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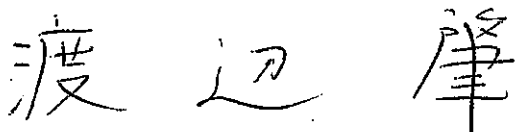
**MINUTES OF MEETINGS
BETWEEN
THE JAPANESE MID-TERM EVALUATION TEAM
AND
THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND
ON
THE JAPANESE TECHNICAL COOPERATION
FOR ASIA-PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER ON DISABILITY PROJECT**

The Japanese Mid-term Evaluation Team (hereinafter referred to as “the Team”) organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (hereinafter referred to as “JICA”), headed by Mr. Hajime WATANABE visited Thailand from May 15th to May 28th, 2005, for the purpose of the joint mid-term evaluation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project (hereinafter referred to as “the Project”).

During its stay in Thailand, the Team had a series of discussions with the Thai authorities concerned, jointly evaluated the achievements of the Project, and exchanged views of the Project.

As a result of the study and discussions, both sides agreed to report to their respective Governments the matters referred to in the document attached hereto.

Bangkok, May 27th, 2005



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Leader,
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

It is estimated that there are over 600 million persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the world today, two-thirds of them living in the Asian-Pacific region. Given the size of the population and the significance of the issues and challenges that they face, further efforts must be made to support PWDs in order to reduce the socio-economic gap that exists between disabled and non-disabled persons.

For two decades, considerable effort has been made to promote full participation and an improved quality of life of PWDs in the Asia-Pacific region. The UN declared 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons, and the years 1983 to 1992 as the UN Decade of Disabled Persons. During that period, the UN facilitated the implementation of government policies for PWDs in various countries. In 1992, the 48th General Assembly of the UN ESCAP resolved that the decade from 1993 to 2002 would be the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons and that the governments in the Region should be responsible for the implementation of the Agenda for Action in cooperation with relevant non-government organizations.

JICA and the Government of Thailand discussed the matters of establishing of an Asia-Pacific regional center on disability since 1998, in order to support the implementation of the Agenda for Action. The regional center, which is located in Thailand, is intended to benefit PWDs in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

In this context, in October 2000, the Thai Government officially requested the Japanese Government's cooperation in establishing the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD). In response, the Government of Japan decided to implement "the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project (hereinafter referred to as "the Project"). The Record of Discussions (hereinafter referred to as "the R/D") was signed on July 9, 2002. The duration of the Project is five years from August 1, 2002.

At this time, approximately, 2 years remaining, a Team was dispatched by JICA for the purpose of evaluating the achievements at the mid-term of the Project.

1.2. Objective of the Evaluation

1) To grasp the inputs of the Thai / Japanese sides and summarize the achievements of the Implementation Plan of the Project.

2) To execute a comprehensive evaluation of the achievements at the mid-term of the Project from the viewpoint of five components of the evaluation (explained later in this document).

3) To make recommendations on the future perspective of the Project and to lead lessons learned from the Project to technical cooperation in the same field through data obtained by the evaluation process.

1.3. Major Activities of the Team

Date		Major Activities
May 15	Sunday	Arrival of the Japanese consultant in Bangkok
May 16	Monday	Meeting with JICA Experts
May 17	Tuesday	Meeting with Thai Evaluation Team Discussion about Method of Evaluation
May 18	Wednesday	Interview with APCD Resource Persons, Executive Board Members, and Staff (Individual)

May 19	Thursday	Visit to DPI/Asia-Pacific to interview Mr. Topong KulKhanchit Back to APCD to interview Ms. Panita Kambhu Na Ayudhaya
May 20	Friday	Visit to RVSD to interview Mr. Supornum Monkolsawadi
May 22	Sunday	Arrival of the Japan Mid-term Evaluation Team
May 23	Monday	Visit to Nakhonprathom IL Center
May 24	Tuesday	Discussion with Ms. Kanitta, APCD Director Participating in APCD Presentation of APCD Activities based on the PDM by the Thai Counterparts
May 25	Wednesday	Visit to Thailand Association for the Blind Discussion and interview with Mr. Monthian Buntan Visit to National Association of the Deaf in Thailand Visit to Disabled Peoples' International/Asia-Pacific Region
May 26	Thursday	Meeting on the Results of the Evaluation and M/M
May 27	Friday	Meeting on the Results of the Evaluation and M/M Signing ceremony of the Minutes of Meetings
May 28	Saturday	Leave Bangkok

1.4. Evaluators

The mid-term evaluation was jointly carried out by the both Japanese and Thai evaluators.

Japanese Evaluation Team

Mr. Hajime Watanabe, Team Director, Social Security Team, Group II, Human Development Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Mr. Ryosuke Matsui, Professor, Faculty of Social Policy & Administration, Hosei University

Ms. Yukiko Nakanishi, President, Asia Disability Institute

Mr. Yohei Takahashi, Social Security Team, Group II, Human Development Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Ms. Hisami Nakamura, Consultant, Overseas Project Management Consultants, Ltd.

