



WORKABILITY ASIA NEWSLETTER Vol. 27

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I am pleased to announce the forthcoming 2017 event of both Workability Asia and Workability International that the 2017 Hong Kong Conference will be held in Hong Kong from 12-14 June 2017 at Kerry Hotel and the website and the first announcement has just been open to the public. We welcome every one of you, persons with disabilities, employers who fully support to provide both training and employment, the non-government sectors that provide services and all stakeholders in the arena of work and employment for persons with disabilities. The theme is "Creating a Sustainable Ecosystem for Persons with Disabilities at Work" and the website is www.2017wasia-wiconference.org.hk.

We have formed an Organising Committee in which I chaired and members are all Workability Asia members in Hong Kong and their keen involvement and support facilitate the organizing the international event. The hosts are The Hong Kong Joint Council for People with Disabilities and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service. We also formed an International Steering Committee comprising all Board Members of both Workability International and Workability Asia to give advice to the conference organiser. The 3 day conference itinerary includes 2 days of scientific programmes held at the conference venue and the 3rd day is a full day visit tour to various organisations that provide work and employment and lunch at the social enterprises' restaurants/cafes. You are also invited to be one of the sponsors for the international event and also to join as exhibitors of the booths.

I extend a heartiest welcome to all of you to attend 2017 Hong Kong Conference and you may browse the website for detail information and registration so please register early as to catch the early bird rate.

From the Board

2017 Hong Kong Conference **Workability International and Workability Asia**

Deborah Wan

Vice-chairperson of WAsia and Board member of WI



WORKABILITY ASIA

NEWSLETTER

From the Board... cont.

I am happy to report that Mr. Jerry Davis, new President of Workability International, visited Hong Kong on 28 December 2016 and spent one full day with us on knowing the progress of the 2017 Hong Kong Conference and also meeting the Workability Asia members through the visits to their centres and at lunch gathering. The one day programme included visit to the conference venue, Kerry Hotel (to be open in March 2017), the Caritas Integrated Vocational Training Centre, New Life Workshop at New Life Building, lunch at New Life Restaurant (social enterprise) and meeting the employer, the Intercontinental Hong Kong, and also the Commissioner for Rehabilitation. You may find the photos of the visit for your information. Mr. Davis appreciated to have the opportunity to meet so many stakeholders in one day and he was indeed impressed with the arrangement.

Hong Kong will also host the coming Workability Asia Board Meeting from 7-8 February 2017 and one full day visit will be arranged for all Directors on 7 February and the Board Meeting will be held in the morning of 8 February.

I will give you the update of 2017 Conference in March 2017 and I wish you all a Happy New Year of 2017 and also the Lunar New Year of Rooster commencing from 28 January 2017.



2017 Hong Kong Conference

- **Date:** 12– 14 June 2017
- **Venue:** Kerry Hotel, Hong Kong
- **Theme:** Creating a Sustainable Ecosystem for Persons with Disabilities at Work

- **Registration Fees:**

Participants	Professional Early Bird Rate (until 28/2/2017)	Professional Standard Rate (after 28/2/2017)	Person with Disabilities/ Accompanying Person
Overseas(USD)	230	300	100
Hong Kong (HKD)	1,500	2,000	500

Don't miss the Early Bird Rate

- **Tentative Conference Programme:**

12/6/2017 (Monday)	Morning	Opening Ceremony
		Keynote Speech: Topic TBC
	Afternoon	Plenary Session I – Enabling Ecosystem to facilitate work potential and employment opportunities for PWDs - Policies and Initiatives on supporting PWDs training and employment on different aspects including government, NGOs, private sector, community acceptance and awareness, and accessibility Format: Panel discussion Parallel Session A – Enabling Ecosystem 1. Government and NGOs Initiatives on the latest thinking and new service models on enhancing PWDs' workability 2. Private Sector Initiatives on CSR policies and collaboration model with NGOs 3. Community Acceptance and Awareness towards the work potential of PWDs and their right to work in global and local environments 4. Accessibility for PWDs, including enhancing physical and psycho-social accessibility

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Hong Kong Conference ... cont.

13/6/2017 (Tuesday)	Morning	Plenary Session II – Social Innovation in enhancing the employability of PWDs ↵ Format: Case illustration ↵
		Parallel Session B ↵ 1. New technology to enable working beyond limit ↵ 2. Successful cases of PWDs working at home and self-employment ↵ 3. Micro finance model in rural areas for employment of PWDs ↵ 4. Social Enterprises ↵ 5. Use of media and social media to promote workability of PWDs ↵ ↵
	Afternoon	Plenary Session III – Social impact of Social Enterprises ↵ ↵
		WI Annual General Meeting ↵
		Closing Ceremony ↵ WAsia Annual General Meeting ↵
14/6/2017 (Wednesday)	Whole day	Study Visit ↵



- Abstracts:

The Organizing Committee of 2017 Hong Kong Conference invites the submission of abstracts under the Conference theme: Creating a Sustainable Ecosystem for Persons with Disabilities at Work

Guidelines for Submission of Abstracts

Important Date:

-10 March 2017– Closing date for submission

-14 April 2017 – Notification of acceptance of abstracts.

