

# ICEVI HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK

Creating inclusive and welcoming university environments for students with disabilities



## ANNUAL Report

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With the support from



Submitted by:



International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment

**LARRY CAMPBELL**

President Emeritus, ICEVI and Project Director

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# INTRODUCTION

The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment ICEVI with support from our partners at The Nippon Foundation has been directing a regional initiative to improve and expand the inclusiveness of higher education for persons with visual impairment. In 2013-14, the project included Myanmar as the additional country. The local partners implementing the project are Krousar Thmey (Cambodia), PERTUNI (Indonesia), Resources for the Blind, Inc. (Philippines), Sao Mai Vocational and Assistive Technology Center for the Blind (Vietnam), and Myanmar National Association of the Blind (Myanmar). The Lao Association of the Blind (Laos PDR) was also selected during the year for implementing the higher education project from 2014-15.

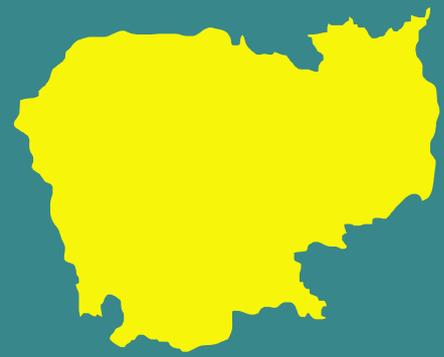
The financial year 2013-14 began with an orientation meeting organized for the partners in Hanoi, Vietnam on 22 –23 April 2013 to reinforce the key objectives of the project, which are creating a welcoming environment for the admission of students with visual impairment in higher education institutions and use of technology to enhance their learning potential. Each implementing partner also formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ICEVI at that meeting, which was also attended by Larry Campbell, President Emeritus, ICEVI and Project Director (Higher Education);

Dr. Suwimon, Chairperson, ICEVI East Asia region; Ms. Yoshimi Horiuchi, Special Advisor for Myanmar and Laos and Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI.

During the academic year 2013 – 2014, 569 students with visual impairment were assisted in the Higher education projects in the five countries, of which 88 students graduated. While 465 students are continuing their studies, 16 dropped due to personal reasons.

The year 2013-14 was marked by the conduct of many capacity building programmes including seminars, workshops and exhibitions in the respective countries to orient University administrators, teachers and human resource personnel. All the countries report that the project is creating greater awareness regarding the capabilities of students with visual impairment, which in turn is resulting in more inclusive higher education facilities. The project partners also worked with the Governments in their respective countries to lobby for making the universities inclusive. The first tangible result from this initiative is evident from the fact that the Director General of Higher Education in Indonesia has provided Universities with a block grant to develop themselves as “Inclusive Universities”.

The detailed country-wise reports are enumerated in the following pages.



## CAMBODIA

1. A training programme on Special Education was conducted by Krousar Thmey core trainers to 20 teacher-trainers of the National Institute of Education (NIE) of Cambodia and the staff of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) for five days from 29th April to 3rd May 2013.

The content of the training included

- A brief history of Braille
- Presentation of Braille Khmer
- Abacus and Mathematics
- Orientation and Mobility
- Low vision
- Computer program for students with visual impairment

The NIE director, HE Dr. Sieng Sovanna attended the training and explained that the NIE will try to incorporate content of Special Education in the curriculum of teacher training. An orientation on higher education for students with visual disabilities too was organised for the teacher-trainers.

2. Exhibitions were conducted in four universities, namely the Battambang University and Angkor University in December 2013, the National University of Management in January 2014 and Build Bright University in March 2014. In total, around 2,000 university students and lecturers attended these events. Mr. Tep Ratha who was incharge of the exhibition campaign, made presentations on education for persons with visual impairment. Besides, around 2,000 leaflets related to education for the blind were distributed to all those who attended the exhibitions.
3. The second training of teachers of NIE was conducted at Krousar Thmey School on 1st April 2014. Trained teachers who attended the first training were invited to see the teaching activities within the school. The aim of the training was to review what they have learned at the beginning of the project cycle and to show them actual activities in the special school of Krousar Thmey.



