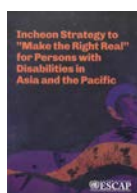


# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

The Foundation of  
Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability  
under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness  
Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn  
(APCD Foundation)



All activities implemented with



Incheon Strategy to 'Make the Right real' for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific 2013-2022



United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



## **APCD Activities REPORT 2022**

**The Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability  
under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri  
Sirindhorn (APCD Foundation)**



**Dr. Tej Bunnag**



## **Foreword**

The COVID-19 pandemic had constituted an unprecedented, multifaceted global crisis, causing tremendous shocks everywhere to health, development, the economy, and many other sectors. In terms of the Disability Development field, the pandemic had detrimental effects on progress worldwide towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 with targets linked to Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID) and Disability-Inclusive Development (DID).

Most concerning, the pandemic's impact was disproportionately felt by society's most vulnerable and marginalized members, especially persons with disabilities. The pandemic severely disrupted the active participation, empowerment, and capacity-building of more than 700 million persons with disabilities in Asia-Pacific alone and severely impacted the delivery of equitable quality health, the achievement of project outcomes, and the quality of persons with disabilities engagement, as well as the overall health and well-being of persons with disabilities, especially the most vulnerable – the already economically challenged, disabled, or otherwise marginalized.

It is urgent for all stakeholders to rethink and transform Disability-Inclusive Development throughout Asia and the Pacific because there is a risk of further permanent derailment of decades of hard-gained progress towards achieving disability inclusion. 'Building back' means building back better and more equally, and building back to transform. Regional collaboration and mutual supports among partners are more important than ever to make a simultaneous impact at national, regional, and global levels. By working together, we can ensure the lasting success of recovery, together with adaptive and resilient transformation for years to come.

To that end, the Asia Pacific Development Center on Disability, in close collaboration with partners, will soon establish a regional program to support countries in the region in their recovery initiatives and in their journey to truly innovative self-transformation. We recognize the need for rethinking of promoting and implementing disability inclusion in multiple perspectives in the area of Inclusion, Equity, and Accessible for All towards peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable future of humanity and the planet. We have gradually recommenced in-person training, workshops, and meetings post-COVID-19 pandemic relaxation measures. Though we have challenges in mobilizing resources, we are proactively committed to our missions, in main approaches namely Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID), Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB), Disability-Inclusive Sports (DIS), and Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR).

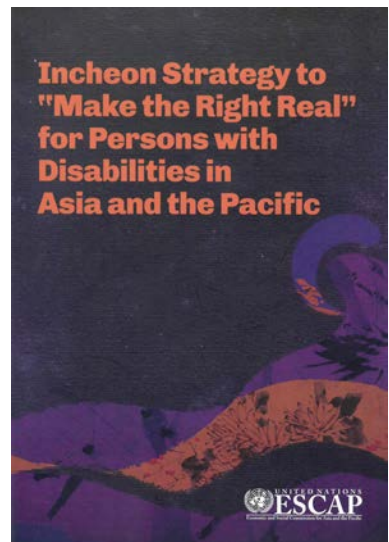
**Dr. Tej Bunnag**

President

The Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability  
under the Patronage of  
Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn

The tenth year for  
implemented the  
Inchoen Strategy to  
**‘Make the Right real’**  
for Persons with Disabilities  
in Asia and the Pacific

2013-2022





United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

# Table of Content

<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MAIN ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Disability-Inclusive Business</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 1</b> Reduce poverty and enhance work and employment prospects	<b>14</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 2</b> Promote participation in political processes and in decision-making	<b>26</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 3</b> Enhance access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication	<b>30</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 4</b> Strengthen social protection	<b>50</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 5</b> Expand early intervention and education of children with disabilities	<b>54</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 6</b> Ensure gender equality & women's empowerment	<b>64</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 7</b> Ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management	<b>66</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 8</b> Improve the reliability and comparability of disability data	<b>68</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 9</b> Accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities and harmonization of national legislation of national legislation with the Convention	<b>70</b>
<b>Inchoen Strategy Goal 10</b> Advance subregional, regional and interregional cooperation	<b>72</b>

<b>Visitors</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Highlight</b>	<b>96</b>
The Event of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over APCD 60+ Plus Kitchen by CP Opening Ceremony	
<b>The Event of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC 2022)</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>APCD Good Practice on project of sustainable employment documentary</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Disability-inclusive business models for an enabling environment</b>	<b>115</b>
by Mr. Piroon Laismit, Executive Director of APCD	

## **BACKGROUND**

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) is a regional center on disability and development in Asia and the Pacific. APCD was established in Bangkok by Thai cabinet resolution on 31st July 2001 as a legacy of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, with the joint collaboration of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), the Royal Thai Government, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Government of Japan.

APCD was endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) as a regional cooperative base for Biwako Millennium Framework for an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for people with disabilities in the Asian and Pacific, 2003-2012. ESCAP also identified APCD as the regional center on disability and development for the Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real, 2013-2022.

APCD is currently managed by the Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD Foundation) which was implemented under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn since 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007. The cabinet also approved APCD to be under supervision of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

During the past 22 years, APCD trained more than 7,000 persons with disabilities and stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region through different training courses. Furthermore, APCD has strongly committed to cooperate with more than 30 countries for the organizing of disability and development programs and activities.

## **MISSION**

To build the capacities of persons with disabilities and Disabled People Organizations (DPOs) as 'Agents of change' especially focusing on Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID) and Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB)

## **VISION**

An Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for persons with disabilities through the empowerment of persons with disabilities and disabled people's organizations (DPOs) in the Asia-Pacific region.

APCD commits to promote United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## **MAIN ACTIVITIES**

### **Capacity Building and Training**

Training and capacity building activities for persons with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and staff who are working with persons with disabilities is our main mission. We believe that persons with disabilities and relevant persons who were trained through the program of capacity development will be ‘Agent of Change’ in their community and society. Meanwhile, the effective trainings will empower persons with disabilities and stakeholders to have knowledge, skills, and positive attitude towards disability and community development.

### **Networking**

Networking and collaborations is a significant mission of APCD. We believe that the key success factor to move disability and development programs is to create a win-win situation and to share resource among each other. APCD is the Secretariat of various networks in the region. It strengthens sustainable networking towards the future.

### **Information, Knowledge Management and Publications**

Information Knowledge Management and Publications is one of our missions to ensure effective communication, codifying knowledge and experiences to share expertise through various channels, especially social media.

## **Disability-Inclusive Business**

APCD also promotes Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) as a strategy in the sustainable development of quality of life of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the concept of Inclusive Entrepreneurship (IE) is the next step to be implemented.

### **60+ Plus Skills Development Training**

Skills Development Trainings for Thai Persons with Disabilities on “Employability in Food Business” were implemented by APCD Foundation under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The training courses aim to build capacity and raise full participation of persons with disabilities in the society. The program promotes self-esteem and sustainable jobs for persons with disabilities.

APCD Foundation opens 60+ Plus Kitchen by Charoen Pokphand Group (CP). The Kitchen by CP aims to build capacity for persons with disabilities in the food and restaurant business. APCD currently operates 60+ Plus Bakery & Chocolate Café at APCD Office in Rajvithi Home for Girls area, and opened a branch at Government House of Thailand.

The pride of our trainees with disabilities is to make delicious baked and chocolate goods to serve our customers with dedication in working toward acknowledgement and acceptance from society.

- **60+Plus Bakery by Yamazaki**

60+ Plus Bakery by Yamazaki was initiated by collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, Embassy of Japan in Thailand, Thai-Yamazaki Co., Ltd., and APCD.

The special of this Café is trainees with diverse disabilities participated in the capacity-building programs, bakery production and sales. It is to develop persons with disabilities skills and abilities in food business so-called sustainable employability and implement Sustainable Development Goal1, End poverty in all its forms everywhere.



- **60+ Plus Chocolate by Mark Rin**

60+ Plus Chocolatier by MarkRin is initiated by APCD in collaboration with MarkRin Chocolate Co., Ltd. The project aims to provide on-the-job training of person with disabilities in the food industry.

Premium chocolate products made by persons with disabilities are from fragrant cacao beans grown by Thai farmers.

- **60+ Plus Kitchen by CP**

APCD in collaboration with the Charoen Pokphand Group (CP) implements Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) through 60+ Plus Kitchen. The Objective is to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through capacity building and development of the Public-Private Partnership concept in the food business sector.

## **Collaborations**

APCD collaborates with all partners and stakeholders who have mutual strategies, mission and vision. We focus on disability and development through various projects and activities in the context of Community based inclusive development (CBID), Disability Inclusive Sports (DIS), Disability Inclusive Business (DIB) and Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR).