Note: We do not accept any new proposals or changes beyond 10 March 2017

All proposals for oral presentation require submission of an abstract.

Abstracts must be sent through Email: 2017hkconference@hkcss.org.hk with .doc files.
 (*Please indicate “Abstract Submission” on the email topic.)

All information is here. <http://www.2017wasia-wiconference.org.hk/>

Golden Girl

Dr. Shamim Ferdous
Director of WAsia and Executive Director of
Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation



Parul is a girl with intellectual disability. She belongs to a poor family with no agricultural land. They just have a hut on a small piece of land where the family lives. Her father is a day labor and mother is a housewife. Between her brother and herself, Parul is the younger. Parul came to Rural Inclusive School at Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation when she was only 5 and identified her as mildly intellectually disabled. She was also malnourished at that time.

Parul had to face lots of challenges in her life. Just because of being a girl child she was neglected in her family. Moreover, when her intellectual disability was identified negligence towards her increased. She was also

unreasonably considered as a lunatic in the community.

Community people especially members of extended family blamed her mother for giving birth to such a girl. Her mother had to face the risk of divorce. Parul was discriminated even in daily meals with her brother. Her family was not interested to send her to school. BPF visited her family to provide home based service (Psychosocial support) to raise awareness in the community so that they send her to school. After starting school it was seen that she was more interested in games and sports especially in swimming rather than study. At first BPF arranged her swimming practice in the local pond to increase her capacity. Soon she started participating in National level competitions and won many medals which inspired her significantly.

Golden girl... cont.

Besides these, BPF helped her family in repairing their house to ensure protection of Parul and also bought a rickshaw-van for her father by the Income Generating Activities (IGA) program. Previously their monthly income was \$40-50 and now \$150-200.

Simultaneously, she continued her study and completed her primary education. Her parents became happier and were eager to get her enrolled in a mainstream school to continue her further education. In this new school she faced difficulty to adjust in the new environment. She became a victim of bullying by her classmates and also teachers of this school neglected her because of her disability. She felt like she was abandoned while at the school.

As a result she was not interested to go to school anymore and became frustrated. After that BPF arranged meeting, training, workshop, theater show (TfD) and also incorporated Community people in this matter. BPF continued these programs and a significant change was seen in their attitude and then they accepted Parul easily. Now Parul is enjoying her school in a safe and protected environment. Moreover Parul is a member of Child Club and vocational unit.

Parul has been participating in Special Olympics since 2011. From the Special Olympics, Parul has brought fame for Bangladesh too.

- 1 Bronze medal in 2011 in Greece
- 2 Gold medals and 1 bronze medal in 2013 in Australia
- 1 Gold medal in 2015 in USA

Because of these achievements Parul has been able to establish her own position in the society. Now her family, teachers, friends and the community feel proud of her.

Parul's mother says, "previously I was known as mother of a lunatic girl. But now people know me as mother of a girl who achieved gold medal. I am very grateful to BPF." Parul's father couldn't be any prouder "now I am not just a van driver, I am Parul's father", he boasts.



International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Rama Perumal, Director of SINAM

International day of persons with disabilities was celebrated on 3rd December 2016 at Kalasapakkam Panchayat Union Conference hall, Kalasapakkam block, Block Development officer Mr. P. Sathyamoorthy was a chief guest of the day. Mr. Rama Perumal, Director of SINAM was a chairperson for the programme. In his talk, he was appreciated the effective participation of various key stakeholders in the programmes of disabled people in SINAM. Subsequent to this, Ms. V. Poonkodi, co-ordinator of SINAM gave a welcome address. Others who participated as a guest of honour are listed below.

Mr. Palani, Deputy Block Development Officer, Kalasapakkam block development office.

Mr. Pattusamy, Special Group Co-ordinator, SINAM.

Mr. Devendiran, Special Group Co-ordinator, SINAM.

Ms. Geetha, Special Group Co-ordinator, SINAM.



Block development co-ordinators of Kalasapakkam, Vembakkam, Thandrampet and the facilitators of the disabled people in every panchayat of different three blocks, participated.

