

## UNESCAP-APCD High-level Stakeholders' Workshop on Empowerment of People with Disabilities and a Barrier-free Society through Networking and Collaboration

The Workshop was organized in collaboration with UNESCAP at UNCC, from 6-8 June 2007. The objectives of the Workshop were to share the outcomes of APCD, and also consider the future direction of APCD. The Workshop consisted of 3 main parts: firstly, the statements by the Government of Japan and the Royal Thai Government concerning the APCD Project; secondly, the reports of APCD's outcomes, including field visits; and thirdly, the future direction of APCD's collaboration with the international, sub-regional, national and grass-roots organizations.

H.E. Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister, Royal Thai Government, who gave the inaugural speech emphasized that Thailand has been an active participant in the area of humanitarian issues and poverty alleviation of people with disabilities. The Government of Thailand has changed its policy from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach and APCD has been promoting an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based humanitarian development, not only in Thailand, but also in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Shigeru Mochida, Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer-in-Charge, a.i. of the Secretariat, UNESCAP, welcomed the participants. He stated that ESCAP was preparing for the mid-point review of the second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012 and that the Workshop's inputs would be valuable for such review.

Mr. Katsuji Onoda, Resident Representative of JICA Thailand mentioned that JICA had 31 overseas offices in the region and that they closely collaborated with the APCD. They would continue to collaborate with the Thai Government and NGO sectors in order to promote empowerment of persons with disabilities and a barrier-free society in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Jun Niimi, Charge d' Affairs, a.i., and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, reported that the Government of Japan

has been supporting disability and development through the Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund (JECF) since 1986. APCD was the legacy of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and identified APCD as the regional organization to promote empowerment of persons with disabilities and a barrier-free society.

The Workshop was attended by representatives of APCD's national focal points from Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam, 22 associate organizations, as well as international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

APCD and UNESCAP reported their achievements, followed by APCD's focal points and associate organizations on their best practices:



**H.E. Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister, Royal Thai Government at the Opening Ceremony**

### **(1) Capacity-building of Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) and their contribution to earthquake reconstruction in Pakistan.**

The Government of Pakistan and disabled people's organizations (DPOs) such as Special Talent Exchange Program (STEP), Milestone and Life Independent Living Center (Milestone), and



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AI Sanghar Handicaps' Association (ASHA), collaborated to form a national organization of DPOs and created a collaborative mechanism between the Government and DPOs. As a consequence, both sectors jointly collaborated to support the earthquake victims who became paraplegics. The Japanese Social Development Fund, through the World Bank, was utilized to set up independent living centers in the earthquake affected areas, as well as a community-based rehabilitation program. Organizations of people with disabilities were important stakeholders to rescue and reconstruct the earthquake affected areas in this national disaster.

### **(2) Promotion of Non-handicapping Environment (NHE)**

APCD's NHE ex-participant gave a presentation on the promotion of accessibility for the built environment in the Philippines. The National Council for Welfare of Persons with Disabilities (NCWDP) facilitated, in collaboration with the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) from the professional sector, and organizations of persons with disabilities to organize a national workshop on a non-handicapping environment with support of JICA Philippines. As a result, the local government, as well as the private sectors such as SM-Supermall, banks, restaurants, etc., took initiatives to carry out non-handicapping environment activities.

### **(3) Information Networking and Accessibility to/or Information and Communication Technologies**

The representatives of Mitra Netra Foundation, Indonesia, and Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), Bangladesh, presented very successful experiences of ICT accessibility.

### **(4) Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities in the Community**

A representative of the Thailand Council for Independent Living (TCIL) shared about the independent living movement in Thailand, which now has 4 Centers in 3 provinces. These ILCs collaborated with the village level, government sector and community organizations as well as private sectors in promoting accessibility in the community and awareness of the disability movement.

### **(5) Collaboration between the Government and Self-help Groups of Persons with Disabilities with a Hearing Disability**

The representatives of the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Myanmar, and Yangon Deaf Association, gave a joint presentation on the standardization of sign language in Myanmar, which was supported by JICA Myanmar.

### **(6) Sub-regional Collaboration in the Pacific**

Representatives of the National Assembly of Disabled Persons (NADP) in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) in Fiji, presented their subregional collaborative activities in the Pacific. CBSHOD organized in Papua New Guinea this year, has resulted in a newly formed

self-help organization in March 2007 and the promotion of disability and development, especially in the area of women with disabilities.

The Pacific Disability Forum was formed in 2004; APCD has been supporting the PDF to develop its subregional mechanism through CBSHOD.