Thai Evaluation Team

Ms. Ubol Limsakul, Deputy Director-General, Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection, and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

Ms. Achara Yodpetch, Social Welfare Strategic Planning Chief, Department of Social Development and Welfare

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Ms. Phongpenkae Dhephassadin Na Ayuthaya, Foreign Affairs Coordination Chief, Department of Social Development and Welfare

Ms. Suthanone Fungtammasan, Program Officer, Evaluation Unit, Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) ,Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Opas Pimonvichakij, Planning and Strategic Division Chief, Bureau of Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Wiriya Namsiripongpun, Professor, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University

1.5. Method of Evaluation

The original Project Design Matrix (PDM) jointly approved on July 9, 2002, is a guideline of the evaluation together with the plan of operation presented in the R/D of the Project. Achievement of the Project has been evaluated by the following five criteria through discussion between both sides.

a. Relevance

Relevance of the Project plan is reviewed by the validity of the Project purpose and the overall goal in connection with the development policy of the Government of Thailand and the needs of the beneficiaries as well as the logical consistency of the Project plan.

b. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is assessed by evaluating to what extent the Project has achieved its purpose and clarifying the relationship between the purpose and outputs.

c. Efficiency

Efficiency of the Project implementation is analyzed with an emphasis on the relationships between outputs and inputs in terms of timing, quality and quantity.

d. Impact

Impacts of the Project are assessed by either positive or negative influences caused by the Project.

e. Sustainability

Sustainability of the Project is assessed in organizational, financial and technical aspects by examining the extent to which the achievement of the Project will be sustained and expanded after the Project's completion.

2. Project Achievement

2.1. Inputs

2.1.1. Inputs from Japanese side

The following inputs have been provided by JICA for the Project.

(1) Dispatch of Experts

Four (4) long term experts and twenty seven (27) short-term experts were dispatched and assigned.

The subject/fields of the long-term experts are as follows:

- Chief Advisor

- Project Coordinator
- Development of Training for PWDs
- ICT (Information Support and ICT Accessibility)

The subject/fields of the short-term experts are as follows:

- Independent Living/Peer Counseling (8)
- Non-handicap / barrier-free Environment (4)
- Community-based Rehabilitation (2)
- Capacity building of Self-help Organizations (2)
- ICT (Web-based Networking, ICT for All, ICT for Visually Impaired Persons, ICT Training Course Management) (5)
- Human Rights of PWDs (1)
- PWDs-Friendly Information Provision (Learning Materials) (2)
- Empowerment of PWDs (2)
- Operation and Management of NGO Training (1)

(2) Provision of Equipment

Equipment necessary for the Project such as a bus with a lift, wheelchairs, office furniture, digital camera, computer sets, and LAN system was installed in the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (hereinafter referred as to “the Center”).

(3) Local Cost Disbursement

The Japanese side has allocated and appropriated a necessary budget for the activities of the Japanese experts as shown in following table.

Unit: Thai Bahts			
Japanese Fiscal Year	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004
Cost for Project Implementation	8,500,000	18,900,000	26,100,000

(4) Counterpart Training in Japan

Sixteen (16) counterparts were trained in Japan. The subjects of the training courses were as follows:

- Disability Policy (6)
- Independent Living/Peer Counseling (2)
- Disability-related Human Resource Development Training Management (5)
- ICT related (3)

(5) Grant Aid

The Japanese government provided the Project with the total amount of 538 million Japanese yen as a grant aid to implement “the Project for the Construction of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability”

- 47 million Japanese yen for a detailed design for the Project for Construction in FY 2002,
- 210 million Japanese yen for construction in FY2003,
- 281 million Japanese yen for construction in FY2004.

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2.1.2. Inputs from the Thai Side

The following inputs have been provided by the Thai side.

(1) Assignment of Counterpart Personnel

7 counterparts and 11 temporary officials were assigned.

(2) Provision of Land

Land of 4,500 m² for the administrative and training buildings of the Center was provided by the Thai side.

(3) Disbursement for the Utility and Daily Administrative Costs of the Project

The Thai side has allocated a budget for utility and administrative costs, including personnel costs, of the Project. The budget allocated for each year is as follows:

	Unit: Thai Bahts		
Japanese Fiscal Year	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004
Cost for the Project Operation	686,823	4,565,731	7,319,328

*The cost includes: 1) APCD building preconstruction and maintenance, 2) Utilities and infrastructure, 3) Training Course payment for Thai participants, and 4) Administration cost, including personnel.

2.2. Outputs

The achievement of the outputs through the corresponding activities is measured by the indicators of the PDM.

Output1. The Center will facilitate networking and collaboration among relevant agencies/groups.

Indicator 1.1: Number of the Center's focal point organizations identified

Indicator 1.2: Number of the Center's associate organizations identified.