The chief guest Mr. Sathiyamoorthy has indicated that there is a difference between physical disability and mental disability. The participants assembled here are the physically disabled people not mentally disabled people. So you are capable of doing various activities to generate income for your livelihood. Government, NGOs, Banks and other number of or-

ganisations are providing various inputs for the life improvement and development of differently abled people. You should come forward to utilise various opportunities and resources available for the differently abled people. Your mind should be clear that you can win in your life and career. When you succeed the entire society will appreciate and admire you. Let your life be the sense of inspiration to others. He wished for the bright future. 50 persons with physical disabilities participated in the programme. Ms. Jagadeewsari, SINAM Field staff provided vote of thanks.



40th KYOSAREN Campaign for Making the Rights of PWDs real

Fuki Sato, Secretariat staff of KYOSAREN and WASia

KYOSAREN, Japan Association of Community Workshops for Disabled Persons, has a 40-year history working to make the rights of persons with disabilities real, to participate in society through work, and live normal lives in their communities. We have about 1900 members consisting of workshops, small scale residential facilities, counseling centers and so on. We also have about 33,000 individual associate members.

Since our foundation, we have consistently demanded that national laws should be amended and new laws created in the national Diet so that PWDs are able to live as full citizens. Our campaigns have collected signatures and donations and explained the real situation of PWDs and our objectives to ordinary people, and asked them for their support. KYOSAREN has 40 branches in 40 out of 47 prefectures in Japan. All branches start campaigns at same time and continue it for about 6 months.



As a part of our campaign, especially during Disabled Person's Week, 3rd to 9th Dec, we collect signatures and donations on the street all over Japan. In Tokyo, we held a one day campaign on the 6th Dec. 2016. About 350 people, PWDs, their families and workshop staff, joined in the campaign at Shinjuku station, which has the largest number of passengers in the world. Over 30 speakers who were PWDs, staff, representatives from many DPOs, a lawyer and lawmakers gave short speeches on a sound track from 10am to 4:30pm.



Visibility of Employees with disabilities is increasing in corporate market of Pakistan

Muhammad Atif Sheikh

Research associate at Harvard Law school Disability Project



People with disabilities are more likely to stay on the job*1, which helps employers particularly in the corporate sector to save the cost of recruitment and training. In addition to this certain hidden benefit hiring persons with disabilities conveys a sense of corporate social responsibility. However, employment of disabled persons still lags far behind that of persons without disabilities in Pakistan. In the country, estimates of the number of persons living with disabilities vary between 3.3m and 27m, depending on whether they are based on government statistics (the last census which measured the prevalence rates was taken in 1998) or whether they come from other agencies*2. This ultimately means that they are being excluded as productive members of society, leading to economic losses of as much as US\$11.9bn-15.4bn, or 4.9-6.3% of Pakistan's GDP*3.

As the population in the country increase and ages, so does the incidence of disability which is being noticed by the large scale employers. At the same time enhancement in the reserved quota by Government for the employment of persons with disabilities from 1% to 3% is also a contributing factor towards widening the doors of job market for disabled human resources. Awareness raising by organizations led by persons with disabilities and influence of international development instruments such as Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ILO code of practice*4, Disability inclusive SDGs*5 and Incheon Strategy*6 has given rise to the visibility of employees with disabilities in the corporate sector of the country.

Top of the list leading multinational companies who have hired persons with disabilities in preceding five years are Telenor Pakistan, Standard Chartered Bank, KFC, Shell Pakistan, Nestle Pakistan and Coca-Cola Beverages Pakistan Limited. Though these MNCs have a set a trend of hiring persons with disabilities on merit basis and providing enabling environment but total number of employed disabled person is extremely low in comparison with prevalence of unemployed youth with disability in Pakistan.



Visibility of Employees with disabilities ... cont.

Apart from the magnitude of multi-tiered obstacles faced by persons with disabilities in Pakistan including negative attitudes, environmental and communications barriers, a brief review of existing policy framework can carve an avenue for future towards inclusive employment market in Pakistan.



The systematic care of persons with disabilities was brought into focus in Pakistan in 1980s with the observance of 1981 as UN International year of disabled persons. The need was then felt for their education, rehabilitation and mainstreaming both by government and by the private sector. An Act titled "Disabled Persons (Employment & Rehabilitation) Ordinance, 1981" was passed in 1981. This Act is a comprehensive legislation that spells out the responsibility of the state towards the prevention of disabilities; protection of the rights of persons with disabilities; and provision of medical care, education, training, employment and rehabilitation to persons with disabilities (Ordinance 1981) but its implementation was patchy and ineffectual. There was a need to establish a framework for comprehensive development of strategies, programs and services for the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities and special provisions for their integration into the social mainstream. Hence a National Policy was formalized in 2002 and the vision of the policy was to provide by 2025 an environment that would allow full realization of potential of Disabled persons through their inclusive mainstreaming and providing them full support of the government, private sector and civil society (Policy, 2002). Pakistan has also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability in 2011 which describes that *"States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities... by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia: Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;....."*



Visibility of Employees with disabilities ... cont.

