

Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand in collaboration with the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) organized a Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking from 22 June to 9 July 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand. The objective was to promote information management, networking, and accessibility to related disability organizations in APCD's targeted countries.

The twenty-two participants from governmental and non-governmental organizations in 10 developing countries in the Asia-Pacific Region came from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Nine of the twenty-two participants were persons with disabilities; six physically disabled, two hearing impaired persons, and one visually impaired person.



Mr. Javed Abidi,
Director of NCPEDP

The four resource persons, professionals in disability information management, networking, and accessibility, especially in the Asia-Pacific region came from India, Japan, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Mr. Monthian Buntan, who is visually impaired and President of the Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB) acted as the course leader. Mr. Javed Abidi, Executive Director of the National Center for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) in India, Ms. Nguyen Hong Ha, Coordinator of the Disability Forum in Viet Nam, and Ms. Misako Nomura, Deputy Director of the Information Center of the Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD) in Japan were the main facilitators for the eight-day information management and networking sessions. The emphasis of the second session was on information accessibility. Mr. Masafumi Nakane, Assistant

Professor at Keio University, was the main lecturer for the second session of eight days. A presentation on Assistive Devices Technologies



Participants during the group discussions.

for Persons with Disabilities was also given by Ms. Wantanee Panthachat, Director of the Assistive Technology Center, NECTEC.

1. Information Management

The workshop was divided into two parts. The first part focused on information management, sharing, and networking. Participants from each country reported on the situation of disability information support in their organization and country. Participants were divided into 3-4 groups to discuss setting up a disability network. Then each participant had to draft a plan of action on information networking in their country and organization. The outcomes presented by the participants had similar starting points to network with associate organizations. A field visit was organized to the Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (MCOT) and Ratchasuda College. In addition to the lectures and activities from the main resource persons, APCD invited different information support-related organizations such as, Shin Cooperation, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Mirror Reflection Group, Bangkok Post, and MCOT. All the organizations shared their strategy on information and network especially on how to present their with different types of media.

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Participants at MCOT

2. An Accessible Website

In the second session, participants were taught how to develop an accessible website as one information communication tool. Different applications and guidelines were introduced. For example, XML, XHTML, W3C Guidelines, Cascading Style Sheets, and the Website Design Plan structure. Participants had a hands-on practice to put their theory into practice. Through the practice, participants developed an accessible website by creating a new website introducing their country's situation on disability and/or their organization; some applied the skills to the original organization's website to fit the application of an accessible website, which all participants plan to further develop in their countries. All websites created in the workshop will be accessible at the APCD website (<http://www.apcdproject.org>).

Resource Persons' Corner

Three resources persons of the workshop would like to comment about the workshop as follows:

I. Ms. Misako Nomura, Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) Short-term Expert:



"I think this workshop provided participants an excellent opportunity to learn good use of a website as a means of disability-related networking on the local and regional scale. It also provided a hands-on training of web accessibility

to ensure access to information for persons with disabilities. I am sure that after the workshop, all participants were able to make their website more informative, lively, inspiring, and accessible for persons with disabilities, which will lead to an expansion of their networking activities. In this sense, I hope the Disabilities Information Resources (DINF) website can be a good example for the participants.

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as Internet can be a good tool to raise awareness, facilitate advocacy, provide opportunities, and empower persons with disabilities, if used effectively, considering its accessibility for persons with disabilities. With the use of e-mails, mailing list, and online discussions, persons with disabilities can virtually form a disability community and enhance information networking. Regarding Internet accessibility, ICT accessibility approach must be focused on to ensure equal access to information for persons with disabilities.

To promote information accessibility one must focus on *the translation of the local language, easy-to-read contents, and web accessibility*. I know that Internet access is limited in developing countries but it is important for us to attract the attention of the general public and Governments to ICT accessibility at an early stage since such awareness is essential as the ICT infrastructure is being created in developing countries."

II. Ms. Nguyen Hong Ha, Disability Forum, Viet Nam

"The lectures provided in this workshop were excellent and closely related to the topics and what the participants should learn. In my opinion, the main points towards *promoting information networking and information accessibility of persons with disabilities*, are that we should focus on the information resource, the technique and the way to encourage people to join and share, especially with the Government sectors."