4. Three seminars were conducted, two in December 2013 and one in March 2014, with around 25 teachers for each seminar. The seminars were led by Mr. Vorn Vy, Deputy Coordinator of the Education for the Blind programme. The main aim was to build knowledge of the teachers on how to teach and assist students with visual impairment.
5. In July 2013 the Academic and Career Counseling Department was created with an objective to ensure that visually impaired students get an appropriate job based on their ability and academic background. During the period, regular meetings were conducted with 18 blind students from tertiary education, individually as well as in group, in order to provide them with information about employment opportunities and to discuss about their further capacity building needs.
6. To support students' studies, computers were provided to all university students. In January, 2014, 10 new computers and 7 existing computers were provided to university students. One of the 18 students enrolled for higher education owned his personal computer and thus 17 students were provided with computers.
7. A common leaflet about special education for visual and hearing impairment from pre-school to higher education and employment was prepared in August and around 2000 copies were distributed during the advocacy campaigns.
8. The training manual on "Jobs Project Basic Pre-Employment" received from the Resources for the Blind Inc. (Philippines) will be used to train university students who will graduate in the next academic year as well as students who have graduated in the past and who are still searching or wanting to learn more.
9. The Krousar Thmey is also creating a booklet of Academic studies and Vocational skills, which will be used to raise awareness among high school students with visual impairment who wish to continue their studies at universities.



1. A meeting was conducted with the Rector of Diponegoro University in Semarang in late April 2013 and the Pertuni presented how a university should have student service center for students with disability.
2. A sensitization seminar on Inclusive University was conducted in Diponegoro University on 21 May 2013. A total of 130 participants consisting of the Rector, Vice Rector, Department Heads, Faculty members, students and NGO members attended the seminar, which was inaugurated by the Vice Governor of Center Java.
3. Two college students of Dian Nuswantoro University were provided with talking net books through the Gadget/Computer loan.
4. Pertuni and representatives of University partners in higher education project had succeeded in incorporating content related to disability in the draft of the “National Standard of Higher Education Plan”.
5. The Pertuni conducted a National University Blind Students meeting, which was attended by visually impaired students of higher education from 12 provinces of Indonesia. The purpose of the meeting was to motivate the students towards independence and the deliberations centered around the following key objectives :
  - To increase the students' understanding and awareness that they would become future leaders for Indonesia.
  - To apprise them about students advocacy tools that are available now and also the techniques to use them.
  - To provide information regarding disability movement at the global, regional and national levels and encourage them to involve in such movements.
  - To provide students with exercises to cope with problems that might come up during their study in universities.

6. Three meetings with the Director General of Higher Education were conducted in December 2013, January 2014 and February 2014 to develop policy on Inclusive Higher Education.
7. The Pertuni held meetings with high school students and teachers in Manado and discussed about their aspirations after schooling. Meetings were also organised with the Rectors of Christian University of Tomohon and Manado State University to discuss about the education of disabled students in the respective universities and about the Pertuni Higher Education Project. Consequently the Pertuni and the Universities decided to sign Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between them.



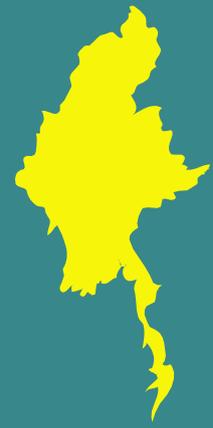
## Signing of Letters of Agreement with Project Partners

