



**ILO/APSDEP/Japan Technical Consultation
Meeting on APSDEP Information Network
OVTA Centre, Chiba, Japan, 5-8 March 2002**

FINAL REPORT



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1. Background

Since its establishment in 1979, APSDEP has played an important role in promoting human resource development through technical and further education and training (TVET) in the region.

APSDEP assists in improving the effectiveness of vocational training policies and systems through high quality, timely and relevant skill training. Increased emphasis is placed on the contribution that skill training makes to economic growth and improved living standards, particularly as countries adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of globalization, increased competitiveness and productivity, and the changing world of work.

APSDEP has provided valuable opportunities for direct exchange of experience and expertise in vocational training through technical meetings, workshops and related activities. One of these activities is the promotion of information dissemination and information networking in the region.

APSDIN, the original information network created by APSDEP in 1986, has been an important source for information exchange between APSDEP members on topics such as local research outcomes and research in progress in TVET, as well as a source for sharing printed material, for the last decade. However, moving with the advances in communication and technology, the current key tool used by APSDEP to disseminate topical TVET information among member countries is the Internet. To keep members and stakeholders up to date on APSDEP activities, the existing APSDEP website has been used and promoted as the main information dissemination channel over the last few years.

1.1 Rationale for a New APSDEP Information System

One of the main proposals that came out of the APSDEP Informal Consultation Meeting in Bangkok, in December 1998, was for the development of a new web-based information system linking APSDEP member countries to the ILO and enabling them to access a wide range of on-line information related to vocational training. Such a system would also function as an interactive management tool for the APSDEP Secretariat, facilitating improved communication between the Secretariat and member states, enhanced planning of APSDEP activities, and more efficient dissemination of APSDEP information, reports, documents, etc.

Unlike the existing Asian and Pacific Skill Development Information Network (APSDIN), which has primarily evolved into a documentation and referral system coordinated by one member institution (NCVER), the new approach aims to exploit the potential of the Internet for accessing global information and developments in vocational training both within and outside the Asia/Pacific region. In addition to updated information on the objectives and activities of APSDEP, the proposed system will be in collaboration with the ILO's existing Internet web site, thereby facilitating access to APSDEP information on Governments, its social partners and the ILO field and headquarters structure.

However, the format and contents of the website remain unattractive, or difficult to access, especially for those member countries that are novices in the use of computers and/or access to the Internet. Besides current news on APSDEP activities, there are no additional significant access points of newsworthy

information or relevant features attractive to member countries, to encourage members to take full advantage of this site.

In order to strengthen information networking, as well as the promotion of the existing APSDEP website as one of the major channels for information dissemination and networking in TVET in the region, the Japanese Government, as principal financial contributor to APSDEP, initiated the suggestion to discuss the future of the APSDEP information network and to start the process of updating and improving this website, by sponsoring this consultation meeting.

2. Objectives

The overall objective of the meeting was to develop the APSDEP Information Network including the creation of a new APSDEP website that will be functional, user-friendly and attractive to all APSDEP stakeholders.

This objectives were be reached by

1. Identifying users of the information services (this included identifying in-country stakeholders, as well as related local information networks)
2. Identifying and discussing user requirements and expectations relating to web-based information
3. Closely examining and mapping the existing APSDEP website
4. Exploring potential resources (electronic and paper based) that could be employed to enhance the present facility
5. Suggesting changes and improvements to the website
6. Obtain commitments of participants for ongoing contributions to the website
7. Suggesting follow-up activities

Attending the meeting were APSDEP focal point representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam (10 countries), together with employers' representatives from New Zealand and India, and workers' representatives from Singapore and Indonesia. A representative from OVTA, Japan (APSDEP's principal operational partner) also participated. (List of participants can be found as Annex 1). The delegate from Papua New Guinea was unable to attend but submitted a country report.

3. The meeting

The meeting was inaugurated at the opening Ceremony, with a greeting from Mr. Naoki Hamada, Chief Technical Adviser, ILO/APSDEP, who welcomed the participants on behalf of ILO/APSDEP, followed by a short address from Mr. Enomoto, Director - Overseas Cooperation Division, Human Resources Bureau Ministry of Labour, Health and Welfare, who greeted the participants on behalf of the Japanese government. He expressed the wish for a successful meeting, and for participants to enjoy the hospitality of OVTA and to explore the neighbourhood and to venture beyond the meeting rooms. Mr. Nobuhiro Uehara, Managing Director, Overseas Vocational Training Association (OVTA), welcomed participants on behalf of OVTA.

3.1 Overview of the Meeting

Mr Wattanin Potrayanont, Programme Officer, ILO/Japan Multi-bi Programme, spoke of the APSDEP's website potential to accelerate TVET research and Development, thanked the APSDEP Secretariat for their excellent preparations; he also introduced the resource persons, and thanked them for their planning, following he invited each participant to introduce themselves and to state their wishes for the outcomes of this meeting. He then introduced Ms Haraghey, APSDEP/ILO consultant, to provide an overview of the meeting. Ms Haraghey welcomed the delegates on behalf of the resource persons and outlined the programme (Annex 2), and explained the various activities planned. This presentation is attached as Annex 3.

3.2 Presentation and Discussion of the country reports

Each country, employers' and workers' delegates presented their reports and invited questions and discussions. The full reports are available separately from APSDEP. The following summary (in alphabetical order of country) contains the recommendations made in each individual report, relating to the APSDEP information network, and specific requests pertaining to the proposed improved APSDEP website.

