

International Seminar on

Mobility Support for Persons with Disabilities

Focusing on the software aspect in human support



February 13, 2016

National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities
Japan

(WHO Collaborating Centre for Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation)

This report is available to read on a website of the Center
<http://www.rehab.go.jp/english/whoclbc/seminar.html>

Program

Time & Date : 12:30~16:45, February 13 (Sat.), 2016

Venue: Tokyo International Forum(3-5-1, Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan)

Facilitator: Kenji Sakai, Director, Department of Planning and Information, NRCD

12:30 ***Opening Address***

Kozo Nakamura, President of NRCD

12:40~ ***Presentation***

1 “Being included in the Community”

Saowalak Thongkuay, Regional Development Officer, DPI Asia-Pacific
Regional Office

2 “Support for Disabled People in Public Spaces-The Malaysian Dilemma”

Peter Tan Hua Choon, International Coordinator, Disability Equality
Training Forum

**3 “Accessibility Challenge! Challenges and Prospects of ‘Hospitality’ for
Wheelchair Users in Public Transportation”**

Yoshiaki Imafuku, Representative, Access -Japan

break

**4 “Current Situation and Issues on Support for Persons with Visual
Impairment when Outside the House: Combination of formal and informal
support ”**

Takayuki Suzuki, Vice Chair, Japan Federation of the Blind

**5 “Barrier Free Mindset Developed Through Barrier Free Tourism: If you don't
give up, you can change peoples' minds ”**

Ayumi Noguchi, Secretary General, Ise-Shima Barrier Free Tour Center

6 “Mobility Support for Persons with Cervical Spinal Cord Injuries”

Takeshi Shimizu, Chief Physical Therapist, NRCD

“Mobility Support for Persons with Visual Disabilities”

Eiji Tani, Chief skills training specialist, NRCD

break

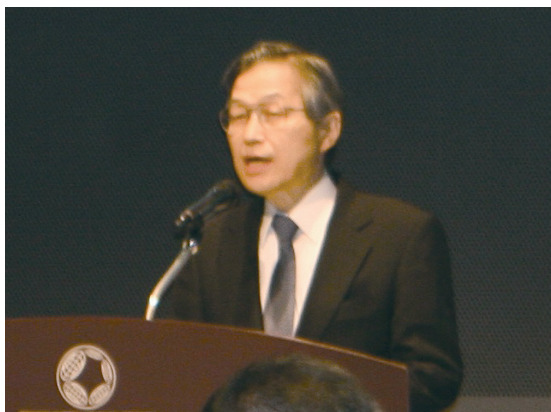
15:25～ *Discussion among presenters, Q&A*

Facilitator: Eiichi Ono

Director, Research Institute, NRCD

16:45 *Closing Address*

Setsu Iijima, Director of Rehabilitation Services Bureau, NRC



Opening address Kozo Nakamura



General facilitator Kenji Sakai



Discussion facilitator Eiichi Ono



Discussion



Closing address Setsu Iijima

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Opening Address

Kozo Nakamura

President

National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities

I am Nakamura. Thank you for the introduction. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for joining us for this international seminar. At the opening of this seminar, please allow me to say a few words.

Our center is acting as a WHO collaborating center for disability prevention and rehabilitation. Today's seminar is organized as a part of the WHO collaborating center activities.

Now, the theme for today, as you know, is mobility support for persons with disabilities, focusing on the software aspects of human support. People moving from one place to another is obviously an important part of people's day-to-day living, commuting to work or going to school or visiting friends and going on sightseeing. This is an important requirement to realize communication and interactions with society. In mobility, improvement of what is called hardware aspects such as roads and transportation is extremely important. However, at the same time involvement of people, or what we call software aspects, is just as important. Today we would like to focus on this software aspect of the mobility.

The software side is about person-to-person interactions so there must be many commonalities as well as differences because of the different cultures from one country to another. Today we have invited from Asia and Japan those active in this field as persons with disabilities themselves or representatives of organizations at the forefront in building conducive environments for tourism in Japan as well as experts involved in training programs for persons with disabilities to speak to us. They will also participate in the discussions that will follow to the challenges to be addressed in improving mobility and accessibility for those with disabilities. As people with different backgrounds exchange views with one another, I hope this seminar will prove to be a fruitful one to persons with disabilities and to society as a whole which will allow us to see the next steps to be taken.

Thank you for your attention.

Presentation

Being included in the Community



Saowalak Thongkuay

Regional Development Officer,
DPI Asia Pacific Region

[Biography]

Work experiences

2007- present: Regional Development Officer, DPIAP

2002-2006: Project Assistant, APCD

Education

Master degree of Education Program in Human
Resource Development, Ramkhamhaeng University

B.B.A. Public Relations, Ramkhamhaeng University

Achievements:

An outstanding women to promote women human
rights, The Ministry of Social Development and
Human Security, Royal Thai Government, 2008

A Founder of ASEAN Disability Forum (ADF)

Subcommittee on Women Equality Act 2015

[Summary]

Experiences of institutionalization and/ or isolation of persons with disabilities within their communities over centuries resulted in exclusion from the social, economic and political participation is one of the major reasons for the provisions of article 19 in the Convention. Living independently in the title of CRPD Article 19 does not necessarily mean living alone. It refers to the CRPD Preamble that the global community recognizes the importance for persons with disabilities of their individual autonomy and independence, including the freedom to make their own choices as well as build on the principle of respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons.

Various factors and multi-sectoral issues have resulted in persons with disabilities being denied the right to live and be included in the community. Discrimination and barriers in the community have constantly contributed to isolation and restriction of participation of persons with disabilities in their community all over the world and through ages. Therefore, community supports can take many different forms. The main idea depending on the support needs of the person is about having key people in the community, families, friends, frequently used service providers who know the person and some of the issues persons with disabilities might have in given circumstances and that can be supportive them in managing daily living issues, making important decision or overcoming crisis moment. It is crucial that the person's autonomy and choices are fully respected.

Being included in the Community

Saowalak Thongkuay
Regional Development Officer, DPI Asia-Pacific Regional Office

Thank you very much, moderator. First of all, I want to say thank you to the organizer to give me the opportunity. I am happy to be one of the members of the presenters and I am a female among those man presenters.

I want to begin my presentation rather than giving a lot of introductions because I have only 30 minutes and now 19 minutes left and I have prepared 28 slides. Even though the topic is really connected to - I mean specific to human support, however human support can be in various means of support, not only giving of hands-on daily support but also the other necessities to develop an independent life of persons with disabilities. Therefore, my presentation will include information and necessary issue related to the Convention on the Lives of Persons with Disabilities.

As the introductions, my presentation is under DPI APD's terms. I am working at the regional development office; my office is in Bangkok. I want to start with quick things. You think about - you answer my questions by yourselves within five seconds. The first question is how many friends do you have? One, two, three, four, five. The second question is how many friends with disabilities do you have? One, two, three, four, five. Do you get the answer by yourselves, by your own? The third question is how many colleagues without disability do you have? One, two, three, four, five. The fourth, the last question: how many colleagues with disability do you have? Now you get the questions? The number of your friends with and without disabilities.

The issue is we have to think the difference of why the number of persons with disabilities related to our lives are very, very small and sometimes difficult to answer the questions. As well as it is difficult to answer the question of having friends without disability, because we could not count. Come back to disability and development. This is the evolution. We start from medical and charity-based model, the way of our thinking. And then, I'll turn to rehabilitation and then rights-based society and human rights and empowerment. Right now in this period we are on this way, rights-based societies, human rights and empowerment.

Why do we have to talk about community? It should start with government and persons with disabilities themselves should be enough; why do we have to talk about community? Why don't we talk about it being - I mean putting persons with disabilities at home only, why do we have to include communities? Number one: no one needs to be separated from their community because of disability, it is the facts. Living among family, friends and neighbors fosters new ability and creates communities where everyone is welcomed. Do you agree with me? Persons with disability who require extra support or specialized care have a better quality of life when they receive care and support in their home in the community.

What do we really mean, being included in the community? Being included in the

community, that is not the issues of being in the community only, but issues of having the legal right to exercise personal autonomy and having the means and necessary support to participate, to have full participation and meaningful participation to community life and developments on an equal basis with others. Equal basis. What do we mean, looking at these pictures? Living in the community does not mean living alone, and putting someone, a person with disability in the community without any support, leave them in the community, that's it, it does not really mean like that. What we have to really seriously recognize is to respect them in human dignity, individual autonomy, including freedoms to make one's own choices and independence of persons.

The picture really only shows you a really serious disability who cannot communicate properly. The only one way to communicate to his parents, his family member is to use his eye by whispering. And although if we want to talk with him we have to touch him at one part of his head and he can communicate with the translations of his parents or his family member. Why I take these pictures? Because I want to show how we respect inherent dignity.

If you cannot see, if you don't want to see this picture and you feel and we feel, community feel very ugly, very uncomfortable to see this kind of pictures. It means we still keep a very strong charity and medical mindset, that we don't want to see these kind of pictures because it is not beauty as a social norm. This is what he wants, he makes his own choice that please include me in the pictures and take this picture and show to your friends around the world to let them know I am here, I stay here, I do exist. Don't hide me. At home nobody knows that I do exist; this is the way we respect inherent dignity and individual autonomy.

Then I show you the other pictures, they are inherent respect and inherent dignity, case of women with disability. Does she need to wear the artificial legs to be a very smart and pretty, beauty, supermodel? Actually, she is beauty on her own way. She can be a supermodel, perform her smart, good-looking on catwalk equal as other supermodels, because we people in the community have multiple identities arising from our memberships or our affiliations with the different grouping we belong to, which we use it to negotiate our power and privilege and position in society.

Sometimes, like today in this time I am a speaker here in this forum, this is my identity as a speaker, and if you saw me in the community, I have the other identity, other image. If not look like professional, good-looking lady, you would see me like ordinary persons without disability who look very poor sometimes, depend on the positions we belong to and we use to negotiate at those levels.

What are the concerns that human support really need to be aware, CRPD. CRPD became our bible on disability and development, especially Article 3. Article 3 is a key point and it is a foundation of CRPD, in every Article, general principles, respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy and independence, non-discrimination for effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of people with disability as a part of humanity and human diversity, equality of opportunity, accessibility, equality between men and women, respect for the capacity of children with disability and their right to preserve their identities. You can see CRPD really

strongly recommends diversity and cross-cutting. Disability is cross-cutting if we interpret the general principles.

The other concern is Article 19, living independently and being included in the community. I show you on the slide, it's simple language, it is not the text, copied from CRPD. It said that people with disability have the same right as everyone else to live and take part and be included in the community, and the country are to take proper steps to help persons with disability enjoy their lives by making sure they have the first one, opportunity to choose where they live and who they live with, like other people. Access to in-home residence and other community supports, services to help them to be included in the community and prevent them from being isolated.

The last one, equal access to the community services and facilities that are available to public, which should take into account the needs of persons with disabilities. The last point highlights availability of the public services and facilities that should be accessed. And what is the concern of Article 19 if we articulate it? Actually, there three points, three elements related to support and inclusive choices. Persons with disability living in the community should have choices, although the duty of the government is to provide or ensure access to necessary support services. About inclusive, the community services are inclusive and accessible and responsive to the needs of persons with disability.

When we are talking about ensure access, we are talking about what ensures access. It needs to be availability, affordability and equality of service should be a concern if we want to provide access to the support. Then what does the government should do? It did highlight in every CRPD article, it said that the state should recognize, means respect, value, accept and aware that persons with disability do exist and take it seriously, the issue, and treat it seriously in a fair way. Okay. the government obligated, must do, to ensure access, to ensure that the service should exist, accessible, affordable, acceptable and quality. So if the access meets those five standard elements, disability-related needs are met, and then general community support would be inclusive.

Also leading to what when we talk about support, Article 28, social and economic participation and inclusion of persons with disability. Social protection is very important. Look at your country and your government and the community levels; what is the quality of social protection scheme and programs? We need for persons with disability living in the community, need access to food security, clean water and sanitary, housing, health care, education, employment guarantee, basic income security or whatever, if they work they need retirement benefits, poverty reduction program. They may not be able to access without disability-related needs support programs like disability allowance, assisted device, training, counseling, employment quota, scholarships to access education, personal assistance, support of sign language interpreter.

Then when they access to the food security, clean water, housing, health care, education, they would live in the community with adequate standard of living. It means enough, sufficient, acceptable standard of living, have enough food, acceptable

food, clean water, housing, clothing. This means a quality of life. I think it applies to not only persons with disability, it applies to everyone living in that community.

The pictures show you a group of visually impaired living in the temple before in Cambodia. They had no job. They lived in the temple, they'd come out to sit down on the footpath, on the street, beg for money, because not any sort of support. One, the leader thinking about doing something to create, to live, to create a better quality of life, they're searching who could help, they find a DPO, a disabled people's organization in the community. Then DPOs link them with the donor and they get money to set up the musical bands and train other visually impaired how to play a musical instrument, and they set up a band. When then they have a band, they can receive the order from the community to play a music band in the community events and then they earn money. Then the money is separated into three parts: return to the group one part; return as a benefit to the group members; and the last part becomes the fund for capacity-building in the other necessary needs for the groups.

Then they start to strengthen their group and concerned in the community and become community people. Because community people recognize their ability and do recognize "Oh, we have these kind of friends in our community that we haven't seen it before". This is also the other group in Siem Reap district next to Angkor Wat, living in the mountain, no ID card, identity card, no job, no education. Therefore, they have friend who help them in the community to train them. They need to train on sandstone crafting and now they get a job. They own their business.

This is showing you how hearing-impaired access to information and communicate with other people without sign language interpreter. Quality sign language interpreter, not only sign language interpreter. We need a quality sign language interpreter. Therefore, social protection is an important part for persons with disability to live in the community. It is like a safety net. Then social protection becomes a safety net, becomes the bridge that allows persons with disability to develop themselves and to have a standard of living. This is the way we empower persons with disability. We have to build capacity of persons with disability.

At the same time, we need some synergistic efforts from environment; we have to remove barriers from environment. Create barrier-free society that allows persons with disability who are already empowered to full participation and have equality with other people. This shows you the other parts of work. When we talk about disability, we do not talk about only poverty reduction but also we're concerned with other civil society organizations like solar cell, solar power plantations. How do they employ persons with disability in the office, how do they recognize the pollution that will be allowed to come with the community where persons with disability are living in? A possible three-way violation of this convention would occur when we place persons with disability in the community that we have to be aware.

Laws or practices may prevent persons with disability from exercising choices about their living arrangements. They would not have a chance to decide by themselves. And how about housing opportunity without social support, how persons with disability access housing opportunities, and the restriction on the personal autonomy and control

given all the caregiver and personal assistants who become in effect substitute decision-makers. Some persons with disability may not be allowed culturally to decide what they want to do by themselves. It is important, it's always happened with psychosocial survivor, autistics and children with intellectual disability.

What action can we take to fulfill the Article 19, living independently in the community? Are we consulting with disabled people's organizations in the community, modify existing legal words to ensure non-discrimination, awareness-raising and support to families, develop a system and provide adequate support, accessible to general community service? This shows you the other picture, that community supports a family of students with intellectual disability by providing them a place where they can set up the center and then organize some activity to develop their students' skills, like reading, writing, social skills.

This picture shows you a group of independent living centers in Thailand provide a group peer support to persons with disability who stay isolated at home to help them firstly a basic need and then secondly, to refer some issues to the government unit to get the government services, like to apply for disability cars, to get the disability fund and to find out appropriate assisted devices like which are used there, like wheelchairs, computers, or software. This shows you the other individual support.

Lastly, the laws of the community person to create, initiate or create developments of the community support net, because when we are talking about the community it does not mean individually living isolated. In the community there are many, many concerned bodies, it may be women's clubs, it may be a government club, district or community clinic club, student clubs, children, persons with disability, farmer, temple, monk; how do they work together to create inclusive community support nets? Of course, concerning of persons with disability in the community. The initiative or the creating of new inclusive program would not happen, and support to personal assistance services.

