



APCD Celebrates 120th Anniversary of Japan - Thailand Diplomatic Relations

The year 2007 was important to Thai people since they celebrated His Majesty the King's 80th birthday. It also marked the **120th Anniversary of Japan-Thailand Diplomatic Relations**. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and APCD together with the Embassy of Japan, organized a Memorial Seminar on the Development of Persons with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region on 29 November 2007 at APCD, Bangkok. H.E. **Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Development and Human Security** presided over the Opening Ceremony which was to strengthen friendship and cooperation between the two Governments on disability issues.



The Opening Ceremony of the Memorial Seminar on Development of Persons with Disabilities in Asia-Pacific Region

H.E. **Mr. Tanin Kraivixian, Privy Councillor and Chairperson of APCD Foundation** stated since disadvantaged groups including persons with disabilities have a low quality of life, cooperation at different levels is needed. The Japan-Thailand cooperation to empower persons with disabilities through the APCD Project has been publicly recognized. APCD Foundation, a non-governmental organization will take a more crucial role in the future to administrate the Center particularly, in transforming APCD to become internationalized.

Mr. Katsuji Onoda, JICA Thailand Resident Representative stated since JICA has been promoting various kinds of projects in Thailand to help develop a better society for disabled persons for more than 3 decades, JICA and Thailand have collaborated in the APCD Project. JICA has

experienced a paradigm shift on disability issues since some persons with disabilities are no longer subjects of Official Development Assistance but have become precious resource persons. He hopes that collaboration between Thailand and Japan will be strengthened in the future to promote an inclusive barrier-free society for all.

H.E. **Mr. Hideaki Kobayashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan** to the Kingdom of Thailand stated that the modern nation-to-nation relationship between Japan and Thailand was established in 1887. The two countries have cherished their friendly and mutually beneficial relations in a number of fields including social development. This Memorial Seminar was one example of an important Japanese-Thai joint effort in the development of persons with disabilities which is an integral part to promote human security. He mentioned that the Government of Japan has conducted systematic reforms in areas which affect persons with disabilities such as living support, employment, education, mobility and accessibility. Through these reforms, a rights-based approach, support that meets users' needs more effectively and more comprehensive systems were introduced. He also wished that the Japanese experience can be utilized to promote international cooperation in their field of development of persons with disabilities.

H.E. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, who chaired the opening of the Seminar, stated that Japan and Thailand have had more than 600



Thai Musical Show by Thai Autistic Foundation

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years relations. Recently, through diplomatic relations, both countries have become “partners” in promoting quality of life for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The Thai Government through the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security has agreed to continue the Technical Cooperation of the APCD Project for another 5 years. He noted that significant progress in disability issues has been made in Thailand and that the Government has approved a New Law for Disabled Persons,

effective September 2009. This new Law entitled, “Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities B.E. 2007” emphasizes a rights-based approach to disability and has established a new department called the “National Office for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities”. Moreover, the Government has amended several laws affecting the quality of life of disabled persons in terms of education, employment, accessibility, etc.

Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific

The Emerging Social Issues Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) co-organized the Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific from 11-13 October 2007 in Shanghai, China.

The objectives of this Regional Workshop were to identify issues of persons with intellectual disabilities as well as their families in the region, and to identify good practices of policies and support systems for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families in the region.

The topics which were covered in the Regional Workshop included the following areas:

- A. Review of international and regional norms, and national policies regarding persons with intellectual disabilities and their families;
- B. Identification of issues regarding persons with intellectual disabilities and their families;
- C. Presentation by persons with intellectual disabilities on their issues and recommended actions;
- D. Discussion on good practices regarding community living and empowerment of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families;
- E. Working group discussions on the outcome document and its adoption.

The Workshop also included a field trip for participants to see the services provided for persons with intellectual disabilities in Shanghai, China and observe the closing ceremony of the Special Olympics.

The Workshop was attended by 30 delegates from China, Hong Kong China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. It included policy-makers who were responsible for disability matters, representatives from organizations of persons of intellectual disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities as well as their family members.

The 8 delegates from Thailand included a person with autism, an intellectual disability, a member of the Association of Parents for Thai Persons with Autism, a member of the Association for Persons with an Intellectual Disability of Thailand, and APCD. Representatives of both Associations including the two self-advocates presented the situation of persons with intellectual disabilities in Thailand and about their potential as well as daily living in the family and the community.

