate information for focal point and associate organizations of APCD.

Ms. Manassawee visited five organisations; the Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI –Japan), Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD), Japan Federation of the Deaf (JFD), Japan Council on Independent Living Centers (JIL) and the Tokyo Voluntary Action Center to learn about information to support activities of organizations for persons with disabilities, guarantee of information for persons with disabilities, and the role of the information centre.

Ms. Nanta Sampinong, from Nakorn Prathom Independent Living Center and Mr. Teerayudth Sukonthavit,

from Nonthaburi Independent Living Center went to Japan from 3 – 17 March 2007 for counterpart training on Peer Counseling and Management of Independent Living Centers (ILCs). The objectives were to understand effective management and various activities of ILCs and their Council as well as to develop an action plan to strengthen ILCs and their Council in Thailand and cooperation with APCD.

The experiences and knowledge derived from the training in Japan is useful to apply to the context of the Council of Independent Living (CIL) in Thailand by reviewing the concept of IL, roles and work of CIL whether they reconcile with the IL concept, work particularly for all types of disabilities; the main services of the CIL should conform with the IL concept and the principles apply to all services.

Full Report of the training is available at APCD Website:

<http://www.apcdproject.org/publications/2007/newsletter19/counterpart.html>

Regional News

January - March 2007

1. School of Leadership Launched a Bakery Pakistan January 2007

The School of Leadership trained deaf students to bake and management skills, then established a bakery in January 2007. This is the 2nd project for the deaf in Pakistan following the KFC project.

Please check www.pad.sdnpk.org or email to Ms. Urooj Mazhar for more details.

Source: Report from Mr. Muhammad Akram, Pakistan Association of the Deaf

2. Sights Set on Autos that Say Thank You India 7 January 2007

A Delhi-based NGO, Samarthyia has designed a voice-enabled fare meter - for autos and taxis - that not only displays the fare and the distance travelled, but also announces the same to the passenger. The NGO hopes that apart from the users benefiting, these meters will also bring the city much prestige and goodwill from the international community. This technology will also make public transportation more accessible for the blind. The company whose factory brought Samarthyia's idea estimates the cost of the product would not be more than Rs 500.

Please check www.samarthyaindia.com for more details.

Source: Samarthyia, National Centre for Promotion of Barrier-Free Environment for Disabled Persons

3. The Opening of New Independent Living Center Thailand 19 March 2007

Mr. Santi Rungnasuan, the ex-participant in APCD training on independent living, and JICA Training on peer-counselling has stepped further to become the founder and director of new Independent Living Center (ILC) in Bhudamonthon District, Nakornpathom Province, Thailand. The new ILC was formally opened on 19 March 2007. Its types of services include peer-counseling, information sharing and advocacy movement for persons with disabilities in the area.

Source: Mr. Santi Rungnasuan, Director of Nakornpathom Independent Living Center

4. Record Number of Countries Sign UN Treaty on Disabilities on Opening Day United Nations 30 March 2007

Eighty-one Member States and the European Community signed a landmark new treaty at the United Nations that aims to improve the lives of the world's estimated 650 million people with disabilities. Jamaica also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – the first country to go beyond endorsement and adopt it as law.

Please check <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=22085&Cr=disab&Cr1=&Kw1=RECORD+NUMBER+OF+COUNTRIES+SIGN+UN+TREATY+ON+DISABILITIES+ON+OPENING+DAY&Kw2=&Kw3=> for more details.

Source: UN News Centre

Regional News: Upcoming Events April - June 2007

1. International Conference for Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Singapore 23 - 26 April 2007

Topic areas include the universal design, inclusive housing & the work place, transportation, accessibility issues, social issues, policies, political issues related to disability and the aging population.

Please check www.i-create2007.org for more details.

Source: International Conference for Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology

2. The 1st International Conference on Prevention and Rehabilitation of Hearing Impairment China 26 - 28 April 2007

The purpose is to further develop the prevention and rehabilitation of hearing impairment, and to strengthen international communication and cooperation.

Please check www.chinadeaf.com/prhi/list/list_59_1.html for more details.

Source: China Deaf

Editorial Message

Welcome to the 19th Volume of APCD Empowerment Newsletter! Time flies so fast with APCD almost 5 years old! Looking back, we have worked diligently to achieve the worthwhile goal of empowering persons with disabilities with close ties of support from all of our friends; we have been able to play a meaningful role in various events in this region. Some such events featured in this volume are the Pacific Sub-Regional Seminar on Capacity-Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) in Papua New Guinea, and 2 regional trainings on Community-based Rehabilitation and ICT for All: Training of ICT for Persons with Print Disability conducted at our Center in Thailand.

We would like to thank all of you who have given much of your time and resources to support us through the years. There are definitely many challenges along the way for years to come; your continued support is appreciated so we can continue to improve our newsletter.

"Empowerment" APCD Newsletter
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