III. Mr. Masafumi Nakane, JICA Short-term Expert:



"In the training this year, the long-term goal is to establish a regional web-based disability information network, which the APCD attempts to achieve through this training course. The newly added first half of the training served this purpose well, and it also provided the trainees with direction and motivation for the second half of the training.

The first half of the course left me with the impression that it is very important to cover both information networking/management and accessible web development to establish an accessible web-based network so that inclusion of these two aspects is reasonable and essential. The hands-on training aspect provided a good overview of basic knowledge and skill required for accessible web development.

Comments that I would like to further share about web-based accessibility is to develop a usable content management system, which produces accessible content. The development can be based on existing and low-cost solutions. The cost may be an issue; however, it could be limited to a minimum by utilizing existing software. "

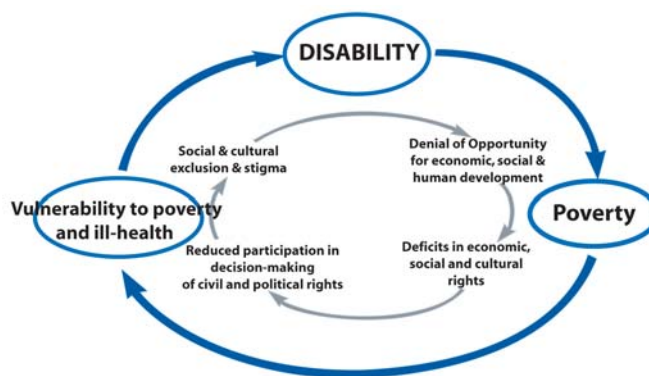
APCD aims to continue to build and expand the network with all participants from the workshop to further empower the information support on disability-related issues. APCD would like to express gratitude to all the participants, resource persons, taskforce members, and special thanks to all assistants especially all former trainees for devoting their time and knowledge to the workshop.

Training of Initiators of Self-help Groups of Persons with Disabilities towards Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development

APCD organized the Training of Initiators of Self-help Groups (SHG) of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) towards Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development from 10 – 30 August 2004 at the Redemptorist Center in Pattaya, Chonburi Province in Thailand. The intent was to help participants gain knowledge, skills and values to enable “poor PWD” to form their own SHG. Eighteen persons from more than 10 organizations in Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand participated, who plan to initiate/strengthen SHG of “poor PWD” at the grass-roots level.

Poverty and Disability

International organizations recognize the vicious circle of “poverty” and “disability”. Enabling poor PWD to form their SHG is a way to break through this vicious cycle to meet their basic human needs in their communities, and empower them to be major driving forces for rights-based and sustainable development of their communities.



Department for International Development , UK, 2000

Empowerment of Poor PWD through Forming their SHG

For poor segregated PWD, SHG is like a “family” with respect and empathy for each other. Also, poor PWD, who have been isolated and deprived of education and information, SHG is like a “school” to learn many new things. SHG can play a variety of many roles in mainstreaming PWD in the community, when they become well-developed. Furthermore, SHG of PWD are capable of contributing to solving common problems in their communities (e.g., safe drinking water, sanitation, better housing, health services, schools for all children, etc.)

Through the process of forming/developing/sustaining SHG, poor PWD can become more responsible for their development, able to have control of their own lives and decide on issues affecting their rights.



SHG Training participants

“Poor PWD”

APCD’s mandate is to work in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region, where approximately 20 – 30 % of “the poor” are PWD and more than 40 % of PWD are “poor”. Although the definition of “the poor” varies, generally their basic human needs (e.g., food, housing, schooling) as well as “extra” basic human needs due to their impairments (e.g., assistive devices, rehabilitation) have not been met in their communities.

What is SHG?

Recently, a number of NGO in developing countries have been successful in empowering socially vulnerable and economically poor persons (e.g., women, land-less farmers) by enabling them to form their own groups of 7 – 15 members, which then form a federation. In these SHG, a micro-credit scheme is also used to generate necessary funds. This SHG approach which has already been proven effective in very poor rural communities in the Asia-Pacific region (e.g., India), where no adequate or sufficient government services (e.g., transportation, sanitation) are available, can also be applied to PWD.



