



# EMPOWERMENT

APCD Newsletter

Volume 21: October 2007

## UNESCAP High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012

UNESCAP organized a High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, in Bangkok, from 19 to 21 September 2007.

Mr. Shigeru Mochida, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Officer-in-Charge, a.i. of the Secretariat, welcomed the reviews on progress towards the targets of the Biwako Millennium Framework of Action (BMF) and plan for the coming five years.

Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Development and Human Security, Royal Thai Government, welcomed ESCAP Member Governments and Non-governmental Organizations, including disabled peoples' organizations, the international community and the United Nations on the successful adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He reaffirmed the Royal Thai Government's commitment to the common goal of the Convention and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. He emphasized the regional initiatives in the field of disability for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Jun Niimi, Minister and Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP, recognized the important role of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), under the auspices of the Royal Thai Government, with the support of the Government of Japan, as a regional mechanism in advancing collaboration among countries in the region for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

Ms. Yukiko Kada, Governor of Shiga Prefecture, Japan, sent a statement via video transmission. She congratulated all the stakeholders in the Asian and Pacific Region for their contribution in the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She appreciated all the successful achievements in the implementation of the BMF to promote an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society.

The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Monthian Buntan, President of the Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB), and Executive Board Member of APCD and the World Blind Union

(WBU). He emphasized the spirit of the BMF which had translated aspirations of persons with disabilities into reality and marked a paradigm shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach. He noted the positive changes in the last five years in all the priority areas of the BMF and referred to the realization of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He remarked that the Bangkok Draft, which reflected the principles of the BMF, greatly contributed to the formulation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



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

The following major issues were discussed and adopted:

1. **The Pacific Subregion.** There was a roundtable discussion on the implementation of the BMF in the Pacific, which noted the success of collaboration with ESCAP. The Pacific Islands Forum (an intergovernmental body) and the Pacific Development Forum (a non-governmental organization) were collaborating and developing the subregional mechanism.

APCD has been supporting the Pacific sub-region through the Training Seminar on Capacity Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD) in Papua New Guinea, February 2007, to which 14 countries were invited.

2. The subregional mechanism was emphasized; cooperation and collaboration through involvement of the subregional government organizations and NGOs to promote the BMF and

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to identify APCD should be further encouraged to develop the sub-regional mechanism.

There were presentations on new types of disabilities by the respective representatives.

3. **Psychosocial Disability.** Professor Amita Dhandha, Professor, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, India, Representative of World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, India, emphasized the need for self advocacy by persons with psychosocial disabilities, who are socially stigmatized, discriminated against and excluded due to the different ways they think, feel, express and make decisions.

4. **Deafblind Disability.** Mr. Shinichiro Kadokawa of Japan Deafblind Association, an international organization, delivered a speech and stated that the Association was planning to organize an International Assembly in Japan in 2013. They would also like to develop networking and collaboration among deafblind persons in the Asia and Pacific Region. Mr. Kadokawa emphasized the need for understanding the deafblind persons who use finger Braille, which is hand sign-language. However, many organizations exclude the deafblind persons; e.g., there is no sport section for the deafblind persons in the Paralympics. There is a definite shortage of communication interpretation for them.

5. **Disaster Management.** Ms. Sae Kani, Project Manager, Information and Outreach Disaster Management, Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB), Indonesia, made a presentation on inclusive disaster management, and emphasized the importance of making disaster risk reduction strategies for persons with disabilities. She stated that during the World Conference on Disaster Management in Kobe, Japan in 2005, 168 nations adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, 2005-2015. However, the Framework had not yet included persons with disabilities as prime targets. She emphasized that the disaster preparedness of persons with disabilities would be enhanced if the Hyogo Framework for Action could include more disability issues.

6. **Community-based Approach.** The community-based approach was emphasized in the BMF Plus Five. In order to promote poverty alleviation, self-help organizations of persons with disabilities and families, accessibility for the built environment, information communication, and vocational training, there should be more comprehensive community development programs, as well as policies and regulations initiated by each Government. APCD should be encouraged to further develop community-based development through the independent living approach and community-based rehabilitation, as well as self-help organizations.

7. **Private Sector.** Ms. Annie S. Garcia, President of SM Supermalls, the Philippines, presented the participation of a private sector to the BMF in terms of an inclusive and barrier-free approach for company management. She emphasized that the Supermalls Administration was not only making an accessible built environment, but was also training staff to promote an inclusive and barrier-free community. This is proof that the BMF has already reached the private sector.

8. **Participants.** The Meeting was attended by 25 high-level government representatives. The following Offices of the United Nations, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Population Fund, the International Labour Organization, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization as well as an Intergovernmental Organization: Pacific Islands Forum.