### **Field Visits to the Thai Best Practices:**

There were 3 field visitations: (a) accessibility in the built environment (underground train system, Mass Rapid Transit, and Council of Disabled People of Thailand); (b) accessibility to information (Thailand Association of the Blind, TAB and National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, NECTEC); (c) empowerment and community living of persons with extensive disabilities (Independent Living Center and the sub-district administrative Organization (SAO)).



**Participants at the Sub-district Administrative Organization (SAO)**

Lastly, the Workshop focused on the future direction of and collaboration with APCD by the stakeholders. The panel discussion was conducted by representatives of Inclusion International (II), Disabled Peoples' International, Asia-Pacific Region (DPI AP), Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD), World Federation of the Deaf, Regional Secretariat in Asia-Pacific (WFD AP), and SM-Supermall (a private sector). II and WFD emphasized the need to organize national organizations of intellectual disabilities and organizations of persons with hearing impairments in the Mekong river countries. JSRPD would like to collaborate with APCD to do follow-up of their ex-trainees in the Asia-Pacific region, totaling as of 2007, 61 persons with disabilities from 21 countries. DPI-AP would like to collaborate with APCD in the area of CBSHOD, women with disabilities and the promotion of disability and development.

Lastly, SM-Supermall as a private sector, emphasized the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and encouraged all the private and business sectors to collaborate with APCD to develop a society for all.

Some suggestions came from the subregional meetings wishing to have a subregional office of APCD or similar function, and also to collaborate with intergovernmental subregional organizations such as ASEAN, SAARC, and Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in order to enhance a subregional mechanism and cooperation between government and non-governmental sectors.



Recommendations were as follows:

(1) Government focal points, associate NGO organizations and international NGO welcome APCD to become a public organization in order to become an international organization in the future.

(2) To strengthen subregional networking and collaboration with government and NGO sectors.

(3) To strengthen subregional networking and collaboration on disability, and a subregional intergovernmental forum/association should be established as a disability focal point.

(4) CBSHOD could invite representatives of a subregional intergovernmental body.

(5) Focal points and associate organizations should exchange information and personnel and share experience and expertise to strengthen networking and collaboration in the subregion.

(6) APCD should actively include persons with intellectual disabilities, as well as deaf persons as the target groups of its programs.

(7) Through networking and collaboration with APCD, Governments in the Asia-Pacific region are encouraged to promote the establishment of national self-help organizations

of deaf persons and assist them in the development and nation-wide dissemination of a standardized national sign language.

(8) Networking and collaboration with the business sector in order to promote corporate social responsibility (CSR).

(9) APCD may promote poverty reduction by collaboration and development of a mechanism among stakeholders.



APCD/UNESCAP Meeting at UNCC

## Workshop Outcomes

Workshop evaluations indicate that 60% of all participants strongly agreed that they gained new valuable knowledge and insights, while 38% agreed for a total of 98%.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants strongly agreed and 31% agreed to have developed/strengthened a network with APCD. Again, 98% of all participants.

Fourteen country representatives would like to further develop their network; 24 of the associate organizations would like to strengthen networking and collaboration.

Phase I of APCD (August 2002-July 2007) definitely established the infrastructure of networking and collaboration with member countries and associate organizations, which will be a valuable asset for Phase II (August 2007-July 2012). International organizations, such as Disabled Peoples' International (DPI-Asia Pacific Regional), the World Deaf Federation, Inclusion International, and the Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD), clearly expressed a desire to collaborate with the APCD in Phase II, especially the development of Self-Help Organizations (SHO) of people with hearing impairments and persons with intellectual disabilities in the Mekong sub-regional countries. Several major international government organizations and international NGOs are also expected to join the project in Phase II. Therefore, APCD's Phase II will further develop effective and sustainable networking and collaboration.

Lastly, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) would like to utilize the results and reports for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Mid-point Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons. The UNESCAP also expressed a desire to develop networking and collaboration with APCD to promote a sub-regional mechanism.



**Ms. Maheswary Velautham,**  
Advisor to the Hon. Minister,  
Ministry of Social Services  
and Social Welfare

## Interview Corner

NGOs are taking part in formulating policy on disability issues. We have an excellent Council for persons with disability. H.E. Mr. K.N. Douglas Devonanda, Minister of Social Services and Social Welfare is encouraging NGOs to take responsibility; he wants NGOs to accept their rights. We are networking more with NGOs and INGOs. It's the government's job to give them responsibility. We signed the International Convention of Human Rights for Persons with Disabilities in March 2007. We already drafted a rights bill by cooperating with the Article of the International Convention. We introduced a regulation on accessibility which was passed in March this year.