SHG Meeting in India

Training Focuses

As a Co-course Leader, APCD invited Mr. B. Venkatesh, a prestigious Indian trainer on SHG of PWD who has contributed greatly to the VELUGU project supported by the World Bank in Andhra Pradesh State, India. He conducted a three-week training module as follows:

1. Disability and Development:
 - The situation of “disabled persons” in society and the reasons for it
 - What we need to do in order to change this situation

2. Poverty and Disability:
 - Why people are poor
 - Links between poverty and disability

3. Community Study: Why/how to work in the community

4. Case Study: Why/how to work with PWD and their families

5. Group Building: Why/how to build SHG of PWD
 To help participants gain “a hands-on experience” of PWD in poor communities, they visited the same Thai person with a disability and his/her family twice. Through these field visits, they could gain further insights and skills in developing a rapport with an individual with a disability.

Mr. Yutaka Takamine, Co-course Leader for the SHG

I participated as a co-course leader in the above-mentioned training held in August this summer. Lessons learned from last-year’s training workshop on a similar subject were used to develop this year’s training program. Last year’s workshop focused on the training of self-help organizations of persons with disabilities [you may call them disabled peoples’ organizations (DPOs)]. Evaluation of last year’s workshop, indicated there should be more focus on grass-roots groups of poor people with disabilities than established DPOs. It was a common understanding that empowerment should take place among persons with disabilities at the grass-roots level, in order to change lives of persons with disabilities in rural villages. As a result, this year’s workshop was developed to train initiators of self-help groups. Mr. B. Venkatesh, a well-known expert on training of self-help groups of persons with disabilities, was invited to formulate a training program and lead the training workshop.



Mr. B. Venkatesh

One important agenda of the training was to learn that poverty is the root cause of disability in developing countries. It is estimated that over 40 % of persons with disabilities in developing countries of the Asian and Pacific region are poor. Thus it is imperative to understand the close relationship between disability and poverty. Building on this understanding, 18 participants from Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand learned how to conduct a community study, case study, group building, project management, independent living and fund-raising for the duration of 21 days. The highlight of the program was visits to six persons with disabilities living in poor villages. Participants were divided into 6 groups and assigned to do a case-study of each disabled individual and conduct a simple community study to learn about the community each disabled person lived in. Each group reported on the two visits they made to understand the real situation of persons with disabilities in rural areas.



Mr. Y. Takamine

I believe this training of initiators of self-help groups of persons with disabilities can be developed as a flagship program of APCD. This is because the main target of the United Nations millennium development goals is to reduce poverty by 50% by the year 2015 through all United Nations member governments, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, international development banks, and non-governmental organizations. To achieve this global poverty reduction target, issues of poor persons with disabilities who constitute 20 % of poor people have to be incorporated into the national poverty reduction programs. Support for the development of self-help groups of persons with disabilities at the village level and the formation of federations of such self-help groups may be considered the best way to empower and assist them in coming out of poverty.



2nd Seminar for South-to-South Cooperation for the Decade of People with Disabilities: An Orientation to APCD

The UNESCAP/APCD Seminar for South-to-South Cooperation for the Decade of People with Disabilities: an Orientation to APCD was organized by the Asia-Pacific Development Center (APCD) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), at the United Nations Conference Center, Bangkok on 17 August 2004.

The objectives of the Seminar were to establish and strengthen a collaborative relationship with APCD by enhancing an understanding of APCD and the new Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012); to gain insights to develop the new Decade by sharing experiences and achievements through the past Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002) among invited representatives from the Asia-Pacific region and delegates from the South Africa and Arab regions.



Overview of the Seminar

The Seminar was opened by Mr. Sakhon Boonkhum, Director-General, Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection, and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. He stated that the Royal Thai Government placed importance on the promotion of the rights, opportunities, and equalities of persons with disabilities with a high priority on regional cooperation towards the empowerment of persons with disabilities and a barrier-free society for persons with disabilities in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Uriate, Jr., Principal Officer and Officer-in-Charge of UNESCAP welcomed all delegates and felt the Seminar was timely, since the Governments in the Asian and Pacific region have proclaimed an extension of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons for another 10 years from 2003 to 2012, and the adoption of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities (BMF) in October 2002.