The High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003–2012, was organized by ESCAP and hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea. The Meeting marked the conclusion of the second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003–2012, and launched the new Decade. The Governments at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting adopted the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The Incheon Strategy provides the Asian and Pacific region, and the world, with the first set of regionally agreed disability-inclusive development goals. Out of seven goals of the Incheon Strategy, Goal 1 promotes poverty reduction and enhance work and employment prospects:

“The Decade must see greater progress in reducing poverty among persons with disabilities and their families.... Having a decent job and the necessary education, training and support to keep that job is one of the best means of overcoming poverty. Those who can and want to work must therefore be better supported, protected, and equipped to do so. This requires more accommodating labour markets.”

In 2009 a cross disabilities organization STEP (Special Talent Exchange Program)*7 drafted and implemented the first ever strategic roadmap for Telenor Pakistan having a human resources of more than 4000 is the market leader for employers of persons with disabilities in Pakistan. The program has now been institutionalized in the 9th largest mobile phone service provider in the world*8.

Pakistan is in process of developing a mechanism for the implementation on international commitments related to inclusion of disability in development agenda and having non-discriminatory rights based legislation. If imperative measure for the employability of persons with disabilities will continue backed by rights based legislation and budgeted allocations employers at the large will gradually realize that hiring people with disabilities is not just charity and that employees with disabilities have a lot to contribute.

*1 http://www.businessanddisability.org/images/pdf/factsheets/ilodisabilityfactsheets_why_hire.pdf

*2 Moving from the Margins

*3 <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/280658-1172606907476/DisabilityIssuesMetts.pdf>

*4 http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_103324/lang--en/index.htm

*5 <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/2016/SDG-disability-indicators-march-2016.pdf>

*6 <http://www.unescap.org/resources/incheon-strategy-%E2%80%9Cmake-right-real%E2%80%9D-persons-disabilities-asia-and-pacific>

*7 <https://www.telenor.com.pk/about/corporate-social-responsibility/disability>

*8 <http://www.toptenfindings.com/top-10-cellular-companies-in-world-largest-mobile-phone-operator-company/>

Workability Asia Board Members Visit Hong Kong

Hiroshi Ueno, WAsia Secretary General

The Directors of Workability Asia visited Hong Kong in 7 – 8 February 2017. Main purpose of the visit was to know about the progress of WI/WAsia Hong Kong Conference to be held in 12 – 14 June 2017 and hold the Board meeting during the stay. The delegate visited the Kerry Hotel which would be a venue of the conference. The hotel is now taking their final approach to inaugurate in March. They checked the conference area and guest rooms as well focusing on the accessibility for persons with disabilities in particular.



Hotel visit

They also visited many sites such as camp, vocational rehabilitation center, café, restaurant and convenience store where providing work opportunity for persons with disabilities mostly run by WAsia members in Hong Kong. Many of them are being implemented by the government scheme of social enterprise which is one of the key topics of forthcoming conference.



With WAsia members in Hong Kong

Directors had a very good time with some of WAsia members in Hong Kong exchanging frank discussion on the conference and innovative activities to develop work and employment of persons with disabilities. Most of WAsia members in Hong Kong are working hard for the conference as members of Organizing Committee.

WAsia Board members visit Hong Kong ... cont.

At the start of the Board meeting Mrs. Carrie Lam visited our room. She is the former Chief Secretary for Administration and now the candidate for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong. Coincidentally she was in her meeting at the office of Hong Kong Council of Social Service. WAsia Chairperson Katsunori Fujii sought the support of Hong Kong Government to the WI/WAsia conference. This was the first meeting welcoming new Directors from South Asia, Shamim Ferdous from Bangladesh and Dipesh Sutariya from India. We received detail updates of the conference by Deborah Wan, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee of the Conference. The Board also discussed about several agendas such as membership, financial. The visit this time was very much fruitful thanks to excellent arrangement by the Hong Kong team and Directors extended their special thanks to Ms. Deborah Wan, Mr. Chuen Chin Kuo, Secretary General of Hong Kong Joint Council for People with Disabilities, Ms. Agatha Tang and Mr. Alan Lee of Joint Council for their great help.



Please visit the conference website for more information.

<https://2017wasia-wiconference.org.hk/>

With Mrs. Carrie Lam

Looking forward to meeting you in Hong Kong!

EDITORIAL NOTES

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