I believe too from the Article 19, human support. Article 19 is really specific to personal assistance is human support. Also the support of local community services in being accessible and responsive to the needs of persons with disability, and how human support can be taken, can be in many different forms that I cannot identify exactly here because the detail, it should be decided by each community. But CRPD should be guideline to decide to create a new inclusive community services net or form, or support form.

But the main idea depending on the support needs of persons is about having key persons in the community as I said, family, friends and service providers. Although it can be supportive in managing daily living issues, making important decisions or overcome a crisis moment. To overcome a crisis moment is also a very key point to empower persons with disability, to let them find a way how to go out from home and then up to the same levels, you're living in the same level with the community people. Thank you. My presentation has already spent more than 20 minutes, but thank you for organizer and participant here for your patience and for your attention to my presentation and Q&A: you're welcome later. Thank you.

Support for Disabled People in Public Spaces - The Malaysian Dilemma



Peter Tan Hua Choon
International Coordinator
Disability Equality Training Forum

[Biography]

2015 Trainer of Training of Trainers of Disability Equality Training (DET) Course Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (DSWM) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Malaysia

2010 1st Asia-Pacific Regional Training of Senior Trainers on Disability Equality Training (DET). Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (DSWM) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Malaysia

2006 Training of Managerial Personnel of Independent Living Centres (ILC) and Peer-Counselors for People with Disabilities

Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability (APCD), Thailand

2006 Country Focused Training Course in Independent Living Programme for People with Disabilities. International Cooperation Program of the Government of Japan, Japan

Currently providing consultancy on Independent Living to the DSWM together with JICA and Human Care Association of Japan for the establishment of 7 Independent Living Centres to serve 11,000 disabled people under the 11th Malaysian Plan running from 2016 to 2020.

[Summary]

This presentation looks at the mobility of disabled people in public spaces and advocacy for accessibility and inclusion. We are still facing significant difficulties in the built environment and public transport system despite the enactment of legislations requiring the provision of accessible facilities.

In view of this, the support of a personal assistant or carer is often needed whenever we go out for work or social activities. In the absence of dedicated person to provide support, we have to depend on the public to assist us. They are generally helpful but there is a need to provide support in a way that doesn't pose any risk to safety of both parties.

It was only after several concerted advocacy activities in 2006 and 2007 that major organisations with direct dealings with customers began to look at structured trainings for their staff to support disabled people using their services. However, such initiatives are still limited and an area where disability

educationists should look into and develop in order to ensure the public can provide proper support when needed.

Support for Disabled People in Public Spaces-The Malaysian Dilemma

Peter Tan Hua Choon
International Coordinator, Disability Equality Training Forum

Yes, thank you very much for the introduction. Good afternoon, everyone, *konnichiwa*. Thank you to the organizers and NRCD for the invitation to share with you the Malaysian situation. The title of my presentation is *Support for Disabled People in Public Spaces: The Malaysian Dilemma*. We have a dilemma now. This is the situation that I am going to share with you.

The content of my presentation will be (1) introduction; (2) historical perspective; (3) the current situation; (4) the challenges that we face; and then (5) conclusion.

Let's look at the statistics on disability in Malaysia. As of 31 August 2015, we have 370,501 disabled people who are registered with the Department of Social Welfare. This is 1.7% of the total population of Malaysia, which is about 30 million people. If you take a calculator and you calculate this amount. 1.7% is not the ratio; 370,000 is not 1.7% of 30 million people; it's closer to 1.2%. So actually the government is not very sure about the statistics of disabled people in Malaysia but this is the official statistics.

In reality we don't know how many disabled people in Malaysia except what we have from the registration. It's not compulsory registration, so not every disabled person will register. Only those who need to use the card will register. They issue you with a card which is shown here. If you register with the Department of Social Welfare you will have this card. This is my card and you can see my photo there. This registration has been ongoing since the 1990s, that means about 20 years ago. To have this registration process for so long and to have that small number of disabled people shows that something is not right somewhere.

The other thing is that Malaysia will become an ageing nation by 2030 where 15 per cent of the population will become people who are 60 years old and above.

Let's look at the legislation. In 1991 we passed a uniform building bylaw which compels developers to make their buildings accessible to disabled people, and buildings that are built before that have three years to comply. This law has been around for 25 years, because they passed it in 1991.

At the same time, we have the *Persons with Disabilities Act 2008* which was passed by the Parliament in 2007 and came into force in 2008. Unfortunately, this is a purely administrative law. It delegates the responsibilities of protecting disabled people to the various government agencies, to other ministries, and there are no penalties under this law. So if disabled people are being discriminated against, if the organizations don't provide access to disabled people, this law does not have a penalty for it. This is purely an administrative law.

Malaysia also signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, just after we have our *PWD Act*. We ratified the CRPD in 2010, with reservations to Article 15 which is the freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, and Article 18, which is the liberty of movement and nationality. Malaysia has not signed the optional protocol so we will have problems looking for recourse if there are issues with the rights of disabled people in Malaysia.

Historical perspective. To understand support in Malaysia, we first need to look at how disabled people are able to go out. If you stay at home, you don't need that kind of support because the family will be providing it but when you go outside we definitely require human support. In this aspect the advocacy activities are crucial in the evolution of mobility of disabled people from home to public spaces where we can go out and enjoy our rights as a person with equal rights with other people. On the importance of human support in public spaces, you need to understand how we advocated for public transport and accessible environment to understand how we can get human support in public spaces.

So the historical perspective of advocacy, for equal access to public transport, can be divided into two periods.

Let's look at the first period from 1994 to 2004 when we advocated for access to urban rail. At that time, the entire public transport system in Malaysia was inaccessible to wheelchair users. This is a newspaper cutting of a protest conducted in 1994 when they built the first urban rail line in Malaysia. They came out with a statement that disabled people will not be able to use the system because it is very dangerous for us to use and to fit the system with modifications will be very expensive. We were left out from the system, from the first urban rail line. So we protested and one of the government ministers came up with the statement that it's very costly, as you can see in the newspaper report, and there is a need to install special equipment to enable disabled people to use them. This is the first protest we held with regards to equal access to public transport in urban rail.

Around that time when they launched the first rail line, Malaysia was building another rail line, the second LRT system, and the developer came out to say that we are going to provide the facilities for disabled people, which is proof that the first statement about the first rail line was not true. They just didn't want to provide facilities for disabled people. The second rail line said we will do it, and because of that we came out to show them our appreciation by holding another protest, this time a protest of appreciation to the rail line. Unfortunately, when the third urban rail line was opened on 31 August 2003 it was not accessible at all.

This is the problem that we face all the time. I think we did not protest when they opened this third rail line because we were already very tired after the first protest. This is the period from 1994 to 2004.

Let's look at the next period, which is 2005 to 2015. We have focused more on access to public transport and airplane during this time. On 24 September 2006 the

government announced that they're going to buy 1000 buses. The group called the Barrier-Free and Accessible Transport Group organized a campaign to board buses at an LRT station in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city in Malaysia. None of the buses were accessible, unfortunately, not even one.

We protested and a senior staff from the company came and said they will provide 100 accessible buses within 30 days. So we waited. We waited for 30 days, we waited for another few more weeks, and on 3 December 2006 in conjunction with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities we came out to protest again. We organized our protest outside the Kuala Lumpur Sentral which is the most modern and biggest transportation hub in Malaysia. We protested because they did not deliver the 100 buses as they promised. This protest was widely covered by the media and in the newspapers, in the television and online media. At the same time we applied for a permit to protest but the police refused to give us a permit but they allowed us to protest for 10 minutes. Of course, the police were there, they took photos of our protest and after we finished our protest they confiscated all our placards.

With the wide coverage we got from this protest, the government and the bus company engaged us, the group BEAT (Barrier-Free Environment and Accessible Transport), to look into how they can make the buses accessible. From 2008 to 2011, which is about four years, we had negotiations with the bus company and looked at suitable facilities for disabled people and how they can provide better services for disabled people using the buses. In 2011, after so many years of negotiation, after the protests, Rapid KL brought in the 400 buses as they promised, not 30 days but after four years.

At the same time, the government realizing that access to public transport is very important for disabled people, they begin to renovate the rail lines that were not accessible to disabled people to include lifts and accessible toilets. So in that sense it was a success for us and that was four years of effort from a lot of disabled people doing this work.

These are the accessible buses in Malaysia. The orange bus, you can see on your top left, is a tourist bus. It's a double-decker and it goes around Kuala Lumpur and the island of Penang. These are pictures of all the buses that were accessible after our protest; it was only after our protest that they brought in all these accessible buses to serve the public. If you look at the pink bus, this is a free bus service that runs around Kuala Lumpur.

At the bottom on your right is the smart bus which is provided by the government of Selangor which is a state in central Malaysia, and also it's a free bus service and it's accessible. On the left is a grey bus; it's called the rapid transit bus. These are electric buses that run on the elevated and dedicated roads. They are built above the road just for the buses and they are fully accessible to disabled people. While we have all these accessible buses - now we have 400 buses, we have these new buses but the majority of the bus stops in Malaysia have not been upgraded to be suitable for these buses to use. So now we have buses that we cannot use. This situation is still what we face today, after all these protests. We have new buses but we have no bus stops and we still

cannot use the buses, mostly.

This is a map of Malaysia. Malaysia consists of the peninsula and also Sabah and Sarawak in the island of Borneo. I must stress that not the whole of Malaysia have all these buses; it is concentrated only the Klang Valley which is around the capital city of Kuala Lumpur and Penang Island where you have the hop-on hop-off buses and also where the Rapid KL's sister company Rapid Penang runs a bus service there. In Kuantan, which is also another sister company of Rapid KL, the bus company that we protested against, they have a bus service there in Kuantan which is accessible.

One of the reasons why we have so few spaces where we have accessible buses is because the disabled people in Kuala Lumpur, in the Klang Valley, are more active and they are more vocal in their protests. Nevertheless, because of this protest we have been carrying out and the *Persons with Disabilities Act 2008* that Malaysia has, the government has realized that in order for disabled people to realize participation in society, the public transport system has to be accessible.

After the bus protest came the discrimination against disabled people in air travel. On 15 July 2007 we protested at the low-cost carrier terminal in Kuala Lumpur, because AirAsia actually refused to take disabled people who cannot climb the boarding stairs. So we protested. Two days after that the ministry of transport ordered Malaysia Airports, which is the operator of the airports in Malaysia, and AirAsia, to resolve the issues faced by disabled people. On 20 July 2007, about one week after that, the CEO of AirAsia came to meet us and after we discussed with him he promised that he would buy two ambulifts and requested training on disability for AirAsia staff.

This is the slide that shows AirAsia launching the ambulift. They also put a symbol of disability on one of the aircrafts to show that they are committed to providing access to disabled people. We came out to thank AirAsia for this. Unfortunately after that when we were about to build the new low-cost carrier terminal, AirAsia refused to use the aerobridges, saying that it will slow down their turnaround time. We came out to protest again. Malaysia Airports understood that disabled people need to use these aerobridges for their convenience and safety. They announced that they would include these aerobridges at the airport. So they included the aerobridges. This is the advocacy that we have done from the period 2005 to 2015.

Let's look at the current situation in Malaysia. We have a dilemma. We have the laws but there is poor implementation and enforcement, and there are no penalties for non-compliance with accessibility law. Developers who don't provide accessibility are not penalized for it and there is no penalty against discrimination, as I have mentioned earlier.

This is the circle of mobility. If you look at it, the point of origin to the final destination must be seamless. A break anywhere in between will cause problems for disabled people. And in Malaysia we have a lot of breaks in between that circle. So disabled people have a lot of problems.

This is the problem that we face in Malaysia, and if you look at these pictures, this is

what we face. Look at this ramp. This is a bus stop that we cannot use and this is the walkway that we cannot use and this is a toilet that we cannot use. Can you see what is wrong with that toilet? I will pause for a while to show you.

Can I continue, because my time has run out? Yes, my time has run out. I'm sorry, it took a bit long.

In Malaysia we have what you call a problem of islands of accessibility in an ocean of barriers. We have little spots of accessibility but then there is no connectivity so we are stranded somehow.

Let's look at the disabled people in public spaces. Removing barriers in public spaces—do not always solve disability-related problems. Disabled people, especially those who are more severely disabled, require some form of human support after all, and in Malaysia we are far from being a barrier-free society. In public spaces like hospitals, shopping malls and train stations we are usually limited to the provision of wheelchairs and scooters. So if you need support and assistance, either you have to be physically independent, you have to do everything by yourself, you have to have a family, spouse, family members, carers or friends to help you when you're outside or you can get help from random members of society.

This is a case study of Siti Zuraida. She is a paraplegic. She's aged 37 years old and she drives to work. She pre-arranges with the security personnel in the workplace to support her. When she arrives there, they will help her to get the wheelchair out, assemble the wheelchair, help her get on the chair and help to push her up the point where she can get to her workplace by herself. So this is the kind of support that she gets. This kind of support also can be requested from the security personnel in shopping malls, in hospitals, and they do it not because they have to do it but because it's a voluntary service by themselves out of the goodness of their own heart. It is not something that they are trained to do but they do it because they are kind enough to help us.

If you look at this, a second case study. After our protest against AirAsia they decided that they wanted to understand how they can support disabled people more. So we provide the training for AirAsia which we call disability equality training (DET) and also disability-related services training (DRST) for ground crew and cabin crew since 2008. This is training that provides training on how to support wheelchair users, how to support blind people, how to support deaf people, and also how to support those with intellectual impairments when they use AirAsia so that the staff knows how to support this type of passengers. These training modules were developed with support from Dr. Kenji Kuno of JICA and both trainings have been conducted in one-day sessions on a monthly basis, depending on the schedule of AirAsia.

This a photograph of the DRST and DET training that we hold for AirAsia. In 2010 we had a training for other trainers from Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand so that those people from those countries can provide training to the AirAsia staff in those countries to support disabled people. This is a picture of DRST in Penang, Rapid KL, Rapid Penang buses. These are bus captains who are bus drivers. They provide support for

disabled passengers. This is a type of training that we have which is mostly limited to providing training to support wheelchair users and also blind passengers mostly. They are not so well-versed with other kinds of disabilities.

A third case study is personal experience when I took the highway code - I wanted to drive. I went to take highway code. The test room was on the first floor and there is no lift up to the first floor, so I had to get some strangers to help carry my wheelchair up to the first floor to take the test, and when I finished the test they had to carry me down two flights of steps again so that I can get back home. This is a picture of how they carried me. It's quite dangerous if you look at it.

These are the other situations that I faced; when I went to the cinema, they had a stair lift to go up, but when I finished the movie and wanted to come down the stair lift broke down halfway due to poor maintenance or something and they had to carry me down. This is a country club, a very exclusive country club in Malaysia, they have no lift down so the staff have to carry me down. This is the other picture that I've shown you just now.

I'll be quick with this. The challenges that we face. We need to push for full accessibility with enforcement in existing laws. We have laws but we don't have enforcement and we don't have implementation so we have to push for it. Under the *PWD Act*, the *Persons with Disabilities Act 2008*, there is a law that says that the National Council of Persons with Disabilities can recommend new laws, so we need to make sure that this National Council is able to push for an anti-discrimination law with penalties so that any acts of discrimination can be acted upon so that people who discriminate against disabled people can be punished for that act.

We need to have proper maintenance of facilities; we have a very poor culture of maintenance. Toilets break down, lifts break down, stair lifts break down and disabled people have problems moving about. We need to have a holistic approach to this issue. We cannot just say I want you to make this area accessible, it has to be looked at in a big picture. Connectivity must be seamless all around, not only in one specific place, so that we can move around conveniently. We require more human support because of the inaccessibility in Malaysia, if not we'll have difficulty moving around.