Australia

- ❖ *Rejuvenate APSDIN (both as a source of information resources, as well as an established source of TVET information specialists), making this a useful and valuable group of focal points that can readily contribute input (especially content) to the website*

Bangladesh

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Statistics on TVET capacity*
- ❖ *Annual graduates figures (from trades and institutions)*
- ❖ *Curriculum, syllabi*
- ❖ *Future plans and development projects*
- ❖ *Evaluation reports on technical training*
- ❖ *Outcomes and resources of TVET conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.*
- ❖ *Employment outcomes of graduates*

China

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Not just general TVET content, but also information on different industries training*
- ❖ *Training knowledge, technical guidance and technical development trends*

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *It should be an ACTIVE site – it should attract attention*
- ❖ *Have plenty of band width, be efficient, convincing and accessible*

India

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Web site to be used and promoted as avenue for exchange of experience and expertise*

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Information about TVET institutions in AP Region, course schedules, course content etc*
- ❖ *Correlation of training courses offered in member countries*
- ❖ *Standardization of course content for wider acceptability and job opportunities in the country*
- ❖ *Certification of vocational skills required in region*
- ❖ *Research documents, training materials, etc*

Indonesia

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *One look, one feel, one style web site*
- ❖ *It should be consistent but not boring*
- ❖ *Technology versus traffic*
- ❖ *Good navigation bars*
- ❖ *Site map*
- ❖ *E – newsletters*
- ❖ *Member's own area (possibly requiring registration)*
- ❖ *Bulletin Boards*
- ❖ *Chat*
- ❖ *Polls*

Japan

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Basic Information on human resources development*
- ❖ *Laws relating to HRD*
- ❖ *Government documents, e.g. basic plans*
- ❖ *TVET systems*
- ❖ *TVET Institutions*
- ❖ *Statistical data concerning HRD*
- ❖ *Training trends in industries*
- ❖ *Survey and Research Reports*
- ❖ *Development of teaching materials*
- ❖ *Training techniques*
- ❖ *Useful examples of experiences in the field*

Korea

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *More technical reports and cases on developing SCANS, TVET curriculum development, occupational standard information*
- ❖ *Labour market information in region*
- ❖ *Open system (as against closed)*

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Participation of stakeholders*
- ❖ *BBS*
- ❖ *E-newsletter*
- ❖ *Links to stakeholders*
- ❖ *Addition of search engine*
- ❖ *Redesign of navigation*

Malaysia

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Research*
- ❖ *Curriculum*
- ❖ *Policy*
- ❖ *Assessment/evaluation*
- ❖ *Occupational skill standards*
- ❖ *White papers on new technologies*
- ❖ *Conference papers*

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Optimize website-access, services, expectations, satisfaction*
- ❖ *Maintenance*

Associated activity:

- ❖ *VIGOROUS MARKETING OF WEBSITE*

New Zealand

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Adequate speed, download service*
- ❖ *Easy access, good structure, logical design, clear sitemap*
- ❖ *Security virus protected*
- ❖ *Attractive (pleasing to the eye)*
- ❖ *Reliable*
- ❖ *Keep site fresh, dynamic*
- ❖ *Discussion opportunities*
- ❖ *Better navigation, A4 standards, etc.*
- ❖ *Increase scope of information via links*

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *How APSDEP supports initiatives (information on). Links to current programmes*

Philippines

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *General as well as relevant specific TVET information from APSDEP members*
- ❖ *Labor market information (plus networks) and databases*
- ❖ *Feature (highlight) best practices*

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Members (stakeholders) need more prominence (on home page?)*

Singapore

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Comprehensive information and advice on skills development programmes, not only AP region, but also international*
- ❖ *International best practices and successful programmes that can be used as models*
- ❖ *Integrated resource – shared lessons*

Sri Lanka

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Provide a forum to share experiences etc.*
- ❖ *Establish links with TVET websites in region*
- ❖ *Regional skills standards/training standards*

Content requests for the website:

- ❖ *Directory of Lead TVET institutions and APSDEP focal points, full contact details*
- ❖ *Links to ILO databases*
- ❖ *Bibliographic information, highlighting best practice*

Thailand

Physical and technical requirements for website:

- ❖ *Addition of a web board (BBS)*
- ❖ *Link to member countries to be fully operational*

Vietnam and Papua New Guinea

- ❖ *A website that provides a One-Stop-Shop for information on TVET and associated areas of interest*

3.3 Overview of APSDEP information sharing activities and achievements to date

To set the scene for the discussions pertaining to the future of APSDEP information activities, Ms Haraghey presented a paper on the history of APSDEP's information sharing activities over the past 23 years, and on the services and products APSDIN had provided over a 10-year period. The full paper is available as Annex 4

3.4 Computer based exercises, database demonstrations APSDEP website exploration

Ms Jeanne Mackenzie and Ms Marjolijn Haraghey introduced the delegates to a wide variety of TVET information services and encouraged participants to explore relevant databases. A number of hands-on computer-based sessions were held, where the current APSDEP website was extensively surveyed, and the areas that require improvement and modification mapped and noted, preparing participants for the ensuing discussions.

3.5 Discussions

During the split group discussions, the following topics were discussed:

Key Issues

- *Site Content*
- *Site Design*
- *Site Traffic*
- *Site Maintenance*

Site Content

- *Focussing on ...*
 - ❖ APSDEP Stakeholders
 - ❖ TVET and related topics
 - ❖ Current / Newsworthy information
 - ❖ Interaction & Participation of members and users
 - ❖ Communication ~ Links & Bulletin Boards

Site Design

- *Style Requirements*
 - ❖ User Friendly ~ Inviting, Clear, Simple
 - ❖ Exciting to visit ~ Links to new stuff
 - ❖ Current ~ Well Maintained
 - ❖ Logical Layout ~ General > Specific
 - ❖ Targets Key Users ~ Actual/Potential

Site Traffic

■ *A Key Challenge*

◆ Increased Hit-rate

- ★ # 1 improvement task
- ★ Linked to Awareness
- ★ Marketing opportunity
- ★ Government Influences
- ★ Industry users needed
- ★ Stakeholder Involvement sought

Site Maintenance

■ *Share the workload between*

- ◆ Country Coordinators
- ◆ APSDEP

3.6 Field Trips: Visit to OVTA Library and Visit to Ability Garden

The OVTA Information Center; OVTA Library

OVTA (<http://www.ovta.or.jp/smallmenu.htm>) has one of Japan's largest specialized libraries related to overseas vocational training. The core of the collection consists of information and statistics necessary for vocational training for foreign trainees. OVTA invites all those active in this field to utilize these resources, whether for reference or as basic materials on internationalisation and human resources development. The library provides a reference and lending service. The extensive collection covers such subject areas as ability development, occupations, and labour conditions in Japan and overseas, as well as reports on overseas technical cooperation, overseas conditions, foreign languages and Japanese language teaching materials, specialized technical fields, etc.