APCD/UNESCAP Meeting at UNCC

Some of the Non-governmental Organizations represented were : Association for Aid and Relief, Japan, Christoffel-Blindenmission, Disabled People's International, Handicap International, Inclusion International, International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment, Landmine Survivors Network Vietnam, Leonard Cheshire International, People with Disability Australia, World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry; as well as Other Entity: Asia-Pacific Disability Forum.

Some of the Non-governmental Organizations expressed their concern and commitment to the BMF Plus Five to advocate the promotion of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society to ESCAP as well as Government representatives.

9. **APCD.** Many Governments recognized APCD's activities and expressed appreciation for the Center. Particularly, the Government of Papua New Guinea clearly mentioned that "there was no disability development in Papua New Guinea until APCD became involved in the disability area." Now the Government has a National Policy on Disability and Development and a budget. As a result of CBSHOD, there are now national allowances for persons with disabilities and the Government has further developed an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities.

10. **World Federation of the Deaf (WFD).** Mr. Ichiro Miyamoto, Director of the Regional Secretariat in Asia and the Pacific, World Federation of the Deaf, emphasized that communication accessibilities in the BMF Plus Five should be ensured. There were needs for sign language interpretation in many countries. He pointed out that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities identified “language” as spoken, sign language and other forms of non-spoken language.

11. **Inclusion International.** Mr. Osamu Nagase, Council Member/ Representative of Inclusion International, Asia/Pacific, emphasized collaborating with APCD to develop empowerment of intellectual persons with disabilities, particularly in the Mekong River countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam). APCD was planning to dispatch missions to these countries along with Experts from Inclusion International, and provide intellectual persons as resource persons, as well as Experts on Intellectual Disability and Development. Parents of intellectual persons with disabilities would be regarded as supporters.

12. **Intellectual Disability.** UNESCAP and China Disabled Peoples’ Federation are co-organizing a Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific in Shanghai, immediately following the Special Olympics the beginning of October 2007. APCD is dispatching several persons from Thailand. Inclusion International, particularly Peoples’ First Organization, are sending representatives from Japan to this Regional Workshop. AJU-Nagoya, an associate organization of APCD, is planning to send representatives of intellectual persons with disabilities to this Workshop to present a model case for community living and promotion of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society.

## Interview Corner

### COOK ISLANDS



Hon. Ms. Ngamau Mere Munokoia  
Minister of Internal Affairs and  
Social Services, Rarotonga

The Government supports the BMF and is implementing in the area of education. I will try to convince my Government to set up a law on disability and change society positively. Each disabled person must receive income. Persons with disabilities receive 150 New Zealand dollars per month from the Government. The New Zealand Government and UNESCAP and other concerned persons have drafted a law in accordance with disabled persons.

The Disability Law in the Cook Islands is in the process of being endorsed but it will take many months. We do have a policy on disability that includes women with disabilities and accessibility. It will be reviewed before the end of 2012.

### FIJI

The Fiji Government is working with DPOs and summarizing the BMF to make it simple for people with disabilities. We are now in the final stages of the National Policy on Disability but due to our political situation, it has been held back. Currently, we do not have a disability policy and need an endorsement by the Cabinet as far as the 7 priority areas of the BMF. The first priority is women with disabilities in DPO because we see that women sometimes face discrimination problems. However, due to the change in Government, the Minister and Secretary of NCCD have also changed so the process is not yet moving.



Mr. Frederick Miller  
Pacific Islands Forum, Suva

### PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Mr. J. Paraha Jalal  
Deputy Secretary  
Community Development

Since APCD’s CBSHDOD (Capacity Building for Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities) workshop in 2007 promoted an awareness of the BMF, all the self-help organizations of people with disabilities are interested to have training. After the CBSHDOD training, persons with disabilities know their rights and seek opportunities for empowerment. The BMF aims to empower them so they will become more independent and participate in society.

Another concern is women with disabilities that the empowerment training will provide an opportunity for women with disabilities. We do have a women’s organization supporting the BMF. They are starting to promote the United Nations Convention on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Our inclusive education is going very well.

The Government is pushing and supporting the BMF and is now coming with a policy on disability. Since the CBSHDOD, the National Government has been creating a policy on disability which is based on the BMF. We have a law on accessibility, however, many buildings are not accessible for people with disabilities. In our policy we will make sure that we provide accessibilities, which is within the spirit of BMF. The Government is going to ratify the United Nations Convention on Disability after the endorsement of the policy which has already been submitted to the Government. The Government wants to endorse the policy on disability which was recommended by CBSHDOD.

## Interview Corner

### THAILAND

In Thailand, all priority areas in the BMF have been addressed but weigh in each area differently as follows:

The strength of Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) in Thailand is an important wheel to drive the disability issue for a long time. In the new legislation, it is noted that the Government must strengthen DPOs, which was not addressed in the former Bill. The government is also stressing the significant role family members play for persons with disabilities.