Not many businesses see the importance of providing human support to customers; they think that as long as they provide physical access according to the law it's enough. They don't go one step further in providing human support; their staff are not aware of how to help disabled people. It makes business sense if businesses can provide that kind of support to disabled people, more people would patronize them because we are not alone in patronizing them, we have family members, we have friends, when we go, it's not just one person but an entire group of people. So it makes business sense to provide the kind of support we need so that we can patronize them more.

In Malaysia it is very uncommon for disabled people to request support. If we need support and there is nobody to help us usually we don't go out, we stay home. So we need to be more vocal in requesting support from the public to help us around.

Even though companies do not see the importance of providing human support, we have demands from individual public members who want to understand how to be able to support disabled people. They demand for training on disability etiquette and support so that they understand how they can help disabled people when they see one in public spaces.

I'm going to wrap up my presentation. I'm sure most of you understand, disability rights advocacy is like kicking a deflated ball. You have a ball, you kick it, it rolls a few steps and then it stops. You have to continue kicking it continuously to keep the momentum going. This is what we face in Malaysia. We have to do it continuously and it can be very tiring. Not every disabled person wants to become an advocate because it is a very tiring job.

I'll conclude my presentation. The takeaway message is that for many disabled people in Malaysia, we always have a dilemma when we think of going out. We fear getting stuck in an unfamiliar environment without support.

However I would like to say that Malaysian public are generally very helpful to disabled people and if you ask for assistance, you will usually get it without hesitation. They will help us but we need to ask. If we do not ask, nobody knows what kind of needs that we require and what kinds of support we require. We need to learn to give clear, precise instructions. You know, you just can't ask them, please help me because the public doesn't know how to help you. So not giving proper instructions is very dangerous because when they help you in the wrong way they may injure both parties. In this area disability educationists need to conduct more training for the public so that they are aware of how to provide proper support when needed.

Lastly the inaccessible environment makes it all difficult but the availability of human support makes it easier for us Malaysians. This human support factor makes a lot of difference in our quality of life. Going out is still a dilemma for us even though we have human support. But it's not so scary anymore because we know that someone will be there to help us when we are stuck in a sticky situation.

This is my presentation on Support for Disabled People in Public Spaces - the Malaysian Dilemma. Thank you very much. *Arigatou gozaimasu.*

Accessibility Challenge! Challenges and Prospects of "Hospitality" for Wheelchair Users in Public Transportation



Yoshiaki Imafuku

Representative, Access-Japan

[Biography]

1958 Born in Kyoto

1984 Seven-month training program at Berkeley CIL (Center for Independent Living), California, United States, as part of the Mister Donut United States leadership training program for persons with disabilities. Impressed by the use of route buses with self-operated lifts for the first time and self-operated elevators located in subway stations

- 1988 Started editing and publishing “Access Kyoto”, a local magazine containing barrier free information in private railway stations in the Kansai region
- 1994 Moved to Tokyo. Started editing and publishing “Access Tokyo”, providing plans on how to use trains and subways as well as barrier free information in private railway stations in the Kanto region
- 2000 Participated in discussion during the process of establishing the Barrier Free Transportation Act as a standing committee member in charge of transportation issues in the Japan National Assembly of DPI (Disabled Peoples' International)
Held the position of chairman of the “Tokyo Executive Committee of National Action Requiring Transportation Facilities Available to Everyone” through 2004.
Built a relationship with 14 railway companies and 12 bus operators in the metropolis to continuously hold an annual discussion about the development of barrier free transportation
- 2006 Participated in the House of Councilors as a witness for establishing the new “Barrier Free Act”
- 2012 Participated in the “Vehicle Guidelines Review Committee” of the new “Barrier Free Act” as a committee member
- 2013 Participated in a transportation barrier free meeting in Taipei, Taiwan, as a lecturer

Rode the buses available to wheelchair users 300 to 400 times every year. Achieved 500 times a year in December 2015. Inspected a variety of public transportation methods across the country to make proposals for improvements and discussions with business operators and the government. Provided other wheelchair users with transportation barrier free information.

[Summary]

Established in 2000, the law regarding promotion of smooth mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities in public transportation use (known as the Barrier Free Transportation Act) defining measurable goals for the development of barrier free transportation for the first time in Japan has dynamically accelerated the maintenance of transportation facilities, such as elevators in train and subway stations, and low-floor buses in route bus services. Then, in 2006, this law was integrated with the law regarding promotion of barrier free buildings (known as the “Accessible and Usable Building Law”, established in 1994) and became the law regarding the promotion of smooth mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities (known as the “Barrier Free Act”). Under this new law, the target of barrier free access has been expanded and upgraded. The most important essence of the new law is promotion of “barrier free mind” of hospitality or “Omotenashi”, inviting diverse types of persons who have constraints regarding using public transportation or buildings to utilize public transportation with as much ease and confidence as possible and to enjoy coming to town.

As one of the persons with disabilities who are using wheelchairs, my achievements and challenges as well as prospects of various “mobility support” for people having difficulties in using public transportation and buildings in Japan span from the International Year of Disabled Persons of 1981 (Theme: Full Participation and Equality) through the Disability Discrimination Act to be come into effect in April 2016, and in anticipating Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Games.

Accessibility Challenge! Challenges and Prospects of "Hospitality" for Wheelchair Users in Public Transportation

Yoshiaki Imafuku
Representative, Access -Japan

I am Imafuku from Access-Japan. I am a person with disability using an electric wheelchair and I am really a fan of accessibility and I'd like to talk about Challenges and Prospects of Hospitality for Wheelchair Users in Public Transportation. Welcome to Japan. This means that there are experts and speakers from Thailand and Malaysia and ahead of 2020 and the Olympics and Paralympics this is the message I'd like to express. And from various places across Japan or I hope people visiting Japan will have the opportunity to visit various places across Japan. As of 2016, there are many people with disabilities that can have the opportunity to get around outdoors visiting various places and I would like to just give you the numbers later to show that. Next slide please.

Here is says "Accessible Tokyo" and the message behind this is the following. I have been living in Tokyo for close to 20 years and actually it's more difficult to look for barriers. I wouldn't say that much but barriers and barrier free accessibility is what I have been involved in for close to 20 years and if you just look for very minute barriers then I will find it hard to even find the very minute barriers and then I may have to move to some other place if Tokyo is running out of barriers. Well ahead of Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games and the person with disability and accessibility restricted which is the word that is used in our law - the Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law talking about elderly and people with disabilities that have difficulty in mobility and we are now making various preparations to give more hospitality or *omotenashi* in Japanese to those that have difficulty in mobility from abroad.

In Japan in 2000, the law regarding the promotion of free movement for elderly person and physically disabled people in public transportation use, otherwise known as the Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law. Japan has since made dramatic improvements to make transportation more accessible and when this Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law in 2000 was enacted I found that the most important message about this law is that including buildings in public transportation, the ability challenged people will feel that they are welcomed and invited with any degree of severity in disabilities in the commercial facilities and in public transportation and they would feel that they are welcomed to our place. In the public transportation, please just come and board us - that's the kind of message that the people with disabilities should feel. That is how we should interpret this law - the Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law - otherwise there's no point having this kind of law.

For the next four years there will be more progress to be made in improving accessibility for taxis, buses and hotels and tourist destinations. There has been much progress already made in the buses, hotels and tourist destinations, but in taxis there are 260,000 taxis that are running around the city and across the country and for instance in Tokyo, there are very few, only 53 taxis that you as people that are wheelchair users to

hail the taxi on the street and get on. As to airport buses available for them, there are practically nothing. So I have been involved in the actual boarding and alighting and using and inspecting the public transportation and making recommendations with regard to improving the transportation to make it more accessible by sitting on various advisory panels of the Government as electric wheelchair users. I'm looking forward to seeing various people with disabilities from around the world. This means I want to see various barriers around the world.

Back in the 1980s about 30 years ago, I have been using electric wheelchairs and I'm from Kyoto. In 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons was the scene of full participation and equality. Under this theme, Japan saw the arrival of the first elevator equipment for four stations on the Karasuma line of the Kyoto Municipal Subway, for the latter half of 1970s, there had been movement to advocate for the elevator equipment to be on the stations of the subway, when the subway had been prepared to be installed. That was installed in the subway in Kyoto where I was from. It was a very pleasant experience because I didn't have to now ask people and the station the volunteers to carry me up the stairs and I was able to use the subway easily and safely with the elevator. Without the elevators, I had to yell for somebody to help me and carry me up the stairs. We would have to have that courage to shout to ask for help and once we had that courage then we would become a fully-fledged person with disabilities.

Well it was a bit scary for the first time I used the elevator but for the past 10 years I didn't have to ask for somebody to carry me. 100 per cent of the time I was able to use the elevator in the stations and I loved going around outdoors with electric wheelchairs at the four kilometers per hour with the battery lasting four hours. I was visiting various places and I went to the places like post offices, book stores and supermarkets and restaurants and also places where people with disabilities and volunteers gathered. In 1984 while working in disabled person's leadership training with Mister Donut, I spent seven months at the CIL in Berkeley where I trained in the independent living program for people with disabilities.

For the first time in my life I got on the bus by using a lift, while such a bus did not run in Japan. In San Francisco, the BART - the subway that was running in the city had elevators in all 32 stations and also the very cheaply made electric wheelchairs that I was using back then - even with this wheelchair, I was able to board the subway without any assistance. So this was a pleasant surprise and so on weekends and holidays I really had fun getting around with the subway and buses with lifts. In Berkeley when I had an idea, then I just went out and got a subway to San Francisco. Well it was not that safe generally speaking in the city but I got around with the subway with all 32 stations.

When I went back to Japan I got involved in the movement to have buses equipped with lifts in the city. At that time, 30 per cent of the buses were equipped with lifts back then in San Francisco. So people who completed that training with me were involved in that movement in the 1980s in Japan. As a result, in 1991 Japan's first lift-equipped buses hit the road in the cities of Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Yokohama and Tokyo. About three to 10 buses were equipped with lifts and started to run in each of the cities back

then. In 2000, finally the Transport Accessibility Improvement Law was enacted, as I said and the law said for the following 10 years until 2010 there was a goal - the numerical goal that was set for transportation improvement - accessibility improvement - and it was really a breakthrough for us. In the 1990s and 1980s, we had to work with transportation operators asking for elevators and ramps and a toilet for wheelchair users. But structurally speaking they said it would be impossible.

But I have never expected that the numerical goals would be set. But in 2000 the numerical goals or quantitative goals were set and in railway and fixed road buses, the goals were met. In 2006 the Transportation and Building Accessibility Improvement Laws emerged and they became the New Accessibility Improvement Law. It started as a law to promote smooth transportation for elderly persons and all groups of disabled persons, not only physically disabled person. So the scope covered by this spread, in addition to the conventional targets of railways, buses, ships, aircraft and sidewalks, it also now included urban parks, accommodation facilities and community buses. So there was thus an increasing need for disability community leaders to participate in conventions, working workshops and so forth. It may be difficult for you to understand what I meant but I was really a fan of accessibility.

So I tried at every opportunity to use the buildings and transportation and disseminated information about accessibility of each of those facilities and then shared that information with the Government and with organizations. Sometimes they hated me, but sometimes they loved this information and sometimes it resulted in more specific improvements. So I really took every single opportunity to get my voice heard at the gatherings and every possible platform so that by actually using the buildings - going into the buildings and using the transportation and then the operators of the transportation and government officials would listen to you. Of course it doesn't necessarily mean that they would make improvements. But at least they would listen to you.

In 2010, the areas addressed by the push for accessibility were expanded to include limousines, long distance buses and taxis and quantifiable targets were increased and the term for these targets was extended by 10 years to 2020 when the Olympics and Paralympics would be held. So the target years for the law and target years for the Olympics and Paralympics matched. There are 15,000 limousine buses available in Japan. By 2020, 3715 of those 15,000 should be made accessible. That's the target of the Government. But in reality, 100 limousine buses and most of the buses that would be made accessible are the community buses. But domestically speaking, close 800 buses are now more accessible. As for taxis, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government said that by 2020, 10,000 taxis would be given subsidies to make them more accessible.

Ahead of the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, the stadiums and other buildings and spectator buildings would have to be also made more accessible so that there will be many more wheelchair user seats in the stadiums. And the Disability Discrimination Act was enacted in 2013 and would be taking effect in this year. So there will be more improvement that will be asked for and requested in the public space for more improvement in accessibility. So between now and 2020, as of 2016 the current status of accessible transportation in Tokyo is out of 5178 local buses, 4719 representing 91.1

per cent, meaning that nine out of every 10 buses are low floor buses in Tokyo and low floor buses with one step with ramp are 393. This may not be so understandable for those of you are from overseas. But there are low floor buses with one step with a steeper ramp and there are many such buses running across the country and 393 in Tokyo and lift equipped buses, 58 in Tokyo and 800 across the country and buses not available to wheelchair users, eight in Tokyo - 7.2 per cent.

So 99.8 per cent of the buses in Tokyo can be accessed by wheelchair users in some form or other. Back in 1991 when the buses - there was the first bus that was made available with a lift. Looking back on that and when I had to ask for the volunteers to carry me to board the bus when there was no bus that was equipped with ramps or lifts. So for me with that experience, this is really an improvement and a dramatic improvement that was made possible with this Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law. The city has 755 railway and subway stations and over 700 stations can be accessed by elevator or ramps or 93 per cent. In London it's about 30 per cent or 40 per cent. So in Japan, by 2020 - the next four years - excluding the very low goal lines like Oume, 97 or 98 per cent will be equipped with some sort of accessibility.

So in terms of resolving level difference difficulty, we are now ready but in 2020, the number appears certain to increase by about 20 stations to represent 95 per cent. There may be more increase. As for UD taxies, there is only 53 in Tokyo. In Japan as a whole, it's said that there are 800, but many of them are welfare taxis that are not much used. So 53 out of 25,000 are running in Tokyo. So they are saying that they would like to increase 53 to 10,000. Once we achieve this number then even with wheelchair users, if you just call a taxi or just raise a hand to hail a taxi on the street, you may be able to hit the taxis with accessibility for wheelchairs. Maybe that is already the situation in London, but this would be really a breakthrough if this is realized. In railways and subways, from the 2000 Transportation Accessibility Improvement Law, for those of us who use electric wheelchairs and have a real desire to board the subway unassisted, that was made possible.

In Japan there are 10,000 stations, large and small including local lines. Without any assistance, you can use 250 of them if you are wheelchair users. So it's only 2.5 per cent. What we really want to do is to board the subway or railway unassisted - wheel on by ourselves. So we have to make the barriers excluded as much as possible. Out of 755, 146 allow you to board the subway and railway unassisted, but we like to increase that number. As for the buses, the non-step or low floor bus accessing road information should be provided but 91.1 per cent of the buses in Tokyo are low floor buses. So you can see the scenery from out of the window when you are using the bus, unlike in the subway. So buses are really easy to use and you can go anywhere you like with the buses. So the accessibility route of the low floor bus should be provided more. This would be useful for elderly people and stroller users, because low floor buses are really easy to load and ride on for any people.

Low floor design taxis, you have to have the information provided about UD taxi operators, even if each of the operators has several UD taxis, the number is small. So you have to know the contact number and information about the operator that does have

UD taxis. With regard to accommodation, in 2006 was the new Accessibility Improvement Law, if the hotel has more than 50 guest rooms, then at least one should be made accessible. So it was quite a welcome regulation, but there has not been any improvement made since then. So before 2020, the Olympics and the Paralympics, we need much more improvement here because if there's only one guest room out of 50 that has accessibility in one hotel, then that will not be even enough. So we are still behind in this regard. So we need to make more improvements.

With regards to tourist sites, the information about the route will allow you to access the destination easily and cheaply. The accessibility has been gradually improved in tourist destinations. You have to make sure that all the facilities in one tourism destination have to be made accessible. Well it's not in Tokyo, but in - there was the sewing factory that - old factory *Tomioka Silk Mill* that got listed in World Heritage last year - had this very difficult to use train system and when it was listed in the World Heritage, there was no toilet for wheelchair users. So we need more improvement in this regard.