Ability Garden, Tokyo.

The Lifelong Human Resources Development Center (Ability Garden (AG)) (http://www.ab-garden.ehdo.go.jp/Central_E/index.html) is a comprehensive central facility focused on the development of professional skills required in today's changing business fields. AG offers a wide variety of services not only to employees themselves, but also to industry groups, educational and training organizations and professionals involved in the development of human resources.

It provides three basic types of services designed to enhance professional career skills. Together these services offer a total solution to the development of special skills required throughout a full scope of professional fields and job descriptions. The first service is one of 'think tank', which includes Survey, Research & Development, Joint Research & Development, Educational Training, Distance Learning System. The second service is referred to as 'key station', which covers Information Dissemination, and Advisory & Counseling and the third, a 'network center', providing Information, and opportunities for Opinions Exchange & Enlightenment Diffusion

4. Recommendations and Conclusions

On the **APSDEP Website Content** the following Specific Suggestions were **recommended**:

Although current the web contents, i.e. APSDEP history, Objectives, etc. are all laudable topics, it was recommended to shift focus from 'APSDEP' only to APSDEP plus stakeholders, grouping areas such as history, objectives, functions into a merged information area. Publications should only be included if useful and properly maintained. Focus of site needs to be changed from passive information to active information.

*Forum

- ◆ The site should include an [Expert Forum](#)
- ◆ This Forum is to be encouraged for debate on specific topics, which can be suggested by members and/or ILO/APSDEP
- ◆ This forum provides an opportunity for members to be heard

*Bulletin Board

- ◆ One or Two bulleting boards need to be added to the site, which could function as de facto Chat Groups, and be more informal than the proposed expert forum.
- ◆ Threads (of conversations) should be monitored by APSDEP, which in turn may recommend salient topics to the forum for further discussion.

*News and Events

- ◆ Input from Member Countries is paramount (Access issues were yet to be resolved)
- ◆ TVET News should be current (topical)
- ◆ Events = Scheduled/planned need to be kept up to date and wide reaching

On **Site Design** the following Specific Ideas were **recommended**:

◆Appearance

- ❖ Design should not be too serious – it should convey a sense of enthusiasm and excitement
- ❖ “More” buttons linked to detailed data
- ❖ Generic hierarchical format e.g.:

◆Asian Pacific Region

- ◆Bangladesh
 - Policy
 - System
 - Methods
 - Etc
- ◆China
 - Policy
 - System
 - Etc

◆Navigation

- ❖ Site map required
- ❖ Search engine required
- ❖ Links need to be well maintained (kept current)
- ❖ Logical layout

On **Site Maintenance** the following Specific Ideas were **recommended**

■Share the workload

◆ **APSDEP**

- ❖ Should specify Standards/Quality/Format of input form members countries / stakeholders (i.e. ensure consistency of data)
- ❖ Should focus on Management Role
- ❖ Should Seek human resources/staff expansion – website maintenance, quality control, moderation, etc. will take time if website is to be taken seriously
- ❖ Should support and encourage Regional input
- ❖ Encourage Regional Government Interest and use of website
- ❖ Promote 'new' website – arrange a launch
- ❖ Should act as Primary Communication Link

◆ **Country Coordinators**

- ❖ Provide new input
- ❖ Identify Regional Needs
- ❖ Extend awareness and use
- ❖ Work with APSDEP central
- ❖ Foster submissions
- ❖ Provide Communication Links

This Site needs to be dynamic to attract and retain visitors.

In **conclusion** to the meeting, the following **PLAN OF ACTION** schedule of activities was produced and unanimously agreed upon:

	Activities	Schedule	Responsibility
A	After the Meeting		
1	Prepare and submit meeting reports to host (home) countries and organizations Final meeting report to APSDEP	March 2002	All meeting participants Ms M. Haraghey
2	Write to APSDEP focal points / organisations with request for Web content	March 2002	APSDEP
3	Dissemination of proceedings of the meeting to participants and funding organizations	April 2002	APSDEP
B	APSDEP Website Development / Revision		
1	Revised APSDEP Website, First Draft	June 2002	APSDEP with Webmaster
2	Feedback	July 2002	Meeting Participants, focal points
3	APSDEP Website, Second Draft	Sept 2002	APSDEP / Webmaster
4	Development of content / databases, establishment of Links, testing of links and verifying content	Oct. 2002 – early 2003	APSDEP and Focal points
5	Follow up meeting	2003	APSDEP (c/o MHLW – Japan)

5. CLOSING REMARKS

Mr Naoki Hamada thanked the Japanese government for making this meeting possible and for OVTA in providing excellent facilities and a very efficient secretariat. He thanked the delegates and resource persons for their attendance, hard work and contributions. He was confident that the discussions and recommendations will be translated into the product the meeting participants envisaged.

Mr George Gerard replied on behalf of the participants, thanking the Japanese Ministry of Labour, Health and Welfare, for their vision and leadership in creating this opportunity for APSDEP and its stakeholders to come together to produce a practical framework for APSDEP to start the process of enhancing its website. He thanked OVTA for providing the meeting with such excellent facilities and hospitality, and the resource persons for their contributions.

Postscript

Immediately after the meeting one of the participants created a mailing list for APSDEP (apsdep@yahoogroups.com), starting off the membership with the meeting participants, but encouraging interested parties to contribute dialogue, and use the list as an interim forum. To be added to the group list, please email kun@indosat.net.id for inclusion.