One key expected outcome of the workshop was the statement of recommended actions regarding persons with intellectual disabilities and their families in the UNESCAP region which was formulated by the group of participants and validated by all delegates.

The Shanghai Recommendations clearly mentioned the key issues related to the development of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families such as supporting the formation and development of self-help groups of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families, encouraging the development of self-advocacy, ensuring the participation and decision-making of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families, public awareness-raising concerning positive images of persons with intellectual disabilities, support for persons with intellectual disabilities for an inclusive learning setting and an effective employment system, etc. (For more details, please see the document at <http://www.worldenable.net/shanghai2007/shanghairecommendation.htm>).

Most impressive in this workshop were the self-advocates who presented and shared their experiences and ideas independently so participants could produce a comprehensive, rights-based document, the “Shanghai Recommendations on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific.”

APCD believes that the movement of persons with intellectual disabilities will be developed through effective networking and collaboration among self-advocate groups, self-help groups of parents, government organizations, non-governmental organizations and all other sectors in society at different levels.



The Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities in Shanghai



APCD/WHO Regional Workshop on Reviewing Draft Version of CBR Guidelines

APCD collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) to organize a regional workshop on reviewing the draft version of the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Guidelines from 26 - 28 November 2007 at the APCD training building. Resource persons to facilitate the workshop were Mr. Chapal Khasnabis, Dr. Maya Thomas, and Ms. Karen Heinicke-Motsch.

Some participants, ex-participants of APCD trainings came from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand; Christoffel-Blindenmission (CBM) collaborated with APCD to mobilize their personnel from the Philippines and Vietnam to join the workshop; participants sponsored by WHO came from China, Mongolia, the Philippines, and Thailand as well as an Indonesian sponsored by APCD. Self-sponsored participants came from Vietnam and Thailand; a Nepalese came as an observer. The 19

participants were CBR field managers who participated to experience reviewing the draft version of the CBR Guidelines.

The new CBR Guidelines cover Health, Education, Livelihood, Empowerment, and the Social Component. The Livelihood, Empowerment, and Social Components were rather newly developed for the previous CBR Manual published in 1989. The new CBR Guidelines will try to provide a practical guide for CBR managers with local and international NGOs, development organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities, their families and villagers particularly, are important targets for CBR. The CBR Guidelines will help realize the change from the medical model to the social model.

WHO is proposing the draft to the CBR Asia-Pacific Congress in December 2008 in Bangkok. APCD will seek to collaborate with WHO along with UNESCAP, ILO, UNICEF, and International NGOs, such as CBM, Handicap International, and World Vision International to organize the Congress.

WHO sincerely appreciated collaborating with APCD and JICA for this workshop. All of the participants felt they acquired new knowledge through the experiences of the CBR field practitioners.



INTERVIEW CORNER

Mr. Chapal Khasnabis

Technical Officer, Disability & Rehabilitation (DAR) Team, WHO

This regional workshop was held after having field testings in 29 countries so far. The participants from different countries made a great contribution to give us their feedback on CBR Guidelines. The draft is becoming a "peoples' draft" because all participants gave their feedback based on their realities.

On the basis of their comments, the Guidelines will be revised again by March. The revised Guidelines will have the "peer review" by 10 identified universities around the world from March to June. After that, we will design, layout, and ultimately try to publish in different languages.

CBR is for PWDs and their families. Thus, we want more participation of PWDs and their families in all activities as in the CBR Congress. I really appreciate APCD and JICA for having exercised leadership to organize this regional workshop. APCD has the largest network with Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPO) and a non-DPO network whereas other organizations do not have such an intensive network. We are looking forward to APCD as our great collaborator.

Dr. Maya Thomas

CBR Consultant, Editor, Asia-Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal Group

I think bringing people from many different countries has been very useful in terms of getting their comments and feedback on the entire Guidelines. It is really helping us to modify the Guidelines to respond to the needs of practice. This may be the first time that people from different countries have helped to develop the Guidelines.

The target population of the Guidelines is quite clear. It would be the CBR managers, government sectors, international NGOs, local NGOs, and DPOs. Whoever manages the CBR programs will be the target of the Guidelines, in any of the sectors, the grass root community level, and the provincial or national levels.