April 2013, Hanoi





# MYANMAR



1. A six-week training programme on preparation for Higher Education for students with visual impairment was conducted from 2nd September to 12th October 2013. Six trainees completed the entire training and were awarded with certificates. They have obtained basic skills in English language and ICT, which can be used as a foundation for their self-study. They have come to understand that technology is really helpful for their education and employment.
2. A Laptop/Computers borrowing programme was launched in Yangon city and Sagaing city where VI university students are enrolled in higher education institutions. Twelve students were benefitted by this programme.
3. MNAB negotiated with the Western University to start the higher education project to support students with visual impairment for their inclusiveness. MNAB also provided a set of computers to the library of the University and installed NVDA in all computers in the lab in order to make them accessible for students with visual impairment.
4. MNAB took follow-up action on developing Myanmar Text to Speech Engine (TTS). The contracted team, Solve Solutions is in the process of completing the task, which will help students with visual impairment in their studies.
5. MNAB conducted a Braille Embosser Index User Guide Training on 10 – 11 March 2014. Mr. Bjorn Lofstedt, CEO of Index Braille Technology conducted the training, which was attended by the staff of schools for the Blind and MNAB.
6. Under the Online Library Project, MNAB has collected 23,315 Electronic books for academic areas including social studies, political studies, and general knowledge. 4 thousand out of these books are in Burmese. 67 audio books including general knowledge and recreation have also been collected.
7. To promote ICT among students with visual impairment, MNAB and the Overbrook Nippon Network for Educational Technology (ON-NET) project are working together to formulate a formal curriculum and this exercise is assisted by Mr. Benedict Lahkun and Mr. Pyae Phyo Paing who had received such a training from external trainers in Vietnam.

# PHILIPPINES



1. A Workshop for University and College Administrators on Education as Human Right in the CRPD was conducted jointly with the Commission on Higher Education. 39 administrators attended the workshop.
2. Orientation on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Access for University Key Persons, Math, and Science Professors was conducted and a total of 119 professors were trained.
3. Students Resource Centre: 133 graduate students visit the centre for technical support. Other than the graduate students, a total of 44 school students, employed, and unemployed persons too use the centre.
4. Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) Book Production: RBI produced 70 new titles with the requests of students nationwide.
5. Students are loaned with netbook, talking scientific calculators, low vision devices, victor readers and audio graphing calculator which are useful for their studies. A preparation course was conducted in May 2013 on how to use the devices and a total of 23 students were trained.
6. Orientation on Human Resource Disability Training in the Workplace was conducted in four areas of the country in partnership with the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and other NGOs. A total of 58 HR personnel were oriented.
7. Fifty-one college students were provided with equipments in this academic year under the Gadget / Computer Loan programme.
8. College scholarships were provided to 2 most outstanding high school students.



# VIETNAM

1. Soft skills and pre-employment training: In July and August 2013, two training programmes were organised, one in Hanoi and the other in Ho Chi Minh for a total of 49 blind students (24 in Hanoi and 25 in Ho Chi Minh) to improve their soft skills, pre-employment preparation and specific work consultation. Under soft skills training, focus was more on communication, presentation, and working style (make-up, appearance in work environment etc.). In employment, the focus was on giving them knowledge and skills to prepare essential documents to apply for a job (curriculum vitae, letters etc.), interviewing skills and introducing them to available job resources in Vietnam where they can search and apply for jobs.
2. A half-day interactive programme was conducted for recruiters who have employed and haven't employed the blind and visually impaired students. The aim of the interaction was to share views and concerns from both sides. Most of the recruiters were willing to employ if the blind people have the requisite job skills and appropriate soft skills which are necessary to have successful employment.
3. The project has provided scholarship support for the following students who continue graduate education program and students taking the second university degree to do their related thesis and follow practicum sections.
  - 2 students pursuing the graduate education program, one majoring in History and one in Psychology
  - 7 pursuing the second university degree education program, 3 majoring in English linguistics, 2 in Special Education, 1 in music and 1 in Law.
4. Material Production:
  - 225 book titles and 93 handouts have been produced for the students from April 2013 - March 2014.
  - Request for psychology major books have been received more. Most book titles are categorized into majors: Psychology, Law, Education, Traditional medical, English and History.