Mr. Mikiharu Sato, Resident Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), extended his

congratulations to all for organizing the Seminar, which promotes the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, particularly in the area of establishing a barrier-free and rights-based society in the Asia-Pacific region.

Fifteen government delegates from Bhutan, the Cook Islands, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, and Viet Nam joined the Seminar. Additional representatives from 10 South African countries, non-governmental organizations and other organizations involved with disability issues and resource persons from Lebanon and Thailand participated.

Seminar focus

The Seminar focused on the following issues:

1. Introduction to the APCD
2. Introduction to the Disability Program of UNESCAP
3. Sharing experiences/achievements through Decades of Disabled Persons in the Asia-Pacific and Towards the Elaboration of an International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The presentation by Mr. Monthian Buntan, President of the Thailand Association of the Blind, on his experiences/achievements gained through the Decade was appreciated. He shared some positive views on policy and legislative changes; the formation and strengthening of self-help organizations of persons with disabilities; public awareness; and networking and collaboration. Mr. Monthian also expressed the need for further reconsideration and re-thinking of the following: the diverse characteristics, needs and problems of persons with disabilities; the dimension and emphasis on accessibility; rights-based versus charity-based, including the civil rights disability movement versus economic empowerment; expansion of "ideological extremism"; education and employment; and recognition of disability issues by politicians and policy makers.

4. Sharing experiences/achievements through the Decade of Disabled Persons in the African Region. Statements by Representatives of the African Group, who shared their views on the African Decade of Disabled Persons (2000-2009) were appreciated. The Decade was



Representatives from the African Group

declared as a result of the initiatives of persons with disabilities in Africa, who received moral support from different international organizations of persons with disabilities, as well as United Nations Organizations.



APCD Team with representatives from Bhutan, Kyrgyzstan and Lebanon

Objectives of the African Decade are:

- 1) Poverty alleviation and reduction among persons with disabilities and their families through economic support and education
- 2) Capacity-building among organizations of persons with disabilities at various levels.
- 3) Advocacy and lobbying for policies and legislation
- 4) Support women, youth, children, and marginalized persons with disabilities
- 5) Networking and partnership building at the national, regional, and international levels and with various organizations
- 6) Awareness raising on disability issues and human rights in the region
- 7) Putting disability issues on the social, economic, and political agenda of African Governments, and
- 8) Strengthening the voices of persons with disabilities as well as the use of the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities as a basis for the development of policies and legislation to protect and promote the interest of persons with disabilities in Africa.

5. Sharing experiences/achievements through the Decade of Disabled Persons in the Arab Region. A presentation of the Arab Decade for PWD 2004-2013 was made by Mr. Nawaf Kabbara, President, Arab Organization of Disabled People, and Lebanon. Mr. Kabbara explained about the Arab countries' human values, authentic cultural and educational heritage; commitments to religious edict, international covenants, treaties, declarations, and the agreement of the United Nations and recommendations of United Nations conferences of the last decade of the 20th Century. In recalling the Convention of the Arab League, the Arab Convention of Social Justice, the Arab Strategy for Social Work, the Arab Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Arab Declaration on the Rights of the Family, and the Arab Strategy for Development and Health, the Arab countries continue their efforts in the areas of legislation, development, and support aimed at safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities, including the right to habilitate, rehabilitate, and integrate into society, and guaranteeing their full participation in public life as an integral part of the fabric of society and human development. Mr. Kabbara believed that Persons with disabilities have the capacity and capability to contribute if they are presented with the appropriate training and rehabilitation services, equal opportunities, and the ability to participate equally with all other members of society to achieve true and comprehensive human development.

6. Experiences/achievements through the previous Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002). Government representatives from each country gave a report on their country's achievements on their National Policy on Disability, National Laws and Regulations on Disability, National Statistics on Population with Disabilities, and Remarkable Achievements through the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002).

In conclusion, Ms. Saranpat Anumatrajkiy, APCD Director, expressed her sincere appreciation to all partner members and Government delegates for participating and sharing up-to-date presentations so we can learn from each other.