Please read the full interview from APCD website at <http://www.apcdproject.org/publications/2007/newsletter20/interview.html>

## Summary of the Best Practices by APCD Focal Points and Associate Organizations

Pacific Disability Forum (PDF)  
Mr. Setareki S. Macanawai, Chief Executive Officer  
APCD Resource Person

PDF, a regional non-governmental organization born in Nadi, Fiji in 2002 is currently working with national DPOs in 10 countries of the Pacific sub-region and plans to extend its coverage to the remaining 12 countries and territories of the region.



Mr. Setareki Seru Macanawai, Pacific Disability Forum

### Key Fields Collaborated with APCD:

Since PDF recognizes the important role and valuable assistance of APCD especially in disability development in the region, it has become an Associate Member of APCD with the development of self-help organizations of persons with disabilities as a top priority. Evidence of this partnership was the participation of PDF through its Chief Executive Officer as a resource person in the CBSHOD Pacific subregional training seminar that was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea from 12-16 February 2007.

### Future Collaboration with APCD to Further Facilitate the Disability Movement in the Pacific:

First, there is a real opportunity for close collaboration between the two parties in organizing training programmes which APCD plans to conduct in the Pacific Subregion. Similarly, PDF can assist APCD in identifying suitable candidates from this subregion to participate in these training programmes which APCD organizes. Secondly, PDF can partner with APCD and other United Nations agencies to better inform and strengthen disability organizations in the delivery of their services. Finally, APCD can utilize capable resource persons from the Pacific to facilitate in appropriate training programmes it conducts in Asia and the Pacific region, as well as draw on these valuable resources to introduce or strengthen the disability movement in other Pacific countries.

### Expected Roles of APCD and Possible Contribution from PDF:

APCD's follow-up mechanisms must be in place to ensure that trainees are using the skills, knowledge and experience gained from their training programmes. A review of existing training programmes offered by APCD is necessary to ensure that they are relevant and reflect the training needs of the sector in this region. APCD could also focus its resources on conducting disability-related research in the region.

## Promotion of Non-Handicapping Environment for Persons with Disabilities

Arch. Jaime G. Silva

APCD Ex-training Participant

Chairperson, Committee on Accessibility, United Architects of the Philippines (UAP)  
Vice-Chairperson for NGO Sub-Committee on Accessibility and Telecommunications,  
National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons (NCWDP)

### Collaboration with APCD:

The Philippines is very fortunate to have seven (7) Filipinos, three of whom are officials of the UAP, who participated in APCD's Regional Training Course for Trainers on the Non-handicapping Environment held in Bangkok from 2000 - 2004. After the training, various activities have been undertaken in line with the promotion of a non-handicapping environment (NHE) such as continuous monitoring of government and private establishments for public use, access talks, access audits and other advocacy activities not only in the urban but in the rural areas as well to reach the grassroots level.

One of the major initiatives through the NCWDP as APCD's Focal Point in the Philippines, was the successful Training of Trainers on the Promotion of a Non-Handicapping Environment (NHE) for Persons with Disabilities from March 1-4, 2005; it was organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Philippines and United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) and, APCD.

In 2006, a follow-up activity called the National Consultative Workshop on the Promotion of a Non-Handicapping Environment for Persons with Disabilities was conducted through NCWDP with JICA Philippines, UAP and APCD. The National Workshop aimed to assess the extent

of implementation of the action plans developed by the participants of the training in March 2005.

### **Collaboration/Partnership Project for the Next Five Years:**

The Philippine Government through the NCWDP and its partners like the UAP has envisaged a five-year pro-poor project entitled "Towards a Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Philippines: Creation of a Non-Handicapping Environment for Filipinos with Disabilities in the Rural Areas." This project will bridge the gap between PWDs in urbanized centers and rural areas in terms of access to services. This will be another partnership/collaboration between and among NCWDP, UAP, JICA and APCD.

### **Philippine Vision with APCD Support**

The Council recognizes the significant role, support and commitment of APCD to assist Filipinos with disabilities towards their empowerment through the promotion/creation

of a non-handicapping environment. We strongly believe that with the continued collaboration with APCD, our country will achieve its vision of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based Philippine Society for our brothers and sisters with disabilities as enunciated in the BIWAKO Millennium Framework of Action and translated into the National Plan of Action for the Philippine Decade for Persons with Disabilities.



**Mr. Jaime G. Silva, Chairperson, UAP**

## **Special Talent Exchange Program (STEP) A Cross Disability Organization Muhammad Atif Sheikh, President APCD Resource Person**

STEP was conceived and launched in 1997 by Persons with Disabilities with the prime objective to raise their voice at all levels, initiated from the grassroots to state and International levels.