Thirty seven (37) mission teams were dispatched to 18 countries in Asia-Pacific Region for networking and collaboration between APCD and disability-related organizations since the Project started in 2002.

As a result, twenty-four (24) government focal point organizations, four (4) NGO focal point organizations in 24 countries and eighty-six (86) associate organizations, which are engaged in PWDs support activities in 20 countries have been identified and signed minutes of memorandum with the Center. The total number of focal point and associate organizations is one-hundred and fourteen (114) as of May 2005.

In addition, NGO forum was organized by the Center in July 29 to 31,2004 in Bangkok, Thailand, participated by thirty- four (34) persons.

Output 2. The Center will provide information support for the overall goal of the project.

Indicator 2.1 Number of visitors to the Center's homepage

APCD Website has been opened since October 2002. The average numbers of visitors and page views of APCD website per month have steadily increased.

	Oct 02- Mar 03	Apr 03-Sept 03	Oct 03- Mar 04	Apr 04- Sept 04	Oct 04- Mar 05
Average number of HP visitors per month	N/A	110	669	1,736	3,200
Average number of page views per month	N/A	415	3,714	6,497	10,235

Indicator 2.2 Number of visitors to the Center for information support:

Since the Information Resource Room has not yet been opened to the public, there is no track record of the number of visitors to the Center for information support.

Indicator 2.3 Number of users of the Center's information referral services and their satisfaction:

The Center provided information referral services to 28 focal point, 86 associate and 430 relevant organizations through the APCD missions, website and e-mail communications. Since November 2002, there have been approximately 20 requests per month by e-mail for disability information. In addition, 52 individuals requested Newsletters and 96 individuals requested an APCD video online.

Indicator 2.4 Number and contents of the information from focal point /associate organizations in the region to be linked with the Center's homepage

Two-hundred and three (203) regional news and case studies were reported in APCD Newsletters vol.1 to vol. 10, which are also uploaded on APCD's website as of May 1st, 2005. The main contents and the number of information are as follows:

- Fifteen (15) country profiles,
- Six-hundred and sixty-nine (669) organization profiles,
- One-hundred and eight (108) information on trainings from 5 countries.

The APCD website is linked to 312 of 544 relevant organizations from 38 countries in the region (122 government organizations, 332 NGOs, 58 international NGOs, and 32 international organizations) and 27 organizations are linked to the website.

Indicator 2.5 Number and contents of publications to be produced/edited:

Ten (10) Newsletters (vol.1-10), with two-hundred and three (203) regional news and case studies, have been published since October 2002 on a quarterly basis. A total of 23,759 copies were distributed to 40 countries, of which 25 are developing countries. More than 9,000 copies of pamphlets and 3,360 videos /VCDs have been distributed to the focal point and associate organizations, and relevant agencies and organizations. Country profiles on disability for 15 countries were compiled and uploaded on the APCD website.

The following three kinds of accessible training materials and manuals were developed to support the training courses implemented by the Center.

- Web-Accessible Guideline,
- Altair Tutorial for Beginners,
- Training Module for DAISY Production.

Output 3. The Center will develop disability-related human resources leading to the overall goal of the Project in cooperation with relevant agencies/groups.

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Indicator 3.1 Number of training courses conducted:

13 regional and 1 domestic training courses were organized by the Center until May 2005. The detailed information including the title of the course and the number of participants, are as follows:

	Date	Title of the Course	Venue	No. of Participants
1	Feb. 25- Mar. 11, 2003	Regional Training Courses for Trainers on the Promotion of a Non-Handicapping Environment for PDWs	Bangkok, Thailand	31 (9 countries)
2	July 3-12, 2003	Sub-regional Training Course on Workshop for Strengthening CBR Movement	Chiang Mai, Thailand	22 (5 countries)
3	July 21-Aug.1, 2003	Regional Workshop on Web-based Networking	Bangkok, Thailand	22 (11 countries)
4	Sep.10-20, 2003	Training Workshop on Capacity Building for Self-help Organizations for PWDs	Bangkok, Thailand	23 (6 countries)
5	Feb 18-22, 2004	Non-handicap Environment Workshop for National Trainers and Policy Makers	Bangkok, Thailand	20 (former participants) 15 (policy makers)
6	Mar 16-18, 2004	Workshop on Human Rights of Marginalized Disability Groups: Voices of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities	Bangkok, Thailand	17 (ID course) 18 (PD course)
7	June 22- July 4, 2004	Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking	Bangkok, Thailand	23 (10 countries)
8	Aug 10-30, 2004	Training of Initiators for Self-help Groups of PWDs towards Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development	Pataya City, Thailand	22 (3 countries)
9	Oct 20-Nov 9, 2004	Training to Strengthen CBR through a Participatory Comprehensive Approach	Khon Kaen Province, Thailand	17 (3 countries)
10	23 Nov -17 Dec, 2004	Training of ICT for Visually Impaired Persons	Bangkok, Thailand	9 (6 countries)
11	Dec. 13-17, 2004	Capacity Building of Self-help Organizations	Hanoi, Vietnam	49 (19 countries)
12	Feb 1-18, 2005	Training of ICT for ALL: the Digital Accessible Information System for Persons with Print Disability	Bangkok, Thailand	11 (3 countries)
13	Mar 1-18, 2005	Training of Managerial Personnel of Independent Living Centers for PWDs	Bangkok, Thailand	14 (2 countries)
14	Mar 1-4, 14-18, 2005	Refresher Training Course in Peer-Counseling for PWDs (in-country training)	Bangkok, Thailand	9 (3 provinces)