# Goal 1

Reduce poverty and enhance work and employment prospects

## CRPD

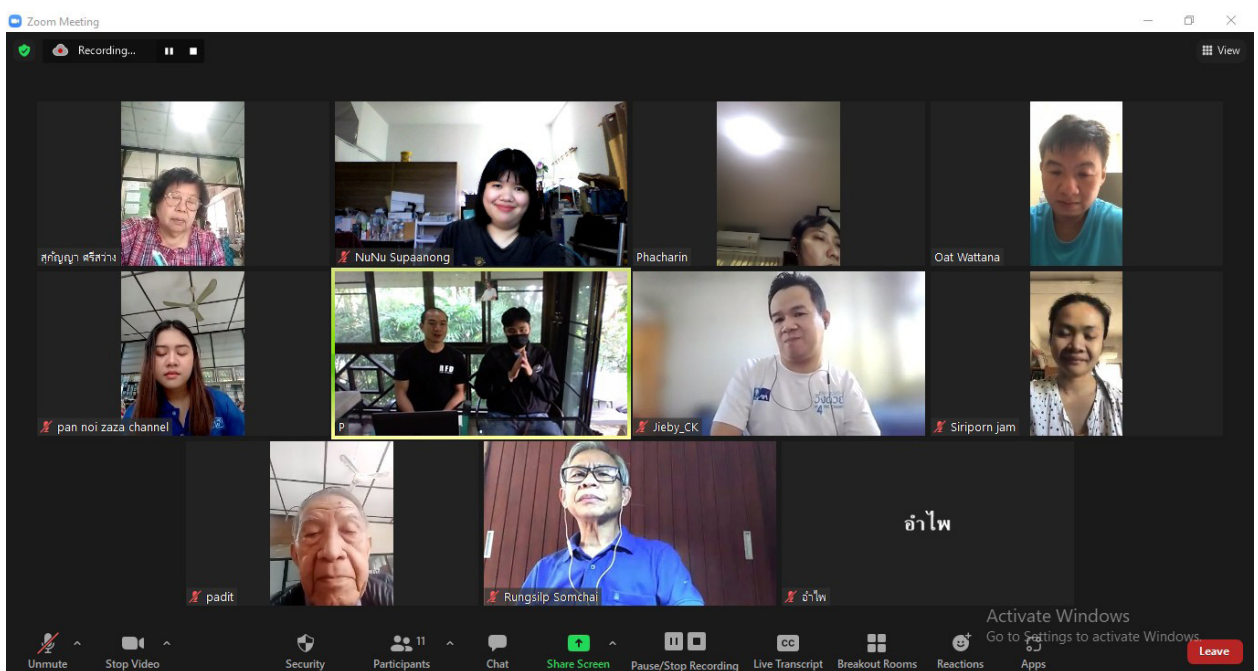
**Article 27:** Work and Employment

## SDGs

**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

**Goal 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

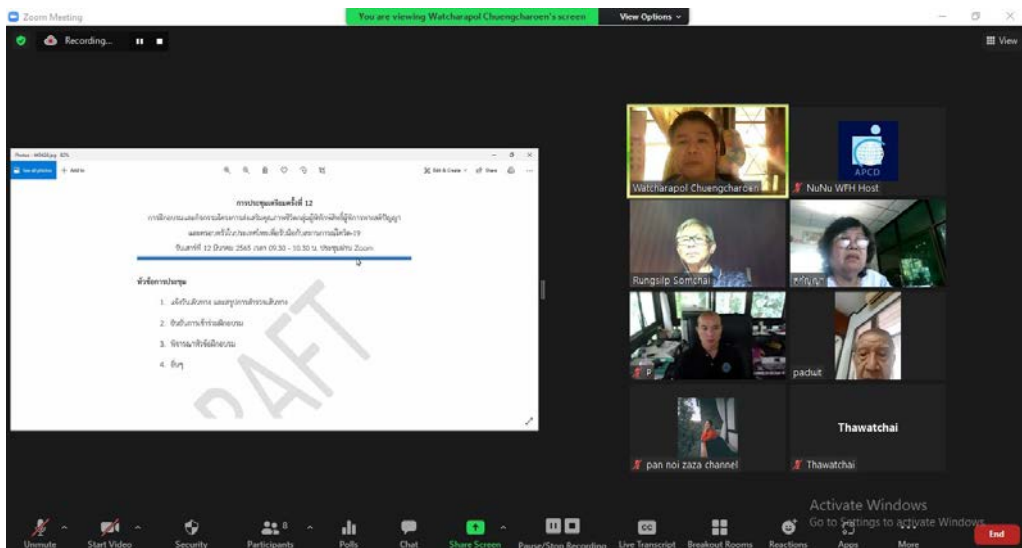
Implementation of the ESCAP-APCD Partnership Project for self-advocates with intellectual disabilities and their families. This collaboration promoted mainstream on self-reliance, independent lives, and the economy of sustainability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemics in accordance with the late King Rama IX's philosophy and urban agriculture application.



The ESCAP-APCD partnership Project working group convened to design self-advocates with intellectual disabilities and their families' training content, on January 15, 2022.



Pre-visit workshops on capacity development for the APCD-ESCAP Partnership Project were held in Nakhon Nayok, Pathum Thani Province, on March 11, 2022, as well as in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai Provinces from March 16-18, 2022.



The working group members revised the plan for implementing the ESCAP-APCD partnership Project in response to the uncertain COVID-19 situation for on-site trainings, on March 12, 2022.





The first capacity development workshop for Healing Family Foundation (Ban Samanjai Group) and Dulabhatorn Foundation took place at the Tawanchai Foundation and Grand Pa Hotel and Resort in Lamphun Province, Thailand, on April 5-11, 2022.

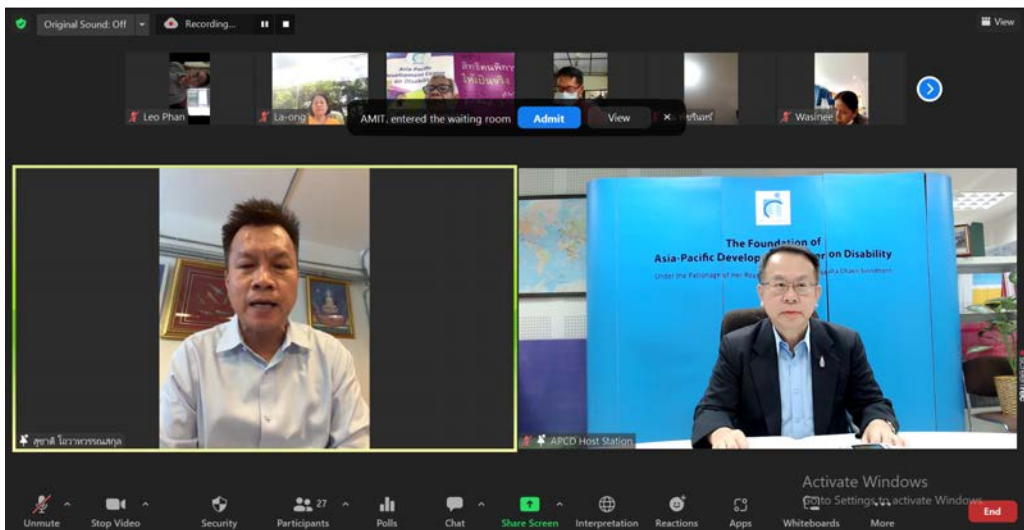


The second Capacity Development workshop for Dao Ruang Self-Advocates with Intellectual Disability Group was organized at Novotel Future Park Rangsit Bangkok and Golden Jubilee Museum of Agriculture, Pathum Thani, Thailand, on May 3-8, 2022.

The Follow up activity for Chiangmai Group was dispatched to Bangkok at the Association of Parents of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities of Thailand, Golden Jubilee Museum of Agriculture, and APCD, on May 23-25, 2022.







The Online Thai Stakeholders Meeting on Lesson Learned on Empowering Self-Advocates with Intellectual Disabilities in the Context of COVID-19 Pandemic was organized. More than 30 participants joined the meeting. The participants consisted of Self-Advocates with Intellectual Disabilities, Parents, Supporters, and relevant stakeholders in various fields, on May 27, 2022.



Follow-up activity on ESCAP-APCD partnership Project “Protecting and Empowering Self-advocates with Intellectual Disabilities in Thailand in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic” Bangkok, on July 3, 2022.

DPI-Korea invited APCD to speak at the International Conference to promote the employment of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on July 12-15, 2022.





Mr. Piroon Laismit visited Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd. Head office, to discuss for disability inclusive business corporation on August 5, 2022.



Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEP) joins hands the Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD Foundation) to empower vocational skills of people with disabilities of the year 2022, on May 11, 2022.





7 September 2022, Congratulations to trainees with disabilities who graduated in the internship program of APCD 60+ Plus Vocational skills training in the Hospitality business project at the Centra by Centara Hotel Chaeng Watthana, on September 7, 2022.





# Goal 2

Promote participation in political processes and in decision-making

## CRPD

**Article 29:** Participation in political and public life

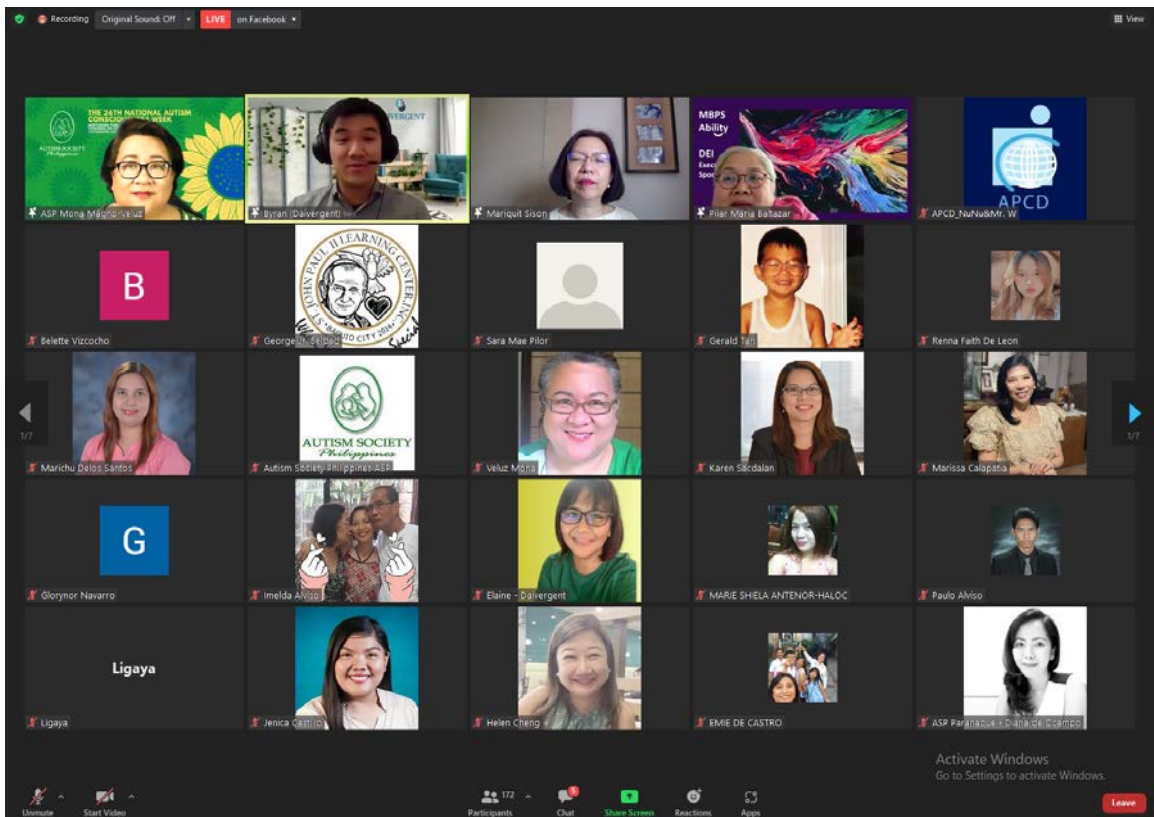
## SDGs

**Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries

**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



APCD presented via video recording at the Open Forum, representing the region's autism self-advocates and reflecting the “ASEAN Enabling Masterplan” and the Philippines Autism Policy Framework. The event was conducted by Autism Philippines Society (ASP), on January 28, 2022.