### **Collaboration with APCD and UNESCAP:**

The disability movement in Pakistan is accelerating and the rights of PWDs are getting recognition. A good number of PWDs from STEP have attended trainings from APCD and JICA, have been employed in mainstream organizations, received higher training and are playing active roles in society.

### **Major Accomplishments of STEP in Collaboration with APCD:**

#### **• Accelerated Disability Movement in the Country**

In April 2004, an APCD mission team attended and supported the National Training Seminar on Disability organized by STEP with 20 PWDs participating from all over the country. The inaugural session was chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education and 150 stakeholders. It was the first meeting of PWDs of Pakistan with the APCD team; the Disability Movement was rejuvenated after this assembly.

#### **• First Ever Accessible Website for Persons with Visual Impairments**

One participant from STEP attended the Web-based Information Networking Training held by APCD and developed the First Ever Accessible Website in Pakistan for Persons with Visual Impairments. ([www.step.org.pk](http://www.step.org.pk))

#### **• Interaction of DPOs with Government and International Organizations**

In 2005, APCD supported the implementation of a Regional Training Seminar on Capacity Building of Self-Help Organizations of PWDs (CBSHOD) in Pakistan in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan, JICA

Pakistan and World Bank Pakistan, inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

#### **• Contribution/Response to the Earthquake**

An earthquake jolted the whole country on a large scale on October 8, 2005 resulting in many persons becoming disabled. A team from STEP focused on PWDs in the affected areas since disabled persons are the last to be rescued in any disaster.

#### **• Capital Independent Living Center**

Two members of STEP established an ILC after attending training at APCD. They pioneered the concept of IL and motivated a large group of severely disabled persons in Islamabad. An IL team attended a three day session in Lahore too with a JICA expert. After all these efforts the word "IL" has not only become a buzz word but the heart beat of all PWDs in Pakistan, particularly for those who were confined in their houses since birth. To all these efforts, we have given the name of Capital Independent Living Center (CILC).



**Mr. Muhammad Atif Sheikh, President, STEP**

### **Future Collaboration with APCD:**

APCD could increase the number of trainees and conduct frequent refresher programs. We intend to conduct trainings on a larger scale in Pakistan and invite APCD resource persons.



## Seminar on APCD Networking

APCD organized a Seminar on APCD Networking from 29 April to 2 May 2007. The purpose was to share information on the work of APCD in the Asia-Pacific with associate organizations and relevant stakeholders and develop a mechanism for networking of disability work among organizations in Thailand, regional organizations and APCD.

The 25 representatives from governmental organizations, leading disabled peoples' organizations and organizations for persons with disabilities participated in the workshop. Such organizations included the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups, Ratchasuda College: Mahidol University, Office of Health Promotion, Kuanchalik Sub-district Administrative Organization, Thailand Association of the Deaf, Association for the Mentally Retarded, Christian Foundation for the Blind in Thailand, Handicap International, etc.

All participants shared their opinions on how to strengthen networking for disability work, develop collaboration between

domestic networking organizations and APCD, and enhance cooperation among networking organizations and regional organizations such as UNESCAP. Also, they are committed to collaborate with each other, APCD and other regional organizations, for the betterment of disability work at the domestic and international levels.



APCD Director, Ms. Kanitta, Giving a Lecture to the Participants

## Training of Peer-counseling

APCD organized a domestic peer-counseling training program from 15-18 May 2007 to empower PWDs, especially their attitude toward their severe disabilities, give confidence to join activities outside their homes, and share knowledge in their communities. Resource Persons came from 3 Independent Living Centers (ILC) in Thailand, which were Nakornpathom, Nonthaburi and Chonburi. These ILCs from 3 provinces are experienced in this field and have potential to extend the concept to the



IL Group at APCD Training Building

community and other provinces. There were 18 trainees including personal assistants from Nonthaburi, Pathumthanee, Chonburi, Chanthaburi, Nakornpathom, Ratchaburi, Supanburi and Bangkok, participating in this course.

The main contents of the training were the Independent Living Concept (1 day) and Peer-counseling (3 days). Learning methods included lectures, small group discussion and a presentation of future activities.

Through practice, participants learned skills on how to become peer-counselors. In addition, they drafted a future plan with the 3 ILCs collaborating. They plan to share information, consult with experts in this field and expand their concept with other PWDs in different communities to empower more PWDs.

## Non-handicapping Environment Workshop

APCD organized the first domestic Workshop on a Non-Handicapping Environment for PWD from 11 – 15 June 2007. Eighteen participants represented architects, public workers, self-help organizations of PWDs, and professors and teachers from several Faculties of Architecture.