In addition, the Center provided technical support for the following seminars and training workshops held in Bangkok.

	Date	Title of the Course	Venue	No. of Participants
1	Jan 27- Feb 1, 2003	The 2nd National Seminar on Independent Living	Bangkok, Thailand	> 300 (Jan. 27 th) 37 (Jan.27- Feb. 1)
2	Jan 26-31, 2004	The 3 rd National Seminar on Independent Living	Bangkok, Thailand	236 (Jan. 26 th) 55 (Jan. 27-31)
3	Mar 1-2, 2004	Training on the Promotion of Non-handicapping Environments (in-country training)	Bangkok, Thailand	110

Indicator 3.2 Number of participants of the training courses

Three-hundred and twenty-one (321) persons (159-no disability, 97-physical disability, 34-visual disability, 15-hearing disability, 7-intellectual disability, 9-psychiatric disability) participated in the APCD training courses from 22 countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. The selection of participants for the training courses was well-balanced in regards to gender and the types of disabilities.

Indicator 3.3 Satisfaction level with the training courses felt by the participants

According to the questionnaires of the training participants after completing the training courses, most of the participants were satisfied. According to “the APCD Former Training Participant Survey” (hereinafter referred as to “the Training Participant Survey”) conducted by the Center in March 2005, ninety-five percent of the respondents said that the training was useful. It can be considered that the overall satisfaction level of the participants with the training courses was very high.

Indicator 3.4 Number of participants who have reported/shared the contents of the training to/with their organizations

According to the Training Participants Survey, 34% of the respondents organized meetings, training courses and workshops in their countries after the training courses by the Center. Regarding the rights of PWDs, 35% of the respondents shared the knowledge and experience obtained through the workshop and provided awareness to the members of their own organizations.

In addition, one-hundred fifteen (115) participants, who were monitored by HRD missions dispatched to eight countries in 2004, had reported/shared the contents of their training to/with their organizations after returning from their training.

In addition, twenty (20) participants of the 2004 NHE follow-up training, who were outstanding ex-trainees in the past years and were invited for further capacity development, and reported/shared the contents of their training to/with other relevant organizations in their countries, in addition to their own organizations.

Indicator 3.5 Utilization of skills, knowledge, technologies, etc. obtained by the participants in their organizations

Since April 2004, the ex-trainees started to report to the Center on their post training activities in their respective countries. Most of ex-trainees found they could contribute to strengthening their existing activities or initiating/promoting new activities based on the skills or knowledge obtained in the training courses. There are some outstanding activities which the ex-trainees are engaged in:

- CBR activities in Viet Nam,
- SHO activities in Myanmar,

- IL and Peer Counseling activities in Pakistan and Thailand,
- NHE activities in India, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand,
- ICT related activities in India, Indonesia, and Viet Nam.

Indicator 3.6 Number and contents of the associate organizations' training activities supported by the Center

The Center provided support to the training activities organized by associate organizations providing training materials, dispatching of experts, and advisory service to plan the training course.

The following activities were reported by the end of April 2005:

- WBN Training in Indonesia in March 2005 and Nepal in April 2005, supported by PROVIDING TRAINING MATERIALS
- WBN Training in Indonesia in March 2005 and NHE Training in the Philippines in March 2005, supported by APCD RESOURCE PERSONS & JICA EXPERTS

Output 4. The Center will take the necessary administrative measures to ensure its sustainability.

Indicator 4.1 Establishment of an Endowment Fund/ a Foundation solely for the Center:

The Foundation of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (FAPCD) was registered on July 19, 2004. The main objectives of the Foundation are:

- to support APCD's activities.
- to support and promote empowerment through the training of PWDs in the Asia-Pacific region,
- to support and promote empowerment through the training of disability-related individuals and organizations in the Asia-Pacific region,

Indicator 4.2 Establishment of the Board of Trustees for the Endowment Fund/Foundation:

The Board of FAPCD is regarded as the Board of Trustees shown in the organizational chart in R/D as of July 9, 2002.

The Board of FAPCD is chaired by H.E. former Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr. Tanin Kraiwichien and consists of 22 members, including 2 persons with disabilities. The number of Board members is expected to increase to 35.