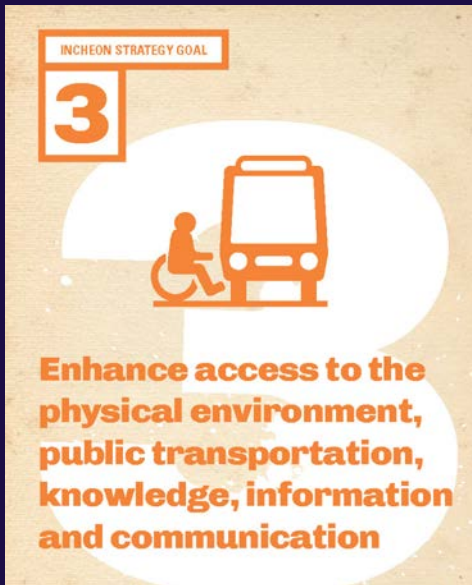
APCD attended an international training course on “Empowering Persons with Disabilities Program” organized by the Singapore Cooperation Program, Singapore from December 5 to December 9, 2022.





The APCD Executive Director visited “Joy of Life” Café to follow up on the success of a APCD graduated trainee with hearing disability of the APCD 60+ Plus project, on September 30 2022.





# Goal 3

Enhance access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication

## CRPD

**Article 9:** Accessibility

## SDGs

**Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

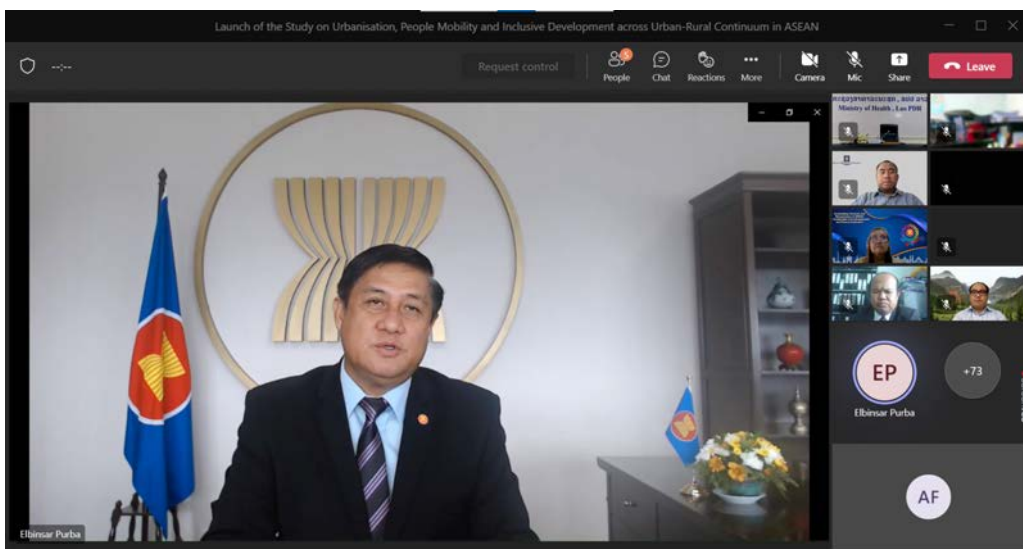
**Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



In accordance with the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025, APCD participated in a webinar on building sectoral partnerships for inclusive smart city projects Transportation for All (T4A), Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, and the ASEAN Disability Forum (ADF) were the co-organizers of this event, on January 28, 2022.



APCD participated in the launch of the ASEAN Secretariat’s webinar titled “Study on Urbanization, People Mobility, and Inclusive Development in the Urban-Rural Field”, on June 15, 2022,



Asian Network and the ERIA E-S-I Knowledge Lab invited APCD to a unique private lunch roundtable discussion at the St. Regis Bangkok. During this roundtable, participants shared their thoughts, comments, and ideas regarding recent ERIA initiatives and supported to the launch of the ERIA E-S-I Knowledge Lab in Thailand. In addition, they discussed the policy brief “Social Enterprises and Disability: Promoting Inclusion, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship in ASEAN” in greater detail of future collaboration, on June 17, 2022.



Mr. Piroon Laismit gave information about employability of persons with disabilities according to APCD Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) at the Association for Parents of Person with Intelligences Disability of Thailand (APID), on April 22, 2022.





APCD in-house media editor for the smartphone training program organized by APCD, on January 21, 2022.



NNA Thailand Edition called on the APCD Executive Director for an interview at APCD Office about APCD profile, activities and project, APCD 60+ Plus Bakery& Chocolate café by Yamazaki and MarkRin project, on February 23, 2022.



APCD Executive Director led the APCD team to call on Dr. Dhanakorn Srisooksai Ph.D., the Chief Executive Officer-CEO of THAI MEDIA FUND, for future coporation, on June 24, 2022.



Mr. Takayuki KOBORI, the Chief Editor of the Daily NNA Thailand Edition from the KYODO NEWS GROUP visited APCD to interview Mr. Masami Akiyama, the president of THAI YAMAZAKI CO., LTD, on June 29, 2022.





Mr. Krisana Lalai, the reporter of “Krisana Tour Yok Lor” TV program interviewed Dr. Tej Bunnag, the President of the Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability at APCD 60+ Plus Kitchen by CP, on June 29, 2022.



The Thai PBS TV channel filmed “APCD 60+ Plus Vocational skills Training for persons with disabilities of the year 2022” and promote the new APCD Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) project, the APCD 60+ Plus Kitchen by CP, on July 5, 2022.



The Pen Gun Eang TV program of NBT channel filmed “APCD 60+ Plus Vocational skills Training for persons with disabilities of the year 2022”, on July 6, 2022.



APCD started the media project of sustainable Disability-Inclusive employment documentary focusing on ex-trainee of invisible disability employed by the Black Canyon (Thailand) Co., Ltd, on September 2, 2022.





Sook Baab Thai Jai Por Peang TV Program, broadcasting on Thai TV Channel 5 visited APCD, on August 30, 2022.



APCD started the media project of sustainable Disability-Inclusive employment documentary focusing on ex-trainees with invisible disability, on August 29, 2022.





APCD started the media project of sustainable Disability-Inclusive employment documentary focusing on ex-trainee with disability employing and interview Mr. Sammy Carolus, General Manager, the Hyatt Regency Bangkok Sukhumvit, on September 5, 2022.



Tape on APCD 60+ Plus Project Documentary with trainee of year 2022 at Centra by Centra Cheang Wattana Bangkok, on September 1, 2022.





APCD Good practices Documentary of the 60+ Plus vocational skills training for persons with disabilities employability project (Disability-Inclusive Business- DIB). The program interviewed Mr. Masami Akiyama, the President of Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd. and Mr. Pravit Chitnarapong , the Managing Director of the Black Canyon Thailand, on September 19, 2022.



The “Thailand Today” TV program interviewed Mr. Piroon Laismit, APCD Executive Director about the APCD 60+ Plus Bakery&Café project on Disability-Inclusive Business-DIB, in September 2022.





News1 Channel, released on Channel 26 Thailand, filmed the APCD 60+ Plus projects on Disability-Inclusive Business- DIB at the APCD 60+ Plus Bakery & Café, the Government House, on October 5, 2022.



“Thailand Today” TV program for interviewing Mr. Sammy Carolus General Manager of Hyatt Regency Sukhumvit and his team in providing Sustainable Job Opportunities for APCD ex-trainees with disabilities, on October 7, 2022.







H.E. Mr. Tej Bunnag, APCD Foundation President, gave an interview to support the APCD 60+ Plus projects (Disability-Inclusive Business) implementation, on October 3, 2022.



The “Wanmai Variety” TV News Program broadcast on the Thai PBS Channel, visited Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd branch, namely SAINT ETOILE, at Central Rama9, in November 2022.





The “Wanmai Variety” TV News Program broadcast on the Thai PBS Channel, visited Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd branch, namely SAINT ETOILE, at Central Rama9, on November 8, 2022.





The “Wanmai Variety” TV News Program broadcast on the Thai PBS Channel, visited the Black Canyon (Esplanade branch), on November 15, 2022.





# Goal 4

## Strengthen social protection

### CRPD

**Article 28:** Adequate standard of living and social protection

### SDGs

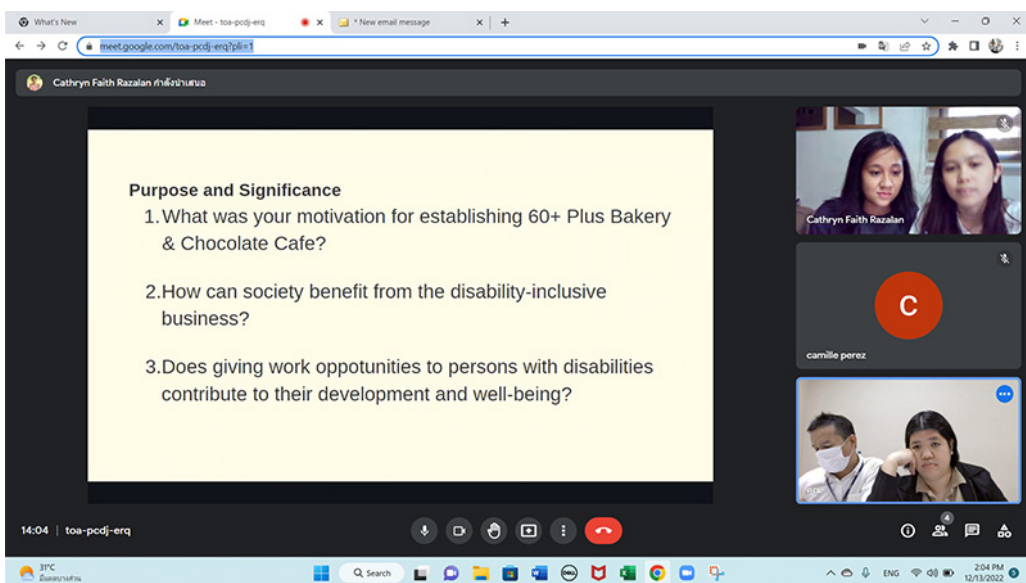
**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

**Goal 9:** Reduce inequality within and among countries

The Dao Ruang (Marigold) Group, a Thai Self advocate group for people with intellectual disabilities, and their families had a study visit for disability awareness to Pattaya, Chonburi Province, on September 4, 2022.