For women with disabilities, the government has tried to change the attitude of family members in regards to Thai culture. Thai families are very concerned about their daughters so it is rather difficult for person with disabilities to go out from their homes. Currently, families with a persons with a disability have more understanding on the issue of rights but only in small groups.

According to the new legislation, the issue of decent work for persons with disabilities is very visible. The Ministry of Labour is primarily responsible to increase the employment of disabled persons. The important condition in the new legislation notes that the government sector must employ persons with disabilities at the same rate as the private sector. If 60% of the employees at the workplace are persons with disabilities, a company/organization can have tax exemption; if less than 60%, taxes will be reduced.

A Sub-committee on Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities has been set up to address the issues of an accessible environment and ICT for disabled persons. The Sub-committee also invited stakeholders to make plans, for example, to include the concept of Universal Design as a course at the university level, make an accessible website for all, and provide training for agencies concerning disability. These plans along with the participation of DPOs will be incorporated into the National Plan of Quality of Life Development B.E. 2550-2554 as well. The Prime Minister is presiding on the National Committee on Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. Lastly, the new Bill will upgrade the Bureau of Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities to become the National Office for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities which will cover wider areas, persons with disabilities and as well as their families, other stakeholders such as transportation, labour, tourism, etc.

The Government Policy also notes the issue of poverty alleviation which includes the disability issue such as a subsidiary, employments, and institutions.

In my opinion, the Convention would support the implementation on the BMF progressively. As we are a State Member, we will push the disability issue forward especially the new Bill that has many measures to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in keeping with the goal of the Convention in all aspects. We expect that the new law will be passed within the next 3 months.



Ms. Sunee Saisupatpol  
Director, Bureau of  
Empowerment of  
Persons with Disabilities

### VIETNAM



Mr. Nghiem Xuan Tue  
Director of NCCD

In Vietnam we have been implementing the 7 priority areas of the BMF. In order to implement the 7 priority areas of the BMF plus 1 in Vietnam since Vietnam decided to add inter-ministerial collaboration to provide disability and development in a holistic manner. NCCD has relevant organizations from 17 ministries and 5 NGO for persons with disabilities.

Within the first five years of the Second Decade, NCCD has already approved a 5 year National Plan of Operation on disability. One of the most outstanding implementations of the BMF is in education and employment for persons with disabilities because we understand that persons with disabilities should also be given equal opportunities for vocational training and employment. Persons with disabilities can then participate in self-help organizations and have confidence to raise a voice concerning the needs of persons with disabilities. The Vietnamese delegation would like a component on accessible tourism in the area of the built environment and public transportation. After studying the Biwako Plus Five, we will

report to the National Assembly and other organizations in Vietnam in order to authorize the content of Biwako Plus Five for the next five years. In the next five years, we will also emphasize access to ICT to facilitate accessibility by persons with disabilities to ICT.

At the present time, we only have ordinances but we plan to develop a disability law. The process to develop a disability law is an item in the Biwako Plus Five. The disability movement in Vietnam will open to the social sector which means that society will change with the disability movement. In fact, the disability movement in Vietnam is developing well thanks to the BMF and Policy Guidelines for the development of disability. So we will propose that the Government and the social sector promote the BMF Plus Five.

## Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) World Assembly

APCD mission members attended the 2007 7th DPI World Assembly, which was organized by the Korean Organizing Committee from 5 to 8 September 2007 at the Kintex Convention Center in South Korea which was opened by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health and Welfare. Dr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General, sent a statement via video transmission. Speeches were made by Madam Venus M. Ilagan, President of the World Assembly and Dr. Lee Ick-seop, Chairperson of the Korean Organizing Committee. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Luis Gallegos, UN Ambassador of Ecuador on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The General Assembly speakers were from the United Nations and World Bank. The Assembly focused on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

1. **New DPI World Executive Committee Members** were elected:

Chairperson: Mr. Guzman Wilfredo, Peru

Deputy Chairperson for Development and Under-

Represented Groups: Ms. Kachaje Rachel, Malawi

Deputy Chairperson for Human Rights: Mr. Daniel George, Trinidad and Tobago

Treasurer: Mr. Shoji Nakanishi, Japan

Secretary: Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal, Bangladesh

Information Officer: Mr. Griffio Giampiero, Italy

The new Chairperson, Mr. Guzman Wilfredo who is blind gave his speech in Spanish. DPI is a cross-disability international organization of people with disabilities. It was noted that some APCD Stakeholders are Executive Committee Members of the DPI World Executive Committee.