6. ANNEXES

6.1 Annex 1: List of Participants

ILO/APSDEP/JAPAN
Technical Consultation Meeting on APSDEP Information Network
(OVTA Centre, Chiba, Japan, 5-8 March 2002)

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6.2 Annex 2: Programme

ILO/APSDEP/JAPAN
Technical Consultation Meeting on APSDEP Information Network
5 – 8 March 2002

	Tuesday, 5 March	Wednesday, 6 March	Thursday, 7 March	Friday, 8 March
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 4022</u></p> <p>8:45-9:00 Orientation</p> <p>9:00-9:20 Opening Ceremony (ILO/MHLW)</p> <p>9:20-9:35 Introduction of participants and resource persons (Mr. Wattanin)</p> <p>9:35-9:45 Overview of Meeting (Ms. Haraghey)</p> <p>9:45-10:00 Group Photo</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3014</u></p> <p>9:00-10:00 Introduction to APSDIN services and NCVET facilities, demonstration of VOCED database</p> <p>(Ms. MacKenzie and Ms. Haraghey)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>9:00-10:00 Group discussion – feedback on web based information experienced thus far</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3014</u></p> <p>9:00-10:00 Continuation examination of APSDEP site, individual annotations</p>
10:00-10:20	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break (-10:30)</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>10:20-10:30 Introduction to ILO/APSDEP (Mr. Hamada)</p> <p>10:30-12:00 Presentation and Discussion of Country Reports</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3014</u></p> <p>10:20-11:00 Demonstration of VOCED database (cont.)</p> <p>11:00-12:00 Mapping of APSDEP web site, noting areas for improvement, modification, etc. (Ms. Haraghey)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>10:20-11:20 Hands-on Internet, further examination of APSDEP and related sites</p> <p>11:20-12:00 Visit to "Information Center" OVTA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3020 (Group A)</u> <u>Room 3021 (Group B)</u></p> <p>10:30-12:00 Groups A & B discussion recommendations for web site improvement and future of information dissemination</p>
12:00-13:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Welcome Lunch</u> <u>Browsing Area, 5th fl.</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lunch</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lunch (-12:45)</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lunch</u></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>13:30-14:30 Presentation and Discussion of Country Reports (cont.)</p> <p>14:30-15:00 Overview of APSDEP information sharing activities and achievements to date (Ms Haraghey)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3020 (Group A)</u> <u>Room 3021 (Group B)</u></p> <p>13:30-14:30 Group A & B discuss findings of mapping exercise, note preliminary findings and recommendations</p> <p>14:30-15:00 Group discussion</p>	<p>12:55- Study Tour</p> <p>14:00-16:00 "Ability Garden" Tokyo</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>13:30-14:30 APSDEP's action plan for web site improvement and information dissemination</p> <p>14:30-15:30 Adoption of meeting report</p>
15:00-15:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break (-15:20)</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coffee/Tea Break</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><u>(15:30-) Coffee/Tea Break</u> <u>Tea Room Chatty</u></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>15:20- Introduction to APSDEP web site</p> <p>15:30-17:00 Hands-on Internet practice and preliminary exercises</p> <p>(Ms Haraghey & Ms MacKenzie)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3014</u></p> <p>15:30- Demonstration of related web- based information currently available, further hands-on practice</p> <p>(Ms MacKenzie & Ms Haraghey)</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Room 3021</u></p> <p>16:00-16:30 Closing Ceremony</p>
				<p>18:00-19:00 Sayonara Party</p>

6.3 Annex 3: Overview of the meeting

Overview of the Meeting – Welcome

Dear Mr. Enomoto, Mr. Hamada, Mr. Uehara, fellow delegates and friends

Welcome on behalf of Jeanne MacKenzie and myself to this consultative meeting and this wonderful facility. We hope and trust that you all had comfortable journeys and a good nights' rest. This rest was important, because we all need to be wide-awake and full of energy, as we have a lot of work ahead of us this week!

Having said that, we also hope that you will find the days ahead of us, and the activities we have planned challenging, stimulating and rewarding.

We know the reasons and some of the background as to why we are here. But to sum up – we are here to assist APSDEP in assisting us in the business of information dissemination and networking, and especially in the field of Skills Development, or as most of us call it – Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

APSDEP has provided valuable opportunities for direct exchange of experience and expertise in TVET through technical meetings, workshops and related activities. One of these activities is the promotion of information in the Asian and Pacific region.

I underline promotion, as APSDEP cannot be expected to provide all the information by itself. APSDEP member countries and worker organizations need to be prepared to contribute content to make this process of information dissemination and networking successful.

One of the main proposals which came out of the APSDEP informal Consultation meeting in Bangkok in December 1998, was the development of a new web-based information system linking APSDEP member countries to the ILO and enabling them to access a wide range of on-line information related to TVET. Such a system would also function as an interactive management tool for the APSDEP Secretariat, facilitating improved communication between the secretariat and member states, enhancing planning of APSDEP activities, and more efficient dissemination of information, reports, documents, etc.

In response to this proposal, the APSDEP website was established, however, like any work in progress, it needs some help in enhancing its accessibility and thereby create a valuable, functional and attractive user-friendly website. To achieve that goal we shall be identifying website users and discuss their requirements and expectations relating to web-based information. We shall be closely examining the existing APSDEP website and map it according to user profiles, we shall be exploring potential resources that can be employed to enhance the present site and suggest changes and improvements.

Most of the country reports you have prepared (you have received copies) already address some of these objectives and identify the tasks required. Therefore, most of you have already given these goals and possible solutions a fair bit of thought.

Keep those thoughts coming!

We shall be mixing our programme over the next 4 days with practical computer based work, discussions and field trips. We hope to create an environment where participants will feel comfortable to share their knowledge, skills and experience. In turn, we trust that delegates will learn some new skills or tips and get to know as well as share, some new websites. We hope you will enjoy the experience of exposure to a new or different culture, taste some new foods and make some new friends – and importantly, establish new networks.