APCD participated in an online interview with architecture students from Mapa Institute of Technology at Laguna, Malayan College Laguna, regarding their undergraduate thesis titled “Self-sustaining Shelter for Abandoned Children with Down Syndrome”, on December 13, 2022.





Disability Equality Training (DET) Presentation at the RBB Human Resource (HR) Retreat Workshop organized by the World Food Program, on September 22, 2022.





Fourteen new diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and government officials visited APCD to learn how APCD empower persons with disabilities, on August 4, 2022





# Goal 5

Expand early intervention and education of children with disabilities

## CRPD

**Article 7:** Children with Disabilities

## SDGs

**Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The Thai Japanese Association School (TJAS) brought visitors (teachers and students with disabilities) to APCD for a half-day bakery-baking workshop. They gained bakery making skill and disability inclusive business experiences, on February 4, 2022.

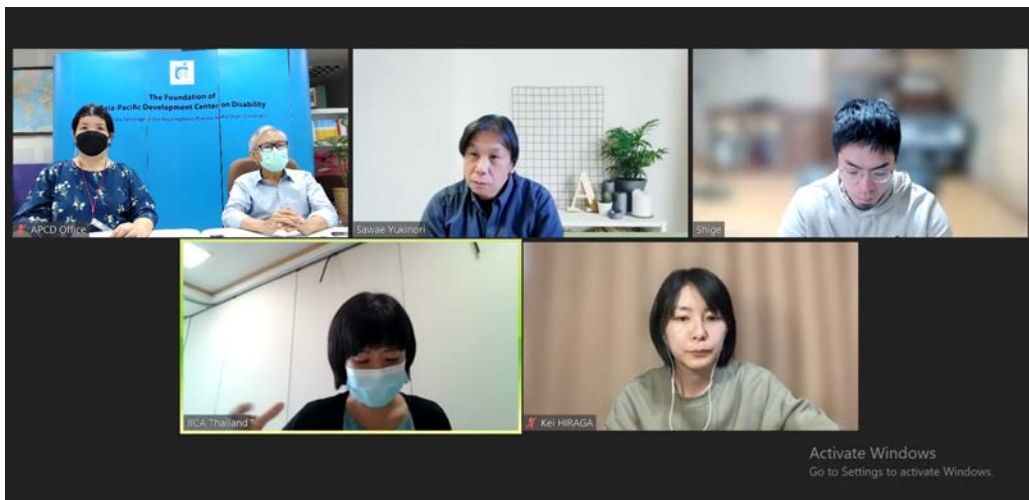


APCD followed up on the Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in cooperation with the JICA Thailand Office and the University of Tsukuba. All three parties confirmed that strengthening the partnership between the University of Tsukuba, JICA, APCD, and key ASEAN and Asia-Pacific partners was one of the purposes. Representatives from the JICA Thailand office, the University of Tsukuba, and APCD have decided to collaborate on future implementation in order to extend key outcomes to additional ASEAN and Asia-Pacific countries, on March 9, 2022.





APCD met JICA Thailand Office and the University of Tsukuba to discuss the next phase of the Community Empowerment Program (CEP). The CEP focused on promoting physical activities for persons with autism, intellectual disabilities, and psychosocial disabilities in ASEAN countries to cope during COVID-19. The follow-up activities identified the outcomes of the previous activities and considered the next actions of the project in order to expand the outcomes and scale up the project, on April 28, 2022.



APCD presented an inspiring case story to parents of children with disabilities at an online class of the Foundation for Children with Disabilities (FCD), on June 2, 2022.

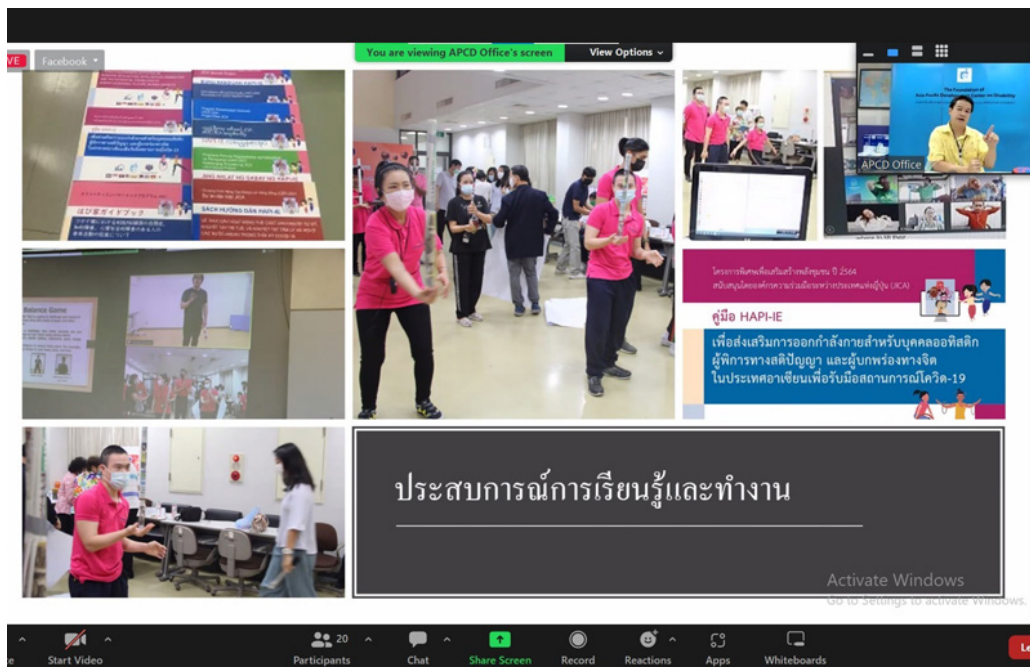




APCD participated in the Thailand mission to the Republic of Maldives to monitor and assess the needs for inclusive education improvement. The mission took place in Malé, Maldives, on August 22–26, 2022.



The Foundation for Children with Disabilities (FCD) hosted the APCD's presentation of leisure, recreation, and sports for children with disabilities, on September 5, 2022.



The JICA Follow-up Program for the Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP): “Promotion of Social Participation of Persons with Disabilities through Sports (A),” organized by the JICA Tohoku Center from at the APCD Training Center in Bangkok, Thailand, on October 14-20, 2022.



JICA in partnership with APCD organized an online side event of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, on October 20, 2022.





TICA, APCD, and Srinakharinwirot University organized a study visit for Maldivian delegates to Bangkok and Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, to learn more about inclusive education. The participants were professionals, teachers and parents, on November 29 - December 1, 2022.





Congratulations to trainees with disabilities who graduated in the internship program of APCD 60+ Plus Vocational skills training in the Hospitality business project at the Centra by Centara Hotel Chaeng Watthana of the year 2022, on September 7, 2022.



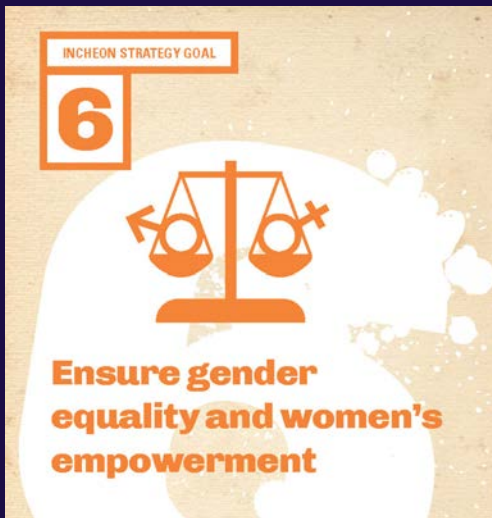
Congratulations to trainees with disabilities who graduated in the internship program of APCD 60+ Plus Vocational skills training in the Hospitality business project at the Centra by Centara Hotel Chaeng Watthana of the year 2022, on September 7, 2022.



APCD welcomed a half-day visit for secondary students from Anglo Singapore International School, Bangkok, Thailand, on June 23, 2022.







# Goal 6

Ensure gender equality & women's empowerment

## CRPD

**Article 5:** Equality and non-discrimination

**Article 6:** Woman and disabilities

## SDGs

**Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



APCD presented at the Online Regional Consultation on “Facilitating Innovative Action on Disability-inclusive and Gender-responsive Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific”, on May 5-6, 2022.