So in the slide you can now see various buses. People are getting on and off the bus - large and small buses - and those who have disabilities - wheelchair users and stretcher users are now able to board the buses. When you go to Disneyland, the bus that is running, if you look at the right top corner, you see the low floor, one step bus with a steeper ramp and this is Toden Arakawa, the city tram - you can board and alight the tram without any assistance. Basically all the trams in the city are not accessible in all the stations, but new vehicles - new cars have been introduced. So if you instinctually choose those cars then you will be able to use the city trams. In the railway, as you can see in the photo, this is a new Skyliner, which takes you to Narita Airport from Tokyo - Ueno - and in Shinkansen or Bullet Train, there's no free space for wheelchairs that can see the views out of the window. But in Odakyu and Nankai railways - the private railway - there is more free space for wheelchairs.

But many of those stations do need assistance from the station staff to help us board the train. Well I often see this, but even with wheelchair users, sometimes with your arms you can lift up your wheelchairs and front wheels and then you will be able to board the train without any assistance. So if you include these then many more stations are more accessible to wheelchair users. So I am a big fan of the accessibility and also a big fan of wheelchair spaces. So the law requires one wheelchair space in one train and the guideline asks for two spaces per train and I decided that I will only use the space designated for wheelchairs. Recently, you will be able to see also the scenes out of the window. In two or three years, including one rails and others, the human assistance system of ramps was ready. In 2005 about 6000 ramps that were made available according to Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Well this is partly used in Switzerland and in Korea. So now to resolve level difference and the staircases in the stations, the ramps are really easy.

But the next major goal for Japan is to allow wheelchair users to use and board the train without any assistance. This is Kaminari-mon Gate in Asakusa and Tokyo Station. As you can see, in Tokyo Station, there are many places to see in the station. That's all. Thank you for your attention.

***Current Situation and Issues on Support for Persons with Visual Impairment when Outside the House
: Combination of formal and informal support***



Takayuki Suzuki

Vice President, Japan Federation of the Blind

[Biography]

1971 Became blind due to injury during soccer at the age of 15

1976 Fourth in the long jump at the Paralympic Games in Canada

1977 Kanagawa Prefectural Hiratsuka Blind High School

Worked at Okada Orthopedics

1978-2007 Worked at Zama City Municipal Office

2000-2004 President, Kanagawa Prefecture Visually Impaired Welfare Association

2002-present Director, Japan Federation of the Blind

2012-present Vice President, Japan Federation of the Blind

Established a number of incorporated non-profit organizations and worked as a director in such organizations. Won sports championships especially in the floor volleyball. Worked as a director in sports organizations.

[Summary]

- Institutional support for the visually impaired and the “human support” service focusing on Guide Help

- Progress of human support

In 1962, public services started by introducing support for persons with visual impairment when outside the house into the Home-Help Service.

In April 2003, the “Support Cost System” was launched, enhancing public services by emphasizing self-determination and providing user-oriented services.

In October 2011, accompanying support was introduced and added to the scope of the independent support payment.

- Mobility support and accompanying support

Mobility support service and accompanying support service are dealt with as

different services in communities.

- Contents of human support

Mobility support, information provision, writing and reading service

- Difference between formal and informal support

- Issues in staff training

- Conclusion

From now on, it is necessary that both formal and informal services are provided in leveraging their respective advantages.

It is also considered to be required that staff training should be implemented as a duty of the Community Life Support Service and contributions should be reduced.

***Current Situation and Issues on Support for Persons with Visual Impairment when Outside the House
: Combination of formal and informal support***

Takayuki Suzuki
Vice Chair, Japan Federation of the Blind

Hello everyone, my name is Suzuki. Thank you for having me. I'll do my best. You can read or you can find who I am and what I do in the leaflet. So let me start my talk right away. First of all I ask you what seeing is. It is said that about 80 per cent of the information that we get comes from seeing. If you get just a little bit of all your visual information or if you don't have it at all, your life can be tough. What does that mean? Those of you without a visual disorder or a visual disability, think about it.

Imagine that you are coming to this hall. Now you are seeing people. You can see things, you can read things. If you are looking the other venue, instantly you can tell how big this hall is, what the shape of this hall is, how high the ceiling is and what is placed in the hall. You can get all of that information instantly. If you use your audio or hearing sense or tactile sense, do you think that you can use these senses to understand what this hall is like? If you touch things, you might be able to get some information, but this hall is quite big. So even if you touch things, it will be difficult for you to realize what this hall is like. In summary, being able to see means being able to understand instantly the situation surrounding you or the environment surrounding you. Now then again, think about it. Seeing, how does that affect your movement or behavior?

Those of you who do not have any visual disorder or disability, assume that you are walking from your home to whatever the destination is and you have to walk. If you don't have any problems with lower limbs or if you don't have any problems with your body trunk, you should be able to move your legs and walk. But that is not enough for you to get to the destination safely. Usually you don't pay any attention to that. But when you are walking somewhere, when you are going somewhere, you are using your eyes to make sure that the environment is safe and without thinking, unconsciously you are finding out where you are going. You are getting information about where you are - the orientation, the direction. In other words as you are ensuring safety in front of you, you are ensuring your position where you are, you are ensuring where you are going, instantly. You get all that information without thinking.

Having said that, let me show you some of the other survey results. This survey was organized by the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare five years ago. The survey is on difficulty of living. One of the questions was this, how often do you go out? Under 65 years old, 32.1 per cent - the highest score. Over 65 years old, three times to six times a week. That accounts for 24 per cent. Now then, another question was this, do you need any assistance or do you need any support when you are going out? Under 65 years old, 45.4 per cent said that they needed assistance. For 65 or older, 55.9 per cent said that they needed support. Further, there was another question. To

what extent would you like use a welfare service when you are going out? Under 65 years old, 19.1 per cent of the respondents said that they wanted to use such services. Over 65 years old, 21.9 per cent of the respondents said, yes they wanted to use welfare services. Do you think all these figures are big or small? I would say, if it is over 20 per cent, I would say that is a lot of people who are looking for human support.

Well for many years there have been a number of human support services almost for the persons with visual disabilities available in Japan. Today I would like to share with you some of this history chronologically. In Japan we have had a public transportation fare discount system for disabled person. Are you all aware of that? Back in 1974, in addition to this kind of service, another system was introduced. This system was about the use of guide helpers for the persons with visual disabilities. This is the first formal mobility service. Then this guide help service for the persons with visual disabilities was included in the project of Promotion of Social Participation. That was introduced in 1979. The service provider is actually the local municipalities. Then, city governments and provincial governments, they were allowed to consign such work to the other welfare organizations or welfare groups.

Who was eligible for such service? You had to be a serious visually disabled person without a private assistant and with a low income. Then, you also had to be a person with disabilities who had such needs to go to hospitals, to go to city halls or something formal. This system was not available for a disabled persons or visually disabled people for having fun. You might wonder who these guide helpers were. These guide helpers had to be registered at the municipalities and they had to be considered as proper or decent people to provide such service. Then further, after 2003, the system was improved. At that time, government values the decision by themselves in their new system. From that system, these guide helpers had to be trained. They have to take about 20 hours or so of training so that they can understand better what they need to do for the persons with visual disabilities. In 2010, accompaniment support for serious visually disabled people was started as an individual benefit. These guide helpers still had to be trained. It was further updated to training of 32 hours.

Now then there are roughly speaking two kinds of care or support. One is mobility support and the other is accompaniment support. Let me tell you what the difference is. What is mobility support and what is accompaniment support? First of all, this accompaniment support is not available for somebody who is going to work, who is making some economic activities. This accompaniment support is not availability for somebody who goes out for maybe throughout the year or maybe for a long time or if this going out is not socially formal, then the accompaniment support is not available. Now on the other hand, mobility support, that's different. It is not restricted to that. Municipalities can decide whatever the content is. So if you are going out to a concert or something, you can use this service, but not the public accompaniment support.

If I may put it in other words, think about a Chinese restaurant. When you go to a Chinese restaurant, there is the rotating table in the center. On the big table, you have this smaller rotating table and so this little rotating table is like the accompanying support and then the basic is the bigger table. That is mobility support, provided by municipalities. Depending on the municipalities, this bigger table varies in scale.

There is still some variance among the municipalities as to the level of the service or the degree of the service for mobility support. So while there are two types of supports - a public mobility support and accompanying support, I think that all the municipalities will have to strive for how much more they can do in addition to what the National Government is doing.

Now then, not only for mobility support or accompanying support, there are so many things that require human support. For instance, if I am going out, it will be nice if I have somebody who can help me when going out. If this person can tell me there is a dangerous crossing, I know then that will be quite helpful for me. Secondly if disabled persons are going out, I would appreciate information and with such information, we can make our own decisions where to go and what we want to do. Because we are not able to get such information visually, there are many restrictions for us to face. However if there is somebody who can give such information in words, by orally, that would be great. Thirdly, if there is somebody who can read things for us or who can write for us, that would be helpful also.

Of course, when somebody is writing for us, when somebody is reading something for us, of course they have to be accurate. In other words, they have to be able to work as our eyes. They have to be able to work as our hands. Sometimes such support is given by home helpers. Sometimes such an autograph or reading for us or writing for us is available at banks or at city halls - at formal institutions. But in addition to that we have a number of informal services. By that I'm talking about a lot of different volunteers. We now have a lot of volunteers who are trained and educated by municipalities. We have volunteers who are trained and educated by volunteer organizations. Their names vary, depending on the municipalities. But it has become quite easy for us to ask for their help. We do have to pay for their transportation cost, but other costs are really very small. So that's also nice. However, these volunteers are not properly trained. They're not necessarily educated. So in terms of the skill there is quite a variance.

Another piece of information for you is that I wanted to share. We also have some volunteers for travelling. I know there are groups of travelling volunteers who can help us going out or maybe travelling, but I am told that their activities are slowing down, probably because of the lack of human resources and financial resources. Furthermore, nowadays we have more and more help or support coming from the railroad operators. For instance, if I am taking a train from one station to another, nowadays the train companies can relay this information. For instance, if I am taking Line A from this station to that station and then change to Line B, the train station or subway companies can relay that information. Of course, we have to allow some time for changing trains, for changing lines. But this is quite effective and this service is provided for free. There are some persons with visual disabilities who are using this service when they go to work. For the technical side, to get a non-public license becomes a kind of status for train companies. So this is another example of non-public service.

In addition, nowadays we have people who can help us at hospitals or convenience stores for example. They would write things for us. They would read things for us.

But of course, if this hospital or convenience store is very crowded and busy, it can take time. We may have to wait a long time for them to do that. But really, I am hoping that this kind of service will be available more and more. However, there is a problem that really it relies on the goodwill of the people. If somebody becomes a guide helper, usually it is a non-public qualification or non-public work and usually it is considered as a volunteer, meaning that the guide helper is not able to earn a living for us. However, on the other hand, often guide helpers feel like that they are protecting the lives of the persons with visual disabilities. That can be a little tough for people to become guide helpers.

So I think that there should be provided both formal services and informal services. I also think that there should be proper and sufficient training and education for people who are interested in becoming guide helpers, plus I think that they should be paid properly. So for our future, I think that we should seek ways to ensure formal services provided by governments and informal services and further we should find ways to reduce the cost of such services. Thank you all very much.

***Barrier Free Mindset Developed Through Barrier Free Tourism
: If you don't give up, you can change peoples' minds***



Ayumi Noguchi

Secretary General, Incorporated Non-profit Organization
Ise-Shima Barrier Free Tour Center

[Biography]

- 1990 Graduated from a prefectural high school
- 1990-1994 Worked at a local town journal editorial office
- 1994 Worked in family business while working as a freelance writer
- 2000 Voluntary Group Ise Barrier Free Group was established.
Took office as the leader.
- 2002 Secretary General, Voluntary Group Ise-Shima Barrier
Free Tour Center
- 2002 Married a wheelchair user
- 2003 Ise-Shima Barrier Free Tour Center was certified as an
incorporated non-profit organization
Nominated as a member of the Mie Prefecture Public
Work Evaluation Review Committee
- 2005 Received “Social Volunteer Award” of the Soroptimist
Japan Foundation
- 2007 Instructor of “Tourism and barrier free” at Mie Prefectural
Toba High School to date (2015)
- 2015 Nominated as a member of the Mie Prefecture Universal
Design Promotion of Community Planning Council

[Summary]

Activities of the “Ise-Shima Barrier Free Tour Center” to promote barrier-free tourism in Ise-Shima region in Mie Prefecture since 2002 and the concept of “Personal Barrier Free Standards” will be explained.

Originally, travel is to enjoy the barriers. The most important thing is, rather than the barrier free environment in the tangible aspect, whether the area is attractive to tourists.

To achieve the concept of “Going to where you want to go rather than where you can go easily”, it is vital to receive support from people when disabled or older persons would like to travel. Currently, we are providing volunteer services to visitors of Ise Shrine in

which there are gravel approaches and stairs. By helping them directly feel the charm of Ise Shrine that has not changed since the olden days, our support by the hands of people is making their trip even more memorable. In addition, particular episodes will illustrate the presentation; for example, experience of having understood the fact that companions are also travelers through arrangements for bathing helpers, to report the process of evolution of our service into a sustainable business keeping the balance between supply and demand.

***Barrier Free Mindset Developed Through Barrier Free Tourism
: If you don't give up, you can change peoples' minds***

**Ayumi Noguchi
Secretary General, Ise-Shima Barrier Free Tour Center**

Thank you very much. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much. I'm serving as Director of an organization called Ise-Shima Disability Accessible Travel Centre. Do you know the place called Ise-Shima? Thank you very much. Maybe this is not the kind of place that is familiar to general travelers from abroad. If you would take a Shinkansen one hour and a half to Nagoya and then you take JR and then you take the train for one hour and two hours and then you have Ise-Shima. I'm not boasting or bragging. There is no coverage by the airlines. So this is a very remote place, however, one thing that we are very proud of about Ise-Shima is that we have the beautiful sight seeing destination. You have to listen to the presentation which covers a wide area. But in my case, I have to speak about something that is more localized, so maybe you can learn a little bit from what I'm going to share with you.

First it's about Ise-Shima Accessible Travel Centre. Allow me to take some time to explain to you what we do. Please refer to the material. I think you have a brochure; it is within a red flame. So that's our center. Sorry, this is only written in Japanese. This is only for the print. So there is no braille, but allow me to explain to you what it is. If you are visiting to go to Ise-Shima and you are a person with a disability, or if you are an elderly, you might want to use wheelchairs. If you also want to use the bathroom, that is enabled for persons with disabilities. So you want to go to Ise-Shima, and then you want to know the kinds of places that you can enjoy. Then please drop into us. We are able to give you lots of information. This is the center. This is a PowerPoint presentation that shows the pictures of the center. We have a counter and a signboard. There are many souvenir shops around our center.

The model we have is that providing the information that is on the survey for the accessibility which is based on the feedback from the local persons with disabilities and then we give information so that we are able to streamline the involvement and also you go to the place, you stay there and you eat. But that's not the only thing you enjoy on your trips. So we give you information about the kinds of events and kinds of activities that you can enjoy in Ise-Shima. If you like, please read the brochure later on to understand what we do. Then we have a rental service for wheelchairs, but most important is the provision of information. If you go out for travel, you want to know more about it. So actually you decide to go to the site, because you know something based on the information given by media such as TV. But in the case of information regarding the accessibility for persons with disabilities, then that information is limited. So that's what we try to do. We are giving out information.