We look forward to being your resource persons this week, and are at your service in any way we can.

We thank APSEP, OVTA and the Government of Japan to have provided us with this opportunity to participate in this meeting, and contribute to the development of a new and exiting APSDEP website.

Marjolijn Haraghey
(ILO/APSDEP Consultant)
March 5, 2002

6.4 Annex 4: Evaluation Summary**"ILO/APSDEP/Japan Technical Consultation Meeting on APSDEP Information Network" OVTA Centre, Chiba, Japan, 5-8 March 2002**

Total number of respondents: 14

Base on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the minimum (least satisfy) and 5 the maximum (most satisfy).

If the question does not apply to the respondents, or he/she does not have information needed to answer it, he/she could choose "no opinion" option.

The numbers of respondents who respond to each scale are shown under each rankings.

Questions	Ranking						% of most satisfying*	% of least satisfying**
	1	2	3	4	5	No opinion		
1. Quality of information you received before the activity.	0	0	0	6	7	1	50.00%	0.00%
2. Quality of logistic information (transportation to OVTA, etc.)	0	0	1	3	10	0	71.43%	0.00%
3. Quality of the residential hall and accommodations.	0	0	0	1	12	1	85.71%	0.00%
4. Clarity of the workshop/meeting objectives.	0	0	0	7	7	0	50.00%	0.00%
5. Extent to which the contents covered your expectation.	0	0	0	7	7	0	50.00%	0.00%
6. Extent to which the contents were correctly sequenced.	0	0	1	7	5	1	35.71%	0.00%
7. Quality of the materials/medias used during the workshop/meeting.	0	0	0	5	9	0	64.29%	0.00%
8. Overall satisfaction of the learning methods.	0	0	0	6	7	1	50.00%	0.00%
9. Clarity of the lectures by resource persons.	0	0	1	5	7	1	50.00%	0.00%
10. Overall quality of the resource persons	0	0	1	5	7	1	50.00%	0.00%
11. Extent to which you were satisfied with the working relations within the participants group.	0	0	0	2	12	0	85.71%	0.00%
12. Usefulness of the sharing of experience, ideas and knowledge with other participants.	0	0	0	2	12	0	85.71%	0.00%
13. Overall quality of the study tour.	0	0	0	3	10	1	71.43%	0.00%
14. Extent to which the activity was well organized.	0	0	0	6	8	0	57.14%	0.00%
15. The quality of the OVTA Secretariat (supporting of administrative matters).	0	0	0	1	13	0	92.86%	0.00%
16. Relevance of the activity to your current functions.	0	0	0	5	9	0	64.29%	0.00%
17. Relevance of the activity to the needs of your organization.	0	0	0	7	7	0	50.00%	0.00%

* % of most satisfying is the number of respondents who gave "5" ranking divided by total number of respondents.

** % of least satisfying is the number of respondents who gave "1" ranking divided by total number of respondents.

Evaluation Summary

Additional comments made by respondents (participants):

1) Curriculum

- Full of rich information, knowledge and useful
- Well organized, some of the time, we got lost, but you don't know what is going to happen. I was very happy with the curriculum.
- Well structured.
- We were able to focus on our objectives once we got here - it was clear then.
- Curriculum and course contents are good.
- Needs to be more elaborative particularly on web design-technique
- Very excellent. The curriculum is focused directly into the main objectives. The working method is very well in terms of discussions, exchange experiences and applied the brain storming of work.

- This activity and its outcome (with the APSDEP website running) will help facilitate the exchange of information on curriculum.
- Well cover for each subject (in view of time allocation and discussion).
- O.K. Demonstration of an effective website would have enhanced the knowledge of participants
- Very good.
- We needed a little more time for discussion of country papers and to develop common themes from those reports.

2) Resource person

- Excellent knowledge of the history of APSDEP. Good (diplomatic), leadership, and involving style.
- Very good.
- Generally good and friendly.
- We can have an expert in web development next time (in the follow-up meeting) who can give the knowledge in analysing of our website very efficient.
- Very good experience on developing the database and conduct the workshop very well.
- They are fine and resourceful.
- Ms. Haraghey was a good resource person.
- Representatives from gov, workers, employers should involve as resource persons.
- Very well chosen and quite suitable for the job. Excellent job done by them.
- Marjo and Jeanne were great resource persons who have well knowledge and experience on subject matter. Thank you.

3) Facilities/Medias

- Advanced.
- Noise of construction was sometimes too loud.
- How could we complain about the facilities and media. It is the best in the world. I'm impressed.
- Excellent, most modern and well maintained.
- Higher bandwidth for Internet.
- Internet linkage was very slow, other than that quality of facilities were excellent.
- Very good.

- Very up-to-date, e.g. each participant has a notebook to work with.
 - I.T. capacity - excellent, laptop server capacity not adequate for group's work - slow.
- 4) Accommodation
- Ideal for this meeting. Clean and well-maintained rooms. Good catering on-site and a wide range of eating-out options.
 - Very comfortable (clean and neat).
 - Excellent. OVTA is situated near places we need to visit. The tearoom is warm.
 - Work of secretariat is also excellent.
 - Warm and friendly. I enjoyed every minute of my stay.
 - Very cozy and felt like home.
- 5) Selection of participants
- Good. Many of them are full of knowledge on IT industry.
 - Their contribution was excellent. Some participants offered a great contribution to the success of the meeting cooperating with resource persons.
 - Participants of 15 Asian nations have variety of experience and we have great chance to learn from them.
 - Commendable. There could not be better group for interactive sessions and focused inputs.
 - Participants showed range of knowledge but all were very willing to work hard and all gave inputs
 - Should be more narrowed down to training manager with IT background.
 - APSDEP has done very good job when selecting the participants. However, APSDEP should give more specific details before the Meeting in terms of schedule, output of the meeting, etc.
 - In future APSDIN activities/meetings, the qualification for participants should be clarified so we send the appropriate person. Communication skills (can speak English) would be very important for exchange of ideas.
 - Good. With different skills, knowledge and experiences.
 - A most energetic, interested and knowledgeable group. Good representation of member countries, plus employers, Unions and Governments.