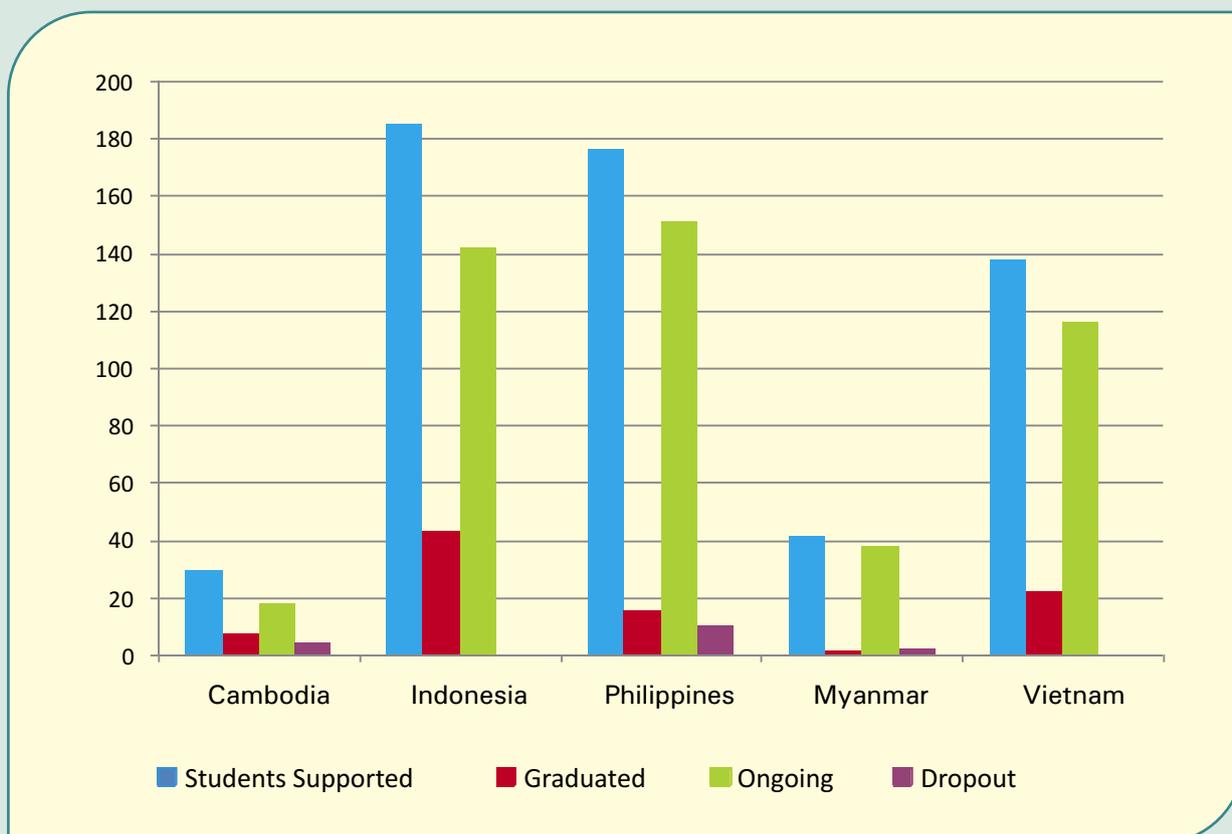
- The higher education programme website has been moved to a better server in order to improve the browsing speed and features for more users.
- An agreement has been made with the HCM Talking Book Library to exchange the books and have collaboration on materials production.
- A channel named “Audio book for the Blind” has been created to get blind people connected with and get them updated with new published books and computer tutorials. <https://www.youtube.com/user/AudioBooksForBlind>
- Ms. Kim Thoa and Mr. Manh Hung, students receiving support from the higher education project have released their publication on How Accessible University Campus is nowadays and 15 years ago. The publication includes their evaluation, comments and interviews from different groups of people.



## STUDENT DATA:

The table below provides the enrolment data of students with visual impairment in higher education institutions in the participating countries during the year 2013-14.