Ms. Karen Heinicke-Motsch
CBR Advisor and Working Group Coordinator, Christoffel-Blindenmission

This workshop has been the best feedback for me in terms of the draft Guidelines. We got all good comments. People were not afraid to ask questions and they had lots of information. It was very exciting for me to be here for this workshop because it will make the document much better. It is great that we not only got feedback from the participants but also the participants had an opportunity to communicate with others from Asia, talking together about CBR. The Guidelines are really written for managers from the rural district level to the national level. It is a different level from the WHO manual on CBR, if you remember, which was definitely written for the grass root and field worker levels.

Ms. Batdulam Tumenbayar
National CBR Manager, National Rehabilitation Center in Mongolia

I started working as a project manager for CBR this year. There are many remote areas and it is very difficult to bring different local people together in Mongolia. Home-based rehabilitation is needed because it is cheaper and more suitable for most remote areas in Mongolia.

Dr. Than Van Chin
Director, Danang Rehabilitation and Sanatorium Hospital, Vietnam

After joining this workshop, I gained much from listening to the experiences of other countries. This workshop delivered lots of information, especially on management, self-help groups, and policy-making.

Dr. Huang Xiaolin
WHO Collaborating Center for Training and Research in Rehabilitation, China

I think the draft of the CBR Guidelines will guide us to the practical work. This workshop was good because I got to know more practical and suitable ways. I think if the writer gets more information and comments on each chapter to make it more practical and realistic, CBR managers will be willing to use the Guidelines.

APCD Missions

Mission to Central Asia (Preparation for CBSHOD in Kyrgyzstan)

APCD dispatched a mission team to Kyrgyzstan from 31 October to 5 November 2007.

The Office of the Prime Minister and Mr. Baktybek Jekshenov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labor and Social Development agreed to collaborate with APCD to organize CBSHOD in Bishkek in September 2008. JICA-Kyrgyzstan will be a co-organizer for CBSHOD and conduct follow up activities for APCD.

The mission team organized a 1 day Workshop in Bishkek with tentative stakeholders of CBSHOD, and another 2-day Workshop in Issyk-Kul with Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPOs) and concerned Government Agencies. Nine self-help groups and self-help organizations (SHGs/SHOs), who attended the Workshop agreed to collaborate and participate in the CBSHOD in September 2008 which identified the main SHGs/SHOs. They are willing to collaborate in preparation for the CBSHOD in Kyrgyzstan, along with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development. The Workshop focused on the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action (BMF) and BMF-Plus Five adopted by UNESCAP, as well as the United Nations Convention on the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It emphasizes the necessity to form Self-help Organizations and a National League of Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPOs) as well as forming a Central Asian Sub-regional Network.

APCD facilitated a meeting between Government officials from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development and Representatives of SHGs/SHOs to discuss collaboration for the CBSHOD, as well as exchange information. On the first day of the Workshop, self-help organizations confronted the Government officials but on the second day, the DPO sectors collaborated with the Government.

The Preparatory Committee for CBSHOD was successfully organized by the Government and SHG/SHO Sectors. It was significant to have the Psycho/Social Disability Group included as this was the first time for APCD to meet them. The mission team encouraged them to actively participate in the CBSHOD and collaborate with the APCD Project. APCD may plan to contact the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP), which is an international organization working with psycho/

social disabilities. APCD may seek the possibility of inviting resource persons for the CBSHOD through them.

Mr. Minoru Hiramoto, JICA Expert in Kyrgyzstan accompanied a PWD for Disability Equality Training (DET) in Malaysia organized by JICA Malaysia in November 2007, and planned to send high ranking Government officers to APCD for training in Bangkok.

The mission team visited the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to confirm their willingness to collaborate with APCD concerning CBSHOD. They will prepare a presentation for CBSHOD and contact other UNICEF Offices in Central Asia.

The mission team invited Mr. Ghulam Nabi Nizamani (Pakistan), Vice-President and Ms. Saowalak Thongkuay, Regional Development Officer, both of Disabled People's International (DPI), as Resource Persons for the above missions. They contributed by explaining the disability movement, self-help organizations and the importance of

CBSHOD to SHGs/SOs, Government sectors and JICA Offices. This is to both empower persons with disabilities and also identify persons with disabilities as the owners of APCD and CBSHOD.