So the way we provide information is slightly different. In user terms, the criteria of accessibility we use the term, pass the barrier free standard. So this is personal. So that means that we provide information that is suitable for each individual. For

example in the case of wheelchair persons, so some of them are using electric driven wheelchairs. But there are all different kinds, depending on the gender and depending on the age group, you are driving different wheelchairs and also depending on the personality and depending on the gender and depending on the extent of the disability. You have different sets of criteria of seeing accessibility. In the case where you have the companion who is frail, as in the case of myself. Well it is a place to rough, right? If you are travelling with a very healthy young man and then you are able to depend on him and then you are able to go beyond certain barriers.

So in that situation you are able to have different travels from the kind of travel or trips that is the trips by the person with disabilities with different sorts of companions. It is not good that you want to be invited into Ise-Shima because of the barrier free. Rather, because of the fact that you can see many attractions. It is a beautiful place in and is where the meeting is going to be held in May and also it is the place where you are able to have good food. So, welcome to go to Ise-Shima because the world leaders will see the same views as you can imagine, more you can see in the trip. That's the kind of drive with which to send you to Ise-Shima. So if you want to go to Ise-Shima then you will say that this is a barrier free where they start to see the space but note that the barrier free is not barrier free per se. If you are able to go beyond the barriers then you are able to enjoy it, so please don't stick to the accessibility issue.

This is what we do. We have been doing this in the last 14 years. This was established in the year 2002 and we have been doing this, so if I try to speak about what we do, it will be much longer than 20 minutes. As a matter of fact my husband is a wheelchair person, so I met him more than 10 years ago and then I realized that it was the first time I had contact with a person with a disability who is using a wheelchair. So, he said that I go out to the town not because it is barrier free, but rather because of the barriers. So we get information beforehand and then prepare for the trip, and we are able to go there to go beyond that barrier. The most important thing is to get information about the town. If you are not able to submit or provide the kind of information it is impossible to expect the old people or the persons with disabilities to come to Ise-Shima.

That's why we go as the personal accessibility criteria, so when I use the term standard you might think of something else, but please know that this is about mindset. We have been doing this in the last 14 years as I said and this is our way of looking at this has been expanded to the entire nation and many people started to provide the kind of things that we do in many places. So the covering of Hokkaido to Okinawa, we have as many as 20 accessible travel consultations, so you might want to take a look at your own place so that you can find one for yourself this year. Well starting from last fall, we have been providing the English version of the webinar and guide – Tokyo, Hokkaido, Mie, Shimane, Saga and Okinawa. If you are interested, please take a look. So this is based on the personal barrier free standard, more detail for example the extent of the steps in centimeters and the profile of beds and the kind of accessible facilities in the accommodation - everything is taken care of in this website.

Then the next is about the accessibility for Ise Shrine visit. Well I am not too much focusing on the actual introduction, but rather I'd like to focus on the human assistance.

Many people go to Ise Shrine or Ise-Shima because it is a very famous place for the once in a lifetime occasion for worshipping. Have you ever been there? Well if you've been there then you understand what's on the picture. We have the outer shrine (Gekū) and the inner shrine (Naikū) and we have 125 shrines and I think the most famous one is the outer shrine and the inner shrine. Around the inner shrine, there are some lively places, Oharai Town or Okage Alley. You have to go through the Uji Bridge and then go through the approach for 800 meters, finally, you have to go up 25 steps and then you go into the inner shrine.

In what way is it possible for the persons with disabilities to go up this staircase. Well we have human resources to provide assistance, so please take a look at this wheelchair. You see the thick wheels and this is electric powered. The shrine itself is providing the wheelchair. Ten years ago or before that there were only a couple, but now they have more than 10. So that means that the people are able to use this so maybe able to use their own wheelchair and then they would be transferred to this special wheelchair so it is possible for people with disability or maybe without disability but they have difficulty walking in this kind of gravel road they are able to use it. Then they either to go tour the actual figures - how many people are coming to the Ise shrine with the wheelchair?

Well this is a very busy slide. In between the years the shrine is rebuilt. Do you know that every 20 years the shrine itself goes moving around? In 2013 there was the latest rebuilding and then we're having some ups and downs of the number of visitors. Ten years ago from 2013, we had about 5.6 million people visit it and then they in 2013 we had 14 million people visiting this Ise shrine. Out of this the number of wheelchair users in 2003 was 4,000 but now in 2013, it is 25,000 people who use wheelchair.

In 2013 the total number of visitors grew by 250 per cent. Then in the case of wheelchair users the percentage is up by 610 per cent. If you count the number of people who are using the wheelchairs it seems that these are the ones with the disabilities, but in general cases people with disabilities come with their attendants who are companions. That means that you really have two times, three times the wheelchair users included in this 250 per cent increase. What we try to do is achieve these goals of 25 steps through shrine visit volunteers. Please note that the steps are very wide, so it is 90 centimeters. That means that they are able to go up the stairs or the steps with hand-operated wheelchairs as we see here.

So, as can be seen every step is assisted by the volunteers and then you are able to go up in the way lifting up the front of the wheelchairs and then using the wheel it is possible to go up. However in this electronic wheelchair it is impossible to do this. Sometimes people say that they have to stay in their own wheelchairs, so in that case it is difficult to put them up into the inner shrine using the volunteers but we try to think about how we can do this. We have been doing this in the last 10 years or more and this has been free of charges so we have been some problems about the human assistance. This is considered to be a very difficult issue so at this point we will have, as I said volunteer services.

If you receive this request, request will be made more than two weeks before their

own travel and then the things that are able to get hold of the volunteer services. Also, we have the assistance services, “the Project of Visiting to Ise Shrine with Wheelchairs” by the local high school students and local university students. Based on this certain occasions and certain designated days they are available. So the travelers are able to receive assistance. However the demand supply situation is very much tight so there is a very high level of demand of people who want to use that kind of the service as I said for support. We have as many as 25,000 wheelchair users and there at least some of them also want to receive the assistance.

What we try to do is to commercialize this service as “*Ise-Omotenashi-Helper*”. We want to have service assistant ready for everybody to get ahold of this service. So, we use accessibility helpers as a special guide who can cover the point that was impossible for us to provide services, because it was free of charges, so the elderly people may be able to come here but because of the manual labor it is very difficult for them to work on. So that means that we want to have to drive younger people to work there it is important to make it a paid service. We have been working with the local government to try this. In several years down the road we do hope that this will be a functional.

Come to think of it what these are, are profiles of the Ise Shrine. If you are able to have the infrastructure ready then you may say that you don't have to worry too much about the position of the human support. Please take a look at this. Allow me to explain to you this is a very busy slide I'm sorry. We have been providing support for the visitors to Ise Shrine. About 10 years ago we were able to land a great deal from a case. There was a customer in his 40s with his mother who wanted to go to visit the Ise Shrine. The reason they wanted to go there was the mother was severely demented and during the World War II she stayed in the place in the vicinity of the inner shrine and so he thought she might remember something if she go there.

Then we were not able to see anything occurring to her since she has severe dementia. It was difficult to drive her emotion, because she was muted and she didn't say words. However come to think of it during the war it was very difficult for the ordinary people to go visit the shrine, maybe especially for children. Maybe the people in the high ranking officials or the soldiers were the only ones who were allowed into that inner shrine but back then I brought her to the Ujibashi Bridge and then I talked to her. Do you remember this is the Ujibashi Bridge and this is Isuzu River and there is the Rock of Eboshiiwa and then do you remember playing the chicken game?

We still play that chicken game and you jump from the Eboshi Rock and then swim through the hole and come back. Then I was talking about that and then the mother started laughing. She was clapping her hand. She was so excited. Her face was like she was a child. She was laughing and excited and she was muted as I said. She had no expressions, but she was thinking about her own experiences a long time ago. Then looking into the Isuzu River she remembered it was exactly the same as the kind of landscape she was able to see when she was a child.

So, because of the fact that the river was unchanged, she was able to remember many things. So, we come back to my own point, I can say that Ise Shrine has not changed much from my childhood for example. It certainly has been the rebuilding of the

shrine but still there is –not major change of the landscape so that means if you try to have some infrastructure building for the barrier free Ise Shrine then it means changing the landscape. Now, most landscapes change after 10 years but Ise shrine has no change. The people go to the Ise Shrine and go honeymoon and then 50 years later they come. They are elderly and then they take a picture.

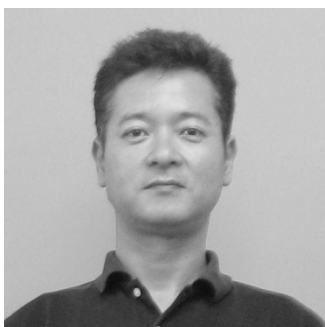
The place where they took a picture makes them newlywed as if it is 50 years ago. So, the point I want to make is that you don't have to worry too much about the establishment of the hardware. Sometimes we have to change ourselves so the human mindset or people's mindset should change. So several decades ago we were not providing support. In the past people did not think too much about providing support, but really many high school students, university students are now trying to provide help. They are offering help and also I go to Ise Shrine and we see people with wheelchair and then the other worshippers talk to us and offer help.

Things are changing. This is invisible the people are changing. We don't have to change the infrastructure, but rather we can change the people's minds and then it is very attractive. We try to maintain what is attractive and then at the same time make sure people with disability will be able to enjoy Ise Shrine. I'd like to continue having discussions with you. So it is already time to stop, so I'd like to cut out what I wanted to have. This is the bathing helper dispatched. This is not free of charges, so this is the paid service to provide the assistance for the bathing. This is the accessibility in nature and this person with disability will be able to enjoy swimming or the beach walks.

Then this is more from event, so the activities and events can be enjoyed by everybody including persons with disabilities. We are providing information for that. As I said people had a very limited options, but we try to make sure people are able to think about and dream about the kind of places they want to go, so they would dream and then come to us and then we try to think about the ways to realize their dreams. We can negotiate and we can provide support and we provide advice. That's what we try to do. We have been doing this in the last 14 years, so there are some achievements, so it was not possible to realize this from the very beginning. We did not have the support system by the volunteers.

However back then they came to us and the elderly and also the persons with disabilities who came to Ise-Shima more than 10 years ago, they are the pioneers and they were the driving force behind the changes we were able to achieve. We are going to continue doing this from now on and then we make sure that the Ise-Shima is the sacred place for these people so that they are able to enjoy themselves anytime, any year. That's all from me. Thank you very much.

Mobility Support for Persons with Cervical Spinal Cord Injuries



Takeshi Shimizu

Chief Physical Therapist,
Division of Daily Living Skills Training for Persons
with Physical Disabilities, Department of Daily
Living Skills Training, Rehabilitation Services
Bureau, National Rehabilitation Center for Persons
with Disabilities (NRCD)

[Biography]

- 1993 Physical Therapy Department, Social Medicine
and Technology Academy
Medical Affairs Division, Ito National
Rehabilitation Center
- 1997 Department of Functional Training 1, Hospital,
NRCD
- 2008 Chief Physical Therapist, Department of
Functional Training 1, Hospital, NRCD
- 2011 Master of Health Sciences, Graduate School of
Comprehensive Human Sciences, University
of Tsukuba
- 2014 Current position

[Summary]

Since persons with cervical spinal cord injuries have impairment of function in limbs and the trunk, such as motor paralysis and sensory impairment, the use of a wheelchair becomes indispensable in everyday life for many of them. Also, since their operation ability of wheelchairs and the stability of their sitting position are both limited due to the characteristics of the disability, they are likely to be subject to constraints caused by inadequacy of facilities. Therefore, in the support for improving the mobility capability of persons with cervical spinal cord injuries, along with the encouragement of exercise on their side, such as exercise to improve physical function, it is essential to provide them with advice and guidance to become able to safely receive assistance from people around them.

In recent years, it may be supposed that a passerby helping wheelchair users has

already become a common sight in Japan. However, we sometimes see the case of someone who cannot find an appropriate method of assistance suitable for the person's disability, or the case of wheelchair users facing danger due to inappropriate assistance. Considering these facts, it is indispensable for persons with cervical spinal cord injuries, whose disability is typically severe, to have accurate knowledge about the characteristics of their own disability, grasp the state of the surrounding environment, and request assistance from other people around them in an appropriate manner. In the meanwhile, it is deemed that we on the supporting side, need to further promote an environment improvement in both the tangible and intangible aspects in utilizing each of our expertise.

Mobility Support for Persons with Cervical Spinal Cord Injuries

Takeshi Shimizu
Chief Physical Therapist
National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities

Thank you for the introduction. I am at the National Rehabilitation Center for persons with disabilities and I am in the division to provide daily living skills training for persons with especially cervical spinal cord injury. I'd like to talk about challenges that are facing us as physical therapists.

First, what kind of injury is cervical spinal cord injury? Let me just be brief on this. There is motor paralysis, sensory impairment and spasticity and contraction. There are much functional impairment that can be seen in these patients and they need wheelchairs to move. Many patients will require wheelchair to move and you can easily imagine how they need such wheelchairs. As you can see on the right, there are only limited residual functions - just functions from the neck upward and limited functions of the arms and shoulders and also because of this motor impairment there is very poor sitting balance. Those are the characteristics that you see in those patients.

In addition to barrier from using wheelchairs, because of many other factors the patients with cervical spinal cord injury would have many limitations when they walk around or move around outdoors. What we do for those patients as mobility support - there are many of them - first improvement in physical function - evaluation of motor ability. This is what people would usually imagine when they hear the word rehabilitation. For motor impairment patients there are three groups of things that we need to bear in mind. The physical function impairment and operational capabilities and complications - the patients themselves need to understand what their characteristics of impairments are. As they move to the destination there are physical barriers on the way or there could be potentially dangerous traffic situations.

They need to understand their surroundings environment as they move. Also, they need to be very effective in asking for assistance from the caregivers when they use wheelchairs outdoors or when they use public transportation or when they use private cars. They have to be very detailed in explaining about what they need and also having the opportunity or providing opportunities for people to experience the assistance. That's what we always bear in mind. Understanding the features of the general population, meaning that there is general - members of the general public who do not understand what the impairments are with the cervical spinal cord injury.

There could be some common mistakes that they may make when they try to assist those patients and potential hazards that could be presumed. You need to understand these as well. This may not require any special explanation compared to - to quote what Mr. Imafuku said maybe we are just nit picking, but even with the very small barriers like elevation differences this could become a very big barrier for cervical spinal cord injury, so they need to know how to overcome these barriers. For different situations, there is some knowledge that you require. First, when the patients are using

the wheelchairs by themselves. For the support movement, they need to consider their own ability to operate the wheelchair or physical barrier or traffic situations when there are road traffics or intersections. They have to be very cautious in making decisions.

That's what we explain to them. Also, when they do request assistance from people around you, they have to consider a very limited setting. Their requests are very specific and presume a very limited setting so that people who are requested to help them wouldn't be confused about what they do. Also, when they use public transportation there are special cautions that they need. They have to be very prepared in advance. They have to know the surroundings and the way to the destination and route to the destination, what sort of transportation they would use and of course when you have cervical spinal cord injury if you use tablets and some information devices then they could withhold the information quite easily. I encourage you that and if you need some assistance then they need to provide information to the people in the facilities that they would use in advance.

Also, you have to be very specific and accurate in providing instructions as to how to assist you and the station staff members think that they are familiar with helping wheelchair users and they think that they are getting used to it. However, when it comes to cervical spinal cord injury patients if they are treated just like another wheelchair user, sometimes they could face some danger and hazard. Especially impact when cervical spinal cord injury wheelchairs are asked for assistance from the station staff members and when they try to board the train they just fell down from the wheelchairs and so that really is what sometimes happens. We have to be very specific about the instruction and also the trains could be shaky and so we have to be very careful about disability. You also need to take into consideration what impact that you might have on other passengers.

When you use private cars to move you can see the only the photos for the transfer when the other side to the passenger seat. Sometimes you would move to the passenger seat to the driver's seat in the taxi and you have to move to the passenger seat in the private car. There is movement of transfer involved and this could increase the danger and hazard, so the patients themselves have to understand how to proceed with this transfer from the wheelchair to the driver's seat or passenger seat.