# Goal 7

Ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management

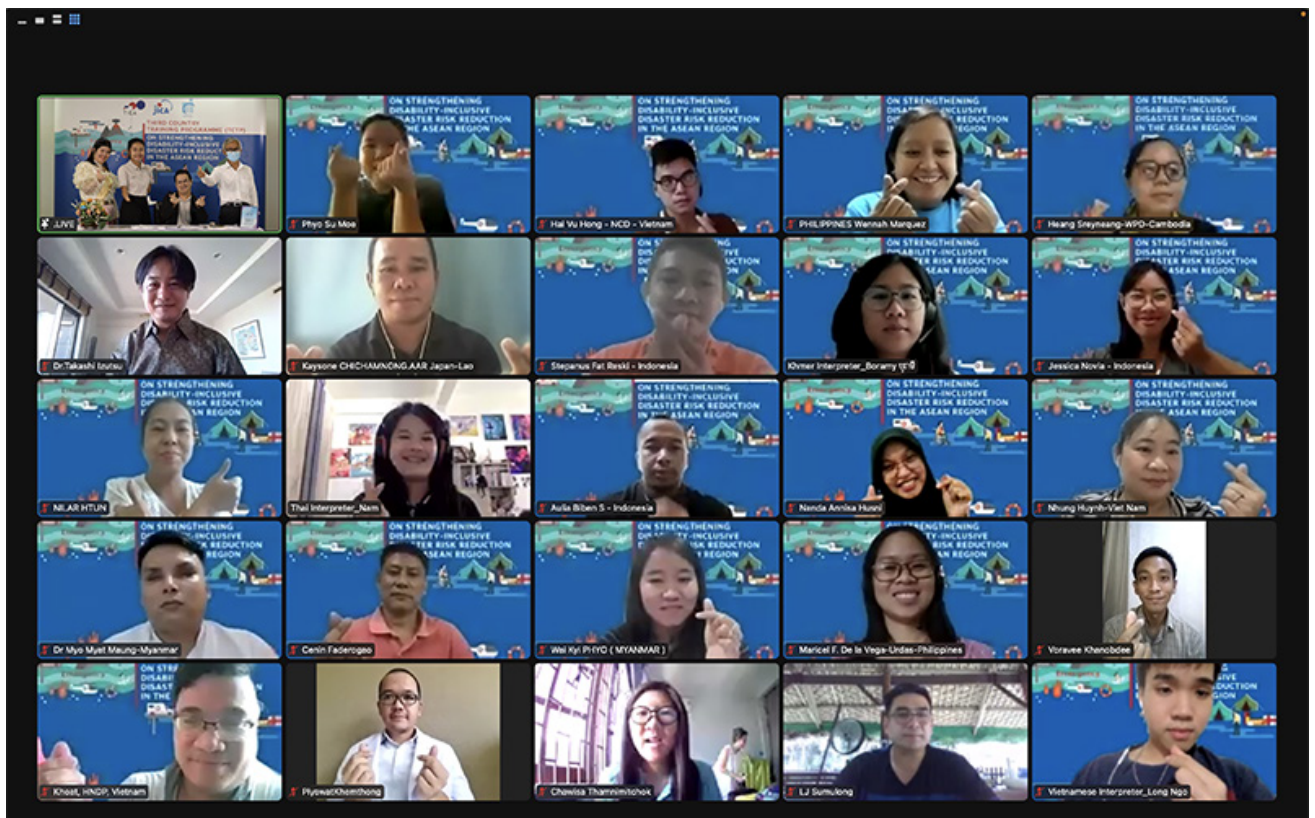
## CRPD

**Article 11:** Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

## SDGs

**Goal 13:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

APCD, in collaboration with TICA and JICA, organized the Third Country Training Program (TCTP) at an online platform: Strengthening Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) in the ASEAN Region, on July 23-29, 2022.







# Goal 8

Improve the reliability and comparability of disability data

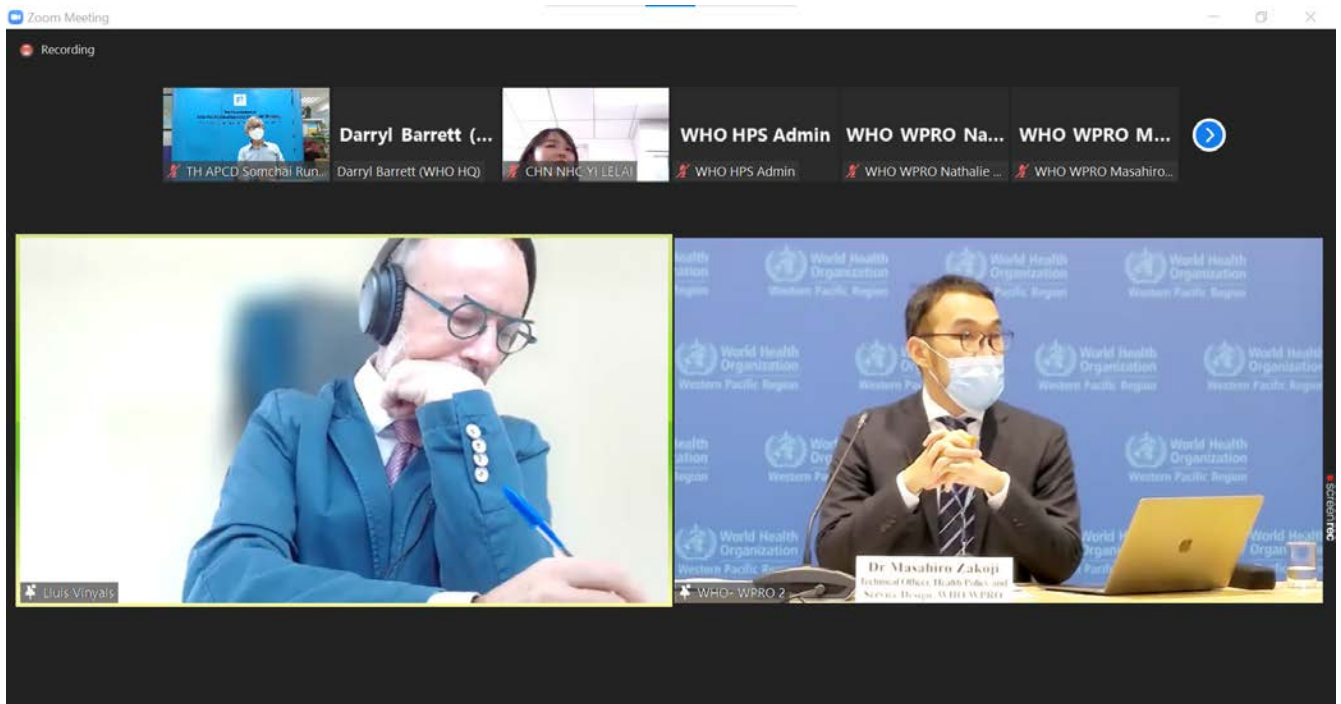
## CRPD

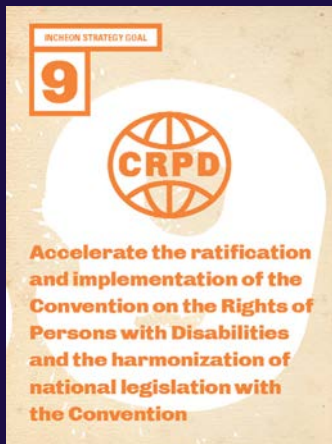
**Article 31:** Statistics and data collection

## SDGs

**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

APCD attended “Regional Webinar on the Draft Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities” organized by World Health Organization (WHO), on June 7, 2022.





# Goal 9

Accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities and harmonization of national legislation with the Convention

## CRPD

**Article 32:** International cooperation

**Article 33:** National implementation and monitoring

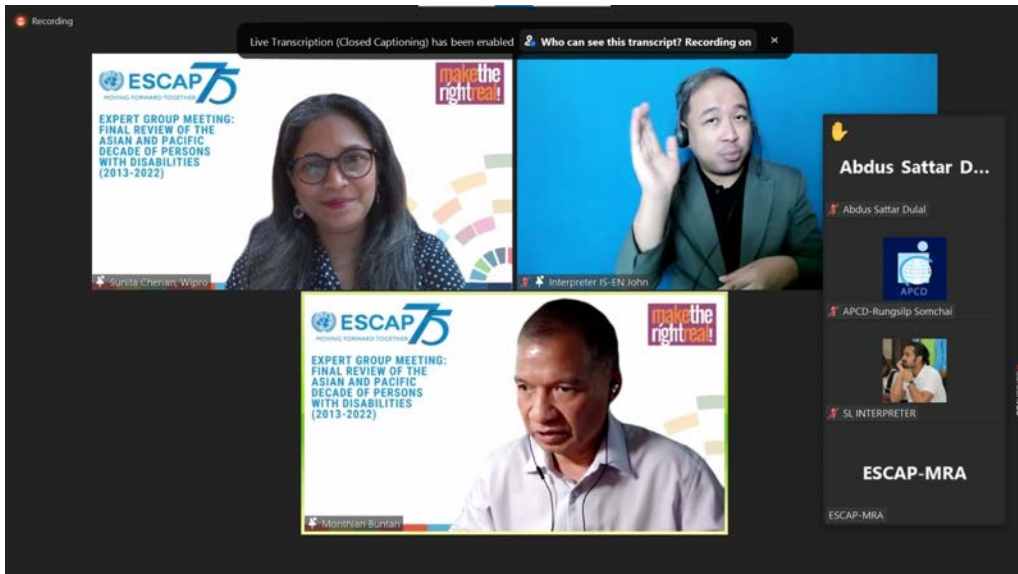
## SDGs

**Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries

**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



APCD participated in the Expert Group Meeting “Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022”, organized by ESCAP, on June 22-23, 2022.



APCD Mission to Jakarta, Indonesia for ESCAP event “the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting (HLIGM) on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 ” which implemented, on October 16 - 22, 2022.





# Goal 10

Advance subregional, regional and interregional cooperation

## CRPD

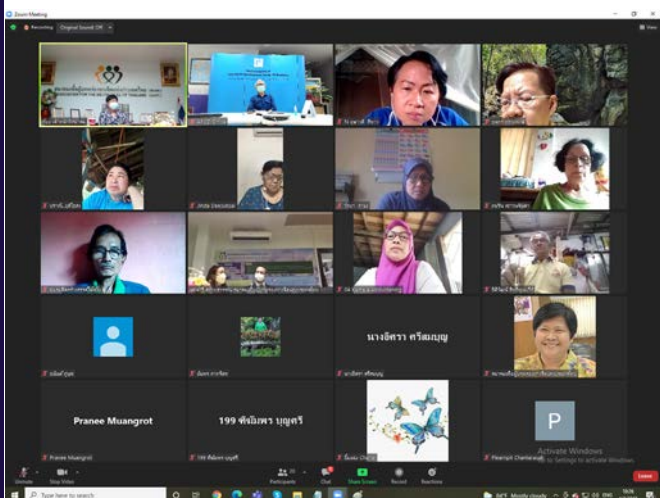
**Article 32:** International cooperation

## SDGs

**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

### APCD In-House Training in January 2022:

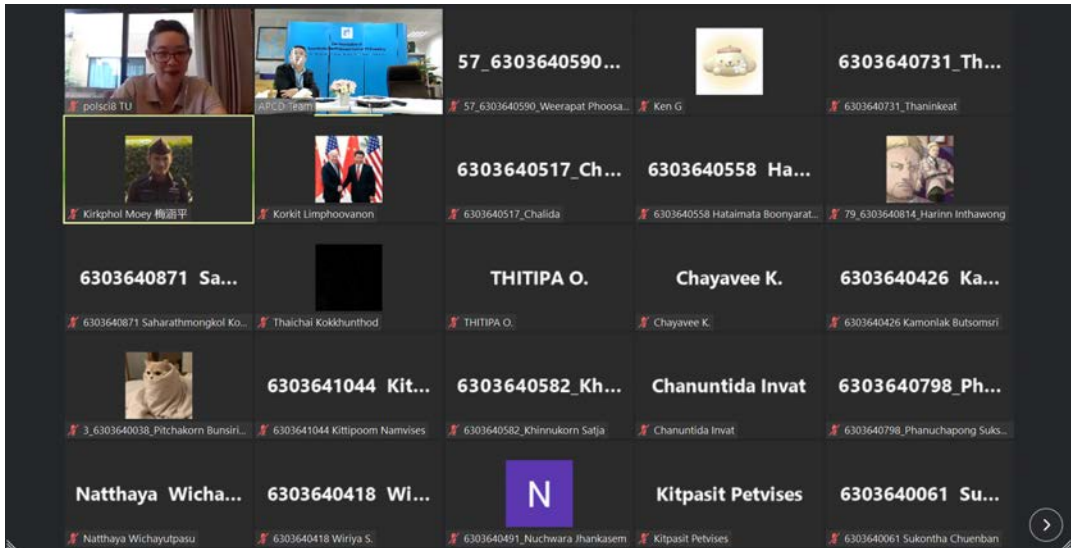
APCD organized an internal training session on “Disability Situation and Policy in China” Mr. Tianzhuo Zhang, an APCD intern from China, served as a speaker of the online session with participation of APCD staff and a colleague from the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEP). The session presented about disability benefits and allowances, as well as data on disability, on January 28, 2022.



