

FINAL EVALUATION

*ICEVI-PERTUNI
Pilot Project on Higher Education
for Persons with Visual Impairment in INDONESIA*

Submitted to
The Nippon Foundation

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June 21-22, 2007

The Setting:

In 2006, the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and the Indonesian Union of the Blind (PERTUNI) launched a project in Jakarta and Bandung to provide support to students with visual impairment enrolled in the higher education in these two cities. This initiative was made possible through the generous support from The Nippon Foundation.

The main objectives of the project were to provide assistive technology to optimize the learning experiences of persons with visual impairment and to sensitize university administrations, faculty and staff regarding the needs of students with visual impairment.

The project sought to prepare young visually impaired leaders who could inspire young children and parents to value education. As the ICEVI led Global Campaign on Education For All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) was launched in July 2006, the higher education project in Indonesia became a timely effort to demonstrate that higher education is a part of the continuum within the “education for all” movement, leading the transition from school to work. For this reason, the implementation of the higher education project had ramifications beyond Indonesia, to the global level; particularly within the context of the use of technology to promote educational equity.

The Model:

The project developed two implementation models to address specific needs in the two sites of this pilot initiative. In Jakarta the project was coordinated by the Mitra Netra, a local NGO that established centers for support service in three different locations throughout Jakarta to facilitate ease of access to support services. Yayasan Mitra Netra supervised the

functioning of these satellite centers and also provided guidance to the students.

In Bandung, the program was implemented within the Indonesia University of Education (UPI), where a Technology Resource Center was established for the use of students with visual impairment. The Resource Center at UPI also opened this center for the use of students from other nearby universities. Of the 100 beneficiaries served during the past academic year 75 were from Bandung and the remaining from Jakarta.

Specific Objectives of the Project:

The specific objectives of the project were to

- make access to higher education a less formidable experience for blind students
- reduce stress and improve satisfaction and performance
- provide valuable data on two different approaches as it relates to factors such as flexibility, accessibility, and student satisfaction levels
- increase awareness on the part of government officials responsible for institutions of higher education and the general public

The Process:

In order to assist the students in pursuing their education, the resource centers and satellite centers were equipped with computers and screen reading and screen enlargement software. In Jakarta laptops were made available that students shared for their class and homework.

The center in Bandung functioned under a staff coordinator from the Department of Special Education and assisted by part-time sighted student workers. The satellite centers in Jakarta were assisted by “student coordinators” who were selected by fellow students within their satellite service area. These coordinators made decisions regarding the scheduled use of the laptops for preparing assignments, taking examinations and doing thesis research. The overall supervision of the project was the responsibility of Pertuni.

The project made no provision for scholarship support for the students or creation of infrastructure. It provided only equipment and training in order

to enhance the learning experiences of students enrolled in higher education.

The pilot project was approved by The Nippon Foundation for a period of one year to test efficacy before possible expansion to other areas of Indonesia and other countries within the region. The project was officially launched in September 2006.

Interim Evaluation:

An interim evaluation of the project was carried out in February 2007 to suggest mid-year course corrections, if any. The evaluation team included Larry Campbell, President ICEVI, Mani, Secretary General, and Aria Indrawati, Pertuni. The team conducted a series of discussions with students, interviews with administrators and also observed the students in as they used these new services. The following were the major observations made during the interim evaluation.

- Most of the beneficiaries demonstrated good skill in using access technology including the Open Book software to access information.
- Many students were using Braille slates and stylus to take notes in class and later used their laptops to expand on their class notes and to complete assignments.
- The students appeared to becoming more independent, sociable and self-confident as a result of their use o the technology.
- Parents were also happy that their children were becoming independent despite their visual impairment
- The general attitude of the teachers and sighted students towards the abilities of persons with visual impairment appeared to becoming more positive and supportive.
- In some cases, visually impaired students helped the sighted students in completing their assignments.
- In some cases, sighted students were also allowed to use the resource centers to access information.
- The stress level of students around the examination period seemed to be reduced among the visually impaired learners of the project as they were able to use technology to keep pace with their classmates.

The team suggested that the efficacy of using student workers in Bandung should be studied in detail and also suggested encouraging more leadership responsibility among the visually impaired students themselves to manage the support center.