This training course was to promote equalization of opportunities for people with disabilities, share and exchange information concerning a non-handicapping environment, universal design and a barrier-free society; it was to also link participants such as professionals in architecture, government officials, leaders with disabilities, university professors and teachers, and network with them to promote a non-handicapping environment.

### Access Survey and Field Visitation

Simulation exercises were arranged to facilitate awareness of cross disabilities, access surveys and have field visits. The access survey included using the BTS Sky



Field Visit to the Bangkok Subway

train service to observe accessible features, then, proceeded to take the sky walk to the newly constructed section of Central World Plaza. The field visit to Pattaya City was to observe accessibility of a tourist site such as restaurants, hotels, theaters, etc.

Most participants gained ideas of the Universal Design and a barrier-free environment, not only for PWDs but elderly persons and the well-being of many other users as well.

## Training of Educational Material Production for People with a Hearing Disability

APCD in close collaboration with the Assistive Technology Center (ASTECH) and National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) organized the Training of Educational Material Production for People with a Hearing Disability from 21 – 30 May 2007. Eighteen



Participants at the APCD Computer Training Room

persons from Deaf schools and Special Education Centers including 4 deaf persons participated.

The objectives were to teach how to produce educational material for students with hearing disabilities and promote learning aids in their schools and Centers.

The training curriculum focused primarily on a hands-on approach. Resource persons from NECTEC instructed how to produce study aids and educational material by using MS Producer and Hot Potato for making presentations and exercise/interactive books by MS Powerpoint; participants also learned how to add captions to VCD and DVD with the program called Magpie.

All participants made presentations, exercises, videos with captions as well as interactive books as their final project.

## Signing Ceremony of the Minutes of Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) for Project Phase II

Mr. Kitti Samanthai, Director General, Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of the Vulnerable Groups (OPP) together with Mr. Takao Toda, Group Director, Human Development Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed the **Minutes of Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) Project Phase II** on **27 April 2007** at OPP. The second-phase project aims at improving the efficiency and sustainability of regional cooperation between the center (APCD) and governmental, non-governmental as well as disabled people's organizations to maximize the capacity of the center. Participants of the signing ceremony were representatives of Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA).



Mr. Kitti Samanthai and Mr. Takao Toda in the Signing Ceremony

### Message from JICA Experts

It is an honor to have APCD Phase II based on the agreement of the Memorandum of Meeting. Since the final evaluation of Phase I was satisfactory, the Royal Thai government and JICA are planning to have Phase II. APCD is an international epoch-making project to promote an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities by people with disabilities in terms of "agents of change".

It is a unique project to collaborate with government and non-government sectors, particularly with persons with disabilities. The APCD project focuses on persons with severe disabilities for independent living as well as community-based development. This approach is a bottom-up and top-down management, in terms of middle management.

We, JICA experts, are honored to have been part of this history-making project as well as being APCD family members. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, organizations of people with disabilities, Thai counterparts, and resource persons as well as APCD staff. We hope APCD Phase II will be successful and impact the disability and development movement globally.



## APCD Project Phase II Framework of the Project

The Minutes of Meeting provide a Framework for APCD Project Phase II, in which the direction of the APCD Project in the next 5 years is clearly stated. Below is a brief summary of the Framework.

### Objectives of the Project

**Overall Goal:** To promote an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society and empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the Asia-Pacific region.

**Project Purpose:** APCD is able to function as a regional Center to facilitate networking and collaboration among organizations of/for PWDs towards an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society and empowerment of PWDs in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **Outputs of the Project:**

1. To develop more effective and sustainable networking and collaboration among APCD, Focal Point Organizations (FPs), Associate Organizations (AOs) and other relevant organizations.

2. To strengthen the managerial and administrative capacity of APCD to become internationalized.

### **Project Activities**

Based on the above project objectives, APCD Project Phase II will be conducted with the following project activities:

1. To ensure proactive participation of FPs and AOs.
2. To ensure communication accessibility<sup>1</sup> in all APCD activities.
3. To develop Action Plans (human resource development, information support) together with high-profile FPs and AOs for effective and sustainable networking and collaboration with APCD.
4. To promote human resource development according to the Action Plans.
5. To promote information support according to the Action Plans.
6. To monitor the Action Plans.
7. To accumulate good practices of FPs and AOs and share them with existing and potential stakeholders of APCD.
8. To conduct sub-regional workshops to facilitate sub-regional networking and collaboration in view of bringing social impacts in the Asia-Pacific region.

Currently, APCD is in the process of becoming a Public Organization (PO) in Phase II, and a preparation to be internationalized. In order to achieve project objectives, APCD is expecting more networking and collaboration with Focal Points and Associate organizations as well as other relevant organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.