2. **Thirteen (13) Workshops** were organized for 3 days. Under the Workshop on "Youth Leadership: Building DPIs' Capacity to include Youth", Ms. Kanitta Kamolwat, Director of APCD, presented APCD's "Vision, Mission and Strategy", and Mr. Akiie Ninomiya, JICA-APCD Chief Adviser, presented APCD Implementation based on the Capacity Development Theory for Youth Leadership, particularly using the CSHOD model from Papua New Guinea.

The 13 Workshop themes were: (1) Women with Disabilities, (2) Living Independently, (3) Implementation and Monitoring Measures, (4) Participation, (5) Children and Youth with Disabilities, (6) International Cooperation, (7) Accessibility and Independent Living, (8) Awareness Raising, (9) Equality & Non-discrimination, (10) Adequate Standard of Living, (11) Right to Life, (12) Work and Employment, (13) Situation of Risk. Most of the Workshops were based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which encouraged all participants to conduct advocacy work for their governments to adopt the Convention in order to promote an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for all.

The Workshop on **Independent Living** was popular among participants from Asia of whom many were APCD ex-participants from the Independent Living Trainings.

The Workshop on **Women with Disabilities** focused on some issues of sexual abuse and an international network among women with disabilities.

3. There were many United Nations agencies, international organizations, and donor organizations, who discussed ways to work effectively for disability and development, focusing on poverty reduction and community development. It was interesting to have discussion on the topic of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict.

Dr. Nawaf Kabbara, President of the **Arab Organization of Disabled People (AODP)**, shared his views on a war situation and disability, including human rights and accessibility. He was elected Chairman of the DPI-Arab Region and requested collaboration with the Region, which was approved as a new region by the DPI World Council. He also approached the APCD mission team for future collaboration with the Arab Region.

Mr. Muhammad Shafiq-ur Rehman of MILESTONE, and Mr. Atif Sheikh, President of STEP from Pakistan, presented their activities on the reconstruction and humanity work for earthquake victims with disabilities. They reported emergency rescue and relief activities for refugees and the promotion of accessibility. They set up independent living centers for victims of natural disasters.

4. Twenty-four (24) organizations, including DPI-Korea and DPI-Japan, participated in the exhibitions, where accessible devices, automobiles, and more transportation were displayed. Many movies on disability and development were also shown in the theatre.

There were about 2,000 participants from around the globe, including United Nations Organizations, Government Sectors and Inter-governmental Organizations. There were about 1,200 Korean and 300 Japanese participants, but fewer participants from Africa and Latin America.



DPI World Assembly Participants

## The 15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)

Every four years Deaf people gather to participate in the World Congress organised by the WFD. They approve the resolutions and recommendations that make up the four-year action guidelines for the Board and General Secretariat. This time, the 15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) was held from 16-22 July 2007 in Madrid, Spain with the theme, 'Sign Languages and Human Rights'. Areas that affect Deaf people's life ranging from Human Rights, Linguistic and Cultural Rights; Sign Languages; Education; Technology and Accessibility; Mental Health; Women, Deaf Youth, Deaf Senior Citizens, Deafblind, and many more were addressed. Following is the new WFD Resolution adopted in Madrid, Spain:



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

**Reaffirming** that deaf people are entitled to the same human rights as all social groups and that diversity is an intrinsic factor in the Deaf Community,

**Recognising** the importance of children and youth; deafblind; deaf with disabilities; immigrants; indigenous peoples; lesbians, gays, transgenders and bisexuals; people in rural areas; religious minorities; senior citizens; and all deaf people as citizens of society with the same rights and obligations as other citizens,

**Emphasising** that by adopting positive actions, equality among all will be accelerated,

**Emphasising** that sign language is a human right for all members of the Deaf Community, including those who use assistive devices and implants,

**Reaffirming** that multi-lingual education in sign language gives deaf and hard of hearing people the best opportunity to achieve full citizenship and enjoyment of all human rights.

Have agreed that WFD and its Members:

- Have an obligation to work together to promote government ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities thus assuring deaf people full attainment of all human rights on an equal basis with other citizens.
- Must work together as a collective group, and those from developed countries must work in close partnership with those from developing countries.

- Must adopt measures to educate and to sensitise the Deaf Community about the diverse variety of peoples and cultures within the larger Deaf culture.

- Must promote gender-equality programmes and policies to ensure the full development and empowerment of women, and adopt measures that combat violence and abuse against deaf women.

- Have responsibility to preserve, promote and protect sign languages and cultural heritages; and to formulate language policies to empower sign language, including indigenous sign languages.

- Have obligation to co-operate closely with schools and educational authorities to promote deaf children's right to receive a multi-lingual/multi-cultural education and to implement training programmes to develop healthy identities for all deaf children, their families and children.

- Should also protect the rights of children with cochlear implants and other sensory modification technologies to an education in sign language.

- Are responsible to sanction the employment of Deaf professionals in all fields that have an impact on the lives of Deaf people.