Discussion with Mr. Baktybek Jekshenov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labor and Social Development

Networking and Collaboration (N&C) on Intellectual Disabilities and the Deaf: Preparatory Missions to Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam from November to December 2007

With technical cooperation from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the APCD Project Phase I (Aug 2002 – July 2007) successfully completed, Phase II (Aug 2007- July 2012) started with a focus on developing an effective and sustainable network and collaboration with/among concerned organizations. One of the Phase II strategies is to help develop/strengthen groups/organizations of 1) **persons with intellectual disabilities (ID) and their families** and 2) **the deaf**, and to network and collaborate with/among them since APCD's network and collaboration with these groups was limited in Phase I.

APCD is aware that in its important target countries such as **Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV)** only families of persons with ID have organized small groups but have not yet developed associations or a group of persons with ID themselves. Since their organizations have not yet been fully developed, APCD may **need to support their capacity building while developing their network.**

In the first year of the Project Phase II, APCD dispatched Missions to CLV; **Cambodia (20-22 Nov)**, **Viet Nam (3-8 Dec)** and **Laos (12-14 Dec)** in 2007. In order to obtain relevant information/needs and identify key organizations and potential leaders, APCD organized a one-day local workshop and field visit respectively in Phnom-Penh, Ho-Chi-Minh, Hanoi, and Vientiane. Each Mission consisted of **two teams**, one for **ID** and another for **the deaf**, being responsible for respective workshops and field visits.

Workshop

The workshops could achieve the aims: A) to facilitate an exchange of information among stakeholders concerned with APCD, B) to share information on relevant international movement (e.g., the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, "self-help" of people with disabilities

and its global networks), and C) to introduce and discuss possible future collaboration with APCD.



Workshop for the Deaf in HCMC

The participants of local workshops for the deaf in CLV were **deaf persons** who are or have the potential to be "leaders" of their self-help groups/organizations and supporters for deaf persons including staff of organizations concerned. Also, the local workshops for ID accommodated **persons with ID (self-advocates)** who have the potential to develop more self-advocacy skills. (e.g., speak out about himself/herself, advocate on behalf of peers with ID), family members of persons with ID and supporters for persons with ID. Every workshop had **approximately 20 participants** and **more than the half had disabilities (ID or the deaf)**. APCD has applied a **participatory approach** and enhanced their maximum participation in the workshops, by providing documents in their local languages and encouraging the participants to speak out with interpretation and enjoy learning together.

Collaboration

For conducting these preparatory Missions, APCD collaborated with the Asia-Pacific Secretariat/Council of **Inclusion International (II)** and **World Federation of the**

Deaf (WFD). JICA nominated and dispatched Japanese experts, Prof. Osamu Nagase and Dr. Akio Suemori, who represented the above international federations and served as resource persons for the local workshops. Also, **Association for Persons with an Intellectual Disability of Thailand** and **Association of Parents for Thai Persons with Autism** were actively involved, and with the **National Association of the Deaf in Thailand (NADT)** greatly contributing. Especially, Thai and Japanese deaf resource persons played an important role in facilitating the workshop, collecting in-depth information and serving as “role-models” for young deaf participants. APCD was convinced that its motto; “**empowered PWD to empower other PWD**”, is significant and effective for N & C on ID and the deaf too.



**Lao Minister of Labour and Welfare
and Thai Resource Persons with Autism**

Of course, precise issues related to **the deaf and ID** are not same, however it was apparent that they tend to be greatly **excluded socially and in the development process of their countries**. Despite all the efforts and current improvements in education of children with disabilities, formation of self-help groups of PWD, information & communication accessibility, etc. in their countries, persons with ID and deaf persons have not been involved or benefited much.

Deaf Community

As for the deaf, for example, there are no high school graduates yet in Cambodia and Laos, and only a few deaf persons have recently enrolled in a college in Viet Nam. Unfortunately, since many schools do not teach deaf students via their local sign language, their learning tends to be partial and many deaf students end up **dropping out from their elementary education**. Some Cambodian and Lao deaf students in regular schools under “inclusive

education” confessed that they are just copying other students’ notebooks without understanding the subjects. A self-help group of the deaf has not yet been established in Cambodia, and the Deaf Unit under the Laos Disabled People’s Association is primarily a place for the deaf to learn/develop their sign language and get together regularly. In Viet Nam, while there are several groups/associations of the deaf in HCMC, Hanoi and other provinces, they could **not have much regular communication and have not yet established a national association of the deaf**. The number of **sign language interpreters is few** throughout each country, and many of them have not yet developed their professional attitudes, skills and experiences as an interpreter.