Indicator 4.3 Amount of the Endowment Fund/assets of the Foundation:

The Endowment Fund amounts to 3,048,457.78 Thai Bahts as of May 2005. The source of the funds is as follows:

- 2,336,000 Bahts donated by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn,
- 692,000 Bahts donated by Ms. Yukiko Nakanishi,
- 11,000 Bahts donated by universities in the United States.

Indicator 4.4 Number of the Evaluations conducted of the Project:

Five (5) monitoring activities of the Center conducted by May 2005 were reported to the Joint Coordinating Committee. The mid-term evaluation was jointly conducted by the Thai and Japanese sides.

Indicator 4.5 Number of Research and Development (R&D) activities promoted by the Center:

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One (1) study was carried out, "A Comprehensive Study of Public Autonomous Organizations in Thailand as APCD's Pathway to Becoming an Independent Organization" by Professor. Wiriya Namsiripongpun of Thamasaat University. This study was accepted by the Executive Board of the Center.

Indicator 4.6 Number of activities for promoting human rights concerning disability issues supported by the Center:

The Center participated in the UNESCAP Human Rights Meeting in October 2003.

One (1) Workshop on Human Rights of Marginalized Disability Groups was conducted by APCD in March 2004.

In June 2004, APCD presented the Human Rights Issue of Intellectual and Psychiatric Disabilities at the Thematic Working Groups on Disability-related Concerns(TWGDC)/ESCAP meeting.

Also, in APCD's Newsletter Vol. 7, the human rights issue is reported.

In addition, the Center incorporated contents related to the human rights of PWDs into all the training courses they implemented.

2.3. Project Purpose

The Center will be established to promote empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The progress towards achieving the project purpose can be verified by the following three indicators shown in the PDM.

a. The Center is recognized by relevant organizations as a Center that promotes empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society.

Since the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action (BMF) to promote the goals of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for PWDs under the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons declared by UNESCAP, guides the collaboration with the Center as a part of strategies on regional collaboration, the Center has been well recognized by relevant organizations in the ESCAP region as a Center to promote the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society in the Asia and Pacific region.

Recognition of the Center in the international community has been ensured through the partnerships with international organizations, international NGOs such as Disabled Peoples' International (DPI), World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and Handicap International, and Minutes of Memorandums between the Center with focal points and associate organizations. For example, in the assembly resolution of ESCAP, No. E/ESCAP/L 161, dated 18 May 2005, it is mentioned that the Center is an ESCAP partner in ensuring the implementation of the BMF and has requested that the partnership between ESCAP and the Center be strengthened in order to promote empowerment of PWDs.

Through the activities of networking and collaboration, information support and human resource development, the Center has been recognized by focal point and associate organizations as well.

b. The Center is equipped for networking and collaboration among relevant agencies/groups, information support, and disability-related human resource development training for the Asia-Pacific

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region.

At the start of the Project, the necessary number of human resources, including the experts, the counterparts, operation staff, and administration staff were assigned. The Center was operated by these human resources without the necessary facilities for the activities planned. External facilities were utilized such as conference rooms of hotels. After the administration and training buildings of the Center were completed in November 2004, the Center was fully equipped physically for the activities of networking, information support and human resource development.

c. The Center is well managed.

Although the Executive Board is a decision making body in the organizational chart of the Center, the Managerial Meeting, which is composed of the Director, Section Chiefs and the Japanese experts, prepares and plans management issues and the activities of the Center. Every six months, the Managerial Meeting reports to the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) and obtains approval of the plans by the JCC. The JCC is composed of the main stakeholders of the Center, including representatives of NGOs of PWDs, the relevant government offices of Thailand, JICA, UNESCAP and the APCD Secretariat. Since most JCC members are also members of the Executive Board, the JCC practically substitutes the decision making function of the Executive Board. The Executive Board's function must be clarified for the future.

It is noteworthy that resource persons with disabilities participate in the management and operation of the Center. They are involved in not only the decision making process of the Center but also in operation of training courses for disability-related human resource development from planning to evaluation through the task forces. The participatory approach makes the management of the Center effective for empowerment of PWDs.

In the planned organizational chart attached to the Record of Discussion as of July 9th, 2002, the International Advisory Board (IAB) was to be established. However, it has not yet been established. The Thai and Japanese sides will further study the necessity of an IAB in the future.

For the Project, the financial resources have been provided by the Thai government and JICA providing the budget required for the operation and administration of the Center.

The technical and knowledge transfer from the Japanese experts to their counterparts and the mobilization of resource persons contributed to the capacity building of the operation and management of the Center.

2.4. Overall Goal

Empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society will be strongly promoted in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Although it is too early to discuss the achievement of the overall goal since the Project has just reached the mid-point of the Project period, some achievements by the Project have already been observed by the APCD missions to the targeting countries.