- Must promote the development of appropriate training programmes and qualifications for sign language interpreters, and follow WFD principles of co-operation with interpreters.

- Must incorporate the principles of consistent application of universal design with technological innovations of new products and services.

- Must formulate a statement of Deaf bioethical concerns and priorities, and quality medical and surgical care for deaf people, based on human rights principles.

- Have an obligation to establish mentorship and positive leadership programmes for deaf youth, and involve them actively in political decision-making and implementation.

- Have responsibility to promote employment and self-sufficiency through Deaf economic empowerment.

- Are responsible to promote equal access to mental health services for all deaf people.

Programmes and actions developed by WFD and its OMs must take into account all deaf people. Special attention should be given to education in both developed and developing countries in order to eliminate any further disadvantage, which brings as a consequence unemployment, poverty, poor health and the lack of self-determination. Education for deaf people, especially in developing countries, must be an initiative of Deaf persons from that country in order to include and impart their native sign language(s) and culture.

The linguistic and cultural rights of deaf immigrants must be respected as well as assistance provided in learning the language and culture of their new country.

Sign language interpreters are a fundamental resource in achieving human rights and full access. The term sign language interpreter is a concept inclusive not only of

hearing sign language interpreters but also Deaf sign language interpreters and interpreter guides for deafblind people.

Technology and e-learning that offer access to information, are vital for structured and informal learning and promote independency. The principles of universal design will ensure full communication access and fulfilment of deaf persons human rights.

Equal and appropriate access to mental health services, through sign language and Deaf culture through the provision of Deaf professional staff, is a basic human right of deaf people.

In reference to the growing demographics of an aging population, attention must be given to programmes and services for deaf senior citizens.

Sign languages serve as vital instruments to transmit culture and knowledge. The status and recognition of sign languages around the world will be strengthened through language policies, research and the preservation of and the teaching of sign languages. Sign languages should be a part of all national curricula.

*The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), its Members and the participants at the 15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf agree to promote and implement this Congress Resolution to all governments and authorities, demanding respect for the realisation of **HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH SIGN LANGUAGES.***

## Disability Equality Training

In order to promote an understanding of the Disability Equality Training (DET) for various stakeholders in provincial parts of Thailand, APCD allowed participants in DET Training of Trainers (TOT), conducted 5 days in July 2007 to design a one day curriculum and implement it with their target groups in different provinces in Thailand as a DET Extension Campaign. The target groups and areas involved were:

1. Loei Province, 17 July 2007: Targets were members of the Child and Youth Council.

2. Nakhonsrithammarat Province, 24 July 2007: Targets were representatives from Huasai Sub-district Administrative Organizations (SAO) and the Organization on Disability Development.

3. Chiang Mai province, 8 August 2007: Target groups included lecturers from the university, representatives from local mass media, SAO and persons with disabilities.

4. Chaiyabhum province, 21 August 2007: Targets were social development volunteers for disabled persons.

Main activities in the DET extensions were lectures based on a disability model which included the Charity Model, Medical Model and Social Model, and information/experience sharing.

Outputs of the seminars in the 4 provinces were reconciled to the objectives of the program. The participants

gained information on the rights of PWDs and an awareness of the social disability model.

In order for APCD to analyze strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) of the whole program, and pursue effectiveness of the course in the future, APCD conducted a DET Evaluation meeting on 28, 29 August 2007, when resource persons, holders and other stakeholders could share lessons and brainstorm for an appropriate curriculum of DET in the context of Thai society.



DET Seminar at Nakhonsrithammarat Province

## Guest Visitation to APCD

### The Pacific Disability Forum

The Pacific Disability Forum members (PDF), including Mr. Tewai Halatau, Co-Chairperson, Mr. Setareki S. Macanawai, Chief Executive Officer, and others visited APCD to express appreciation and discuss further collaboration. They specifically mentioned support in the formation of self-help organizations in Kiribati and Tonga. Since the Micronesian group has no self-help organization, Kiribati is the target country to be the focal point for the South Pacific. APCD has been supporting the Mariana Islands and Polynesia in the South Pacific, but not in Micronesia where future collaboration should be considered.

## Handicap International, South Asia

Ms. Sally Baker, Regional Coordinator, and Mr. Bjorn Schranz, Regional Disability Coordinator of Handicap International (HI), South Asia, visited APCD on 18 September 2007. They discussed collaboration with APCD in South and South-East Asia. Since Handicap International has been developing community-based rehabilitation (CBR) in many countries, they would like to collaborate with APCD, particularly in the CBR monitoring session being organized by APCD in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), from 26 to 28 November 2007.

Handicap International is quite active in CBR in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan in addition to other Asian countries. They have programs in about 60 countries in the world, including Central Asia and promised to exchange information on disability and development. They also shared information about their activities in the re-establishment of earthquake areas in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan.

