



# ICEVI Higher Education Network

Creating inclusive and welcoming university environments for students with disabilities

## ANNUAL Report

APRIL 2014 - MARCH 2015

With the support from



*Submitted by:*



**International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment**

**LARRY CAMPBELL**

President Emeritus, ICEVI and Project Director

## Higher Education Programme – Chronology

The Higher Education project supported by The Nippon Foundation commenced in Indonesia in 2007. Based on the positive outcomes of the evaluation, the project was extended to the Philippines and Vietnam in 2008, Cambodia in 2010, Myanmar in 2013 and Laos in 2014. The broad objective of the project was to make higher education institutions inclusive and also to develop the performance of students with visual impairment by training them adequately in using technology.

To build upon achievements to date, the project continued improving and expanding access for qualified visually impaired students to all areas of education through: 1) equal access to all learning materials and all areas of academic pursuit, 2) enhanced awareness on the needs and capabilities of visually impaired students, 3) improved university and other public policies concerning equal access as defined in Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 4) increased access to appropriate employment through the establishment of effective linkages between visually impaired students enrolled in higher education and 5) internship opportunities and special programs for placement centres and employers.

This work has resulted in significant increases in access to university education in the year 2013 – 2014 by qualified blind students. As per the 2013-14 data, 1436 students had been benefitted by the Higher Education programme since its commencement in 2007 and the number is steadily growing. In addition to the increase in enrolment, initiatives towards policy changes are also on. The Government of Indonesia has issued a Decree on Higher Education facilitating all Universities to become inclusive for persons with disabilities and our partner Pertuni (Indonesian Association of the Blind) played a key role in this landmark initiative. Other participating countries are also encouraged to bring such legislations, which will make institutions inclusive for persons with disabilities in general and visual impairment in particular.

### **Report of 2014-15**

The report below presents activities organised by the member countries from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and the enrolment data presented pertains to the particular year. The annual reports of previous years have been posted on ICEVI website too for wider dissemination.



# CAMBODIA

## 1. Exhibitions at universities

From December 2014 to March 2015, 5 exhibitions were conducted at 5 different universities in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Kampong Cham. Around 250 students and 10 professors participated in each exhibition event. The audience were explained how blind people learn and what “tools” they use. Communication materials such as T-shirts, leaflets, stickers, x-stand banners, and flyers related to education of students with visual impairment were displayed.



## 2. Training of teachers at National Institute of Education (NIE)

Training session on the topic of education for students with visual impairment was organized for 20 core teachers from NIE for 5 days. The participants learnt a lot about the history of Braille, Khmer Braille letters, Orientation & Mobility for blind people, usage of Abacus and computer-based specialised programs for people with visual impairment.



## 3. Employment Seminar

In October 2014, in collaboration with the National Employment Agency (NEA) and HRINC Recruitment Services, a seminar was conducted to present the role of employers in strengthening employment services and labour market information for people with disability. There were representatives from 9 different



companies. Participants discussed about challenges and possibilities to integrate people with disability, especially visually impaired people, into labour market. As a follow up of this seminar, in January 2015, 4 blind students attended a workshop conducted by NEA on career planning and

job placement preparation. After the training, one blind student submitted application to NEA for a job or internship in a private company for the position of a call centre staff. The NEA, HRINC and Krousar Thmey have been working very actively to find the company that could provide this kind of job to the student.

#### **4. Meeting with visually impaired students**

During the first six months, Academic and Career Counselling (ACC) department conducted 4 workshops to benefit 18 students (grade 12) with visual impairment from Krousar Thmey schools in Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Cham and Phnom Penh. The aim of these meetings was to provide information about good quality universities in Cambodia as well as to make these students ready for



university education. Besides, 2 other workshops were organized with 14 visually impaired students from universities to share information about employment opportunity, their needs for further capacity building and difficulties faced during their study.

#### **5. Study tour for students with visual impairment**

On 31st of March, a study visit was conducted for students from Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham and Battambang School for deaf or blind. A total of 11 students with visual impairment visited Pannasastra University, a private Higher Education Institute located in Phnom Penh City, in order to discover the differences between High School and University settings as well as the new challenges they will have to face. They also got information about available scholarship and related application procedures.