The Association for Mental Illness in Thailand (AMIT) invited APCD to participate in an executive committee meeting. The highlight is that an American expert on employment of persons with disabilities, Mr. Kevin Cook, was invited to join the meeting as an advisor for AMIT. The APCD served as a liaison between the National Organization of Persons with Disabilities and an international expert on disability-inclusive business, on February 4, 2022.



APCD delivered a special online lecture titled “In Practice: Negotiating Disabilities and Development” to international program students from Thammasat University, on March 22, 2022.



APCD participated on the Seventh Session of the Committee on Social Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UN Conference Center, Bangkok, Thailand, on September 6-8, 2022.



APCD displayed South to South Cooperation for Inclusive Society cases at the UN Conference Center for Global South-South Development Expo 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand, on September 12–14, 2022.





APCD collaborated with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, World Food Program and Embassy of Australia in Thailand organized a hybrid assembly to commemorate International Day of Persons with Disabilities at UN ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand, on December 8, 2022.





Visit by the Senior Vice President of JICA Headquarters to APCD for an update on future collaboration, Bangkok, Thailand, on December 16, 2022.



Mr. Zhang Tianzhuo, Chinese Intern from University of Queensland have Online Internship Program through World Endeavours Thailand from November 22, 2021 to February 18, 2022.

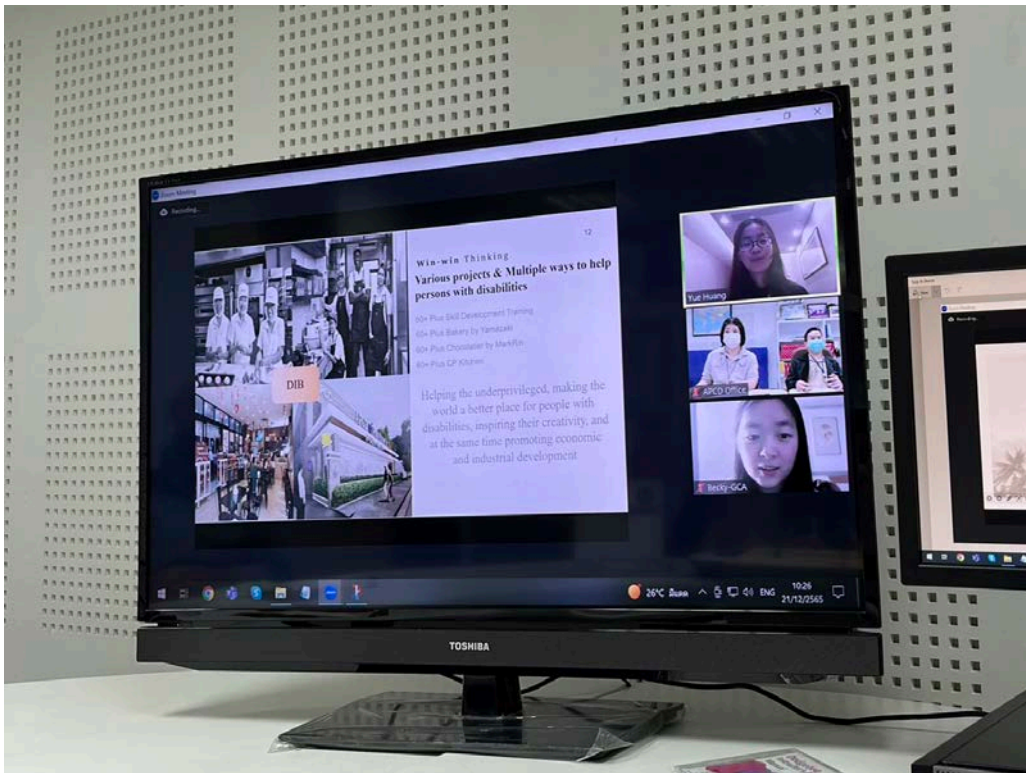


Ms. Yunqi Guo, Chinese Intern from Shanghai University, China have Online Internship Program through Global Cultural Adventurers from June 1 to August 31, 2022.





Ms. Yue Huang, Chinese Intern from College of Clinical Medicine, Zhejiang Chinese Medical University, China have Online Internship Program through Global Cultural Adventurers from September 1 to December 29, 2022.

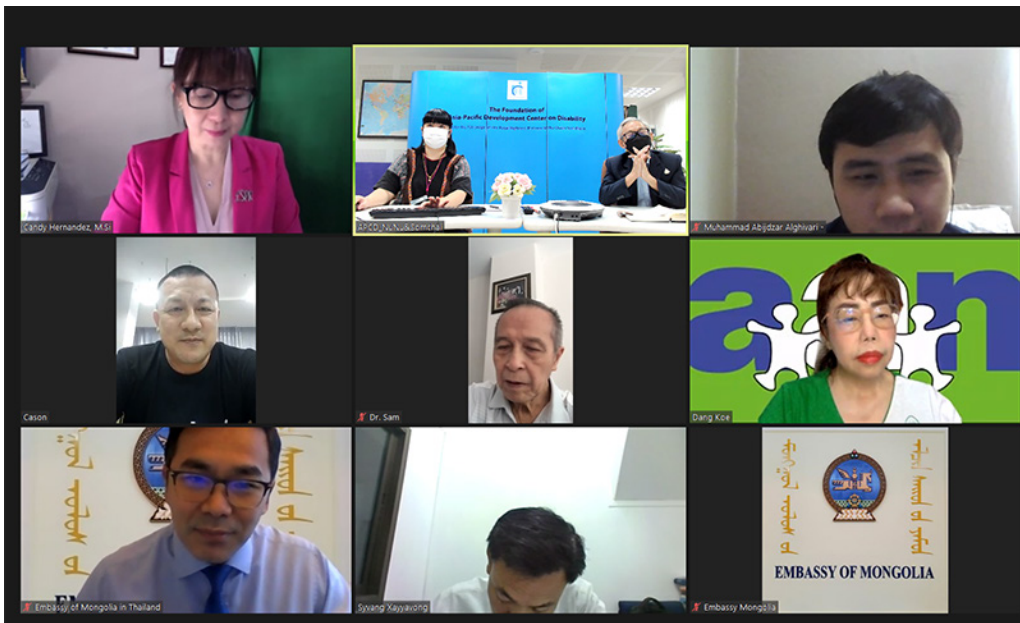


Mr. Evan Hall, American Intern from Grand Valley State University dispatched as In-person Intern at APCD Office by World Endeavours from September 12 to December 2, 2022.

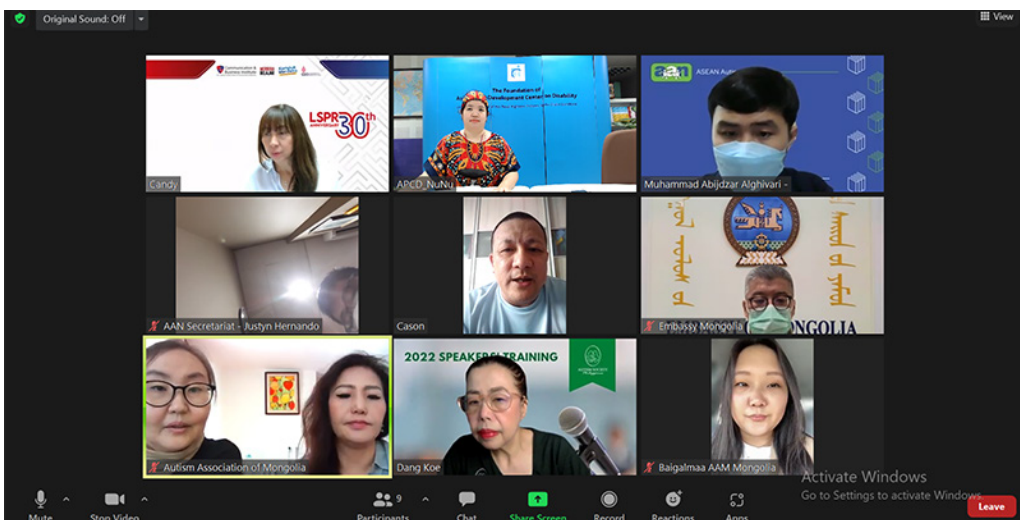




APCD facilitated the attendance of H.E. Mr. Tumor Amarsanaa, Ambassador of Mongolia to Thailand, Permanent Representative to UNESCAP in the AAN Executive Committee Meeting. He admired AAN's monthly activity reports from each country and intended to introduce relevant organization in Mongolia to join the network as an associate member. APCD was honored to be a part of this collaboration between ASEAN member states and Mongolian officials on the international autism movement, on February 24, 2022.



Ms. Supaanong Panyasirimongkol, APCD Networking & Collaboration Officer, attended AAN Executive Committee Meeting. In this meeting, The Embassy of Mongolia in Thailand introduced representatives from the Mongolian Autism Association to join the meeting, on April 27, 2022.