Other comments for future improvement:

- Some difficulties associated with OVTA Building maintenance on day 4 morning session disrupted somewhat by work being done outside adjacent to the seminar room. Overall, a wonderful experience !
- Hoping that APSDEP could use the output of the meeting in improving the website effectively. However, I suggest that APSDEP should make a closer cooperation with the authorized organizations in TVET in the participant countries so that all stakeholders of the site regularly exchange and provide TVET information.
- Follow up and feedback from member countries of APSDEP are absolutely necessary to update the information on APSDEP's web page, especially on the links to certain organizations which could be of interest to APSDEP's stakeholders. Suggest link to Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia's manpower dept. homepage at "www.jtr.gov.my/bi/" on the APSDEP's homepage.
- Such type of meeting is very helpful for improving the TVET education and training of participants' country particularly those countries, which are

developing. By this consultation meeting, I think a good and very useful APSDEP website will be created which will help the APSDEP member countries for easy collection and dissemination of relevant information related to TVET. I hope these types of meetings should be conducted in the near future.

- Ms. Shinobe and her team did wonderful work to make everything go smoothly for us. This was a very good meeting - well-organized, good spirit, good communications, etc.
- Following up this meeting, all the participants should keep in contact by mailing list/e-mails in order to have a continuous activity, meet the schedule and objective. Creating e-newsletter to update the participants for latest update.
- A little more exposure to the TVET practices (in action) in Japan would have facilitated the participants to have insight into the system.
- Thank you for kindly accommodation and well organized professional meeting. My thanks go to Mr. Hamada, Wattanin, Marjo, Jeanne and secretaries. Thank you again, I enjoy academical knowledge exchange and learning experience for every participants of 15 Asian, Pacific nations.
- I like to extend sincere thanks to Mr. Hamada and Mr. Wattanin who did good jobs for us. And OVTA staff members who provided good and considerable services for us so that we are happy to study there. Warm welcome from Mr. Hamada and Mr. Wattanin and also staff members of OVTA to visit China. Thank you all.

End of summary

6.5 Annex 5: Overview of APSDEP information sharing activities and achievements to date

Overview of APSDEP information sharing activities and achievements to date



ILO/APSDEP/Japan Technical Consultation Meeting on APSDEP Web site. OVTA, Chiba, Japan, 5-8 March, 2002

Marjolijn Haraghey
Consultant, Information networking

March 2002

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Introduction

On the request of ILO/APSDEP, in March 1998, Marjolijn Haraghey prepared a *Study on the Asian and Pacific Skills Development Information Network (APSDIN)*. In this present paper we briefly revisit the history of the information network and look at its achievements.

APSDIN history

The ILO's Asian and Pacific Skills Development Programme (APSDEP), created APSDIN in 1986 as a sub-programme, seven years after the establishment of APSDEP itself. The objective of the information network was to promote awareness and effective use of information in the development and improvement of vocational training. Initially, APSDIN was charged with the collection and dissemination of information on the policies and programmes on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the region. Since its own beginning in 1979, APSDEP has always regarded information sharing and dissemination between member countries and stakeholders, as a very significant element in the infrastructure of skill development.

Network structure and membership

APSDIN was composed of national focal points nominated and designated by the ILO/APSDEP focal points, with additional input from a broader network of associated members. The national APSDIN focal points, or nodes, were traditionally allocated to appropriate libraries or relevant documentation centres, often located at, or near the APSDEP focal point. The latter were commonly attached to the local (national) Ministry of Labour, or other relevant Ministries such as Education.

Although officially, all APSDEP member countries were automatically APSDIN members, the thirteen original countries that started up APSDIN were Australia; Burma; Fiji; Hong Kong; India; Indonesia; Japan; Korea; Malaysia; Pakistan; The Philippines; Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The early information network activities were coordinated by the Documentation and Information Centre at APSDEP, then located in Islamabad, Pakistan. When APSDEP was relocated to the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1990, the APSDEP documentation Centre was disbanded, as ILO ROAP already had an established library.

At that point, APSDIN coordination became the responsibility of the Australian APSDIN focal point, namely the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) in Adelaide, Australia, which accepted this role as the designated information Networking Lead institution.

Eligibility of APSDIN membership was extended to government ministries, organizations, institutions, foundations and agencies, whose work involved information collection, retrieval, repackaging and/or dissemination, especially in the area of TVET.

Members' obligations to APSDIN involved cooperating with APSDEP and other APSDIN members in activities through which the network strived to achieve its goals.

Besides two preliminary seminars, eight APSDIN meetings were held. All eight meetings had at least one agenda item in common, to review information networking progress and to share country experiences.

The meetings were held as follows:

1. First meeting, 1986 – Chiba, Japan
2. Second meeting, 1987 – Seoul, Korea
3. Third meeting, 1988 – Turin, Italy
4. Fourth meeting, 1990 – Chiba, Japan
5. Fifth meeting, 1991 – Pattaya, Thailand
6. Sixth meeting, 1993 – Adelaide, Australia
7. Seventh meeting, 1994 – Beijing, China
8. Eighth meeting, 1996 – Adelaide, Australia

Information Services and Products

APSDIN's first service within its own membership was an informal exchange of information and materials between partners. In the beginning, APSDIN relied heavily on the APSDEP Documentation Centre in Islamabad, which offered its library of training materials, as well as its general collection, for the use of APSDIN members.

The Documentation Centre compiled various databases, bibliographic as well as biographic. However, when the Documentation Centre ceased functioning, these activities ceased, and only part of the collection was transferred to Bangkok. The remainder was donated to the Ministry of Labour of the Government of Pakistan. What was left of the collection after that was transferred to Bangkok and became the basis of the reference collection for the APSDEP experts?