Intellectual Disability

Concerning persons with ID and their families, overall, **basic services required and information are insufficient** such as: early intervention, rehabilitation, education, employment support, etc. Only a few places are available for persons with ID to develop their educational and vocational potential. Especially in Cambodia and Laos, only several public/private organizations/professionals provide such information and services, which are not always accessible physically and financially for persons with ID and their poor families in rural areas. Also, it is not easy for many youth with ID to get a job and earn their living even though they have had some education. Quite recently, some parents, who had almost no information and became desperate about how to raise their children with disabilities, have started to get together to form their small self-help groups.

While APCD could see some common issues pertaining to ID or the deaf in these 3 countries, these countries’ situation of persons with ID and the deaf are **precisely at the different developmental stages**, reflected by each country’s history, current political and educational system and government policies for PWD, etc. Especially, deaf persons’ education and movement have been more progressive in Viet Nam than the other 2 countries. In this connection, APCD will **consider the characteristics of each country’s issues and develop strategies** for promoting N & C respectively for ID or the Deaf in CLMV. APCD’s regional workshops and local follow-up workshops can be strategically linked and supplement each other in order to cater to respective countries’ needs.

NEW LAW ON DISABILITY IN THAILAND

Thailand’s New Law on Disability has been in effect since it was promulgated in the Royal Gazette on 27 November 2007. The very first Law on Disability in Thailand was implemented in 1991. The Law, so-called Rehabilitation Law of Disabled Persons 1991, emphasized the welfare system in 4 areas; education, health, employment and social participation. This new Law, so-called Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities 2007, emphasizes a rights-based approach to disability and enhances more participation of persons with disabilities in policy-making bodies at the national, provincial and organizational levels. Moreover, a new department, the “National Office for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities” has been established. This National Office is a secretariat to the National Coordinating Commission on Disability in Thailand as well. One of the projects supervised by the Office is the APCD Project. In the near future, APCD anticipates improving its management by utilizing a more flexible and effective system as a non-governmental organization.



APCD Trainings

Training of Educational Material Production for Persons with Hearing Disabilities

Assistive Technology Center (ASTECC), National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) collaborated with APCD to organize the second domestic training of Educational Material Production for People with Hearing Disabilities from 5–16 November 2007.

The 21 participants included 6 deaf persons from Special Education Centers, Universities and Ratchasuda College in this outstanding training.

The training was to teach computer programs which are used to produce and adapt educational material for students with hearing impairments and promote learning aids on ICT for teachers and students.

After discussing problems and solutions for persons with hearing disabilities to learn on the first day, the hands-on training focused on related software such as MS Producer, Hot Potato, VCD Cutter, Subtitle Workshop, VisualDub, ConvertX to DVD and Macromedia Flash Player.

Participants learned how to create and produce presentations, exercises, add captions or subtitles on VCD and DVD materials as well as make flash cartoons to use in class.

In each part of the program, the participants' homework involved making small projects so they could

utilize their creativity and knowledge from the sessions to practice and better understand how to implement learning material for deaf students through the comments of the hearing impaired participants.

Resource Persons from NECTEC and APCD will compile more information to adapt curriculums, contents and concepts of this training course with the intent to develop and organize a regional training course for deaf teachers and persons who are looking to the future.



During a Session

Non-handicapping Environment Training

APCD organized a Non-handicapping Environment Workshop at APCD from 17-21 December 2007. Thai Resource Persons with expertise in this field included Mr. Ditsanun Banlanggarn, from the Department of Design and Architecture of the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MTRA), Assoc. Prof. Trirat Jarutat, Ms. Kitiorn Sirisuk, Ms. Kulthida Techavorasinsakol, Professor of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, Assoc. Prof. Kusuma Thammatamtong from King Mongkut Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Mr. Sakchai Yauntrakol expert in Access Legislation, Mr. Montian Buntan, President of Thailand Association of the Blind as well as Assoc. Prof. Banasopit Mekvichai, Vice-Governor of Bangkok.



A Group Photo at the Opening Ceremony

Participants from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand represented architects, engineers, urban planners, public transport planners, government officials and non-governmental personnel concerned with disability issues as well as representatives of self-help organizations of persons with disabilities.



A Field Visit to the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand

The first objective was for the above target group to become trainers/promoters/resource persons concerning a non-handicapping environment, universal design and a barrier-free society in their respective countries; secondly, to link the participants by networking to promote a non-handicapping environment in the Asia-Pacific region as well as their own countries.