Final Evaluation of the Project:

The final evaluation of the project was conducted on June 21-22, 2007 by Larry Campbell and M.N.G. Mani, representing ICEVI and Aria Indrawati, representing PERTUNI. The evaluation team was joined by Mr. Yasunobu Ishii, Chief Manager, Basic Human Needs Department and Ms. Maki Honda a project officers from the same unit within The Nippon Foundation.

The team visited the resource center at UPI and the satellite resource center located within the public library at Senayan where they were able to interview a sample of approximately twenty percent (20%) of the visually impaired beneficiaries served by the project during the pilot phase. The team also had an opportunity to observe the students using the technology and were able to speak with administrators, coordinators, and parents about the efficacy of the program and further suggestions for its continuation and sustainability.

The general observations that emerged out of the final evaluation are as follows:

1. The project in general has created awareness among the community about the capabilities of persons with visual impairment.
2. Student access to technology has certainly helped them finish assignments in a more timely manner.
3. The impact of the project is evident from the fact enrolment of students in higher education has shown an increase.
4. The project has reduced stress among the students about examinations as they are able to use computers to complete their exams and are now able to access questions in electronic files or in Braille.

5. If the views of the parents we spoke to are indicative of the views of other parents then from that perspective the project has addressed their needs as well.
6. While final grade results were not yet available when the team conducted the evaluation there was a general sense from the students that they felt confident that their academic performance would prove to be on par with that of their sighed counterparts.
7. The project has demonstrated how two models of service delivery – one through a government supported university and the other through a non-governmental organisation can provide services at an expected level of satisfaction. It also suggested areas where further work is necessary.
8. The use of technology for their independent study has motivated at least 10% of the beneficiaries of the project to buy their own laptops for further studies.
9. The beneficiaries of the project feel that the skills developed by them through the project will help them when they complete their studies and are ready to secure employment.
10. The implementers of the program such as the Indonesian University of Education find a value in the project as it is unique and brings credentials to the University.

Issues to be addressed:

The evaluation team also made note of some issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure quality and long-term sustainability of the project. They are listed as follows:

1. The ownership of the program by the implementing institutions is a major concern. They are not sure of what would happen when the support extended by the Pertuni and ICEVI is withdrawn. The sustainability aspect is yet to be fully assimilated by the system. For example, the Indonesian University of Education has not made formal provision to absorb the expenses of the project in its

regular budget at the end of the project period. However, this does seem to be an issue they are prepared to address and Didi Tarsidi will be following up with the Rector of UPI on this matter.

2. As more students reach the stage of thesis preparation the number of laptops available for student use in Jakarta has posed problems for the students.
3. The maintenance of the computers is also another concern. The Mitra Netra staff members are helping in the issue of maintenance in Jakarta, however, the technology support department at UPI should be more fully engaged in this area. This is an issue that needs to be addressed when the project is expanded to other areas of the country.
4. Use of sighted student workers in helping to manage the center at UPI did not turn out to be successful as we hoped. In the future, a plan needs to be developed to have visually impaired students take more responsibility for the management of the center.
5. There needs to be a clear delineation of the support vs. training functions of the UPI center. The center was not set up to become an access technology training facility for the blind. Such training should be conducted in other locations such as the Mitra Netra branch in Bandung.
6. Usage policies of the UPI center need to be further developed, discussed and approved by university authorities to assure that they do not in any way reduce opportunities for students with visual impairment.
7. The security of all project equipment needs to be addressed, particularly as university holiday periods are approaching.
8. The visually impaired students need take a more active role in the management of the resource centers per point #4 above.
9. PERTUNI needs to assure that s capital inventory of all items is maintained and checked regularly.

10. **Orientation and mobility training should find a special place in the project. At present this aspect is not as strong as it should be and appears to be confined to courses in the Dept. of Special Education which many students do not take. Campus orientation and mobility training when needed should come early in every academic year.**

Project Expansion:

In summary, the outcome of this pilot project has been quite satisfactory, despite some of the limitations identified by the evaluation team. Given the very positive impact the project has had on the lives of the 100 student beneficiaries during this pilot phase we hope the project can be expanded to at least two additional locations in Indonesia (possibly Surabaya and Makassa) and to two other countries in the region (Vietnam and the Philippines) in 2008.

The students, staff and parents interviewed during the final evaluation revealed the impact the project has had on their learning, personality development and leadership skills and also provided suggestions for further development. These statements are provided in Appendix A.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Campbell and M.N.G Mani (ICEVI) and Aria Indrawati (PERTUNI)