

Message from Mr. Hiroshi Ayuha
WAsia Director, President of SELP

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COVID-19 Outbreak and the impact of Persons with Disabilities



Individual Training on New
Normal in MSO



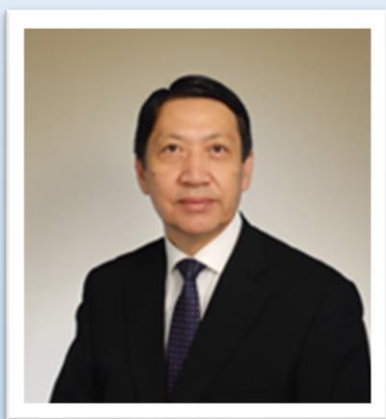
BPKS arranged to distribute rice
and other food items to disabled
persons in Bangladesh



Cakes and other bakeries
are on delivery from The
Nest Bakery

**We will get through it
together...**

Message from Mr. Hiroshi Ayuha, WAsia Director, President of SELP



Mr. Hiroshi Ayuha

In Japan, the Declaration of a State of Emergency in response to the Novel Coronavirus Disease has been extended to May 31. Although this is not a lockdown, all of us are requested to avoid non-essential outings, reduce person-to-person contact, and to refrain from organizing events and opening restaurants, while working from home is recommended. The number of infected people has been gradually reduced, though the medical situation in urban areas is still strained.

The President of SELP is one of my roles, and another is the President of Social Welfare Corporation Ashikaga Mutumi Kai, in Tochigi Prefecture, which is located around 75 kilometers north of Tokyo.

For example, one of facilities under our management, Employment Continuation Support Type A "Kids Pia Ashikaga" provides an indoor playground where children can play with their parents. At this moment 10 persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities work there as our staff. It has been closed since February 27 in response to COVID-19 outbreak. So far we plan to keep it closed until the end of May. Under regular circumstances, we wish we could welcome 48,000 people during this period.

Before closing of Kids Pia Ashikaga



After closing of Kids Pia Ashikaga



In the meantime, our staff with disabilities can get paid as usual by their doing jobs such as cleaning the building and helping other tasks of our corporation in our effort to support their community lives.

According to the reports by SELP members, there are serious damages and loss in their day-to-day operations during this period. SELP has made a request to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan to respond to this critical situation. We continue to make efforts to clarify issues and to secure support to employment support centers for persons with disabilities.

Kids Pia Ashikaga Website (Japanese only)
<http://www.mutumikai.ecnet.jp/kidspia/index.html>

Social Welfare Corporation Ashikaga Mutsumi Kai (Japanese only)
<http://www.mutumikai.ecnet.jp/>

The economic impact in Macau has been largely disruptive because of Covid-19

First Covid-19 case in Macau was confirmed on 22 Jan 2020. With more imported and local cases were confirmed, Macau government announced a serial of measures for residents to avoid Covid-19, such as school suspension, a 15-day unprecedented closure of casinos, restrictions on entering Macau and etc. Those measures aimed to reduce gathering and control Covid-19 spread in the local community, and also resulted in loss of economic activities and people's livelihood were seriously affected.



The economic impact in Macau has been largely disruptive. Many of our users, people with intellectual disabilities who were in labor market, were forced to take no-paid leave during pandemic. As result, their income was significantly reduced, and some of their household were experiencing financial stress. In view of economic slump, Macau government announced economic support measures to extend assistance to residents, workers and companies in Macau. people with disabilities and underprivileged group received extra subsidies from Government and their financial burden could be temporarily relieved.



Besides regular vocational trainings and employment assistance, family support and counselling, which is also one of our service pillars, appears extremely important for our users during pandemic. Under recession and social distancing measures, users lost jobs and had been locked down at home. Their health and emotional condition and family relationship were being challenged. We need to pay more attention on their daily lives and provide immediate support for urgent cases.



In May, we start to resume services and provide individual or small-group trainings for our users. We resume housekeeping, bakery and computer classes to prepare our users to enter or return to workplace. Besides, for moderate and severe grade of people with ID, we arrange individual trainings, such as sports, cognitive pottery & art trainings to keep up their body function.

I hope everything will back to normal as soon as possible and people with disabilities can gain back working opportunities.



Author : Ron Ng : Manager of Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Macau Special Olympics



Our Social Enterprises & COVID-19



The Nest Bakery

The Nesbitt Centre opened its first Social Enterprise, **The Nest** Coffee Shop at St John's Cathedral in November 2013, quickly followed by an 80-seater F&B enterprise **Café 8**, on the Rooftop of the HK Maritime Museum, Pier 8, Central District. In November 2018 we opened a third coffee shop, The Nest at St Andrew's Church in Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon.

Our SEs provide much needed employment for adults with a learning disability. In fact, 40% of our employees have a disability, with 6 now promoted to full time employees - something we are extremely proud of.

Another idea came in 2019 - to open a bakery to supply our own SEs with items as well as being open to the public, ultimately creating more jobs for PWDs. All was going well, then HK had the challenges of the protests, quickly followed by **COVID-19**. Fortunately, we did not lose heart.

We carried on and **The Nest Bakery** opened on 3rd April 2020 in Sai Ying Pun.

<https://www.nesbittcentre.org.hk/the-nest-bakery> .