<sup>1</sup> "Communication" includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-local language, human-reader, sign language interpretation and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.  
"Language" includes spoken and signed language and other forms of non-spoken language.

## Condolence to the late Mr. Topong Kulkhanchit



APCD was deeply saddened by the sudden passing away of Mr. Topong Kulkhanchit, one of APCD's founders who served as an APCD Executive Board Member, member of the Joint Coordinating Committee, and was an APCD Resource Person. For the past 5 years, APCD has appreciated his tremendous contribution and active participation to empower persons with disabilities and promote a barrier-free society in the Asia and Pacific region. APCD will continue to carry on his effort and spirit in order to achieve full participation and equality of PWDs.

## Farewell Message from JICA Expert - Mr. Hisao Chiba

Thank you very much for all persons with disabilities, resource persons, focal point and associate organizations and APCD colleagues. I must tell you that I am leaving the APCD Project by the end of July 2007. It was precious moment that I could work at APCD as JICA Expert on ICT Accessibility in the last 5 years. I could meet a number of PWDs who are fully empowered and powerfully working for barrier-free society. Their passion, energy and confidence deeply convinced me that PWDs have power to change the society for all. I shall never forget the spirits of PWDs. I will be continuously working with PWDs in Japan from September 2007. So I am very much looking forward to seeing you again in the near future and let's work together to realize an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society.





# APCD Activities

## APCD Activities (April – June 2007)

APCD collaborated with UNESCAP to organize “UNESCAP-APCD High-level Stakeholders’ Workshop on Empowerment of People with Disabilities and a Barrier-free Society through Networking and Collaboration” from 6 – 8 June 2007. The seminar focused on the best practices of APCD’s focal points and associate organizations as a result of APCD’s activities such as training courses, information support and, networking and collaboration. There were 55 participants from 15 countries. From this seminar, APCD and its stakeholders could exchange their best practices as outcomes from APCD’s 4-year implementation.

Training courses in this quarter were mostly for Thai persons. In the past 3 months, we organized 5 training courses: A Seminar on Networking for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (NPWD), Peer Counseling (PC), Educational Material Production (EMP), Non-handicapping Environment (NHE), and Disability Equality Training (DET) of Trainers.

In July 2007, APCD’s Phase I 5-year project will end. Currently, we are now in the process of renewing the technical cooperation between the Royal Thai Government and the Government of Japan of the APCD Phase II project. The new phase is expected to commence from 1 August 2007.

On behalf of APCD, Mr. Kitti Samanthai, Director General of the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (OPP) was honored to welcome Mr. Yoshihisa Ueda, Vice-president of JICA from Tokyo, Japan on 24 May 2007. This visit was to follow up on APCD activities and exchange experiences on networking and collaboration to empower persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.



Visitation by JICA Vice-president, Mr. Yoshihisa Ueda and Mr. Kitti Samanthai

Tentative APCD activities for the next 6 months (July - December 2007)

### July

- Newsletter Volume 20
- Disability Equality Training (DET) - 1 \*
- Disability Equality Training (DET) - 2 \*

### August

- APCD Phase II activities to be announced
- Disability Equality Training (DET) - 3 \*
- Disability Equality Training (DET) - 4 \*
- DET Evaluation \*

### October

- Newsletter Volume 21

\* Training for Thai persons only

Tentative Activities	July			August			September		
Newsletter Volume 20									
Disability Equality Training (DET) - 1 (Thai persons only)		12							
Disability Equality Training (DET) - 2 (Thai persons only)			24						
APCD Phase II Activities to be announced later									
Disability Equality Training (DET) - 3 (Thai persons only)				6					
Disability Equality Training (DET) - 4 (Thai persons only)					16				
DET Evaluation * (Thai persons only)								29 - 30	
Tentative Activities	October			November			December		
Newsletter Volume 21									

## Regional News

April - June 2007

### 1. Lao Disabled People's Association Developed a New Website Lao PDR April 2007

Lao Disabled People's Association (LDPA), APCD associate organization, has developed a new website, [www.ldpalaos.org](http://www.ldpalaos.org), where we can see disability news and activities in Laos. They will accept your comments and suggestions through [feedback.ldpa@laopdr.com](mailto:feedback.ldpa@laopdr.com).