As an outcome, participants shared the situation of their respective countries concerning accessibility and learned about the universal concept for all. Fieldwork included observing transportation systems and how Pattaya City adapted a design concept so that private and public buildings are now accessible for persons with disabilities. APCD believes this Workshop will be a catalyst in promoting a non-handicapping environment using the universal design.



APCD Activities

APCD Activities
(October - December 2007)

APCD activities from October to December 2007 began with the Seminar on the Development of Persons with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region on 29 November 2007 recognizing the partner relationship between Japan and Thailand. APCD and Organizing Committees had the privilege of welcoming Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Development and Human Security, Royal Thai Government, and H.E. Mr. Hideaki Kobayashi, the Ambassador of Japan as well as Mr. Katsuji Onoda, JICA Resident Representative who presided over the opening ceremony. This occasion was also to celebrate the 120th Anniversary of Japan–Thailand diplomatic relations.

For networking and collaboration activities, persons with intellectual disabilities accompanied an APCD mission team to Shanghai to participate in the “Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families” from 11-13 October 2007 for networking and collaborative activities. Mission teams were also dispatched to countries in Central Asia as well as the Mekong Sub-region to empower and strengthen persons with hearing impairments as well as persons with learning and intellectual disabilities since they are the target groups for APCD’s Phase II.

The Human Resource Development team has continued their work for domestic and regional training, such as, Education Material Production (EMP) and a Non-handicapping Environment Workshop (NHE). The Information Support team has shared and updated information related to disability with focal points and associate organizations.

Tentative APCD activities for the next 6 months (January – June 2008)

January

- 22 - 25 ● Newsletter Volume 22
- Networking and Collaboration Workshop on Intellectual Disabilities

February

- 19 ● Seminar for Expanding Disability Concept (Tak Province)*
- 28 - 29 ● Thai Ex-participants Evaluation Meeting*

March

- 4 - 5 ● Women with Disabilities Training
- 5 - 7 ● Mission to Myanmar
- 17 - 21 ● Advance Disability Equality Training*
- 25 - 26 ● Seminar for Expanding Disability Concept (Nan Province)*

April

- 21 April - 2 May ● Newsletter Volume 23
- Community-based Rehabilitation Training

May

- 21 May - 13 June ● Regional Training on ICT for Visually Impaired Persons
- 25 - 27 ● Mission to Central-Asia

* Thai Persons Only

Tentative Activities 2008	January	February	March
Newsletter Volume 22			
Networking and Collaboration Workshop on Intellectual Disabilities	22-25		
Seminar for Expanding Disability Equality Concept (Tak Province)*		9	
Thai Ex-participants Evaluation Meeting*		28-29	
Women with Disabilities Training			4-5
Mission to Myanmar			5-7
Advance Disability Equality Training*			17-21
Seminar for Expanding Disability Equality Concept (Nan Province)*			25-26
Tentative Activities 2008	April	May	June
Newsletter Volume 23			
Community-based Rehabilitation Training	21 Apr-2 May		
Regional Training on ICT for Visually Impaired Persons		21 May-13 Jun	
Seminar on the Expansion of Empowerment Concept		25-27	
Mission to Central Asia			

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The 43rd Day of Disabled Persons 2007 Thailand 10 November 2007

The National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand and Organising Committees recently had the privilege of welcoming Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsawalee who graciously presided over the opening ceremony of the 43rd Day of Disabled Persons in 2007 at Suan Am-Porn, Bangkok. Activities included awards honouring and recognizing persons with disabilities, an exhibition related to disability from many stakeholders, medical services, a job fair, and shows by prominent singers. In this regard, Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) also joined the exhibition to demonstrate assistive devices for persons with disabilities as well as publicize the APCD project.

Please check www.apcdproject.org for more details.
Source: *Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability*

International Day of Disabled Persons Celebrated in Ha Noi Viet Nam 2 December 2007

A programme, entitled "Equality and Integration" was held in Ha Noi on December 2 to celebrate the International Day of Disabled Persons by the Ha Noi Disabled People's Association, other disabled people's organizations and UN agencies in Viet Nam. The International Day of Disabled Persons (December 3) this year had the theme, "Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities." Addressing the event, Minister of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, Ms. Nguyen thi Kim Ngan highlighted Viet Nam's intensive policies on vocational training for the disabled, with the aim of providing about 80,000 disabled persons with job training and decent work by 2010.