The progress towards achieving the overall goal can be verified by the following four indicators. All four indicators were affected by the accomplishment of the outputs from activities of networking and collaboration, information support and human resource development.

a. The Center is able to cooperate with relevant agencies/groups in the region in formulating and carrying out policies promoting the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society

In some targeting countries, Cook Islands, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the governments formulated and executed policies to promote the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society. While the APCD missions to the target countries facilitated the government to implement legislation on disability in India, the ex-trainees of the Center's training courses initiated activities to enforce a law to promote a non-handicapping environment in the Philippines. All the activities of the Center greatly contributed to making an impact on policies.

b. The Center is able to collaborate in its activities with focal point organizations and associate organizations in developing countries in the region.

Significant efforts of the APCD missions, which were well-prepared and well-targeted, have brought about successful collaboration with focal point and associate organizations in developing countries. The Center has been collaborating with focal point and associate organizations in the implementation of training courses, information support and the mobilization of resource persons. The Center has prioritized its collaboration with focal point and associate organizations due to its limited capacity and resources.

c. Relevant agencies/groups supported by the Center are able to access and share information with others in the region.

The APCD website has contributed to sharing disability related information, including country profiles on disability for 15 countries. The web-based networking promoted by the Center has supported information sharing in accessible format among the relevant agencies and groups in the region, even though there is still limited access to internet in the region. The information support activities have an impact on information sharing and the improvement of information accessibility in the region.

d. Participants of the Center's training are able to utilize their obtained knowledge and skills in their home countries

The participants of the Center's training have been proactively utilizing their knowledge and skills obtained through the training courses in which they participated and contributed in promoting the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society in their home countries. This has been accomplished through the outputs of the human resource development activities by the Center.

3. Evaluation by Five Criteria

3.1. Relevance

The Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, which was declared by ESCAP, has been challenging the promotion of the inclusion of disabled persons in the mainstream development process based on the needs of disabled persons. The regional initiative for PWDs in the ESCAP region has been supported by the governments that signed Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of PWDs in the Asia-Pacific Region including Thailand and Japan.

The overall goal is consistent with the objective of the Decade to initiate, "development of

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opportunities for full participation and equality of PWDs”, and the goal of the BMF, “an inclusive, barrier-free and right-based society for PWDs in the Asia-Pacific region”. The project purpose is also relevant to the seven priority areas of the Decade.

Although the current target group defined by the PDM is consistent with the organizational mission of the Center, the target group should be more clearly defined according to the Center’s strategy based on the needs of PWDs in the region, as well as the resources and capacity of the Center.

The Project is highly relevant for the needs of PWDs and the disability-related and ODA policies of Thailand and Japan.

3.2. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is assessed by the achievement of the project purpose and the extent its outputs have contributed towards achieving it.

The statement of the project purpose, “the Center will be established” does not give a clear idea what the Project should achieve at the end of the Project. However, it can be clarified by the three indicators regarding the recognition of the Center by relevant organizations, the status of physical equipment and staff allocation, and the management of the Center.

Assessment of effectiveness of the Project is made on the basis of the extent of the accomplishment of the four outputs which affect the accomplishment of the project purpose verified by those three indicators.

The outputs resulted from the activities of networking with focal point and associate organizations and human resource development also contributed considerably to the establishment of the Center physically as well as functionally. The information support activities through the APCD website, APCD Empowerment Newsletters, and the pamphlets are another factors which demonstrate the presence of the Center on disabilities in the region.

The necessary arrangement of management and administration, including human capacity and financial resources was properly made in order to implement the Project. The outputs related to administrative measures to ensure sustainability, which should be verified by the indicators in the PDM have not yet been fully achieved the target and have made a limited contribution to the achievement of the project purpose.

The organizational mission is shared by the stakeholders of the Center, including the relevant persons and organizations engaged in the implementation of the Project in spite of the fact that the project purpose is not clearly defined. The shared organizational mission greatly contributed to raising the effectiveness of the Project.

3.3. Efficiency

The inputs for the Project provided by both the Thai and Japanese sides have been well-utilized in order to accomplish the expected outputs, in particular, networking and collaboration activities, information support and human resource development.

The required human resources were properly put into the Project on time, in quantity and expertise. The Center, therefore, utilized external facilities, such as hotels, for the implementation of 9 training courses until the completion of the functional construction. The necessary facilities of the Center, including buildings for administration and training, were constructed by grant aid from the Japanese government in November 2004. After the Center’s own facilities were completed, the costs of training courses were reduced and the efficiency of the training courses increased due to the

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accessibility and barrier-free design of the facilities.

There are some parts of the facilities constructed by the Japanese grant which have not been fully used. One is the space for the Information Resource Room. Since the functions of the Information Resource Room are under discussion, it has been under developed and not been open to the public as planned. Another area, the office spaces for relevant organizations and the bus with a lift have not been utilized. The government regulations on utilization of government property and the transaction of income generated by the utilization of government property require the Center to take procedures in order to rent out the spaces to the Center's relevant organizations. It is expected that the Center can obtain an approval to rent out the spaces and necessary measures shall be taken for effective utilization of the bus with a lift.