## World Federation of the Deaf, Asia/Pacific



Mr. Ichiro Miyamoto, Representative of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD-A/P), visited APCD accompanied by sign-language interpreters. WFD-A/P promised to collaborate with APCD in developing self-help organizations of persons with hearing impairments in the Mekong River countries, i.e., Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam. They emphasized that the guaranteed right of communication be provided by the APCD Project. APCD has a policy to provide sign-language interpreters for resource persons with hearing impairments.

APCD plans to dispatch four missions to the above Mekong River countries from mid-November to mid-December 2007 and WFD-A/P will dispatch experts to join these missions.

There is no national organization of the deaf community in any of the Mekong River countries. Therefore, APCD would like to collaborate with WFD-A/P for 5 years to promote national organizations of people with hearing impairments and promote human rights for people with disabilities.

## Australia Disability+Development Consortium

Australian Disability+Development Consortium, ADDC, is an Australian network that focuses on all forms of disability in developing countries around the world. Mr. Paul Deany, ADDC Coordinator visited APCD to collaborate and, especially to exchange information on disability and development. APCD shared information about the Pacific Islands including P.N.G. (CBSHOD). Their work is to promote the rights of persons with disabilities on policies and promote partnerships between Australia and other disability organizations globally, currently with more than 300 members of disability organizations and individuals. ADDC held a National Conference on 29 September 2008 in Canberra, Australia. For more information see [www.addc.org.au](http://www.addc.org.au) or contact Paul Deany, ADDC Coordinator at [pdeany@cbmi.org.au](mailto:pdeany@cbmi.org.au)



## Christoffel-Blindenmission , Central East Asia Regional Office

Ms. Helen Sinkinson, Assistant Regional Director of Christoffel-Blindenmission (CBM), Central East Asia Regional Office, who is stationed in Bangkok, visited APCD with Mr. Paul Deany, Coordinator of The Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC). Mr. Deany is also the Australian Representative of CBM.

CBM has been serving 106 countries in disability related development with approximately 12 million persons with disabilities having received their services. They have disability and development programs based on a 20-20 partnership with 1,100 partners globally.

CBM is regularly represented at the UNESCAP Meetings on the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and is also collaborating with APCD.

Christoffel-Blindenmission, Asia/Pacific Region, promised to recommend CBR Managers from the Philippines and Viet Nam to the Regional Workshop on Reviewing Draft Version of CBR Guidelines, to be organized jointly by WHO and APCD in November 2007. This Workshop is expected to set up new international Guidelines on CBR.



# APCD Activities

## APCD Activities (April – June 2007)

On 1 August 2007, it was the beginning of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project Phase II with technical collaboration between the Royal Thai Government and the Government of Japan. The overall goal is to promote an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region. The project aims to promote APCD as a regional Center to facilitate networking and collaboration among organizations of/for persons with disabilities towards an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

In Project Phase II, APCD will target persons with disabilities as well as their families and facilitators. Persons with hearing impairments and persons with intellectual disabilities will be more focused on through APCD activities such as networking and collaboration, training implementation and information support.

Tentative APCD activities for the next 6 months (October 2007 – March 2008)

### October

- 11 - 13
  - Newsletter Volume 21
  - Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific

### November

- 8 - 19 ● Training on Educational Material Production\*
- 23 - 25 ● Mission to Cambodia
- 26 - 28 ● New CBR Guidelines Pre-evaluation Meeting (WHO)
- 27 - 29 ● Mission to Lao PDR

### December

- 3 - 8 ● Mission to Vietnam
- 12 - 14 ● Mission to Myanmar
- 17 - 22 ● Training on Non-handicapping Environment

### January

- 10 - 11
  - Newsletter Volume 22
  - Thai Ex-Participants Evaluation Domestic Course\*
- 22 - 25 ● Networking and Collaboration Workshop on Intellectual Disabilities

### February

- 19 - 20 ● Women with Disabilities Training
- 27 Nov - 5 March ● Networking and Collaboration Workshop on the Deaf

### March

- 17 -21 ● Advanced Disability Equality Training\*
- 26 - 27 ● Seminar to Transfer the Disability Equality Training Concept\*

\* Thai Persons Only

Tentative Activities 2007	October	November	December
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Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Their Families in Asia and the Pacific	11-13		
Training on Educational Material Production - Domestic Course		8-19	
Mission to Cambodia		23-25	
CBR WHO		26-28	
Mission to Lao PDR		27-29	
Mission to Vietnam			3-8
Mission to Myanmar			12-14
Training on Non-handicapping Environment			17-22
Tentative Activities 2008	January	February	March
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Thai Ex-participants Evaluation - Domestic Course	10-11		
Networking and Collaboration Workshop on Intellectual Disabilities	22-25		
Women with Disabilities Training		19-20	
Networking and Collaboration Workshop on the Deaf		27 Feb - 5 Mar	
Advanced Disability Equality Training (DET) - Domestic Course			17-21
Seminar to Transfer the Disability Equality Training Concept - Domestic Course			26-27