Progress of the APCD Building Construction

Good News! The construction of the APCD buildings is in the very final stage. Installation of equipment and interior designing is now in progress in both buildings, providing full accessibility for persons with disabilities.



Administrative Building



Training & Accommodation Building

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

Thai NGO Forum

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) conducted a Thai Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Forum from the 29-31 July 2004 at the Felix River Kwai Resort, Kanchanaburi, Thailand. Focus was given to disability-related NGOs and the Disabled Peoples Organization in Thailand.



Overview of the Forum

Objectives of the Forum were to provide an introduction and orientation to APCD for disability-related network organizations to work together with APCD by strengthening existing networks and mechanisms. The forty participants

from 21 organizations included representatives of visually impaired, hearing impaired, physically impaired, and intellectually challenged persons. The agenda of the Forum focused on the following movements in Thailand:

- Movement of persons with disabilities in Thailand as well as other countries.
 - Laws & legislation concerning persons with disabilities.
 - Community-based Rehabilitation in Thailand as well as neighboring countries
 - Education for persons with disabilities
 - Information and Communication Technology for persons with disabilities
 - Development of Leaders of persons with disabilities
- Each agenda was addressed by a presentation by resource persons, primarily Thai experts, followed by discussion on how to apply the knowledge and experience in the existing situation.

Most participants evaluated the Forum as informative and useful to establish effective networking between APCD and NGO as well as among NGOs themselves.

This was the first national forum conducted by APCD to meet with GO, NGOs, and DPO to collaborate in developing the quality of life of Persons with disabilities in Thailand and will hopefully extend in the region.



APCD Mission Report

Mission to the People's Republic of China

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) mission team undertook a mission to the People's Republic of China from 14 – 17 July 2004. The APCD team identified the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) as the focal point organization.



China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF)

The mission also visited the China Rehabilitation Research Center (CRRC), the Beijing Disabled Persons' Rehabilitation Services and Guidance Center, the Beijing Fengtai Rehabilitation Center for Intellectually Disabled Persons and Jobs Placement Center for Blind Persons and the Beijing Disabled Persons

Family. All the mentioned organizations are under the umbrella of the Beijing Federation of CDPF.

CDPF is acting as the Government Ministry on Disability. CDPF has 31 disabled persons' federations at

the provincial level, 780 disabled persons' federations at the prefectural level, 2,413 disabled persons' federations at the county level, and 53,537 disabled persons' federations at the township level. CPDF's National Office is responsible for policy-making proposals, laws & legislation concerning disability and international relations at all levels to implement projects and activities such as rehabilitation hospitals, vocational training centers, sheltered workshops, integrated education and sports programs for persons with disabilities and other public relations.



China Rehabilitation Research Center (CRRC)

In brief, the number of persons with disabilities from the total Chinese population is approximately 5%. CDPF also has a Medical Rehabilitation Center with a comprehensive program, including medical rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation, and a rehabilitation college to train professionals.

Mission to the Kingdom of Bhutan



**Institute of Traditional
Medicine Services (ITMS)**

A mission to the Kingdom of Bhutan was undertaken by APCD from 22-26 August 2004. Official visits were made to the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, the Medical Education Division of the Ministry of Health, the Department of Public Health of the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education (develop the national education strategy, called "The Vision 2020" and promotes inclusive education).

The mission also visited the following disability-related organizations:

1. Physiotherapy Department, Jigme Dorgi Wangchuk National Referral Hospital, which is a Center for physiotherapy in Bhutan providing free services with sufficient equipment.

2. Center for Special Children-Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Disabled, which is a non-profit organization aiming to mainstream persons with disabilities in society. Activities

provided enhance the independent livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities, but especially focuses on children and youth through vocational skills' training.

3. Institute of Traditional Medicine Services (ITMS) promotes a traditional system of medicine and preserves the unique culture and tradition related to medical practice. ITMS provides job opportunities for persons with disabilities in the Institute.

4. Changangkha Lower Secondary School applies inclusive education and ensures that children with special needs have access to basic education.

5. Gidakom Hospital is planning to be a resource and provide rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities.