There are three main factors to efficiently accomplish the outputs. One factor is to effectively transfer technical knowledge concerning the operation and management of the Center from the Japanese experts to the Thai counterparts, the project staff and resource persons. Also, human resource mobilization, including PWDs with expertise for training, is the other key factor to increase not only the efficiency but also the effectiveness of the Project. In addition, the participatory approach in the training courses also contributed to the efficiency and effectiveness of the training courses.

Another area is strategic targeting with pre-activity research of the targeted countries. Although the target area for the Project is the entire Asia-Pacific region, the Project prioritized countries in the region. The pre-activity research and analysis enabled the appropriate target groups to be identified for each activity and obtain concrete results from the activities.

3.4. Impact

The project has made a significant impact on the empowerment of PWDs and the promotion of a barrier-free society in targeted countries. The key factor leading to the impact is the strong motivation and commitment of the stakeholders of the Project, in particular the resource persons with disabilities and the participants of the human resource development activities. They are playing the role of "agents of change" to achieve the overall goal of the Project as well as the objective of the BMF. Since they have a strong will to empower PWDs and promote a barrier-free society, the Project has promoted the movement to empower PWDs and to realize a barrier-free society. The following impacts have been observed so far.

(1) Policy and Institutional Impacts

The networking and collaboration activities of the Center facilitated contacts between governments and organizations of PWDs. Through the Center's activities, governments of the targeted countries were encouraged and motivated to make a commitment to policy making and take action for PWDs. The human resource development activities also brought about an impact on policy making in the targeted countries through the activities initiated by the empowered ex-trainees of the Center's training courses.

(2) Social and Cultural Impacts

The human resource activities have affected the societies and communities of the ex-trainees. The training courses by the Center empowered not only the ex-trainees but also the PWDs that surround them through their post-training activities. The ex-trainees fully utilized knowledge and skills gained

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in the training courses, such as CBR, IL, Peer Counseling, SHO, NHE and ICT. It is expected that these impacts will bring about a larger impact on the empowerment of PWDs and the promotion of a barrier-free society in the region.

Improvement of accessibility promoted by the information support activities has led to an increase in the awareness of PWDs towards an inclusive and barrier-free society through the APCD website, newsletters and e-mail communications.

(3) Technical Impacts

The Project has also brought about a substantial technical impact on information accessibility. For example, in Indonesia, the ex-trainees of the ICT training initiated activities for web-accessibility by collaboration between associate organizations and the government of Indonesia. In addition, training materials developed by the Center have significantly contributed to promoting information accessibility through the activities of the associate organizations.

3.5. Sustainability

The Project has been making a positive impact on promoting the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society. It is expected the impact resulting from the outputs of the Project will sustain and contribute to achieving the overall goal.

On the other hand, the following factors are critical to ensure sustainability of the Center's operation.

(1) Organizational status of the Center

Presently, there is discussion on how the Center can become a "Public Autonomous Organization", including decision making on the management and operation, fund raising, budgeting, and staffing with the participation of PWDs. The roadmap towards a "Public Autonomous Organization" should be clarified as soon as possible.

(2) The participatory-based management and operation of the Center

The key issue for the Center to sustain the positive effect of its activities is to ensure full participation of PWDs in the management and operation since the overall goal is to promote the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society, which requires strong commitment and ownership (sense of belonging) of PWDs.

(3) Mobilization of human resources for the Center activities

It is essential to have sustainable operation and management of the Center to keep up its activities in order to achieve the overall goal and mobilize human resources in the region, including resource persons from Thailand and other countries in the region.

(4) Technical transfer from Japanese experts to counterparts, the Center staff and resource persons

Since the Center has various groups of stakeholders and covers a large target region with 43 countries, it is necessary for the Center to play the role of a facilitator and a catalyst among stakeholders with different interests in the activities of the Center. Technical transfer on facilitation at the international level from the Japanese experts to key persons, including the counterparts, the Center staff and resource persons is necessary in order to maintain the current activities.

In particular, regarding the information support activities, an information support advisor could be recruited in order to enhance the sustainability of information support activities after 2007 when the

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Japanese ICT expert leaves the Center.

(5)Promotion of localization of the Center's activities through the APCD network

Localization of the Center activities through the APCD network with the focal points, associate organizations and relevant organizations is a crucial factor to sustain the current activities and stimulate greater impact from the outputs with limited financial and human resources. Utilization of the APCD network enables the Center to implement more domestic training courses in the target countries with lower costs and to provide effective support for the activities of the associate organizations. For example, alumni organizations were associated and they initiated trainings to empower PWDs in Cambodia and Viet Nam.

4. Conclusion of the Evaluation

The Project has reached concrete outcomes through the accomplished outputs of the activities for networking and collaboration, information support, and human resource development to empower PWDs and promote a barrier-free society. The Project has also made a significant impact on society in general by increasing awareness of PWDs and increasing the public awareness of disabilities.