## Director's Message

### **Greetings from APCD!**

The Royal Thai Government and the Government of Japan through JICA started their technical cooperation for the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project Phase II, 1 August 2007 - 31 July 2012. This cooperation will hopefully enable APCD to cover areas of disability, which APCD did not focus on very much in first five years; for example, involving more persons with intellectual disabilities and hearing impairments. For persons with intellectual disabilities, activities would include training programs for their families and advocates; For persons with hearing impairments, activities could include developing a standardized sign language and training sign language interpreter.

Other major focuses for the next 5 years are as follows:

1. APCD will continue to develop and strengthen self-help groups of people with disabilities. It will encourage mutual cooperation with its network organizations so that disabled persons' organizations will be real "partners" with APCD. Thus, concrete action plans between APCD and its collaborating organizations are expected to be developed to ensure mutual contribution on disability activities.

2. APCD will emphasize development of sub-regional networks which will enable cooperation of countries in these

regions including national PWD organizations and stakeholders to conduct the following activities:

- Safeguard the rights of PWDs at the sub-regional level
- Develop networks and cooperation among associations/cooperative network with the public sector at sub-regional levels and the private sector on PWD issues.
- Support set up of PWD organizations to develop their potential, exchange information, and collaborate with their government.
- Cooperate with APCD in organizing disability and development activities.

3. APCD and its network organizations from both public and private sectors will enhance cooperation with the business sector by incorporating all disability issues in the business sector (e.g. promotion of built-environment accessibility, job opportunities for PWDs, and budgetary support for corporate social responsibility).

To ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the APCD and to enable APCD to become internationalized, APCD is under organizational improvement and it will soon be run under the Foundation of APCD. I do hope that our future in promoting disability at regional level by APCD and its collaborating organizations will effectively achieve its targets of empowerment of PWDs and promotion of a barrier-free society.

## Regional News

### July - September 2007

#### **National Disability Week To Be Observed Philippines July 2007**

The nation involving various sectors of society will be celebrating the 29th National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NDPR) Week from July 17 to 23, this year as provided for under Administrative Order No. 35 signed by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in May 3, 2002. The theme, "Kapag May Access, May Success" is to raise awareness in the public through various activities; that persons with disabilities can lead productive lives when given equal opportunities in all aspects of human endeavors.

Please check [www.ncwdp.gov.ph](http://www.ncwdp.gov.ph) for more detail.

Source: National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons

#### **BPKS Advocacy Campaign on Flood-affected Persons with Disabilities Bangladesh August 2007**

Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS) still continues an advocacy campaign on the issues concerning

disability. Mr. M A Sattar Dulal, Executive Director of BPKS met with the Secretary of the Food, Relief and Disaster Management Secretariat of the People's Republic of Bangladesh with a proposed agenda to, ensure accessibility of a shelter home including a toilet for disasters and ensure the participation of representatives of disabled people's organizations at the local and district levels. It was agreed to inform the district level officer to take proper action.

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

Source: Mr. M A Sattar Dulal, Executive Director of BPKS

#### **The Roadmap to Development of the Law on Disability Vietnam September 2007**

The Law on Disability will be the framework for persons with disabilities to practice their rights, responsibilities and legal benefits. It will also be useful by reducing the dependence of persons with disabilities on State subsidization, alleviating the self-complex of persons with disabilities and their families, and encouraging initiatives, creation, and responsibilities of persons with disabilities on society. Three objectives of this Law are (1) To set up a legislation framework of the Government to protect the rights and responsibilities of

persons with disabilities; (2) To establish a mechanism to support persons with disabilities and their families in terms of education, vocational training, employment, rehabilitation, and access to development programs and social integration, and also to regulate the responsibilities of persons with disabilities in society and the country; (3) To create favorable conditions for domestic and foreign social organizations and individuals to support persons with disabilities in Vietnam. The first draft of the Law on Disability is expected to be submitted to the Government in the second quarter of 2008. The draft will be presented to the National Assembly for adoption in 2009.

**Source: Monthly Updates, September 2007, IDEA Information Network**

### **A Turning Point for Disabled Persons Thailand 1 September 2007**

August will go down in history as the month of Thailand's first-ever referendum approving a new Constitution and the December 23 election date was set.