6. Paro District Hospital promotes community-based rehabilitation projects.

7. Deaf Education Unit is an inclusive school for hearing impaired students.



**Ministry of Labour and
Human Resources**

Mission to the Republic of the Philippines



**Department of Social Welfare
and Development**

From 14-18 September 2004, APCD sent a mission to Manila and Cebu. APCD identified the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as the focal point organization with the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons (NCWDP) as the direct connecting organization.

In addition, the mission team visited the National Computer Center (NCC) and acknowledged that NCC is ready to promote information and communication technology for persons with disabilities in the Philippines.

The APCD mission team also visited several non-governmental organizations of/for persons with disabilities. The Manila Christian Computer Institute for the Deaf Foundation (MCCID) offers a computer course for the hearing impaired aimed at assisting the hearing impaired in getting a better chance to compete for employment, education, and other opportunities. The Aphasia Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. is a non-profit organization that aims to provide assistance, information and support to people with aphasia, their families and caregivers. The NOVA Foundation for Differently Abled Persons, Inc. is a private organization promoting the full participation, total access, economic and social integration of persons with disabilities to enhance the lives of persons with disabilities by assisting them to identify and reach their career goals. Resources for the Blind provide various valuable programs for visually impaired persons with a focus on children with visual impairments. Handicap International – Philippines provides rehabilitation and inclusive activities for persons with disabilities and supports the "Hilwai", a boat set up to provide mobile rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities who have no access to rehabilitation services on the islands starting in the Visayan Region. The Adaptive Technology for Rehabilitation, Integration, and Empowerment for the Visually Impaired (ATRIEV) provides computer training courses for visually impaired persons.

APCD visited the Kabalikang Malayang Filipino (KAMPI), which is the National Federation of Organizations of/for Persons with Disabilities in the Philippines. Also, the APCD mission met with the Director-General Regional & Sustainable Development Department and representatives of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to discuss collaboration on disability-related issues in the Asia-Pacific region especially on poverty alleviation and information exchange.

Interviews to follow-up and monitor former participants of APCD's training were also conducted by the APCD Human Resources Development (HRD) team. The HRD team also visited potential Independent Living (IL) Centers in Cebu



IL Members in Cebu





APCD Project Activities

APCD Activities in Brief (July-September 2004)

Happy Birthday to APCD on its 2nd anniversary! APCD is delighted to be implementing activities for persons with disabilities in developing countries of the Asia and Pacific Region to empower and create a barrier-free society for them.

APCD activities from July to September 2004 began with the “Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking” with 22 participants from 10 countries from 22 June to 9 July 2004. This was followed by the “Thai Non-Governmental Organizations Forum” organized to network with disability-related organizations in Thailand. The next APCD training course from 10-30 August 2004 was the “Training of Initiators for Self-help Groups of Persons with Disabilities towards Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development” with 18 participants from Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand. For Networking and Collaboration, APCD sent missions to the People’s Republic of China, the Kingdom of Bhutan, and the Republic of the Philippines to identify focal points and associate organizations at the Governmental and Non-governmental levels related to disability issues.

Regarding building networks and collaboration, APCD organized the “Seminar for South-to-South Cooperation for the Decade of Persons with Disabilities: An Orientation to APCD” inviting potential disability-related Government officers exchange disability-related information among the region. This seminar also included representatives from South African countries and a resource person from the Arab region who shared their countries’ situation on the Decade of Disabled Persons. The APCD Information Support team has uploaded the additional country profiles to the website

(www.apcdproject.org). Countries now uploaded are Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

APCD activities in the next 6 months (October-March 2004) include:

October

20 October-9 November

- Newsletter #9
- Workshop for Strengthening the Community-based Rehabilitation Movement

November

14-20
23 November-17 December

- Mission to Samoa
- Training for Information and Communication for Visually Impaired Persons

December

13-17

- Regional Training Seminar on Capacity Building of Self-help Organizations of PWDs, Hanoi, Viet Nam

January 2005

10-15
18 January-18 February

- Newsletter #10
- Mission to Indonesia
- Training for Information and Communication for All