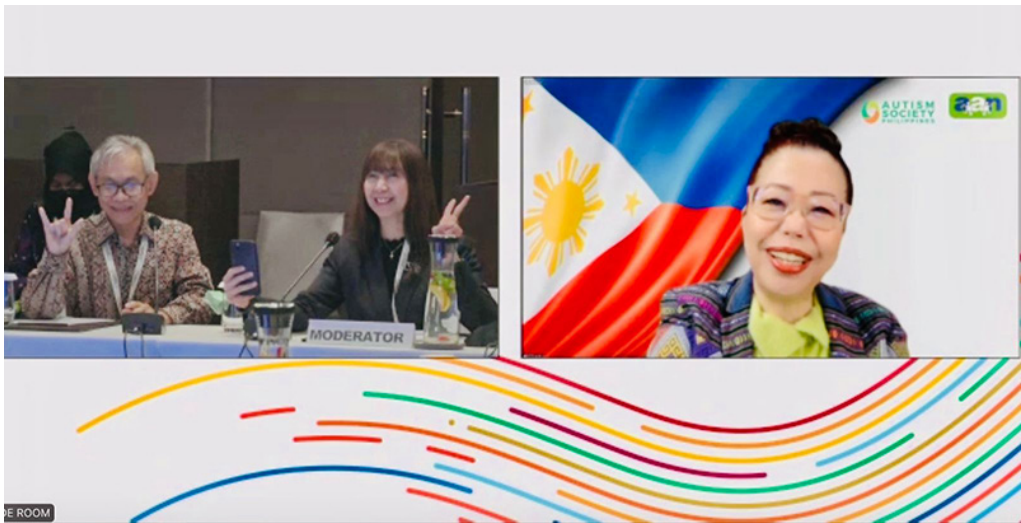
A group of five people, three men and two women, are standing together for a group photo in what appears to be a restaurant or bar. From left to right: a woman in a black polo shirt with 'GARYT' on the sleeve; a woman in a patterned dress; a man in a dark suit and glasses; a man in a white short-sleeved shirt with a black shoulder bag; and a man in a dark suit and glasses holding an orange bag with the 'LEAA' logo. The background features wooden shelves stocked with various bottles.



Mr. Somchai and representatives of the ASEAN Autism Network and the Yayasan Autism Indonesia (YAI) visited and developed cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat and the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), on October 18, 2022.



APCD co-organized side-events in collaboration with the ASEAN Autism Network at HLIGM, on October 21, 2022.





ASEAN Autism Network Handover Ceremony and In-person Executive Committee Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The hand over was delivered from Malaysia to Lao PDR, on November 6-8, 2022.



Government of Cambodia in cooperation with APCD organized the online preparatory meeting of “5<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Community-based Inclusive Development (AP CBID) Congress”, on May 20, 2022.





APCD Mission to Phnom Penh, Cambodia for Collaboration on Organizing the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Community-based Inclusive Development Congress, on August 9-11, 2022.





## Visitors



Mr. Takayasu Shimada, President of TOTO (Thailand) called on Mr. Piroon Laismit APCD Executive Director and taking a tour at APCD Headquarter, seeing APCD projects including Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) projects, (APCD 60+ Plus Bakery&Chocolate by Yamazaki and Mark Rin @Baan Rajchavithi and APCD 60+ Plus Bakery&Chocolate by Yamazaki and Mark Rin @Government House projects). It is to seek possibility for collaboration with APCD, on March 4, 2022.



H. E. Mrs. Ariunzaya Ayush, Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Mongolia together with H.E. Mr. Tumur Amarsana, Ambassador of Mongolia to the Kingdom of Thailand and Mr. Davaadash Sambuu, Counselor of Embassy of Mongolia in Thailand visited APCD to exchange knowledge in disability-inclusive development, especially Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB), on March 28, 2022.



H.E. Mr. Alisher Sadullaev, the Senator, Member of the Committee on Youth, Culture and Sports of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) and the Head of Agency for Youth Affairs together with Mr. Fakhridin Sultanov, the Consul-General and Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to UN ESCAP, Mr. Nuriddin Mamatkulov, the Consul and Deputy Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to UN ESCAP and Mr. Islom Okhunov, the Head of the Division for the Development of International Relations of the Agency for Youth Affairs visited APCD to exchange knowledge in disability-inclusive development, on March 30, 2022.



Mr. Wanarat Chanphet, Officer of the Embassy of Israel in Thailand and Ms. Kanvisorn Charikanonda, Assistant to Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Israel in Thailand visited APCD, on May 25, 2022.





Social Inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, on June 1, 2022.



Mr. Peter Bradley, Chief Executive Officer of Safe Child Thailand (SCT) visited APCD and had discussion with Mr. Piroon Laismit, APCD Executive Director, Mr. Somchai Rungsilp, APCD Community Development Manager and Ms. Nongnuch Maytarjittipun, APCD Information and Knowledge Management Department on potential collaboration with APCD in the future, on June 1, 2022.





A representative from the World Endeavors, Mr. Wanchai Suwatsiripon, Manager of World Endeavors Thailand office, Thailand office paid a visit to APCD, on June 7, 2022.



The World Food Program team visited APCD to seek the possibility of collaborations in the area of accessibility and disability empowerment and development, on June 2, 2022.



Prof. Jun Nakagawa, Faculty of Contemporary Law, Tokyo Keizai University (Tokyo University of Economics) visited APCD, observing for Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) project, on July 8, 2022.



Ms. Thitiporn Chirasawadi, the Director of Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, led Devawongse Varopakarn Institute team and University students from Southern Thailand to visit APCD, on July 27, 2022.





On Mr. Aj Wisuthithawornwong, the manager of CSR Management of Thai Oil Public Company Limited., A Company of PTT Group, on July 25 2022.



Mrs. Chamaiporn Tantivess, Human Resource Officer, Senior Professional Level of DEVAWONGSE VAROPAKARN INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DVIFA) led her team and 14 new diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and government officials to visit APCD for a study visit. It is to understand the civil society roles in empowerment and capacity building for and by persons with disabilities for career opportunities that is related to the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, on August 4, 2022.





A group from Japan and Italy visited APCD to activities on community-based living for people with psychosocial disabilities in Bangkok, Thailand, on August 5, 2022.



Ms. Sally Eubhani, Vice President of Thai-Israel Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Dudi Vaknine, the Chief Executive Director of Mainly Silver Design, visited APCD and met Mr. Piroon Laismit, the APCD Executive Director, Mr. Khan Prachuabmoh, the Director of Fund Raising Bureau of the Thai Redcross Society and Treasurer of APCD Foundation Board of Committee and APCD Team. They discussed the possibility of future collaborations, on August 8, 2022.



Mr. Dmitry Frischin, Deputy Regional Manager of the UN Volunteer, led the UN volunteers team -Ms. Supharat Kaewkhonkaen, Programme Analyst, Mr. Innocent Muvunyi, Regional Communications Officer, and Mr. Namchok Petsaen, Regional Communications Assistant visited APCD and met Mr. Piroon Laismit, the APCD Executive Director, and APCD team. It is to promote an inclusive society and collaborations, on August 10, 2022.



Working Group in the field of Disability Employability Empowerment of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration visited and observed Disability Inclusion environment and inclusive society at APCD. They met Mr. Piroon Laismit APCD Executive Director and APCD team, on August 19, 2022.





The President of the Royal Thai Army Wives Association, Signal Department Royal Thai Army led her team to visit APCD, on August 25, 2022



Empowerment and Vocational Development Center for Persons with Disabilities in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province team Visited APCD office and had a study visit on Knowledge exchange in good practice of Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB), on September 15, 2022.



The Saowabha Vocational College together with its students with disabilities and their parents visited APCD to observe APCD Disability-Inclusive Business project, the 60+ Plus Bakery&Cafe. They participated in a workshop on baking pastries and a session on “What is APCD”, on September 20, 2022.





## Highlight

### **Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over APCD 60+ Plus Kitchen by CP Opening Ceremony, on April 4, 2022**

Dr. Tej Bunnag, President of the Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD Foundation) under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn led APCD Foundation committees, APCD Executive Board members, High-level officials and Mr. Supakit Chearavanont, Chairman of Charoen Pokphand Group Company Limited and CP Group Co.Ltd. management team to welcome Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Mr. Supakit Chearavanont, Chairman of the Board of Charoen Pokphand Group Company Limited, along with the management team, consisting of Mr. Wiboon Kusakul, Advisor of Charoen Pokphand Group Company Limited, Mr. Prasit Boonduangprasert Chief Executive Officer Charoen Pokphand Foods Public Company Limited and Mr. Sunthorn Jasukorn, Senior Executive Vice President, Five Star Business and the CPF restaurant welcomed Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Sirindhorn.

The APCD 60+ Plus Kitchen by CP project is to provide vocational on-the job-training for persons with disabilities in hospitality businesses. This is one of the important Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) projects and missions of the Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn at Baan Ratchavithi, Rama 6 Road, Ratchathewi District, Bangkok.















Open. Connect. Balance.

---

## Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC 2022)

APEC 2022 Thailand is a year-long hosting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings in Thailand took place in 2022. Thailand previously hosted APEC meetings in 2003 and 1992.

The theme for 2022 APEC meetings is "Open. Connect. Balance."

The summit returned an in-person meeting since the 2018 summit after the 2019 summit in Chile was cancelled due to the protests at the country and the last two editions were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



At the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation – APEC, the APCD 60+ Plus Bakery & Chocolate Café was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by having a booth at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center (QSNCC) during 15-19 November 2022.

Many Delegates and media crews visited and purchase Bakery and Chocolate products the APCD booth, such as Mr. Tanee Sangrat, the Director-General, Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Nicha Hiranburana Thuvatham, the Thai Government House Deputy Secretary-General Nicha Hiranburana Thuvatham, and etc.

Mr. Piroon Laismit, the APCD Executive Director and the APCD team together with Mr. Masami Akiyama, the President of Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd., and his team welcomed Mr. Isao Iijima, Special Advisor to the Cabinet and the Japanese Embassy in Thailand team visited and purchased Chocolate and Bakery made by persons with disabilities, APCD 60+Plus Bakery & Chocolate Café

















## The Thai Media Fund supports and collaborates with APCD in producing creative documentaries of APCD Disability-Inclusive Business Good Practices.



This project is to promote the success of APCD vocational skills training programs and inclusive employment of persons with disability in collaboration with private sectors, such as the Thai Yamazaki Co., Ltd., the Hyatt Regency Bangkok, Sukhumvit Hotel, the Black Canyon (Thailand) Co., Ltd., the Centra by Centara Hotel and Central Group.