Also sitting stability and also prevention of pressure sores is something that you need to consider. That is something that they need to be aware of. Now, I have been talking about the challenges for patients, but what are the challenges for us as professionals? Come to think of them there are many that I can think of. On the left hand side, those that provide care or assistance like people in the public transportation, the operators and providers of welfare services - they need to understand the characteristics of the injuries and also people with disabilities. It's not just limited to cervical spinal cord injury patients. What sort of assistance do you need to provide? That should be taught to those people who give assistance.

To the general public, you have to provide some education in general so that their knowledge will be enhanced. From the experts' perspective you have to take initiative and take leadership, taking every single opportunity that you can get. On a day to day basis sometimes you get bogged down in providing specific assistance to the patients on

a day to day basis but you also need to have this broad picture as well. Thank you for your attention.

Mobility Support for Persons with Visual Disabilities



Eiji Tani

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[Biography]

1998 Sociology Major, School of Literature,
Waseda University

2002 Course of Rehabilitation for Persons with
Visual Disabilities, NRCD College
Training Center, NRCD

2008 Kobe Visual Disabilities Institution

2009 Shiobara Visual Disabilities Institution

2013 Current position

[Summary]

For persons with visual impairment there are several means of going to a destination, such as: receiving mobility assistance, using a guide dog, utilizing a white cane, or combining the use of electronic devices with other means.

Among them, the use of the white cane is mainly instructed in orientation and mobility training for the purpose of obtaining the means of mobility by oneself, and it is supported by instructors who have taken the given curriculum.

In orientation and mobility training, various methods of use are taught, including the basics of using the white cane, the application methods of the white cane and other senses according to different locations (such as residential or downtown areas), and also how to use public transportation facilities. Moreover, how to request assistance from others when necessary and how to receive transfer

assistance on such occasions are taught.

Therefore, the development of an environment in which persons with visual impairments can receive proper assistance is supposed to contribute to their smooth, safe mobility. To this, it is necessary to enhance the understanding of the people the visually impaired are likely to meet while moving from one place to another and asking for assistance.

Mobility Support for Persons with Visual Disabilities

Eiji Tani

Chief skills training specialist

National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities

Hello ladies and gentlemen. Together with Mr. Shimizu the other speaker before me, I work at National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities. My name is Tani, nice to be with you. I work for the people with the visual disabilities. I'm much honored to be here.

On a daily basis how do I interact or how do I work with the people with visual disabilities? When it comes to Mobility Support, one of them is to train them and help them become able to walk on their own, sometimes using a long cane or a guide dog. Then, I usually support training to walk with a long cane. As a way - here on the slide you can see some of the ways of transport for persons with visual disabilities. As mentioned in another presentation, you see in the picture on the top right a person with the visual disabilities can practice walking with the guide helper. Secondly, the person with visual disabilities can try to use the guide dog. Thirdly, this is my specialty; a person with visual disabilities can try to walk on his own using a long cane. In addition, nowadays we have some electronic devices.

See this little device on a palm. This can emit ultrasonic waves to detect obstacles and transmit information to the user by sound or vibration. This can be used in combination with some other images. Today in my presentation, I would like to share some information about walking training using a long cane and one of them is called independence training. Actually it's functional training. To be a little more specific this person with visual disabilities will take lessons and will have to practice for these six bullets.

One is introduction to visual aids and we also train them to be able to conduct activities of daily living training including cooking and washing. Thirdly we provide braille training. This can help them to get more information. That also is - and further computer training and portable recorder operation can be trained and at the end we try to enable them to find orientation and to complete mobility training. In addition, there are nowadays some businesses or projects that specialize in emergency life training for people with visual disabilities. These are mainly provided by local municipalities. Further in case of youngsters, children or kids who have visual disabilities we have the schools for the blind and they may be given walking instruction by their teachers.

Now when it comes to say orientation and mobility training this is what we do. Basically, this person with visual disabilities has to come to our facility. As mentioned by Suzuki-san we try to help them understand how big the space is and how far that is. So first we start with indoor movement. This is to be able to recognize the environment around you - surrounding you. Secondly we train them for how to use a long cane. Then once the person is able to use a long cane then we move on to

walking in a residential area. Further, we train the person in walking in a crowded area and that is followed by use of public transportation and requesting assistance to other people. We also teach them how to receive transport assistance.

When it comes to orientation mobility training half of that is complete by just training - walking with a long cane and things, but the other half really comes from information as mentioned by Mr. Suzuki, another presenter today. So it's not just moving your legs and things but it's also the process of recognizing the environment around you and your own bearing. It seems that walking alone is a burden for people with visual disabilities. If this person with visual disabilities is lost for example - that can happen and when that happens this person has to be able to ask people on the street where he is or where she is and earlier Peter mentioned basically Marley people are kind to people with disabilities and I believe and hope that Japanese people are the same.

When a person with disabilities can really express the exact needs - how they want to be helped that would be great. Now then you may wonder who can become orientation and mobility specialists and I am one of them. In order to become an orientation and mobility specialist you have to be trained. There is curriculum available at different schools and institutions. Names vary, but in Japan there are two major institutions. One of them is called Nippon Lighthouse Welfare Center for the Blind. They started holding a workshop inviting lecturers from the American Foundation for Overseas Blind in 1970. Already 600 people have completed the course and approximately 350 are in service. They are working as specialists.

The second facility is called College of NRCD. In fact this is where I work and I am one of the graduates. Approximately 200 people have completed the training course and out of them about 150 are working as specialists there in service. Once we are certified then we are able to be dispatched to different facilities, different schools, different organizations. We can be lecturers and we can help people with travel assistance, employee training programs and as mentioned by Mr. Imafuku, we can go out and help the barrier free education training programs particularly for transport or transportation businesses like train companies or bus companies.

Further, who we can train together is very limited but there are many situations that people with visual disabilities are in trouble when in the town. We can be lecturers at hospitality training sessions at various institutions. It can be schools. It can be police stations. It can be courts and other public institutions and so on. We're hoping that we can be of help to anybody who is interested and anybody who is in need of help. Thank you very much for your attention.

Discussion

Facilitator Ono: Thank you for your introduction. My name is Ono. I am Director of Research Institute, NRC. We received many questions and it is very difficult to answer all the questions, but we have chosen the questions which are directly related to the mobility support and we would like to ask for comments from the speakers. Please forgive us for not being able to cover all the questions you raised.

Are you ready? We'd like to start the discussion. We have already given the speakers the kind of questions we are planning to raise. We'd like to ask for the speakers to make a comment what are some of the most important things that are lacking or what is the challenge that you want to go beyond as early as possible, especially related to the mobility support. We'd like all of you to comment on the kind of things that you want to achieve as early as possible. I think it makes sense to start with the first speaker first. The first speaker will be – Ms. Saowalak Thongkuay. What is missing in this field?

Thongkuay: Yes I heard thank you. You mean in terms of human support? Please can you clarify your question in terms of human support or you said what is missing or what is missing point or what...

Facilitator Ono: Human support - mean human support.

Thongkuay:

Okay in this way I think all speakers already include the necessary issues. What I have to point it out is we have the key players two sides, both persons with disability or their representative DPOs. Also important is that we have to concern them in order to know issue. Even we are talking about human support because per se human support, how do we really see person with disability access to quality, professional human support in any mean. This mean the person who become involved in these programs need to have firstly mindset change.

They have to have the positives attitudes to disability. You have to have mindset change shift the paradigms of disability and development. Secondly they have to understand what exactly disability really means and what kind of instruments or tools include legal instruments and other kinds of instrument do exist. Do we need to develop them - the existing legal and non-legal - I mean the other kind of those service and instruments already meet the needs of persons with disability. Do we need to develop them - is this enough?

Thirdly, what kind of gap in terms of human support to allow a person with disability to be really included in the community meaningfully, not only place person with disability in there. So this mean all kinds of necessary services due to disability related needs has to be provided in the community. Importantly by community persons with support - with - not support, not concern, participation - I mean or advice by persons with disability. At the end, the answer may not be fixed but we know that we have to sustained capacity of DPO. DPO should be accepted in every community and they should have enough necessary capacity to work with those people in the communities. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much, moving on, Mr. Tan.

Tan: Yes thank you, I think whatever I want to say Saowalak has covered most of it.

In the Malaysian situation so far the advocates and activities we concentrate mostly on physical access. Access to the environment, access to public transport. These are the things that we are very good at advocating. The one missing link to this entire thing is the human support. We don't see the importance of human support when we advocate, so we don't do that. We have never advocated for human support for disabled people because for us we feel that if you are a wheelchair user and you can't go out the problem is with you and not in the environment.

So, the problem has to be solved by you alone and not by the community or by the government or by the NGOs. So this is one point that we need to work on, human support for disabled people who need to go out. In Malaysia we don't have personal assistant service and we are very dependent on family members to look after us, especially those who are very severely impaired. They have very little choice and they have very little say in what and how they run their life. So, these are the things that we need to look after - providing human support so that they can have a better quality of life.

From that point of view in Malaysia we are already doing as much as we can in terms of advocacy for access to public transport and the environment. We need to move on to develop a process of human support so that disabled people, especially those who are very severely impaired, they are able to make decisions for themselves. They are able to have choices and they are able to come up in society and become active participants. This is my point of view thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. Moving on, Mr. Imafuku would you like to make a comment?

Imafuku: As was mentioned earlier there is a major goal that should be attained by 2020 - it is important for the wheelchair persons to get on and get off the transportation by themselves, so it is important to really figure so - in Tokyo to be more specific. In the monorails and the subways it is important to enhance the convenience for the getting on and getting off the transportation by themselves. Also within JR in Yamanote line, it is important to make sure that we will be able to get on the train and get off the train, for all the stations. For example, platform screen doors make platforms rising, so wheelchair users get on and off trains easily. So, in order to have the high level of accessibility, it is important to make sure wheelchair persons will be able to get on and get off or to board and disembark. The high level of accessibility really means the global accessibility and it is also comfortable for baby carriage users and elderly people with their legs injured.

That is already the public transportation modality in Barkley, Los Angeles, Korea, Thailand, and China.

Also, in the subway level for the new lines many people will be unable - especially also in the Malaysia. We would like to obtain the goal in Japan as well. The second issue is again the information of the accessibility including the barrier information, not just barrier free information, especially to wheelchair users like ourselves.

We need to get this information translated into the information that is understandable to us, so you have to actually go out and use the public transportation. Only after using the actual public transportation we should be able to disseminate the information about what you thought of the transportation. For example universal tourism as Ms. Noguchi said. I really love the barrier and barrier free programs so tourism to find out

what the barriers are. That is the kind of tour that I want to participate in. If there are no barriers then there is no pleasure in excluding and eliminating barriers so you would be able to find joy in having accessibility. I would like to continue to look for the barriers to be eliminated. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Mr. Suzuki.

Suzuki: Well I think the seat arrangement would be the sequence of presentation, but that is not the case. There are two major issues. First is the improvement in social environment and the other is the efforts by the persons with disabilities themselves. With regard to social environment improvement there are three parts to it. Firstly, the formal institution mobility assistance and improvement in human support in order to assist visually impaired people. And you need to develop professionals to be able to do that. Also, as part of the informal services, the railway maybe improved but buses and taxis and other parts of society as institutions and organizations where the services are being provided to people, you need to provide training programs and educational programs to the people who are engaged in services, so that the environment would be improved. In the surveys of the hospitals and surveys of the convenience stores and tourist destinations there are many things that were found quite favorable and we can learn from them.

The last part is the education of general public. The representative from Malaysia said that people are quite kind, but actually Japanese people are just as kind, but March 11 earthquake - when earthquake happened there was 90 per cent to 95 per cent of the transferred the train seat for me and it has been reduced to 30 per cent so you have to provide more education to the general public. With regards to persons with disabilities efforts, they need to go through walking training, but there are very few that have actually gone through that walking training program. There are 600 that actually work as an orientation and mobility specialist, but there are 360,000 visually impaired people in Japan.

How can you deal with that many people with only 600 that have been trained for walking program? There are only acquaintances and friends that can provide information, not the official information. For instance, for ophthalmologists, when they are discharged from the hospital, if they can go through walking training then they will be able to live independently after they get home. Also, whether you can ask for help - you have the courage to ask for help. Walking training, of course it's very important to be able to request assistance and of course you have to have a society that will not turn back on such requests as well.

Also, long canes signal movement is underway. You are carrying a cane and you just hold it up and then that is the signal asking for help. Then the people who realized it help you. However, in fact, the sign is not known enough. So, if the member of society can reach out for those people if they hold up the long canes and if that information is disseminated more widely, then that will be better.

Noguchi: Well if there are many speakers in front of me then there are also things that have been really covered, but I'd like to just give you from my own perspective from tourism. Before I turned 30 I had very no idea about persons with disabilities. So, I thought that ignorance amongst the general public would be normal. Actually those people who are here may be more aware, but the rest of the people who are not here are

not so familiar. Signals - well we're interested, so we do know the information but even if you hold up a long cane most of the people would not be aware that that would be the signal for request and they don't know what that means.

What a particular movement or behavior mean as a signal, that sort of information should be given as part of the education program for general public. With regard to tourism well as we know, we went along we found out many things and lessons that we have learned. When you say barrier free tourism the elderly people and people with disabilities if they are satisfied in their sightseeing then that would be a success. That may be the thinking that you might have, but actually it's not just people with disabilities that are there. There are people who accompany them like spouses or husbands and wives and children or parents. They come with family members for instance. Is it okay to neglect them? I often go out and go on the tour or go on a trip with my husband who is a person of disability.

If I didn't enjoy my trip then I wouldn't be satisfied. Of course people with disabilities have to be able to be satisfied, but of course the people that have accompanied them also have the satisfaction otherwise there won't be any next trips. The tourism operators in our neighborhood, in Ise-Shima in Mie are given such awareness and that awareness has to be made more widespread because you could tend to have silo type thinking. You need to break down the barriers between the silos so that you can go back and forth between different people within different positions. How can you make the tourism conducive to that? Of course there are people with hearing difficulties and you have to have sign language interpreters. You need to increase that number of sign language interpreters and you have to get general public interested otherwise it can increase the number.

Also, the information has to be there naturally as a natural part of life. If that can be realized then that would make society a better place.

Shimizu: I'm in total agreement with what has been said already, but as a professional challenge from the professionals' point of view I said there has to be some educational initiatives that have to be carried out and in relation to that, as everyone else said, you need to listen to the voices of the people with disabilities themselves. As an expert, as we listen to their voices, what sort of input you can provide as experts and professionals in order to make sure that the people with disabilities voices are heard, we can come in to help, and that's what I felt strongly about. This is another challenge that has yet to be addressed.

Tani: Thank you. If I may take this opportunity, of course there is so much that I would like to touch upon, but I might say something that is relevant to what Suzuki-san was talking about. Of course, the persons with disabilities themselves are working very hard. It's needless to say that. Well, as mentioned by Noguchi-san, it would be great if people with visual disabilities raised their long canes to draw attention, that's nice, but if people on the street really do not know what that means that can be hard, that can be tough. Usually I work and live in Tokorozawa City, which is in the suburbs.

Now, today I came to Yurakucho, and I myself, I was amazed to see this many people in the town, on the street.. What happens is that if this person walking so fast is walking on the street and he or she passes somebody and he doesn't recognize that this person has a long cane and this could trap the fast-walking person. In case of the

person with the limited field of vision, their view could be blocked by the person. Further, even if the person who know the meaning of long canes, s/he could be trapped by the cane because s/he doesn't recognize the use of the cane of shaken from right side to left side.

That's sad but I think that if both sides really are aware of what can happen on the street that would be helpful. One last thing, if you are using a smartphone on the street, I think they should try to refrain from that, it can be very dangerous. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you, everyone. I recognize that there were some overlapping comments but well, that means that there is quite an importance in such comments.