February 2005

8-16

- Mission to Sri Lanka and Maldives

March 2005

1-11

- Domestic Training Implementation on Peer-Counseling

1-18

- Regional Training Implementation on Independent Living

Year 2004 Activities	October				November				December				
9th Newsletter													
Workshop for Strengthening the Community-based Rehabilitation Movement			20 October - 9 November										
Mission to Samoa					14-20								
Training for Information and Communication for Visually Impaired Persons					23 November - 17 December								
Regional Training Seminar on Capacity Building of Self-help Organizations of PWDs, Hanoi, Viet Nam									13-17				
Year 2005 Activities	January				February				March				
10th Newsletter													
Mission to Indonesia		10-15											
Training for Information and Communication for All		18 January - 18 February											
Mission to Sri Lanka and Maldives					8-16								
Domestic Training Implementation on Peer-Counseling									1-11				
Regional Implementation on Independent Living									1-18				

Regional News

1) "Art for All: All for Health" UNCC, Bangkok, Thailand 30 July 2004

H.E. Mr. Anutin Charnvirakul, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Public Health of the Royal Thai Government presided over the opening of the "Art for All: All for Health" at the UN Conference Center in Bangkok. UNESCAP Executive Secretary Mr. Kim Hak-Su received an appreciation plaque from the Art for All organization. The five-day camp in Nakorn Nayok province, Thailand brought together children with and without disabilities through integrated programs of visual, performing, and literary arts. Since UNESCAP organized the first art exhibition in 1999, it has expanded to include work from over 400 students and youth both with and without disabilities, who are working with international artists from 10 countries.

This project is based on the idea that harmony and beauty can be created out of human differences. Various types of art forms are used as a medium for students with disabilities to have better self-esteem through exposure to professional artists to motivate them to participate in all aspects of society. Some graduates of the "Art for All" camp have become notable artists in Thailand.

(For more information please visit: www.artforall.or.th)

2) 4th Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities UN Headquarters, NYC 23 August – 3 September 2004

In resolution 58/246 of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, the General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should start negotiations on a draft convention at its third session and that, prior to its fifty-ninth session, the Ad Hoc Committee should hold two sessions for the duration of 10 working days each in 2004; it held its 4th session at the United Nations Headquarters from 23 August to 3 September 2004 with 361 participants from 78 member countries. The Ad Hoc Committee concluded the first reading of the draft text of the Convention.

(For further details please visit www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc4.htm)

3) DPI World Summit 2004: Diversity Within Winnipeg, Canada 8-10 September 2004

The Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) World Summit was an opportunity for national assemblies, disability organizations, NGO's, international development

agencies, and service providers in the disability field to discuss and share information. The major objective was to promote equality and diversity within the organization. The theme was the diversity of people and cultures with a focus on women, youth, and Indigenous & Arab peoples. Over 30 workshops were held for three days to share collective and individual struggles for social and economic inclusion in civil society. Issues covered were Human Rights, Self-determined Living, Bioethics, Education, Participation, Access, International Development, Sharing the Knowledge, and Local Capacity Building. The Global Disability Village exhibited global disability concerns especially issues on Independent Living, Culture, Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Livelihoods, Models of Learning, and World Research creating a sense of community with participants from both developing and developed countries sharing their research and work on various aspects of disability issues.

(Source: <http://summit.dpi.org>)

4) Capacity Building of Teachers in Bangladesh Dhaka, Bangladesh 11-22 September 2004

The Baptist Sangha School for Blind Girls in Dhaka, Bangladesh held special training for teachers focusing on Mathematics, Braille and Orientation & Mobility for students with visual impairments. It was organized by the International Council for Education of People with a Visual Impairment.

(For further details please visit www.icevi.org)

5) Athens 2004 12th Paralympic Games Athens, Greece 17-28 September 2004

There were 3,969 athletes from 136 countries participating in the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games, which included 19 sports. The four "unique" sports at the Paralympic Games were Boccia, Goalball, Powerlifting, and Wheelchair Rugby. China won the most medals with 141 in all, followed by Great Britain and Canada.

The mascot for the 2004 Paralympic Games was a seahorse, Proteas, a divinity of Greek mythology. The name embraces "excellence" as athletes seek to excel by achieving even higher competition performances. The Greek word "protos" means first in rank, excellent. The creator of the mascot searched for an image that would portray the four unique values for the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games: inspiration, strength, pursuit, and celebration.

APCD would like to say CONGRATULATIONS to all athletes for their outstanding wonderful performance, keep up the good work!