Once resettled, due to resource constraints, APSDEP had to concentrate its activities on providing advisory services to its member institutions. Their entire document collection was transferred to the National Skill Institute for Skill Development (NISD) of the Department of Labour of Thailand, on the understanding that the NISD would henceforth handle information services on behalf of APSDEP. To facilitate effective information handling and systems development, a training workshop on mini-micro CDS/ISIS (Micro ISIS) and information systems and services, was jointly conducted by APSDEP and ILO/ROAP to train information staff of the NISD and the Department of Labour.

The ILO/ROAP library continued to provide technical as well as information support and services to APSDEP and APSDIN member institutions as part of its regional activities. However, it was decided that the information services would be more effective if APSDIN's member institutions became more self-reliant by strengthening their operations and activities, not only amongst themselves, but also amongst their members. Therefore, in 1992 the members unanimously proposed to appoint the then TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, (now NCVER) of Australia to become the Lead Institution for Information Networking for ILO/APSDEP, and entrust it with the coordination of APSDIN activities. It was considered that this solution would provide the highest efficiency in terms of facilities and staff resources.

APSDIN Products (tangible achievements)

APSDIN's first 'product' was a brochure introducing "*APSDIN the Information Network of the Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme*". The last update was in 1990, listing 15 country members and ten associate members. The useful information in this brochure is now largely outdated, especially the references to APSDEP, its documentation centre and its databases.

Vocational Education and Training Database (VOCED)

The NCVER's National Vocational Education and Training Clearinghouse has been collecting and disseminating APSDIN materials and bibliographic information since 1985 and has published them the records in their *Vocational Education and Training Database (VOCED)*. NCVER regarded the coordination of APSDIN as a natural additional regional information service for the Clearinghouse and a logical extension of their responsibilities as an APSDIN network member.

VOCED was, and has the potential to remain APSDIN's primary vehicle for bibliographic information dissemination, as well as tangible proof of APSDIN's existence.

The APSDIN records in *VOCED* can be regarded as a subset of the main database, and can be considered as APSDIN's most enduring product. It is the substantial result of one of the network's primary obligations, namely to share, repackage and disseminate information.

The *VOCED* database, (and thereby the APSDIN records), has been available free on the World Wide Web since 1997. Its Internet address is: <http://www.voced.edu.au/>

The database has been recognised by UNESCO as carrier for its bibliographic records.

APSDEP Thesaurus

This reference tool, used for term uniformity in bibliographic database indexing, was originally developed and produced by the Korean APSDEP focal point with the assistance from the thesaurus expert from the ILO central library, on behalf of ILO/APSDEP. The *APSDEP Thesaurus* was developed to be compatible with the *ILO Thesaurus*. The *APSDEP Thesaurus* focuses on terms related to TVET, although it covers all related subject areas as well. It is a bibliographic tool providing true regional (Asian Pacific) coverage, as all APSDIN/APSDEP focal points were invited to contribute local terms to the draft thesaurus. The ILO Thesaurus has been translated into Korean and Japanese, complementing the APSDEP Thesaurus.

The APSDIN Lead Institution (NCVER), maintains the current *APSDEP Thesaurus* in electronic format. As no funds have been available, no further new hard copy editions have been published since 1993, which is tragic, considering the considerable effort spent on its creation, as well as its maintenance. However, the initial work on the printed edition has not been wasted, as the electronic version of the thesaurus is hooked up to the Internet-searchable version of the *VOCED* database, as a searching back-end. Nevertheless, an updated printed edition would still make an invaluable tool for information professionals who deal with record processing and may not have ready access to the Internet.

Manual of operation for a national documentation centre for vocational training.

To assist in the achievement of one of the early recommendations that emerged from the first APSDIN meeting, that was, to establish and develop local libraries and documentation centres, a handbook, called the *National documentation centre for vocational training: Manual of operation* was developed. This manual provided valuable guidelines to network members without libraries or documentation centres, specializing in TVET in APSDIN member countries. The manual was intended to be used as a guide in the development of resources, understanding processes and promoting services, creating personnel positions and facilities, and included a collection development policy, which gave directions on the establishment of basic technical services and the acquisition and organization of materials. The manual also quotes APSDEP's experience on the growth of documentation centres through computer-based services.

Although this manual is now somewhat dated, some of the procedures basic to traditional library management are still valid, and could still be helpful for fledgling operations.

CDS/ISIS as the software for APSDIN data processing (adoption of)

At the first APSDIN meeting the decision to adopt CDS/ISIS as the common tool to share resources, was a farsighted move, and one of the most important outcomes of the early meetings.

This software, developed by UNESCO, was available free of charge to non-profit organizations, and proved to be a very suitable mechanism for data sharing. As this software was new to all network members, various training courses and seminars were organised to train appropriate key personnel. This training should be regarded as **an APSDIN internal service**, as trained personnel encouraged a higher participation rate in information collection, processing and dissemination.

Before ready access to online information sharing, having a common, easily portable software between the APSDEP documentation centre and the APSDIN focal points, proved to be the key to a successful early growth of the APSDIN database (lodged within the *VOCED* database).

Reports of all eight APSDIN meetings.

Each APSDIN meeting was duly recorded, with summaries of country reports, proceedings and outcomes. Most of these reports were published, although the last few were largely reproduced in small photocopied numbers.

Individual country papers.

Where possible, the individual country papers presented at each APSDIN meeting were collected, processed at the Lead Institution and entered into the APSDIN database. These country papers provided an invaluable body of information about the evolution of the individual focal points.

APSDIN Newsletter

Ready for distribution at the eighth APSDIN meeting in 1996, the Lead Institution compiled the inaugural *APSDIN newsletter*. Members were encouraged to send relevant information to the Lead Institution for subsequent issues. However, although members at the eight meeting were enthusiastic about the newsletter and voted for its continuation, due to lack of contributions, and pressures on resources, only one further issue (no. 2, December 1997) has been published to date.