Cakes, Biscuits galore



Handmade cards from The Nesbitt Centre

COVID-19 really has brought challenges worldwide. While we were watching the amazing support given to Frontline Medical Staff in other countries we thought, what could we do in HK? Well, our **'Cakes for Heroes, baked by heroes'** project was born!! People order cakes from our bakery and we deliver them to the hospitals.

<https://www.scmp.com/video/coronavirus/3082966/hongkongs-bake-cakes-heroes-thank-medical-staff-front-lines-covid-19>



Adventist Hospital Delivery

A brilliant idea and its working.

It shows we can all play our part whilst showing how our employees can shine. Such an innovative way to say

'Thank You'.



Nurses enjoying the cakes



Cakes for the Rutonjee Hospital staff

A Disaster-prone country of South Asia

Bangladesh as a disaster-prone country of South Asia has regular experience but Covid-19 is exceptional and is a new virus that is coronavirus which is a zoonotic disease that stopped the whole world's activities without assumptions. The damaged and severity of it are unprecedented compare with any disasters and disease.

The disabled persons are first victims among all at any types of disasters or disease, this time it is not different, but they feel it more difficult as they faced unlimited lacking of hope to survive because they are poorer than others, their independency are blocked, the social communication and transport systems are not favorable and inaccessible to them, transport are not available and whose disability are severe such as fully visually impaired, deafblind and multiple disabled persons situation is more pathetic, helpless and survive with inhuman condition and finally they are out of seen, out of count and left outed from most of the public attention, service, supports and facilities. Not stop here, because of all these and unknown factors may anticipate which push disabled persons to start on experiencing higher level of anxiety by coronavirus and which anxiety may push them at more risks.

BPKS communicated with 66 DPOs leaders, most of them informed us that they are not worrying about the coronavirus. If they die from the virus, it is not bad, but bad for them is they are suffering because they don't have enough money to buy foods and their beloved children are losing weight every day through lack of food and basic emergency items. During the time BPKS has given them small amount of money and relief which was distributed, some food items and awareness information shared in some of its operational areas.



BPKS developed Tangail and Mymensingh DPO arranged to distributed rice and some other food items to the 500 disabled persons in May 2020.



At the time BPKS staff observed some disabled persons are selling their fundamental properties, domestic animals, poultry and they also suffered a great loss in terms of self-employment opportunities etc. . Over phone, BPKS also talked with 30 families with disability to let them know some basic information, none of them were affected by corona, but they shared their concerned and worried about how they would restart their daily income activities,

such as petty shop, small business, self-employment options, poultry and livestock, 9 (nine) persons said their daily income activities were fully disrupted as supply chains and business connection were not active soon, 11 (eleven) shop keepers with disability at their respective location mentioned that they survived with their income by BDT500 (USD6) to BDT1200 (USD14) everyday which is stopped now. Not only economic downturn is real concern but also the consequences on the mental and emotional wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities and other types are harder of which action will be addressed.

The 2 disabled persons, emotionally shared that they run small shops at road side, very grassroots level and they stay inside of those shop at night for safety of their materials/goods regularly. Due to Covid -19 they closed their shops and they were staying at home with their beloved family members under quarantine program and shops are not secured place and 2/3 KM distance from their home and by the time everything taken/ stolen which cost about USD500 to 700 of each.

To address the situations, BPKS designed a plan to implement that fully contributes in achieving of aspiration of Covid-19 affected disabled person rights to rehabilitation. Same time it improved the perception and understanding among the disabled persons about covid-19 and promote the appropriate policy safeguard.

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COVID-19 Outbreak and Persons with Disabilities

Source : UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Disabilities

Persons with disabilities generally have more health-care needs than others – both standard needs and needs linked to impairments – and are therefore more vulnerable to the impact of low quality or inaccessible health-care services than others. Compared to persons without disabilities, persons with disabilities are more likely to have poor health: among 43 countries, 42 per cent of persons with disabilities versus 6 per cent of persons without disabilities perceive their health as poor.

To achieve the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities, the following actions should be considered:

- Strengthen national legislation and policies on health care in line with the CRPD.
- Identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility in health-care facilities.
- Improve health-care coverage and affordability for persons with disabilities as part of universal approaches to health care.
- Train health-care personnel on disability inclusion and improve service delivery for persons with disabilities.
- Empower persons with disabilities to take control over their own health-care decisions, on the basis of informed consent.
- Prohibit discriminatory practices in health insurance and promote health insurance coverage for assistive products and rehabilitation services.
- Improve research and data to monitor, evaluate and strengthen health systems to include and deliver for persons with disabilities.

While having a disability probably doesn't by itself put someone at higher risk from Coronavirus, many persons with disabilities do have specific underlying conditions that make the disease more dangerous for them.

Over 100 disability advocacy organizations and a coalition of disability rights and emergency management experts in the host country recently made an urgent call for immediate response, addressing the specific needs of persons with disabilities to maintain their health, safety, dignity, and independence in the community throughout the COVID-19 outbreak and related health emergencies.

http: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/covid-19.html>

Workability Asia Newsletter would like to invite you to :

- Share your relevant information, knowledge or experiences with WAsia members and our network.
- Send your articles (1-2 pages) with some photos.
- Send your stories to WAsia Secretariat Team via workabilityasia@gmail.com to be part of the next newsletter **by 15 August, 2020**.

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