(For further detail please visit www.athens2004.com/en/ParalympicGames/parahome)

**6) Second Workshop for Improving Disability Statistics and Measurement
UNCC, Bangkok
27-29 September 2004**

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) organized the 2nd Workshop for Improving Disability Statistics and Measurement. Participants were representatives from 18 member countries and other related national, regional, and international organizations.

Discussions focused on the possibilities for standard disability questions in line with International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health for testing in the region, the first step towards developing a set for inclusion into censuses and surveys. The outcome regarding formulation of a question for self care was that self care issues are important and should be included in any standard set of questions. Any such question set should aim to cover the broad spectrum of disability experience including impairments, activities, and participation. The questions developed by each group were compared to four other standard sets some of which had already been tested or been proposed in other countries and contexts.

A proposal that resource persons together with the UNESCAP and United Nations Statistics Division develop two sets of questions suitable for testing and taking the conclusions of the Washington Group into consideration was accepted. Testing procedures, schedules, and protocols would also be worked out by the resource persons in coordination with the countries interested in testing a set of questions.

(For more information please visit: www.unescap.org/stat/meet)

**7) UNESCAP/NSO Thailand: Fourth Meeting of the Washington Group
UNCC, Bangkok
29 September – 1 October 2004**

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the National Statistical Office Thailand co-hosted the Fourth Meeting of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics. The Washington Group, has been mandated to develop general disability measures for use in censuses and sample surveys, and recommend survey items to measure disabilities or principles for their design. The objectives of the meeting were to: Present a draft on general disability measure, discuss the position paper on proposed methods for implementing the general disability measure, methodological issues relating to full population coverage, a position paper on a proposed approach for development of extended measurement sets related to the general disability measure and, strategy issues including the identification of the next steps.



**Regional News: Upcoming Events
October - December 2004**

**1) Training Workshop on Computerized Braille Production
Chittagong, Bangladesh
4-7 October 2004**

The objective is to provide participants with basic skills, knowledge, and experience to enable them to set up Computerized Braille Production Centers to increase the production of reading materials in Braille for the blind through the library network.

**2) UN ESCAP Working on an International Convention to Protect and Promote the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
11-12 October 2004**

(For more information please visit www.worldenable.net/convention2004)

**3) UN ESCAP Workshop on Monitoring and Implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action for the Decade of Disabled Persons
13-15 October 2004**

(For more information please visit www.worldenable.net/bmf2004)

**4) Sabala National Leadership Training Course for Disability Activists on Disability and Development
New Delhi, India
15-19 October 2004**

The objective is to equip participants with an appropriate attitude, knowledge, and skills to emerge as leaders to facilitate a disability movement in their respective communities throughout the country.

(Source: www.sabala.org)

**5) UNESCAP/CDPF Field Study cum Regional Workshop on Poverty Alleviation among Persons with Disabilities
Lanzhou, Gansu Province, China
25-29 October 2004**

(Source: www.worldenable.net/cdpf2004)

**6) International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) & Deaf-Blind International Asian Conference
Jawalakhel, Lalitpur, Nepal
17-19 November 2004**

(For further information please visit www.icevi.org)

**7) 2004 World Bank International Disability Conference
Washington D.C.
30 November – 1 December 2004**

Source: www.worldbank.org/disability

**8) World Blind Union Women's Assembly & 6th
World Blind Union General Assembly
Cape Town, South Africa
3-10 December 2004**

(For further information please visit www.wbucapetown2004.org)

**9) 2nd Regional Seminar on Creating a Barrier-free and
Rights-based Society for Children and Persons with
Disability
Dhaka, Bangladesh
3-5 December 2004**

The Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation, Foundation for the Developmentally Disabled, Shishu Bikash Network, and the Child Development Network are organizing this Seminar, focusing on the holistic social perspective for children with disabilities.



Editorial Message

Warm greetings to all APCD Empowerment Newsletter readers! In this 9th APCD Empowerment Newsletter we are proud to say that the increased number of contributions from the focal/associate organizations and all other disability-concerned organizations is much appreciated. APCD can be a satellite sharing the empowering disability-related information within the Asia and Pacific region

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