The driving-force of the Project is participatory operation and management of the Center. The highly-committed stakeholders, including PWDs, are planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and following-up the core activities of the Center. The highly motivated participants of the training courses implemented by the Center have created chain reactions to promote the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society in their own countries. Therefore, it can be expected that the outcomes of the Project can be sustained and reached out to societies in the targeted countries through the empowered ex-trainees and empowered PWDs.

From the viewpoints of the five evaluation criteria, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact, the achievement of the Project is significant and outstanding.

Since the Project is moving towards the final stage, the issues concerning sustainability of the Center need to be addressed.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the evaluation of the Project, the Thai and Japanese sides recommend to take the following measures.

(1) Strategic targeting and prioritization of the activities by the Center

Although the target group of the Project is PWDs in the Asia-Pacific region, the Center has strategically targeted countries and focused activities on those prioritized countries due to the limitation of both financial and human resources. On the other hand, it is necessary for the Center to reach out to the outputs of the activities of other countries and to follow-up on the activities of the associate organizations in order to achieve the overall goal.

For the remaining period of the Project, the Center needs to prioritize countries and the activities from the viewpoint of sustainability and feasibility based on the resources after 2007. It is suggested that the Project set criteria for target countries of the Center and also target countries in each activity.

(2)Public relations strategy of the Center

In order to enhance the international recognition of the Center in the Asia-Pacific region, a well-targeted public relations strategy of the Center is essential. The public relations strategy should

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select cost effective media. Effective utilization of the Information Resource Room can be included as a part of public relations strategy.

(3) Review of PDM

The analysis of the Project performance based on the current PDM indicates that there are some activities which are unclear in achieving the outputs. Some indicators are not necessarily adequate to assess the accomplishment of the outputs. The current PDM should be reviewed in order to reflect the reality of the Project and to develop effective activities as well as a monitoring system with appropriate verifiable indicators. It is also necessary to set a clear target of indicators as a guide for the Project in the next two years until the end of the Project since the current PDM does not include a target of indicators to be achieved.

(4) Arrangement of the Final Evaluation

Since the Center has various stakeholders with various needs from the different countries with different extent of accessibility, it is necessary to arrange field visits of focal point and associate organizations in order to review their activities as outcomes of the Project. In addition, the monitoring survey conducted by the Project should be well-designed and aligned to a survey for the final evaluation since a survey questionnaire for focal point and associate organizations as beneficiaries is inevitable but it should not be redundant. In particular, a survey for PWDs should be conducted in accessible format and give enough lead time to prepare their answers.

(5) Long term Commitment of the Center Staff

In order to assure the sustainability of the Center activities, the Thai and Japanese sides will make possible efforts to maintain the long term commitment of the Center staff during the Project and thereafter.

6. Lessons Learned

(1) Empowered PWDs Empowering the Other PWDs: Role Model Approach

The key success factor to promote empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society is "empowered PWDs empowering the other PWDs" by a role model approach which enables the target group of PWDs to recognize how to become empowered themselves. The majority of trainers of training courses by the Center are empowered PWDs. The role model approach of "Empowered PWDs empowering the other PWDs", therefore, can be effectively utilized by the participants of training courses in their community and they themselves can be role models of empowerment in their society.

(2) Promotion of accessible built-environment and information

The Center provides PWDs with accessible facilities as well as accessible information as a Center to promote empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society. Ensuring accessible built environment and information is prerequisite to realize an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for PWDs.

(3) Participatory Management and Operation

The participation of PWDs in the management and operation led to the significant impacts of the Project since the needs of PWDs for empowerment and a barrier-free society were well-identified by the PWDs. It also promoted an increase in public awareness of disabilities which leads to an inclusive

and accessible society for the empowerment of PWDs.

(4) Role of Facilitator and Catalyst of the Center

In developing countries, there is limited contact between the governments and organizations of PWDs, which is one constraint in promoting the empowerment of PWDs and a barrier-free society. The Center as a regional cooperative entity endorsed by the regional initiative for the implementation of the BMF, played the role of facilitator or catalyst by making contacts between governments and organizations of PWDs and increasing the awareness of disabilities.

(5) Pre-activity Research for well-targeted activities

In order to implement effective activities to realize the empowerment of PWDs, it is essential to assess the needs of the targeted area. In developing countries in general, however, PWDs are excluded from society and have less network amongst themselves. Therefore, the necessary data and information to assess the needs of PWDs is limited in those developing countries. By the detailed pre-activity research and analysis, the Project successfully targeted the beneficiaries, who can practice the model of empowerment in their communities.

(6) Arrangement of Evaluation for the Project's Activities at Country Level

In order to assess the outputs of the Project with regional activities, it is necessary to conduct field studies in the target countries since only a survey questionnaire cannot accurately reflect the views of the target groups in various countries.

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