S.No.	Country	Students Supported	Graduated	Presently Studying	Dropout
1	Cambodia	29	7	18	4
2	Indonesia	185	43	142	0
3	Philippines	176	15	151	10
4	Myanmar	41	1	38	2
5	Vietnam	138	22	116	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>569</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>16</b>





**Ms. Yem Sinat**  
English Literature  
Pannasastra University of Cambodia (PUC)

Miss Yem Sinat is a student in PUC, major in English literature. She won a competition scholarship to Japan for 10 months when she was in her foundation year in 2012. Even though the environment barrier in Cambodia is still there, the experience to be independent in a more developed world can bring her a more autonomous life on her own as well as in her study. Sinat tells about her experience in Japan:

“I have been in Japan for 10 months from September 2012 to July 2013 for training in Education and leadership for person with disability at the “Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities”. The first three months, I communicated with people in English. Three months later, I spoke in Japanese to communicate with people. In Japan, I learned many things such as Japanese, swimming, skiing, and living alone independently. I also learned about the education for the service of people with disability, about how to make Daisy (origami), peer counselling, cooking, using computer higher-level etc. During my stay, I joined many workshops, and went to many places. It is a very developed country, and it is very comfortable for the blind people. The blind can live alone independently and they can go wherever they want. For me, I used to walk alone to the market, and lived alone in the house. I could do many house works such as making rice, cooking Japanese food, making Japanese tea, cleaning, washing, etc. I could also communicate with many Japanese, and I had many friends there. I also experienced the shake of the earthquake but it was only about a minute and it stopped. Before I went to Japan, I thought that I could not be an independent person with my blindness, but now I can see I have changed a lot. I feel that I am stronger, braver, and more independent. I can also decide whatever I want to do by myself. I am so happy and I want to share this with the other friends of my kind. I am continuing now my study at PUC at year I. Thank you”.



**Ms. Soeum Navy**  
Philosophy  
Royal University of Phnom Penh

**Soeum Navy**, a 23 year old girl from Siem Reap Province, has been blind since her birth. She is the only blind child among 4 daughters. Her family is poor: its income mainly derives from gardening and rice growing. In such a situation, Soeum Navy did not have any prospect for her future. One day, Navy learned about Krousar Thmey School for deaf or blind through another "organization" (Missionaries of Charity). Her family thus decided to send her to school in 1999 with the hope that she would finally receive good quality education and a chance for a brighter future. It is exactly what happened. She finished high school in 2011 and started studying social science and anthropology, with a major in philosophy at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. She is now in her third year of studies and assisted by the ICEVI-Nippon Higher Education project. She also managed to fit well into university where she has many friends. All of them are very happy to give her a hand, if needed. Every day, she even goes to university by motorcycle taxi ("motodop"). Nonetheless, studying there also poses some challenges. Indeed, there is a serious lack of study documents in Braille language. For instance, it is very difficult for her to do research in the library because she always depends on her friends reading out loud documents due to the lack of Braille media. However, the chance to receive an education has enabled her to acquire a strong knowledge of social and political issues. She is now much more inspired. Thanks to her studies, she enjoys reading books (fiction and non-fiction alike). She has an immense thirst for learning and also listens to the radio in order to broaden her knowledge. She says:

"I am glad to study like any other student. I also have the chance to be mentally and physically supported by Krousar Thmey teachers and staff." In the future, Navy wishes to spread her knowledge by working as a high school teacher in a public school, or at Krousar Thmey, to raise public awareness about Krousar Thmey programmes.

**Lench Ann Perilla**  
**Bachelor of Secondary Education**  
**Graduated April 2014**

Because of the laptop computer that I borrowed from Resources for the Blind Inc. (RBI), my studies became much easier. Because of this laptop, I was able to do all my tasks in school faster and I am able to finish and submit all my requirements on time. This program of RBI has helped not only me but all the college students a lot because we are able to have the opportunity to use and borrow the devices that we need for our studies.

Now, I am on my 4<sup>th</sup> year in college. And on April 2014, my college graduation will happen. And RBI and its partner organizations have a big part in this journey of mine. And even the laptop computer that RBI allowed me to use is also a big help for me to achieve my upcoming graduation. And because of this, I want to thank RBI, ICEVI, the Nippon Foundation and all their partner organizations for making my dreams and the dreams of other blind college students possible.