APCD has continuously practiced and achieved the objectives and goals of the Disability-Inclusive Business (DIB) project, producing tangible outcomes, narrowing the economic and vocational opportunities of persons with disability, and guiding the integration of persons with disabilities into an inclusive society for eight years already. With the leave no one behind, principle of the 2030 Agenda with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this project impacts poverty reduction and employment and decent work within the Framework of Sustainable Development Goal1 and Goal8, mainstreaming persons with disability to society and promoting employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disability in the labour market of the food and hospitality business. It is to ensure that people with disabilities have the same access to basic and essential recruitment and employment as others. Their issues are then incorporated into all relevant sectors (Government, Business, and Private) policies.

















## Disability-inclusive business models for an enabling environment

Piroon Laismit

I have led many groups of visitors to our “chocolate factory” run entirely by persons with disabilities. The expressions of awe and amazement on the faces of my guests never fail to warm my heart. Enter our training centre for chocolate making and you will see to your left, visually impaired staff, meticulously wrapping chocolate bars with high precision, due to their heightened sense of touch and space. Turn to your right and you will see hearing impaired employees, stirring and pouring different chocolate mixtures into chocolate molds, monitoring these molds while they bake in the oven, and then taking them out of the oven for further processing. Every time I observe them busy at work while explaining to my guests the different steps involved in chocolate making, I always feel proud, not only of their achievements but also how they continue to inspire others. Every branch of 60+ Plus Bakery and Café was established with the aim to provide a space for training persons with disabilities, and to serve as a model for coffee shops, or restaurants, successfully run by persons with disabilities.



*60+ Plus Bakery & Chocolate Café and products  
Source: APCD 60+ Plus Bakery & Café Facebook page*

Over the years, I have seen the power and impact of coming together to create opportunities for people in society – opportunities that allow everyone to realize their full potential, and to be able to live independently with dignity. This is our aspiration at the Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability (APCD) when we design training courses and brainstorm career opportunities for persons with disabilities, mostly persons who are visually or hearing impaired, and autistic people. We have demonstrated that they are fully capable to contribute to the food business with our 60+ Plus Bakery and Café staffed and run entirely by such persons. The Café in particular, together with our “chocolate factory,” is a success story that I am always pleased to share with others and one that I have been personally committed to.

60+ Plus Bakery and Café by Yamazaki is a collaborative project between the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, the Embassy of Japan, Thai-Yamazaki Co. Ltd, and APCD. It is a project under the royal patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, established to commemorate HRH's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary in 2015. In a very short time after its establishment and due to its immense success, the Café has expanded to include a branch at the Royal Government House and a restaurant run and serviced entirely by persons with disabilities.

Most recently in 2019, we had the honour to produce chocolate for world leaders during Thailand's ASEAN Chairmanship that year and Thailand's APEC Host Economy Year in 2022. It was a special opportunity to showcase the potential and talent of persons with disabilities to policy makers worldwide and a great source of pride for the men and women behind 60 Plus Café. My only hope is that with each new project and activity, their work will continue to inspire others to see beyond our limitations and to contribute whatever they can to society.

### ***The Importance of a Disability Enabling and Disability Inclusive Future***

As a regional development centre on disability, we strive to communicate the importance and necessity of working towards a disability enabling and disability inclusive future.

Since the 1970s, it was estimated that 10% of the world's population was disabled. Some 40 years later in 2011, a first-ever joint report on disability produced by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank (WB) put that number at 15%, or approximately one billion people who were living with some form of disability. By the end of 2022, this figure had increased to 1.3 billion. In Thailand currently, 3.19% of the population, or roughly 2.1 million people, live with some form of disability.

One conclusion that can be drawn from these statistics is that disability is a fact and reality of life. Whether due to an increase in chronic diseases or ageing populations or sadly, war and conflict, disability is not something we can 'eradicate'. Another conclusion is that the percentage of persons living with some forms of disability is not small and rather a number that must prompt us to action.

And this action must come from having the right attitudes towards and understanding of persons with disabilities. We must continue to find ways to *enable* and empower persons with disabilities, to live independently and contribute to their communities. This is valuable not only for the disabled population themselves, but for society as a whole, in reducing inequalities that prevent us from reaching our full potential.



### ***Thailand's Journey in Creating an Enabling Environment: From Social Welfare to Development Cooperation***

In Thailand, work on creating an enabling environment for persons with disabilities started well before 2015 and the establishment of the 60+ Plus Bakery and Café by Yamazaki. In fact, it began in earnest decades ago in 1954, when the Foundation for the Welfare of the Disabled was established under the royal patronage of HRH the Princess Mother (HRH Princess Somdet Phra Srinakarindra Boromarajajonani). This was soon followed in 1961 by the establishment of a service center dedicated for children and a school for disabled people, “Sri Sangwan School”.

Over the following decades, an expanding network of foundations and organizations with missions to support people with disabilities were either set up or came under royal patronage in Thailand. The Foundation for the Blind and the Foundation for the Deaf in Thailand came under the royal patronage of the HM Queen Sirikit in 1959 and 1964 respectively, the Christian Foundation for the Blind received patronage by HM King Bhumibol in 1978, and the Thailand-Caulfield Foundation for the Blind (TCFB) came under the patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn in 1980.

In my opinion, what was so distinct and pivotal about the royal patronage behind these foundations was that it gave these organizations much-needed publicity and support, improving access to critical funding and collaboration with other agencies. This, in turn improved ‘access’ for people with disabilities to public infrastructure and social services. It was the spark that ignited the engine behind a robust machinery that moved vital work forward in this area.



Source: Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers Facebook page

As these foundations became more established in providing support to the disabled population in Thailand, some even extended outreach to other countries, especially developing countries in Africa and the South Pacific – adding positive momentum to Thailand’s development cooperation. Deserving particular mention is the Prostheses Foundation of HRH the Princess Mother. Set up officially in 1992, it initially worked with the Princess Mother’s Medical Volunteers (PMMV), whose mobile units of doctors and nurses have been in operation since 1969 to reach out to the sick and disabled in remote areas. From the outset, the Foundation focused on using locally-sourced materials for the production of prosthetic legs to reduce costs, based on the principle of self-sufficiency. Over the years and through the support and status lent by the royal patronage, the Foundation was able to collaborate widely with academia and the private sector in the comprehensive production, design, distribution and practical application of these artificial devices.

### ***Towards Sustainable Development through Training and Knowledge Sharing***

In 2007, the Prostheses Foundation started projects with community hospitals to offer all-in-one service for prosthetics wearers, including repairs, refitting of spare parts and training for prosthetics production. It was at this point that the knowledge-sharing took on an international dimension, with training extended to Vietnam, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. A few years later, the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) initiated cooperation with Burundi and Senegal. By then, the Prostheses Foundation had already produced prosthetic legs for over 3,000 disabled persons, and become among the most prolific in Southeast Asia.



*Source: TICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



On 28 September 2013, I had the opportunity to attend a donation ceremony for artificial limbs at the R.J. Grast Memorial Hall in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and to witness the life changing impact that they had with my own eyes. The donation was made upon the request of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, whereby the Royal Thai Government, represented by TICA, in collaboration with the Prostheses Foundation of HRH the Princess Mother, donated one hundred artificial limbs to victims of the collapse of the Rana Plaza building in Dhaka, which housed five garment factories. Its collapse on 24 April 2013 killed at least 1,132 people and injured more than 2,500 workers. Our donation of artificial limbs from Thailand gave these workers in Bangladesh a new life and hope.



*Thailand-Senegal cooperation on prosthetic services  
Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website*

In Africa, the Royal Thai Embassy in Dakar, in collaboration with TICA, extended the expertise of the Prostheses Foundation to Burundi and Senegal by creating regular exchanges, and providing training on the production and management of prosthetics-related services. This collaboration also served to boost bilateral relations, with Thailand helping to set up a prostheses centre at a military hospital in Dakar. Officials from Senegal and Burundi also visited Thailand for study visits and further training.

In 2016, the Prostheses Foundation found exciting new collaborators. This time they were leading companies in the fields of material science and design. Dow Thailand Group, SCG Chemicals and Rubber Soul Company added innovative value by providing specialty urethane, polypropylene, elastomers and ergonomic design for better comfort and durability.

The Foundation had indeed come a long way – from gaining royal patronage to assist the disabled in Thailand’s remote countryside, to offering comprehensive learning support to communities and villages in other countries.

## ***Institutionalising Disability Inclusiveness***

Efforts to improve the welfare of people with disabilities require constant attention and commitment. There is a need for an established infrastructure of public agencies, foundations, and private sector collaboration to sustain projects. And this collaboration, as we have seen in this space, does not need to be limited domestically. Rooted in the philosophy of self-sufficiency and the principle of sustainable development, the various Foundations in Thailand whose missions are to empower people with disabilities are now all operating with a vision towards self-reliance, holistic learning, and partnership with the private sector on disability-inclusive businesses, as well as development cooperation with other countries.

We have to recognize that disability, after all, is not *inability*. Rather, persons with disabilities are *differently abled* with their own set of unique strengths. They can be empowered through inclusive policies and society will benefit as a result.

Let me end here with a favorite quote of mine, that I always come back to, from the Late King Bhumibol the Great, which he uttered in his remarks at the Foundation for the Welfare of the Disabled under the Royal Patronage of HRH the Princess Mother on 22 March 1984: “Helping people with disabilities is a very important task...because they did not wish to be disabled, but would rather be able to help themselves... So, it is our task, our responsibility to ensure our policies *enable* them to help themselves, so that they can contribute to society”.

\* \* \* \* \*



Mr. Piroon Laismit is the Asia-Pacific Centre on Disability (APCD) Executive Director and has extensive experience on the empowerment of persons with disabilities through capacity building programs. Before joining the APCD, Mr. Laismit headed Thailand’s development cooperation projects as the Director-General of the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and has also served as Ambassador of Thailand to the State of Qatar.







Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability  
255 Rajvithi Rd., Rajthevi, Bangkok 10400 Thailand  
Tel: +66-(0)-2354-7505 | Fax: +66-(0)-2354-7507  
Email: [info@apcdfoundation.org](mailto:info@apcdfoundation.org)  
Website: [www.apcdfoundation.org](http://www.apcdfoundation.org)



Japan-ASEAN Cooperation



ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT



ESCAP  
Economic and Social Commission  
for Asia and the Pacific



EMBASSY OF JAPAN



Yamazaki



BLACK  
CANYON  
COFFEE & EATERY