Now, another question. All of you are involved with the different types of activities. I am sure that you all have different levels of goals and one of you may be planning doing this and that, another person may be trying to achieve some goal, a particular goal, and if you can, can you share with us what you're working on right now? Suzuki-san, you can start first.

Suzuki: What I'm doing right now?

Facilitator Ono: Yes. Maybe your next step. What is your next step, what is your next goal and what are you working on?

Suzuki: Okay. My group currently the Japan Federation of the Blind is appealing to government that this training should be an enterprise municipalities must do. We also are asking for improving the service fee, increasing the service fee for the guide helpers. These are something really formal. On the informal side, we are asking train companies and other public transportation companies to expand their services and also we at the Japan Federation of the Blind is now making some research as to know how many specialists are working, orientation training specialists should be deployed in different prefectures and how many should be deployed where, and we're planning to initiate some workshops. In that way, the other blind people can receive training at an earlier stage.

Facilitator Ono: Alright, thank you. By the way, there is one question that is for everyone. Well, at transportation companies like bus companies, train companies, about how many disabled people are working at such companies as training helpers?

Suzuki: I can answer that question. Well yes, we have never taken any statistics or we have never taken any data as to how many disabled persons are actually working at such bus companies, transportation companies but whenever we are asked we go there and we train people to be the guide helpers, for the blind in our case. We're working for the people with visual disabilities. The basic training takes 32 hours of training and depending on the programs and depending on the sessions, there are disabled persons themselves who can be the lecturers for say two hours or for four hours or eight hours. My impression is that there are some people with disabilities who are involved with the training.

Thongkuay: Thank you for your very complicated questions to answer, to be answered. I think the point is not only about the number of persons with disability hiring in the

transportation, public transportation companies. But the point is when they hire persons with disabilities to work there, what is the position, what are their job descriptions and what do they do in the company? Mostly the company hires persons with disability to do only secretarial tasks, management tasks with low level, not at the decision-making levels.

Even though in many countries, in for instance Southeast Asia has a quota system, it's like in Bangkok in Thailand, in the quota systems companies should hire in one person with disability if the company has employee without disability more than 100 persons. This is what we call 100 per one. But most of job descriptions, their positions are in very low levels with low income, no promotions, no job retention. Hiring persons with disability to promote employability does not follow national employment law, it still follows disability law. So it shows again mindset; the understanding to persons with disability who become jobseekers or workers.

Secondly, about transportation. The transportation is really a concern, serious concern to public policy program. What is the impact of public policy programs? How does money come from to implement public policy programs? From our money, right? We pay tax, we are taxpayers. I am a taxpayer. Because we pay tax in different forms. Some persons may pay tax, pay annual income tax; some persons may pay value-added tax, or city tax, but we are taxpayers. So the important thing that we have to ask to society or our government is how persons with disability who are taxpayers can be involved in this kind of public policy.

How do they use my money, I want to know, because I have a lot of persons in Bangkok, in Thailand; you know that the system, the transportation system is not accessible. I and my friend bring the BTS, the sky train to the court, administrative court. We lost at the first court, the administrative court at the first level, but at the supreme administrative court level, yeah. We went at that level, at the Supreme Court. The other company, the public transportation, the BTS company together with Bangkok City to install accessibility wheelchairs in every station because we are taxpayers. I think the thing is this...

Facilitator Ono: Sorry to interrupt, but shall we go on?

Thongkuay: We can talk about human support, because human support does not mean only hands-on activity, day-to-day hands-on, but the support can be in advance. We need innovative idea to create inclusive society.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. Peter, the question is to what extent the disabled persons are involved in developing the program by the bus operators?

Tan: Yes, that's a very interesting topic. When AirAsia decided that they wanted disabled people, to conduct training for them, we the group, the Barrier-Free Access and Transport group, we grouped together and we decided that we wanted to provide training as a community rather than as individuals. So our proposal to AirAsia was that we will provide training to support passengers, disabled passengers, from different groups of disabilities, mainly wheelchair users, blind persons, deaf persons and those with intellectual impairment. Because these were the groups that were involved in advocacy that we protested against AirAsia for the discrimination.

So in our opinion, when we want to provide such kind of training it's better to do it as

a community of people with different disabilities rather than as individual disabilities, because it will give exposure to the different types of disabilities there is and how they can support it. Because in my mind if you were just to do one kind of training and then people who have gone through that training will not be able to understand those other kinds of support that they need to provide for, other disabilities. So we developed the modules together as a group, wheelchair users, blind persons, deaf persons and those with intellectual impairment, we developed together on how we can be effective in delivering the training to the AirAsia staff, whether it is the ground crew or the cabin crew.

I need to emphasize that these modules were developed with the support of JICA and especially Dr. Kenji Kuno who was very passionate about how we can provide effective training to this staff of AirAsia. So he was very involved with us from the beginning. When we started to develop the manuals up until the point where we provided the training he was always there to provide the support and the encouragement. So that's my point. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. So then, what is the issue that you are tackling with? What is the most important thing for you at this moment? Is it the training? Peter?

Tan: I'm sorry, can you please repeat the question?

Facilitator Ono: (Interpreted) At this moment you have your own target, so what is the most important that you are tackling with? Is it training and education the most important thing for you now?

Tan: Yes, because I do training so I will tell you training is the most important thing. When we do training it's not only to lecture; we want the participants to have hands-on experience so that they can use that experience and knowledge to go and do it actually. Because if you just give a lecture they listen and then they forget and then they will not do anything after that. For us, the important thing is to be able to empathize and then to be able to do it in a practical and useful way, not just coming to the training, listen and then go back because that is not effective at all. So for me, I want to provide a kind of training that is effective and will be hands-on for the participants to understand and to learn how they can support disabled people. Does that answer your question?

Facilitator Ono: Yes. Peter, there are many questions that have been raised to you. I'm not able to cover everything but this is a related question. In Malaysia, do you have a public service that would include home helpers or guide helpers like Japan?

Tan: We have what we call the home help service but it is not specifically for disabled people. It was developed by the Department of Social Welfare with DPOs to provide support services to senior citizens, mostly. These are volunteers from NGOs or from DPOs who will go in and help with emotional support, help them with the activities of daily living, help them with health care advice and then help them with running errands. These are the activities that the home help services provide. Now when they understand a bit more that disabled people also need similar kind of support, they are moving from providing that kind of service only to senior citizens and now they are

doing it for disabled people as well, but on a very limited basis.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much.

Tan: You're most welcome.

Facilitator Ono: Then Ms. Noguchi, would you like to answer?

Noguchi: The way we are tackling this, is that your question? Yes. In my presentation I talked about this. The most important thing that I focus on is again the provision of the helper service which is Ise Omotenashi Helper service. In the last 10-odd years we have been providing services free of charges. We are learning from that experience, but on top of that in order to commercialize that service we should increase the hurdles. To what extent are we able to raise a hurdle? That's the point we have to resolve. Also, if it is paid service that means that we have to be self-contained in that business endeavor.

If we are able to do this and if we are going to have this sustainable business, then that'll be great, looking at the situation in the entire nation, not that too many of them will be successful. Certainly there are services which are paid services but they're not doing it on a large scale and it is very difficult for them to make a profit. If you have a system and if you are able to make it successful, then this can be transported to other places, not only in the Ise Shrine but also in other places. So we'd like to come up with something that is serving as a model for the entire nation.

Because we are seeking for its successes, we have been discussing with the government people and also we are listening to the voices of, of course, the persons with disabilities. If we are able to be successful right away then we can say no, but we spend several more years before we actually started that commercialized service. One more thing that we focus is the accessibility center started out from Ise-Shima. The point here is that we want to invite all the people, all the international travelers to Japan, but it is impossible for many of them because it is far away from the people who are without any other places and also because of disability, of the disability some people might not be able to come to Ise-Shima.

So that means that it makes sense to have the accessibility tourism center in many places in Japan, so that means that everybody will be able to have a trip package which suits them. So that provides support, human support, and this way we are able to have a network and we wish to see many more places where - actually, at this moment we have twenty. But there are many more places that should be covered in the entire nation. This way we are able to provide opportunities for the elderly and also persons with disabilities to go out and they have a chance to enjoy trips. So they are really ready in terms of their mindset but we have to give them a final push and then this way they are able to enjoy their trips.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. Imafuku-san, would you like to come back? I think you were talking about this. What is the kind of things that you are doing right now and what is your future goal? Could you tell us a bit more about it?

Imafuku: What I am doing right now is about the community buses and the regular buses. In the last 10 years I have been using and talking about 200 times and 300

times and last year it was over 500 times. Our goal is to achieve 600 times, so by the year 2020, so that would be 700, and then that was a starting point. This year because of the bad weather I was not able to have the increase in the figures but still, I have been continuing getting on the bus starting from January 1.

Up until yesterday I have been using the bus every day so that means that the 115 times this year. Then, I have to come back to my home using the bus. What I'm trying to do is to have a registration for Guinness Record Book. As a full electric wheelchair person, so maybe I might be the only one who is doing this. I'm not able to say to what extent I can go but my first immediate goal is to achieve 600 times so in 2020 that will be 1000 times.

Another goal is as I said somewhere else, head of 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics. If there is a World Congress that can be organized for access maniacs, I'm talking about the barriers and the accessibility of each country presented. Of course, in Paralympics and Olympics there is nothing that we can participate in, so we could have an international conference in Tokyo Kokusai Forum in this venue, in parallel with the Olympic Games; that would be interesting. Also, public transportation is being used in Japan, not just buses but others. As I use them, I feel that people with disabilities interact with station staff members and that is a very good opportunity.

If you consider other types of disabilities, it may not apply, but the community needs and the current situation of the communities, of course these could hinder solving the problems. But what most interesting and appealing is the low-floor buses with good accessibility that is user friendly to wheelchairs. When I have interactions with the bus drivers and then I can find that the people, those drivers have been trained, for example pulling out the ramps and also pushing it back, you can see how they are trained and drivers can also have some enjoyable time as they drive the bus. It could also apply to toilets so all the facilities would be become more meaningful only after they are used by the persons with disabilities. Of course, there are disadvantages but there are more benefits that you can take out.

Facilitator Ono: Let me move to the third question. Ms. Saowalak, can you share your goals with us, or can we move to the next question? Or would you like to say something about your next goal?

Thongkuay: My goal, yes. I have only one goal, I think - and forever goals - are to mainstream disability. My goal is mainstreaming disability perspective in development agenda. This means I want to see my goal: inclusive communities.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. Well, there are so many questions that cannot be addressed by a single individual, but this is an international seminar and conference so I'd like ask questions from a broader perspective, so Mr. Shimizu and Mr. Tani, who are the experts, they can chip in with their expert views. If there are any questions that can be answered by anybody, I would like to you to participate.

There were questions addressed specifically to Saowalak or Mr. Shimizu or Ms. Noguchi and I will be handing these questions over to each of the speakers. Then if it useful, as we put together a report of this international seminar we can have those included. This will be translated into English and that will be distributed outside of Japan and posted onto the website as well. So I hope you will have kind understanding.

So last questions in this seminar, the West Pacific, including Asia, New Zealand and Australia, as part of the program working with the West Pacific, this seminar is being organized. It's not just about individual single countries but with multiple countries working together we can help better solve the mobility issues. I would like to ask for some comments on this, many countries working together. Can I ask Peter to first start off?

Tan: Yes, thank you very much for the question. When it comes to mobility issues, let me give you an example. At the moment I think my country Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, and perhaps further up China, they are developing a rail line from Singapore up to the north. So if the accessibility in Singapore is okay and the wheelchair user or the disabled person goes up the train, and then right at the end of the line he has problems getting out from the train or getting out from the station and there will be a big problem. In this sense, countries across the region need to cooperate so that accessibility becomes a universal value when they develop infrastructure jointly.

Because now we are not talking about individual countries anymore, we talk about bilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation between governments around the region. In that sense they need to work together on accessibility issues because that is the kind of thing that will make the cooperation more successful. When it comes to providing services to disabled people and making it more inclusive, these kind of services will not only provide benefit to disabled people but also to senior citizens because many of the countries in Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia, we are going to be an ageing nation by 2030. So if we don't build to provide that kind of support then we will be in trouble when the time comes.

Likewise, countries like Singapore and other developing countries in the region, they are also facing the same problem of ageing nation. In that sense, we need to cooperate to work together because I feel that Japan has already done a lot when it comes to accessibility. So we can take the model from Japan and apply it to our own countries with some slight modifications so that overall if you go from Singapore to Malaysia to Thailand and maybe up to China, you as a train user you won't face problems halfway or at the end of the line. And that is very important for us because it will spoil the entire experience if we can get up from one place and then we have problems at the end of that journey. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you very much. Then, Mr. Suzuki, signals for long cane was originally from Japan, that's what I heard.

Suzuki: Yes, long cane was started with Helen Keller but when it comes to signals, maybe Japan is the originating country. But as we have had discussions, Japan has good system and for visually impaired and wheelchair users there's a lot of good support in Japan in place already to make their life easier. This could be disseminated to other countries outside of Japan. There are home helpers but not guide helpers in other countries, that's what I heard.

Perhaps the institutions or systems similar to them maybe available but not exactly the same as in Japan, but in China, Laos and Thailand, I visited those places and sometimes it was difficult to board the train, and the infrastructure creation technologies that we have in Japan should be exported to other countries. When we went to China, the kindness of people let me walk alone and I tried to go into a café, but many people

helped me. Maybe that will be the cases in Japan but there are more supports provided. So in terms of emotion and feelings and kindness, there is much more that I can feel from people overseas so in that sense there are lessons that we can learn from other countries as Japanese, how we can interact with people with disabilities in terms of feeling. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you. Okay, it sounds like that you may be interested in inviting a lot of disabled persons from overseas and maybe you can make exchanges.

Suzuki: Well, it's not just our group inviting foreign disabled people to be friends or something, but I think that there should be something more on a global basis, not only the other blind people but also the people on wheelchairs, people where there may be intellectual disability. I think that all of us should be intermingling more deeply. You know what? In Japan if we want to build some facility for disabled persons we are required to submit a letter or a note of approval or note of consent from the local community. Still, in Japan it's a pity that we still have this custom that we have to ask for approval from the local community to build something for us, for disabled people. It may be different in other countries. Maybe the year 2020 would be a good start; it's the year of Olympic Games and Paralympic Games so that might be a good timing for us to have something big. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Ms. Noguchi? You've been really active in Iseshima or Mie prefecture, but correct me if I'm wrong. I heard one time you asked the Ise shrine to make the pavement a little smoother so that wheelchair users can go to Ise Shrine more easily, you didn't mention it in your presentation, but they said that no way, it's a culture. Then, you started NPO and supporting wheelchair users going to Ise shrine. I hope such movement will be spread around the world. Do you have any other idea of disabled people living well, including working with foreign countries?

Noguchi: Thank you for remembering that. I think we've been doing what we've always wanted to do. Thinking of our environment, Japan or our area may be just a little bit one step maybe advanced probably, but I have an impression that at the end of the day it boils down to how much human support or how much human understanding is there. Well, governments and countries can make penalties, they can make laws and things to control or to regulate all these disability issues, but I would say it's a matter of human's perception, it's a matter of understanding among people. Thinking of the world, I would say as a region Asia can be more gentle or can be more friendly to disabled persons I would say. I would say not just relying on regulations and rules and laws and things, but rather I think that we need to change the mindset of the people in the community.

There is one thing that we've been telling disabled people, and well, I feel a little shy about talking about the relationship between me and my husband. Well, my husband is a wheelchair user, and well, I was attracted by him, not because he is a wheelchair user. For me, he was attracted, he was nice; he was great to be around. So I think that we should have more and more attractive disabled persons, like Mr. Suzuki who is blind but he is so much fun to be with. And like people from my neighbor countries who are here as guest speakers, they are really nice to be with. So if we can really be attracted by these people themselves, not just - regardless of disabilities. If we have more and

more attractive and really charming disabled people that would be great.

