



International
Labour
Organization



Promoting inclusive vocational education and training in the Asian Region –

Opening opportunities for persons with disabilities

**Tripartite- Plus Regional Meeting
Bangkok, 29-31 March 2011
Amari Watergate**

States should: 'promote access to education, training and lifelong learning for people with disabilities' - (ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004)

1. Background Note

Situation analysis

Skills development is central in enabling people with disabilities to take part in the labour force. Those who have had the opportunity to acquire marketable skills are more likely to obtain decent and productive work, and demonstrate their potential to earn a living and contribute in the world of work. Yet access to appropriate skills training is not available to a significant number of disabled women and men for differing reasons. Access to general skills development programmes is often limited, with little encouragement or accommodation of the participation of disabled persons. Where training is provided in dedicated centres, catering only to persons with disabilities the training curriculum and equipment are frequently outdated and is less likely than the general training programmes to reflect the requirements of labour market or self-employment opportunities. People with disabilities in developing countries mainly attend training programmes in such centres, or do not attend any training at all, resulting for many in social exclusion and in poverty. The result is a loss of potential, with implications for individuals and for societies.¹

International & regional efforts to promote inclusive education and vocational opportunities

Internationally, attention has been drawn to the importance of promoting opportunities for persons with disabilities to access vocational education and training. The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes that people with disabilities have a right to access the same vocational services available to all citizens, including training and employability programmes. This is promoted in a number of ILO instruments, including the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)², and the ILO Code of Practice for Managing Disability in the Workplace. Many other conventions also support the principle of including disabled persons in vocational training and related employability services. Most notable is the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), which called on member States to develop and implement open, flexible and complementary systems of general, technical and vocational education; educational and vocational guidance; and vocational training, including continuing employment information. More recently, in 2004, the ILO adopted the Human Resources Development Recommendation (No. 195) that explicitly refers to persons with disabilities in its provisions related to the development of education and training policies and implicitly in its other provisions, including those on training for decent work and social inclusion.

At regional level, the Biwako Millennium Framework of Action promotes an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for people with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, and the implementing document for the second Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons calls for the inclusion of people with disabilities in mainstream training as well. Globally, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)³ calls governments to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others (Art. 24,5).

Governments' Action towards the implementation of international commitments

More than half of the world's disabled people – about 400 million – live in the Asia-Pacific region. While some governments in the region have entered binding commitments to promote the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive vocational training, and have started to take initiatives to improve opportunities in line with these obligations, many young people with disabilities continue

1 ILO, Recognizing ability: The skills and productivity of persons with disabilities Literature review, (2008: Geneva)

2 Ratified in the region by 8 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Fiji, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand.

3 Ratified in the region by 19 countries: Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Cook Islands, India, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Vanuatu.

to encounter significant barriers to accessing mainstream vocational training or other skill-development opportunities that result in decent work, with greater disadvantages being faced by women than men.

Several countries in the region are beginning to look at models that would use targeted programmes only for people with high support requirements and as resource centres to advise mainstream programme planners on how to include less disabled persons into their training. This approach offers many benefits, including significant expansion of training opportunities for persons with disabilities. Countries that are beginning to address the issue are proposing inclusive approaches. However, in most countries a full understanding of the practical issues and knowledge of useful models and resources for inclusive vocational training are still limited.⁴

ILO initiatives

During the past decade, the ILO has undertaken several initiatives aimed at providing an overview of the current situation of inclusive vocational training for persons with disabilities at global level and in the region, focusing on challenges and good practices. In February 2006, the ILO organized in Bangkok an Expert Group Meeting on Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Vocational Training. The seminar looked at elements of good practice in skills development for people with disabilities in countries around the world and highlighted areas in which more progress is needed as well as examined attempts to address these challenges. The Bangkok meeting was followed by a Tripartite European Regional Meeting, "The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Vocational Training and Employment", held in Geneva in March 2007, and an action-research seminar co-organized in Quebec, Canada by the ILO in collaboration several other international partners, with funding support by the Government of Ireland and Rehabilitation International (RI).

The ILO SKILLS-AP Network (<http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th>) aims to promote knowledge sharing and online discussions in the areas of skills development and employment opportunities, including for people with disabilities based on the principles of equal opportunity, equal treatment, mainstreaming into vocational rehabilitation and employment services programmes and community involvement.