**Stephanie Gae Santos**  
**BSED-English Major**  
**Trinity University of Asia, Philippines**

The life of college students is truly challenging, especially if they are visually impaired. There are lots of obstacles that we may experience during our studies. When it comes to our academic activities, sometimes we find it hard to accomplish our tasks. But, technology really helps a lot in making our assignments independently. In order for the blind students to study well, Resources for the Blind Inc. (RBI) has a program that allows the students to borrow a specific device to be needed to complete their academic tasks. This is known as assistive technology.

I have also benefitted from some of these assistive technologies that RBI is providing. Before classes start, I would borrow devices at RBI. I used laptop in doing my academic requirements independently. I was able to edit documents by myself. I was also able to make a PowerPoint presentation for my reports and projects. In my experience, I can handle my time in doing my requirements. I can also enjoy some features such as internet that can also help me a lot in my research work. Now that I have completed my college education, I can say that these devices really helped me a lot to finish my studies. I was given an opportunity to organize all things including my academic requirements independently during the process of making thesis and other paper works up to the presentation of the projects. It motivated me to do more and to make all my tasks successful. Through the Loaning Program of RBI, I was able to enjoy my subjects during my college life. In fact, I was one of the Dean's listers' awardees in every end of semester. I was very grateful to this program because I completed my academic requirements easier.

**Gerard Perry Novela**  
Graduate SY 2013-2014  
Computer Programming

The netbooks I borrowed from RBI during my college years were a big help for me. I used the netbooks for almost two years. I had no complaints with the devices and service of the RBI in general. Without it, I would not have lasted one minute in my classes. However, there are some recommendations I want to submit. These are:

The XP installed ASUS netbooks were not very fitting for students who are taking up programming, Web design or any IT-related courses. Although the Operating system itself is stable enough for building programs, the hardware system can't cope with the speed and taxing processes of software programming. Thus, these XP netbooks are just the devices fitted for those students who only use MS Word, Excel and internet browsers. For example, teachers and Psychology students would likely bring along netbooks to aid them in reading books, taking down notes and making lesson plans or perhaps analyzing patients.

Windows 7 netbooks have some hardware issues as well. Maybe because the hardware specs are not quite compatible with the software the students are using. I have checked the netbook myself. I had uninstalled some unimportant apps or software, still, the PC is still low whenever I open a program, much less, when I launch a compiler. Of all the netbooks and laptop I've borrowed from RBI, the latest ASUS notebook (64bit) is the fastest and most reliable. It doesn't hang up whenever I launch a program. It browses quickly with Chrome or Firefox. For me as a low vision, I can use the full screen magnifier without delay.

Generally, the netbooks, both XP and Windows 7 are better for students who are taking up education and psychology courses. They only use lightweight software, which the netbook can handle.. I strongly recommend to let the IT students use the ASUS notebook (64bit) because it can help them in their programming needs. The RAM capacity of this unit is just enough for them to generate a program in school. Well, of course. I don't have problems with any unit of the RBI laptops. In fact, in my 2 years in school, I had experiences in using these entire PC. Windows XP and Windows 7 netbooks were my tool when I was first year. Then I got a chance to borrow an ASUS notebook (64bit) when I reached 2nd year 2nd semester. None of them had malfunctioned.

Perhaps, it still relies on how the user takes care of it whether it's upgraded or not. That's all. I hope this statement help you in your future services. Thank you for letting me borrow those laptops. It was a great help for me in fulfilling my dreams and goals.

## **Renewed approach to higher education**

The coordinators of the higher education programme met in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in February 2014 to plan specific implementation strategies for the year 2014-15. The coordinators suggested that the fruits of higher education can be felt only when successful rehabilitation takes place in the case of visually impaired individuals. In response to this recommendation, a core group was formed to discuss additional inputs to be added to the higher education project to increase the employability of visually impaired individuals. The core committee met in Manila in March 2014 and resolved that the higher education programme implementation in the future should include development of job skills in persons with visual impairment besides their academic studies and training them in soft skills. These components will be built into the future activities of higher education (2015-16 onwards) in order to facilitate a smooth transmission of students with visual impairment from education to employment.

# Shots from Higher Education Project





## HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME - CONTACT DETAILS

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