It will also be recognised as marking a turning point for disabled persons in our society because draft legislation finally guaranteed them an improvement in the workplace. The Bill aimed at improving the quality of life of people with disabilities sailed through the National Legislative Assembly, providing accessibility, a legal framework and strong incentives for employers to cooperate. In doing so, it honoured both the spirit and intent of a UN Convention to protect the rights of some 650 million people with disabilities around the world. The Bill's passage continued a proud tradition set in 2001 when HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn received the Franklin D Roosevelt International Disability Award at the United Nations in New York, in recognition of Thailand's noteworthy progress towards the goal of full participation of citizens with disabilities.

One article in the Bill, taking effect next year, gives employers, including state agencies, the alternative of hiring qualified disabled people or making contributions to a fund for people with disabilities. Non-compliance will mean a fine, but committed companies where more than 60% of the staff are disabled will receive tax breaks.

*Please check [www.bangkokpost.com/010907\\_News/01Sep2007\\_news16.php](http://www.bangkokpost.com/010907_News/01Sep2007_news16.php) for more detail.*

**Source: Bangkok Post**

### **New Law Allows Job Seekers to Litigate against Discrimination China 30 September 2007**

Chinese employers could find themselves in court from next year if they discriminate against job seekers on the grounds of sex, age, religion, race or physical disability. Job applicants will be entitled to sue employers for discrimination from January 1 under the new national Employment Promotion Law. Adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature, the law is intended to promote employment and prohibit job discrimination. The law is to help create opportunities for more than 13 million new job seekers entering the market each year, particularly for laid-off workers, university graduates, ex-servicemen and migrant workers in urban areas.

*Please check [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-08/30/content\\_6634058.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-08/30/content_6634058.htm) for more detail.*

**Source: China View**

## **Regional News: Upcoming Events (October - December 2007)**

### **The First Pan Asian Learning Difficulties Conference Philippines 25 October 2007**

Wordlab School, Inc., a non-stock, non-profit educational institution, is excited to organize the First Pan Asian Learning Difficulties Conference to be held in the Philippines. It is relevant to all professionals who work with individuals with learning difficulties, as well as to parents and families of children, adolescents and adults with learning difficulties. The theme, "LEARNING DIFFICULTIES: AN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE" aims to allow experts (based on professional and personal experience) to exchange their experiences about the understanding, policy and advocacy initiatives, assessment, intervention and therapy of children with learning difficulties in Asia. [panasian.LDconference@gmail.com](mailto:panasian.LDconference@gmail.com).

*Please check [www.wdnf.info/wordlab](http://www.wdnf.info/wordlab) for more detail.  
**Source: Worldlab Conference***

### **The Second International Conference on Intellectual Disabilities/Mental Retardation Bangkok, Thailand 6 - 8 November 2007**

This Conference aims to promote the international awareness of support and social inclusion for persons with intellectual disabilities. It will include the launching of the WHO atlas on country resources related to intellectual disabilities (Atlas-ID).

*Please check <http://v1.dpi.org/lang-en/events/details?page=840> or email to [Dr. Celine Mercier](mailto:Dr.Celine.Mercier) for more detail.*

**Source: Disabled Peoples' International**

**Any disability-related news is welcome to be included in our newsletter.**

**Please submit your news to us!!!**

**18th Asian Conference on Mental Retardation  
Taiwan  
18 - 23 November 2007**

The 18th Asian Conference on Mental Retardation is a biennial event organized by Asian Federation on Mental Retardation (AFMR). It will cover issues concerning mental disability in the fields of biological engineering, health, therapeutics, education and vocational activities, parents' roles, advocacy, etc.

*Please check [www.acmr18.org/en/index.php](http://www.acmr18.org/en/index.php) for more detail.*

**Source: 18th Asian Conference on Mental Retardation**

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference for Accessible Tourism (ICAT 2007) – Promoting Sustainable Tourism towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society: Opportunity for All  
Thailand  
22 – 24 November 2007**

The ICAT 2007 will be co-organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, UNESCAP and Disabled Peoples' International Asia-Pacific. The Conference aims to promote accessible tourism in the region as a way to enhance the implementation of the BMF, Biwako Plus Five and the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific (Phase II 2006-2012) focusing on access to built environments, public transport, training and employment including self-employment.

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

**Source: Disabled Peoples' International Asia-Pacific Region**

## Editorial Message

Welcome to the APCD Project Phase II!

Thank you very much for all your contributions that have helped APCD come this far. Recently, we have seen several epoch-making phenomena in the disability field such as national legislation amendments in pursuance to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and a High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review the BMF plus 5 for adoption.

With these powerful instruments, the APCD Project Phase II believes that the quality of life and the rights of persons with disabilities globally will be greatly more improved. APCD's overall goal is to support the promotion of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

oops!!! Don't forget the International Day of Disabled Persons on 3 December 2007 with the theme of "Decent Work of Persons with Disabilities". Cheers!!!

**"Empowerment" APCD Newsletter  
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