Network member products

Various internal newsletters in local languages were produced at a number of focal points. Fiji, Thailand and the Philippines amongst others regularly distributed their publications to other members, encouraging others to follow suit.

A number of conference papers were delivered to professional information bodies, such as the Australian Library and Information Association, dealing with the application of CDS/ISIS in information networking, as well as on other APSDIN-specific experiences.

Library skills: VOCED update

A video was produced by the New South Wales Dept. of TAFE (Technical and Further Education) based on a live videoconference introducing the machine-readable version of *VOCED* and promoting APSDIN. This video was widely distributed through the TAFE college libraries network in Australia, encouraging the use of the database.

Various bibliographies of APSDIN-related materials were produced (now outdated)

Services

As one of the outreach services of APSDIN, practical assistance to network members and focal points was given by the Lead Institution in the form of training, document supply, advice and software troubleshooting in the form of a helpdesk.

APSDIN evaluations

APSDIN was evaluated twice. Dr William Hall, then Managing Director of NCVER, in 1989, undertook the first evaluation. The ensuing report *Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Asian and Pacific Skill Development Information Network (APSDIN)* commended Network members for the successful implementation of many of the early recommendations and production of early products. The report made further recommendations that were used as the basis for discussions during the fourth APSDIN meeting in Chiba, in 1990.

Marjolijn Haraghey, the former manager of the NCVER Clearinghouse and coordinator of the APSDIN focal point (then Marjolijn Jones), undertook the second evaluation in 1998. The report *Study on the Asian and Pacific Skills Development Information Network (APSDIN)* chronicled the 'life of APSDIN' and summarized the Networks' key achievements. The report reviewed APSDIN products and services as well as related relevant organizations and databases. The recommendations of this report have not been implemented as no further meetings of APSDIN have occurred.

APSDIN intangible achievements

APSDIN achieved **awareness** amongst its stakeholders in the culture of **information sharing**. This is in internal and external settings. The growth of the various newsletters attests to that. This awareness has led to the network associates becoming not only local or regional, but global members of the information society, with all the rights, privileges as well as obligations that this global membership involves.

The capability to access global TVET and other information through increased technological and telecommunication capacities at the focal points, has led to a certain **independence of focal points**, rather than perpetuating the former reliance on single information providers.

The internal and external information **training provided** under the umbrella of APSDIN has resulted in a considerable number of information handlers at many focal points being trained in most aspects of documentation centre management, information collection, retrieval, repackaging and dissemination. A number of individuals were further trained to become specialists in the manipulation of CDS/ISIS (MicroISIS), the software used for APSDIN data processing.

In the process of training others, a number of individuals became '**trained trainers**' themselves, causing this skill transfer to benefit their host organizations as well.

APSDIN information and dataflow coordination by the Lead Institution, has also led to the establishment of a **cooperative information sharing spirit** between sister networks such as UNEVOC and SEAMEO. TVET in the region being the ultimate winner.

Conclusion

We have reached a stage where we largely achieved the main objectives of the original APSDIN concept. We have established and developed confident, efficient and self-reliant information processing sources at focal points and related stakeholder locations. We have created a common database, giving network members the opportunity to share and disseminate information, as well as draw from this source for their own usage. We introduced a common tool to process information, making information portable in data format. We have brought awareness of the importance of information dissemination.

At the first meeting in Chiba in 1986 one of the Europe-based ILO observers commented rather cynically that the exercise of establishing a regional information network was a rather futile exercise, a waste of money and resources, and ultimately a failure waiting to happen. This comment was apparently based on previous attempts in other parts of the world.

This (private) comment spurred a few key individuals that participated in this conversation, to work towards achieving the common goals that had just been established, and to prove this person wrong. In a vexing way though, this individual did utter one truth, in that, a tangible APSDIN network may not be evident at this very moment, then again, having said that, how do we define a tangible network? If it is only a group of people that meet once a year – read out their country reports and go home with the latest meeting report as evidence of attendance, which subsequently gets shelved and forgotten? In that case, this person was right.

However – many of us think otherwise. The legacy of APSDIN lives on. Information sharing between stakeholders is now a common occurrence rather than a rarity. Information processing is certainly not the laborious process it once was. Access to global information is now almost taken for granted. Understanding each other's TVET systems has been part of regular briefing papers for new department heads, chiefs, and colleagues coming in from outside the TVET arena. International and regional information make up part of these packages.

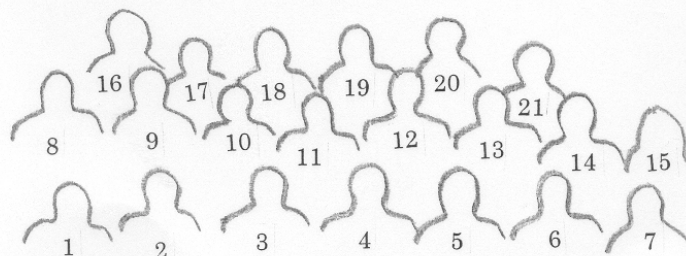
Still, we should not rest on our laurels. APSDEP's original goals of promoting awareness and effective use of information in the development and improvement of vocational training in the region are ongoing goals. There is no due date, nor an expiry date to accomplish these goals. Developing the APSDEP website as part of our ongoing quest to facilitate the best access to information on and about TVET, should be seen as a part of this quest. Yet, we should not lose our spirit to share (our) information by only accessing the information that is supplied or made available by one website. This spirit can only stay alive as long as awareness of our rights, privileges *and* obligations of global information membership remains alive.

APSDEP is well placed to coordinate further activities that allow these issues to be aired and revisited. We all have a role to play in assisting each other, in order to help ourselves. Our very branch of learning, TVET is involved in preparing individuals to become skilled, employable people. If we in the information sector can help to reach *that* ultimate goal in any way, *then* we have proved the cynics wrong.

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Technical Consultation Meeting on APSDEP Information Network
OVTA, Chiba, Japan, 5 – 8 March 2002



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