Imafuku-san is taking the lead; he is a heavy user of public transportation, that's great. I always tell my husband he can handle things himself, even where there is a bump on the street and I try to help him, my husband says you don't have to help me, I'll try myself. I know him and I'm used to it, but when he says that to somebody he doesn't know he goes, oh, you don't have to help me, I'm okay. But I tell him okay, dear, you should be a little nicer to them. You shouldn't be talking only about yourself. See, this person, this lady wanted to help you, right, and so you should understand, and if you don't need help, other wheelchair users may need some help so be nice to them. I tell him that I want him to be friendly to the non-disabled people so that non-disabled people can feel comfortable helping disabled persons. I hope I'm making sense.

Basically, disabled persons don't have to be tough, they don't have to be that strict, they don't have to be that rigid or square. They can feel comfortable about asking for help. In that way, non-disabled people can feel comfortable to give helping hands. So those of you who are disabled, you can become volunteers for disabled people who need help. You may not need some help in some circumstances but other disabled people may need help in the similar situation. So don't be afraid; do tell non-disabled people about what kind of help they can give to you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you. Saowalak, would you like to make a comment?

Thongkuay: Yes. I support her additional comments. However, the difference is how; I think the key point is how do you deliver services when you want to help persons? How do you deliver helping services? In which mindset, negative or positive mindset, it is important, it does not matter if you want to help persons with disabilities who really need help and then you want to help them because they need help and you are able to help them. It's good, but it's not because you help them because oh, they are persons with disabilities; we need to help them because they live with disability, different, the same thing but different. You will show your action in a different way, so please keep in mind how do you deliver services, either human support or other support, the way to deliver? Based on which perception? Thank you. We know; society knows and there is no need to make an instruction of these. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you. Imafuku-san, would you like to make another comment? We are running out of time. We only have three minutes.

Imafuku: Well, I started Facebook; this is late but I'm working on this and I tried to upload information about barriers and a barrier-free society. So if it is possible so that you continue using images, so because of the language barrier it is difficult to understand many things from abroad, but maybe if you try to use IT information technology then we are able to share what is the barriers, what is barrier-free society. In this way we are able to have very good comments, maybe encouraging comments, that would be great. So that's what I am thinking about these days. Thank you.

Facilitator Ono: Thank you. Then Shimizu-san and Tani-san, would you like to make short comments? As the experts, maybe this is too difficult for you? Don't hesitate. All right, then if you're going to decline this opportunity to make comments then maybe some of the questions I raise might not be convincing enough. I'd like to raise two or

three questions. Please answer just yes or no. Saowalak-san, this is a question to you. In Thailand and Cambodia for persons with disabilities are there any day-to-day mutual aids, kind of assistance?

Thongkuay: Thank you. Actually, the question is about the helping aid and day-to-day assistance to persons with disability in Thailand and Cambodia. Yes, actually there are. There are many private assistance and government services, but the thing is how do they access, those persons with disability who are living in the really remote community area, access to government services and private services or even the service provided by disabled people organizations. I think this question refers to my slides from Cambodia, showing the picture from Cambodia and from Thailand. All of the persons with disabilities showing in my slides are living in very remote area. It takes about four hours or five hours from capital city to that area.

Cambodia and Thailand, that's not the same situation that in Japan that you can take the Shinkansen high-speed train and then to everywhere. We have to spend traveling one day, and how about then persons with disability, without accessibility in community area, no money because they are poor. They want to get for instance, to register and get disability card, they have - in Cambodia they have to come to the city. The nearest city is the city where they live in, but they have to use money and take accessibility transportation, but no, there is no. So many of them...

Facilitator Ono: Saowalak-san, we are running short on time.

Thongkuay: We are running short on time. So there is no way for them to access to this, so include many of them. In conclusion, all these services, they are available, affordable to persons with disabilities who are living in big cities only.

Facilitator Ono: This is the last question. Well, there are many minor questions. One question is for Mr. Shimizu. Would you like to answer?

Shimizu: Thank you very much for your question. This is a question about the rigid type of wheelchair. This might be used in the western society. Why is it not used in Japan? Well, in Japan the situation here is different because of the size of the community, so that means that it is impossible, very difficult to use the wheelchair if it is very rigid. Rigid wheelchairs are not collapsible so this is very difficult. Certainly sometimes it is easy for the people to use rigid wheelchairs and I sometimes tell the merit to the users of NRCD but because of the limitations of the space it's not possible.

Facilitator Ono: Well, we only have one minute or less than one minute. Thank you very much for all of you. I'm sure you have many more questions but if you have time please contact the speakers directly. Or you could raise questions to us and then, depending on the nature of the question, we would be able to give you the answer. Thank you very much for your question. Please give them a big hand.

Closing Address

Setsu Iijima
Director, Rehabilitation Services Bureau,
National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities

Thank you very much. My name is Setsu Iijima, director of Rehabilitation Services Bureau, NRCD. Thank you very much for taking your time participating in this international seminar held by NRCD.

As was mentioned earlier, our center is serving as the dedicated research center of WHO and every year we have this kind of international seminars. Until last year we had been holding the seminar in the auditorium of NRCD in Tokorozawa city, but this is very difficult in terms of transportation. We decided to hold this session in this Tokyo forum. We were - this is new forum - place. Maybe you had difficulty having easy access here, we're not sure whether we are able to continue doing next year in this place, but we will for sure be able to hold the international seminar regardless of the place. Also we'll make sure that we will make announcement through the webpage about this international seminar.

We took up the issue of the mobility support for persons with disabilities. When I say mobility, we are talking about the freedom to go anywhere, so this is related to the independence of - and also this is important as one of the basic human rights for the persons with disabilities to ensure their freedom. So we can work on the development of the assistance, the facilities and the equipment, and these are hardware, but this time we decided to use the term human support, and in the Japanese version of the seminar we use the term software. Even if we have good hardware we have to find out the area to tackle is human support. Without human support it is very difficult to have good, easy use of the hardware.

We talked about formal and informal human support, the importance of the human support and also on top of that it is important for the persons with disabilities to do their own share of the tasks. We were not able to draw any conclusion here because of the limited time but this international seminar will be the starting point for all of you to think about this situation and also in order to improve mobility support for persons with disabilities and the enhancement of their participation in society, that will be better for us. We'd like you to participate in the international seminar next year, and I'd like to close this session with my sincere wish for your continued support.

【Appendix】

Answers for Additional Questions

Panelists answered the rest of the question from audience another day that facilitator could not introduce at the seminar.

Q&A

1. Questions for all

Question 1

It is considered that Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games will make a lot of persons with disabilities go to watch games. What do you feel most anxious if you go to watch games?

Answer 1(Imafuku)

It may depend on his/her disability. I am concerned about the accessibility and the number of the multipurpose restrooms because I am a user of electric wheelchair.

Answer 1(Suzuki)

I take a guide helper to go to watch sports as well as I can. If I have to go alone, I will go to the place that has non-complicated seats and guiding staffs because I am worried about guiding for seats, restrooms and so on.

Question 2

How many persons with disabilities are involved in trainers and planning makers of care services in the companies of railway or bus?

Answer 2(Imafuku)

I know some of them conduct training with persons with disabilities, but it must be limited.

Answer 2(Suzuki)

There are commonly few. Recently, I have sometimes been requested to be a trainer by training companies, but not a lot of number. However, the number of companies is increasing that begin to consider the way of training with persons with disabilities. It is now expected. On the other hand, I think it is a problem to train a good trainer, though it depends on the quality of trainers whether the trainings go well.

Question 3

When I joined a volunteer lesson at the station, I heard nobody can bring wheelchairs downstairs except station staffs. I think it may be caused by the difficulty of the matter of how to pay for unexpected accidents. Then, in case the elevator stops by a power failure, do the persons with disabilities have to ask passersby for help for their own responsibilities?

Answer 3(Imafuku)

We have to consider each case, ordinal cases and urgent cases. In ordinal cases, it is better for each other to use a proper route. In urgent cases, you may try to use a proper route as well as you can and if you finally don't have any way, you do that for their own responsibilities.

Question 4

Someone says a wheelchair is product that is hard for man to carry. What should be remodelled to lift it up and down easily?

Answer 4(Shimizu)

It is sure that the wheelchair has no parts to lift up easily with users riding on. Therefore, helpers have to lift heavy wheelchairs up in an unnatural position. However, if wheelchairs are changed to adapt to such situations, that may causes not a few demerits ex) useless parts added in daily life, the weight being still heavier. It will be useful for any situations if the matter is solved.

2. Questions for Saowalak

Question 1

Do you have private/local (community) support system beside of government support for persons with disabilities?

Answer 1

The Establishment of Disabilities Service Centre as a mechanism for enhancing across nation implementation to make the rights real for persons with disabilities. In 2013, the amendment of Persons with Disability Empowerment Act B.E. 2550 (2007) allows Civil Society Organizations (Organizations of and for persons with disabilities) and Local Administration to register as Disability Service Centre to provide services in remote areas. The report as of 15 February 2016 showed that 55 CSOs-based Disability Service Centres had been approved for their registration while 760 local administration-based Disability Service Centres were also approved. The Centres receives funding support from the Persons with Disability Empowerment Fund., The fund manages by the Department of the Empowerment of Persons with Disability.

Question 2

Current situation of installing accessible buses in Bangkok and around

Answer 2

We spent 10 years of convince the government to procure accessible low-floor buses. However, after several TORs, the procurement has not been realized yet.

Question 3

Accessibility in the Don Mueang International Airport.

Answer 3

The accessibility doesn't meet the standard and requirement. There are some accessibility features but not enough in term of quantity. The quality is moderate and it covers to only mainly serve for physically disabled.

3. Questions for Tan**Question 1**

Do you have personal care system like personal care helpers and guide helpers provided by Malaysia government or local government?

Answer 1

We do not have the personal care helpers or guide helpers funded by the federal government or the local government at the moment. Disabled people who require such services have to employ helpers at their own expense. These helpers are usually from neighbouring countries who come in as domestic workers to work in private households.

In the 11th Malaysia Plan (a 5-year economic and development roadmap for Malaysia from 2016 to 2020), the Prime Minister announced the establishment of 7 new Independent Living Centres (ILCs) to benefit 11,000 disabled people. These ILCs will be modelled after the ILCs in Japan, namely the Human Care Association which will be providing technical support together with JICA.

This project has been deferred and will begin from 2018 instead. In the pilot project, the plan is for the ILCs to provide personal assistant service to a limited number of disabled persons. The salary of these personal assistants will be paid by the federal government.

Question 2

How about accessibility of bus-stop area?

Answer 2

Most of the bus stops have not been upgraded for use by accessible buses. Some bus stops are just a sign by the roadside without shelter or proper facilities. Connectivity to bus stops are poor with broken pavement, no tactile guiding path, and indiscriminately parked vehicles and street

furniture. These obstacles makes it difficult and even dangerous for those with mobility impairments and blind persons to get to the bus stops safely and conveniently.

Question 3

Do you have government provision measures of assistive devices/products such as a wheelchair?

Answer 3

Disabled persons registered with the Department of Social Welfare can apply for assistance to purchase assistive devices such as wheelchairs, prosthetic and orthotic devices, crutches and hearing aid. This provision is subject to the doctor's recommendation and the financial status of the applicant. White cane and braille machine are fully funded by the government.

Question 4

Regarding electric powered wheelchair in the airport, users of electric powered wheelchair are required to use a wheelchair which is installed in the airport. They can't use their own wheelchair. How is in Malaysia? Is this issue able to solve by DET activity?

Answer 4

As far as I am aware, Malaysia Airlines allows the use of own powered wheelchair up to the boarding gate and deliver the wheelchair to the aircraft upon arrival. This is subject to the wheelchair, especially the battery, complies to safety regulations.

DET can certainly be used for workshops involving airline staff to explore ways to reduce the inconvenience or even solve this problem through problem posing exercises and action plan making.

Question 5

What kind of activities are provided in the curriculum for supporting hearing impairment by DET and DRST?

Answer 5

In DET and DRST workshops, if there is a facilitator or participants with hearing impairment, the services of a sign language interpreter is used. Training modules also include problem posing scenarios for various impairments including hearing. Otherwise, the basic structure of DET workshop is the same for understanding the causes of disability and making actions to remove barriers. In DRST, apart from the services of a sign language interpreter, various options of communication and support are introduced for more effective interaction with hearing impaired persons.

Question 6

Do persons with disabilities receive benefit by registering with Dept. of Social Welfare of Malaysia?

Answer 6

Disabled persons registered with the Department of Social Welfare receives a Card for Person with Disabilities. Holders of this card are entitled to the following:

- Free treatment and medicine at government hospitals
- Fee-exemption on national registration identity card and passport
- 50% discount on government-owned public transport system
- 50% discount off full air fare for domestic Malaysia Airlines flights (although it is often cheaper to buy the tickets at promotional fare)
- Discount on selected phone and broadband charges
- Nominal fee of RM1 for driving license and road tax

- Exemption of excise duty on the purchase of national car (Proton and Perodua). The vehicle must not be sold for 5 years.

Employed disabled persons earning salary below RM1200.00 per month can apply for the Disabled Worker's Allowance of RM350.00 per month. Carers of bedridden persons can apply for the Bedridden Carer's Assistance of RM350.00. Unemployed disabled persons can apply for an allowance of RM200.00 per month. The bedridden carer's financial assistance and unemployed disabled persons allowance are subject to conditions and a maximum of RM3000.00 total household income. Eligible disabled students will also receive a monthly allowance of RM150 for elementary up to high school and up to RM5000.00 per year for tertiary level.

An income tax relief of RM6000.00 is provided to disabled taxpayer or disabled spouse of taxpayer, and RM5000.00 relief for purchase of assistive devices.

4. Questions for Imafuku

Question 1

Railway companies make the independent riding difficult because they make steps for even new trains ex.)Yamanote line, Hokuriku Shinkansen and Hokkaido Shinkansen. Where and how should we insist?

Answer 1

As for me, I have been insisting that government and railway companies have to solve the problem since Transportation Barrier-Free Law was approved in 2000. Let's continue insisting for Tokyo 2020 Olympic Paralympic Games.

Question 2

Though Tokyo 2020 Olympic Paralympic Games will be held, it is shocked that the number of taxis available to wheelchair users is 53 and that of airport buses is nearly 0. Are annual targets set for increasing the number of them? Can the final goal of 10,000 be accomplished?

Answer 2

Annual targets are not announced. As to Universal Designed Taxis, I am optimistic about the achievement goal of 10,000 because Tokyo grants an original subsidy for taxi companies, whereas pessimistic about airport buses. I have only heard the first airport bus with a lift is running from the end of March, from Haneda Airport to Yokohama City Air Terminal.

Question 3

How do you feel on the jam-packed trains or buses: especially glanced by other passengers? Then, has your activity made the feeling changed?

Answer 3

Recently, wheelchair space has been majored, so I am not so sensitive to the eyes if I can seat there.

5. Question for Suzuki

Question 1

About the measures to avoid accidents as a person with a visual disability.

Answer 1

I will answer it as well as I can consider.

I usually walk on a road with a white cane that I make visible to others. I take a guide helper as well as I can, if it is necessary for me to go through an unfamiliar route or to go to the place for the first time. When I go to such places using public transportation, I usually ask railway or bus companies for help. When I stay home, I don't forget keying the door. A delivery service or a visitor coming, I open the door after I am sure who s/he is, without opening immediately.

6. Questions for Tani

Question 1

Who makes a guiding manual? I sometimes feel giddy because helpers exactly lead along tactile guiding path.

Answer 1

We choose and use training textbooks proper to the subjects decided by Public Notice. Based on it, we teach students basic knowledge and technique about orientation and mobility and also teach them the need of flexibility. However, it is probably considered that some students understand incompletely because the teaching time is limited. While the way of training may be improved, I think it is also important to learn through the actual situation. Therefore, it is very kind of you to tell the helpers what you really think about. I wish you can go outside safely and comfortably.