*Please check [www.ldpalaos.org](http://www.ldpalaos.org) for more detail.*

**Source: Lao Disabled People's Association**

### 2. A Cabinet Resolution on the Draft Plan of Development of the Quality of Life for Persons with Disabilities Thailand 24 April 2007

On 24 April 2007, Cabinet Members of the Royal Thai Government had a resolution on the Draft Plan of Development of the Quality of Life for Persons with Disabilities (2007 - 2011) according to the proposal of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. This Draft Plan consisted of 4 strategies and 24 measures: Management of the Development System for Persons with Disabilities; Supporting of the Strengthening Organizations of/for Persons with Disabilities; Raising Awareness on Disability to the Public, and Promoting a Barrier-free Society for All.

*Please check [www.eppo.go.th/admin/cab/cab-2550-04-24.html#26](http://www.eppo.go.th/admin/cab/cab-2550-04-24.html#26) for more detail.*

**Source: Ministry of Energy**

### 3. How to Guide a Blind Person Safely Bangladesh May 2007

A general guideline on how to guide a blind person safely is now available online by Young Power in Social Action (YPSA).

*Please check [www.ypsa.org](http://www.ypsa.org) for more detail.*

**Source: Young Power in Social Action**

### 4. Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Has Supported Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities Thailand 4 May 2007

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn addressed Thai researchers as well as medical professionals to develop assistive technology for persons with disabilities in order to help them live independently and decrease discrimination in society. At the International Conference for Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology from 23 - 25 April 2007 in Singapore, HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn gave a speech on the subject: the Role of

Assistive Technology to Support an Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities in Thailand. HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn also challenged countries to cooperate to develop assistive technology at a reasonable price to empower disabled persons to live independently in society.

*Please check [www.manager.co.th/Science/ViewNews.asp?NewsID=9500000050853&Keyword=%a4%b9%be%d4%a1%d2%c3](http://www.manager.co.th/Science/ViewNews.asp?NewsID=9500000050853&Keyword=%a4%b9%be%d4%a1%d2%c3) for more detail.*

**Source: Manager Online**

### 5. Science and ICT Fair 2007 Bangladesh 16 - 17 May 2007

To promote science and ICTs at the rural level and raise mass awareness, the Science and ICT fair was held at Sitakund Upazilla in Chittagong District, Bangladesh. This two day fair was organized jointly by YPSA ICT4D Unit, local government authority and the Ministry of Science and ICTs at Sitakund Boys High School ground. The fair featured a number of stalls where local school and college students prepared and demonstrated their science and ICT projects. YPSA ICT4D Unit introduced the local communities to new advanced technologies e.g. open source software, portable equipment and their usage, software and hardware solutions for visually challenged people, etc. The fair also included lively seminars where scientists from the Ministry of Science and ICTs lectured and demonstrated Bangladeshi innovations and technologies that are readily usable rurally.

*Please check [www.flickr.com/photos/debu-bangladesh](http://www.flickr.com/photos/debu-bangladesh) for more detail.*

**Source: Debobroto Chakraborty, Programme Officer, Information & Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) Unit, Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)**

### 6. Ice Breaking in Disability Movement Pakistan 18 May 2007

18 May 2007 was a historic day in the disability movement in a rural remote part of southern Pakistan. After the devolution program which took many years of advocacy and awareness, the local government system has been strengthened in Pakistan. All Sanghar Handicaps' Association (ASHA) as a stakeholder, dropped an idea to the local government to elect people with disabilities to work as a high level committee in Sanghar. After some meetings, it was decided that a high level committee will be formed in the name of "Friends of Disabled Sanghar", which will be comprised of elected representatives, governmental officers, notable persons, and persons with disabilities. The Committee will work to ensure a barrier-free, inclusive and rights-based environment in Sanghar. To achieve the goal, the Committee will organize awareness programs in the community, take steps for inclusive education, focus on



women with disabilities issues, and search for possibilities for an Independent Living Center, for example.

**Source: Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, President of All Sanghar Handicaps' Association**

### **7. Access For All: Training Manual to Promote a 'Barrier-free Environment' India June 2007**

The training manual titled "Access for All" to promote a Barrier-free Environment has been prepared by Rehabilitation Council India and Samarthyaa since 2005. The technical information provided in the manual will serve as a useful guide and assist in creating barrier-free features in all buildings, facilitating people with disabilities to be independent in their daily life.

*Please check [http://rehabcouncil.nic.in/programmes/access\\_all.htm](http://rehabcouncil.nic.in/programmes/access_all.htm) for more detail.*

**Source: Rehabilitation Council India**

### **8. About 83 Million People with Disabilities in China China 1 June 2007**

China has finished the second survey of the nation's disabled population. And according to the results, there are about 83 million people with disabilities in the country. For more than two decades, the Chinese government has taken a series of major political, economic, legal and administrative measures to ensure the protection of the rights of disabled persons and the improvement of their living conditions. The Second National Sample Survey on Disability has been another concrete move by the government to build its vision of a socialist, harmonious society.