Please check www.vnagency.com.vn/Home/EN/tabid/119/itemid/225807/Default.aspx for more details.
Source: *Vietnam News Agency*

Persons with Disabilities a Boon for Their Employers, Says Secretary-General United States of America 3 December 2007

Marking the International Day of Disabled Persons, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized that people with disabilities not only make good employees, but that companies benefit greatly from employing them. "Persons with disabilities have the ability to make valuable contributions in the workforce as employees, entrepreneurs and employers," said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message for the Day, with the theme this year, "Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities." "Whenever the opportunity arises, persons with disabilities prove their worth as productive members of the workforce," Mr. Ban said. "That is why more and more employers are slowly coming to the

realization that employing persons with disabilities makes good sense. Changing workplace environments and advances in information and communications technology are also giving persons with disabilities new avenues for seeking decent work," the Secretary-General said.

Please check www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24895&Cr=disabled&Cr1=&Kw1=PERSONS+WTH+DISABILITIES+A+BOON+FOR+THEIR+EMPLOYERS&Kw2=&Kw3= for more details.

Source: *UN News Centre*

World Disability Day Was Celebrated India 3 December 2007

World Disability Day was celebrated in various parts of the country by organizations and institutions. In Delhi, a large number of disabled persons gathered at India Gate in the Capital to celebrate World Disability Day. Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit was present as chief guest to lend her support for disabled people. The theme for this year's event was "Celebrating United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-Ek Nayi Umang". Participants from across the country came together in a show of solidarity. Representatives from several non-government organizations and societies were also present on the scene. The National Association of the Deaf marched from the India Gate to Jantar Mantar to express their support for the cause of disabled people demanding equal access to quality education and better employment opportunities.

Please check www.disabilityindia.com/html/news.html#wedpa for more details.

Source: *Disability India*

International Disability Day 2007 Bangladesh 3 December 2007

3 December was International Disability Day. A day long program organized by Chittagong Society for the Disabled and the Department of Social Welfare of Bangladesh Government was attended by many persons with disabilities. The Day included a colorful rally, a disability fair, discussion, a cultural program, drama, and a photo exhibition at JM Shen Hall in Chittagong. The Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) project's stall provided publications, digital talking books related to disability, a photo exhibition and various handicrafts made by persons with disabilities. YPSA's program officer, Vashkar Vattacharya demonstrated information technology based on employment opportunities and campaigned for raising awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities. Other NGO projects also displayed their project's activities.

Please check www.ypsa.org/Story/Story%2012%20Disability%20day%2007.htm for more details.

Source: *Young Power in Social Action*

Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities: Asia-Pacific Regional Photographic Competition

The Awards Ceremony for “Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities: Asia-Pacific Regional Photographic Competition” held at the Pullman King Power Hotel in Bangkok on 3 December 2007, was organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Disabled Peoples’ International (DPI) and Irish Aid. It was to raise awareness of the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons (3 December) as well as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006.

The theme was to capture decent work for persons with disabilities, including those who were self-employed, or advocated for their right to work. About 250 photographs from 19 countries across the Asia Pacific were submitted to join either the region-wide, the Thai, or the Cambodian contests. Mr. Hung Nguyen, a Vietnamese, honorably won the first prize in the Asia-Pacific section from among 250 pictures. His photo focused on a man with one arm, casting his fishing net while standing on the edge of his small fishing boat, which impressed many exhibition visitors. Mr. Hansa Tangmanpoowadol won first prize in the Thai section for his photo of Mr. Khumjane Dangsawat, a physically disabled man mouth painting, holding a brush in

his mouth. Mr. Dangsawat is an active member of an IL Center supported by APCD. Mr. Vibol Chhoum won first prize in the Cambodian section.

All photographs captured the abilities and potential of persons with disabilities, which convince us that persons with disabilities can be productive and have an equal right for “decent work”. Everyone present enjoyed dancing and singing together following the official ceremony.



Regional News October-December 2007

Bangkok Recommendations from the International Conference on Accessible Tourism Thailand 23 November 2007

An International Conference on Accessible Tourism (ICAT) was organized from 22-24 November 2007 to promote accessible tourism in the region as a way to enhance the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities (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 transportation and, training and employment including self-employment. The Bangkok Recommendations from the International Conference on Accessible Tourism were adopted.