2. Objectives

The tripartite-plus regional meeting will aim to:

- 1) Review the status of laws and policies, programmes and services relating to inclusion of persons with disabilities in general vocational education and training
- 2) Share knowledge and good practices by social partners of inclusive vocational training in the region and globally
- 3) Identify steps required to improve access by people with disabilities to general skills development programmes
- 4) Encourage countries to take tripartite action at national level on promoting policies on inclusive vocational training.

3. Participants

Representatives of government, employers', workers and disabled people's organizations, as well as UN agencies from the following countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam

4. Working Language: English

⁴ ILO, Expert Group Meeting on Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Vocational Training (2006: Bangkok)

2. Tentative Programme

Day 1	29 March, 2011	
08:45 – 9:00	Registration	Ms. Isssiree Reungpoj and Ms. Attawiparkpaisan Pornbhajara
09:00 – 9:30	Opening ceremony with welcome note from ILO and Minister of Labour of Thailand – INCLUDE video	Ms. Sachiko Yamamoto - ILO Regional Director; and H.E. Mr. - Chalermchai Sri-on Minister of Labour of Thailand
09:30 – 10:00	Overview of global trends and standards related to inclusive vocational education and training [ILO C. 159, UNCRPD, Rec. 199]	Ms. Barbara Murray – ILO Senior Disability Specialist
10:00 – 10:20	Coffee Break	
10:20 – 10:40	Laws and policies on Vocational Training for Persons with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region.	Ms. Barbara Murray – ILO Senior Disability Specialist
10:40 – 11:00	Overview of Findings and Recommendations put forward by international expert group meetings 2006 - 2010	Ms. Emanuela Pozzan – ILO Disability Coordinator - BKK
11:00 – 12:00	Panel discussion - questions and answers	Participants
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	
13:00 – 13:40	Inclusive vocational education and training: tools for skills needs assessments and ensuring relevance to the labour market demand	Ms. Carmela Torres – ILO Senior Employability and Skills Specialist
13:40 – 14:00	Questions and Answers	
14:00 – 14:15	Introduction to working groups	Ms. Barbara Murray
14:15 – 16:00 Including coffee break	Working groups: What needs to be done to bring laws and policies in line with the UNCRPD promise of inclusive vocational education and training? – by country -	
16:00 – 16:30	Feedback from the working group	
16:30 – 17:00	Discussion and concluding remarks	
18:00	Reception	

Day 2	30 March, 2011	
09:00 – 9:20	Review of Day 1	Participants
09:20 – 10:00	Combining different methodologies for skills development: promoting livelihoods in Battambang, Cambodia	Nancy Rollinson, Handicap International
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee Break	
10:00 – 11:30	Making inclusive vocational training work in practice – examples from China, India and Thailand	Delegates from China, and Thailand, resource person from India
11:30 – 12:00	Discussion	
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:30	Country initiatives on vocational training for persons with disabilities	Participants
14:30 – 16:00 Including coffee break	Working groups: development of country action plans at policy and implementation levels	
16:00 – 16:30	Feedback from the working groups	

16:30 – 17:00	Brainstorming on key elements of a regional roadmap on the way forward	Collective exercise
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Day 3	31 March, 2011	
09:00 – 9:20	Review of Day 2	Participants
09:20 – 10:00	Global challenges in moving from a segregated to an inclusive approach to vocational education and training with discussion	Ms. Barbara Murray – ILO Senior Disability Specialist
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee Break	
10:30 – 11:00	Addressing the challenges in the Asian Region – Roadmap	Collective exercise
11:00 – 11:30	Adoption of the Asian Regional Roadmap	
11:30 – 11:45	Closing session	Mr. Bill Salter, Director ILO DWT and representative from DSD Thailand
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	
	Departure of participants	

3. Some Logistics

- **Venue: Amari Watergate**, 847 Petchburi Road, Bangkok 10400
Tel. +66 (0) 2653 9000 Fax. +66 (0) 2653 9045
- **Transportation from the airport:** we suggest sharing a taxi with other participants who might be on the same flight. The cost of the taxi to the hotel will be approximately 500 Baht.
- **Weather:** the weather in Bangkok is humid and rainy. Temperature varies from 25 C. to 35 C. Indoor places tend to have cold AC.
- **Moving around in Bangkok:** the hotel can provide you with information on places to go and how to move around the city.

DSA: the ILO will provide you with a daily subsistence allowance to cover expenses. Accommodation, three lunches and 1 dinner will be provided by the organization. N.B. Participants are responsible for costs associated with personal phone calls, laundry or the use of the mini - bar.