*Please check [www.cctv.com/english/20061201/102453.shtml](http://www.cctv.com/english/20061201/102453.shtml) for more detail.*

**Source: CCTV International**

### **9. Disabled People's NGO Holds National Conference in Hanoi Viet Nam 14 June 2007**

Inclusive Development Action (IDEA) held the annual conference in Hanoi on the 14th of June sponsored by USAID. This year's theme was "Inclusive Development." The topics included inclusive education, the National Action Plan, the development of the Disability Law in Vietnam, the U.N. International Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan. The Conference also gave the opportunity for guest speakers, who themselves are experts in disability issues, to give their views and ideas on a range of issues. Sharing information between participants, speakers and IDEA staff was an important part of the two day event.

*Please email to [forum@idea.org.vn](mailto:forum@idea.org.vn) for more detail.*

**Source: Ms. Nguyen Thi Lan Anh, Communication Manager of Disability Forum Vietnam**

### **10. The 1st International Conference on Prevention and Rehabilitation of a Hearing Impairment China 26 - 28 April 2007**

The Conference on Prevention and Rehabilitation of a Hearing Impairment was hosted by the China Rehabilitation Research Center for Deaf Children (CRRCDC), and co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF). The purpose was to further develop the prevention and rehabilitation of a hearing impairment, and to strengthen the international communication and cooperation.

*Please check [www.chinadeaf.com/prhi/list/list\\_59\\_1.html](http://www.chinadeaf.com/prhi/list/list_59_1.html) for more detail.*

**Source: China Deaf**

### **11. Diversity & Inclusion in Asia Conference Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China 26 - 27 June 2007**

The Diversity & Inclusion in Asia Conference will focus on the key issues of women in the workplace, Asian culture in the workplace as well as addressing the less widely discussed issues in Asia of disability, sexual orientation and generational issues in the workplace.

*Please check [www.communitybusiness.org.hk/diversity2007/welcome.html](http://www.communitybusiness.org.hk/diversity2007/welcome.html) for more detail.*

**Source: Community Business**

### **12. DAISY for All International Trainer's Training Thailand 29 June - 8 July 2007**

The objectives are to produce DAISY 2.02 digital talking books and DAISY 3.0 source files, to ensure individuals completing the course, will provide support for other DAISY producing organizations within their region, and teach the participants how to teach others how to use the tools rather than simply how to use the tools themselves. Participants from Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, China and Pakistan with the required prerequisite will be invited to participate in this course.

*Please email to [Mr. Monthian Buntan - Daisy for All Project Assistance Manager](mailto:Mr.MonthianBuntan@ProjectAssistanceManager.org) or [Secretariat](mailto:Secretariat@ProjectAssistanceManager.org) for more detail.*

**Source: Mr. Monthian Buntan, Assistance manager of Daisy for All Project**

### **Regional News: Upcoming Events (July- September 2007)**

#### **1. Access for All: Seminar & Workshop on Disability and Development Australia 12 - 13 July 2007**

*Please check [www.abbc.org.au](http://www.abbc.org.au) for more details.*

**2. The 15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)**  
**Spain**  
**16 - 22 July 2007**

*Please check [www.wfdcongress.org/eng/version\\_text.php?categoria=Congreso](http://www.wfdcongress.org/eng/version_text.php?categoria=Congreso) for more details.*

**Source: The World Federation of the Deaf**

**3. The 7th DPI World Assembly in Korea 2007**  
**Democratic Republic of Korea**  
**5 - 8 September 2007**

*Please check [www.dpiwa.net](http://www.dpiwa.net) for more details.*

**Source: Disabled Peoples' International Korea**

**4. High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Mid-point Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons**  
**UNESCAP**  
**Thailand**  
**19 - 21 September 2007**

*please check [www.unescap.org/calendar/2007/2007.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/calendar/2007/2007.pdf) for more details.*

**Source: UNESCAP**

## Editorial Message

APCD would like to say thank you to all the readers who have been reading our Empowerment Newsletters. Until now, APCD has already implemented its activities for 5 years!! Even though Phase I of the APCD project will soon end its 5-year project in July, according to the technical cooperation between the Royal Thai Government and the Government of Japan, APCD will continue its activities to empower persons with disabilities and a barrier-free society in the Asia-Pacific Region. In the upcoming Phase II APCD will focus more on concrete networking and collaboration. We hope you will continue to support APCD, especially in its ongoing process to become internationalized.

"Empowerment" APCD Newsletter  
 Editorial Team



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