Please check www.dpiap.org/index.html for more details.
Source: DPI-AP

Joint Statement of the Second ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting for Social Welfare and Development Viet Nam 7 December 2007

Ministers of ASEAN, China, the Republic of Korea and Japan released a joint statement at the conclusion of the 2nd ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting for Social Welfare and Development in Ha Noi. Following is the text of the joint statement regarding “Mainstreaming Persons with Disabilities in Development”:

“We discussed the theme, “Mainstreaming Persons with Disabilities in Development: Lessons and Actions for the Future” and emphasized the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of promoting sustainable development, particularly with regard to the Millennium Development Goals.

“We reaffirmed the priorities set out in the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Plan of Action on building a community of caring societies in ASEAN with attention to measures that would reduce the social risks faced by the elderly and

Any disability-related news is welcome to be included in our newsletter.
Please submit your news to us!!!

persons with disabilities, to increase the effective participation of women, families, civil society and the private sector in eradicating poverty and social welfare issues, and raise the standard of living of marginalized and disadvantaged groups.”

“We appreciated that this calls for consolidated efforts in cooperation between ASEAN Member Countries and the Plus Three Countries in all aspects of social welfare and development, stressing the importance of removing all barriers that had previously hindered the full participation of persons with disabilities in society.”

Please check <http://www.aseansec.org/21227.htm> for more details.

Source: *Association of Southeast Asian Nations*

**The First Runner-up Award to Disability Promotion & Advocacy Association
Vanuatu
11 December 2007**

The Disability Promotion & Advocacy Association (DPA) got the first runner-up award for the seventh RRRT Pacific Human Rights Awards on 10 December 2007 for seeking structural change in the face of widespread prejudice. Andonia Piau-Lynch, National Coordinator of DPA, said this award will go a very long way in helping us here in Vanuatu to continue to push for the human rights of persons with disabilities as well as human rights of all people here.

Source: *Andonia Piau-Lynch, National Coordinator, Disability Promotion & Advocacy Association*

**The First Disability Equality Training in Pakistan
Pakistan
18 December 2007**

The first Seminar on Disability Equality Training (DET) was organized by Confident Disabled Welfare Association (CDWA), member of Sindh Disability Forum (SDF) on 18 December 2007 at Khairpur, north of Karachi. About two hundred delegates from all walks of life attended the Seminar. Mr. Ghulam Nabi Nizamani was a resource person. The Seminar covered the introduction to DET, poverty issues, the gender issue, a rights-based approach, a barrier-free environment, CBR, IL, disaster management, vulnerability in disability, etc.

Source: *Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, DPI AP*

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

**Regional Conference on Women with Disabilities
Hong Kong
7 - 9 January 2008**

Please check www.awdhk-conf.org/home.html or email to women@awdhk-conf.org for more details.

Source: *Association of Women with Disabilities Hong Kong*

**South Asian Regional Conference on Autism: Building Bridges Training Workshop in Structured Teaching
India
15 - 18 January 2008**

Please check www.autism-india.org or email to actionforautism@gmail.com for more details.

Source: *Action For Autism (AFA)*

**International Seminar on One for All - Persons with Disabilities' Initiatives in Development
Bangladesh
10 - 14 February 2008**

Please check www.bpkgsbd.org or email to seminar@bpkgsbd.org for more details.

Source: *Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity*

**The 3rd General Assembly and Conference of Asia Pacific Disability Forum (APDF)
Bangladesh
27 - 29 February 2008**

Please check www.nfowd.com/APDF.htm or email to nfowd@bdmail.net for more details.

Source: *Dr. Nafeesur Rahman, Director of National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD)*

Editorial Message

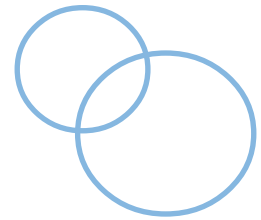
Happy New Year in 2008! Wishing all APCD readers a wonderful and prosperous year! It's time to meet with APCD readers once again through Empowerment Volume 22. APCD will continue its activities and provide updated news related to disability to empower persons with disabilities as well as to promote a barrier-free society. A sincere thank you for the support of the various disabled peoples' organizations and stakeholders. Comments or suggestions are always appreciated. Cheers!!!

"EMPOWERMENT APCD Newsletter"
Editorial Team

International Sign Language Corner



"C" is for ... ? See the next Volume !!



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