#### **6. Distribution of materials/equipment**

During the period, 3 new computers were provided to students. Taking into account the 17 existing computers (previously purchased and provided to students), now 20 computers are being used by students with visual impairment. Beside computers, new supportive learning materials (abacus, stylus, slates...) were also distributed to those students.

#### **7. Cooperation/networking**

Krousar Thmey cooperated with the Australian Center for Education (ACE) in providing scholarship at ACE to graduate students. One student (SOKUN Promvireak) was selected as scholar to study there. The ACC team also conducted meeting with the authorities of The Nippon Foundation about a proposal to establish an Incubation centre. ACC has provided ideas on how to ensure the process of this centre, which – whenever established – would help students with visual impairment to receive fast and useful information.

#### **8. Materials for Training and Awareness Activities**

For awareness raising activities, visual materials (banners, stickers, leaflets and T-shirts which illustrated the education for people with visual disability) were successfully developed and printed

for display in exhibitions and for distribution to audience. As additional support to students with visual impairment, 68 Braille books (comprising 7,208 pages) for higher education were printed (at Braille workshop of Krousar Thmey) and distributed to them. Moreover, in December 2014, 30 booklets on “Academic studies and Vocational skills” were published in Braille version.

**9. Other Activities**

- One student (SOKUN Promvireak) graduated from Pannasastra university of Cambodia in the major of English literature got a job as civil servant in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cambodia.
- In December 2014, the Prime Minister of Cambodia visited Phnom Penh Krousar Thmey school (KT school) to meet deaf and blind students (in primary, secondary and higher education).
- In December 2014, a national workshop on Inclusive Education was conducted with 90 participants from the Ministry of Education at national and provincial level and some NGOs. The workshop was organized by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Krousar Thmey organization with the support of Ministry of Education of Cambodia and the Light For the World. The workshop was conducted in order to share research findings and experience on education of people with disabilities.
- In March 2015, the ACC team’s joint regional workshop was organized by GIZ in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The workshop was organized with the aim of providing a platform for sharing experiences about the economic inclusion of persons with disabilities from health, social protection and employment perspectives. Its focus was on identifying practical approaches to enhance accessibility to labour markets and employability of persons with disabilities.





# INDONESIA

## 1. Decree on Inclusive Higher Education

A meeting was conducted with the Director General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education in June 2014 for discussing the content of the Decree on inclusive higher education. The discussions centred on the following points:

- The groups of students with disabilities who will be able to enter university.
- Disability service center and reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities the university should facilitate/provide;
- Fund allocation for universities which serve students with disabilities.

In late August 2014, as scheduled by the Director of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education released the Decree.

## 2. Visit to Disability Service Center of Jogjakarta State Islamic University

As a follow-up of “Manila core group meeting” in March 2014 and to prepare the next higher education project which would address employment aspects related to higher education, Pertuni Higher Education Project's Coordinator conducted a meeting with the Board of Disability Service Centre of Jogjakarta State Islamic University in mid August 2014.

## 3. University Blind Student Follow up Meeting

In late October 2014, Pertuni Higher Education Project conducted a follow-up meeting of university blind students. This meeting was participated by 20 students representing cities where university blind students are more active and have been involved in Pertuni's advocacy activities. The students who participated in this meeting were expected to become “leaders” among others, who would become “mobile” within their own region. The topics discussed at this meeting were as follows:

- Sharing session: Current challenges in university life for blind students in Indonesia.
- The urgency of Disability Service Centre within a university.
- Session on Ministry of Education Decree number 46 / 2014 pertaining to inclusive higher education.
- Updating information related to the establishment of university blind student community in each province.

- Action plan session: This session was divided into two parts. The first part was to ask the students to define action plans for each province and the second part was to present their action plans for feedback from the larger group.
- Human right and advocacy
- Career counselling session
- About Pertuni.

#### **4. Visit to Lambung Mangkurat University**

In January 2015, Pertuni Higher Education Project Coordinator organised a visit of the project staff to Lambung Mangkurat University in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. During this visit, the project staff met the university's rector and his team and discussed strategies to promote inclusive higher education in that university and to develop cooperation between Pertuni and that university in order to make higher education more inclusive in South Kalimantan. The Project Coordinator also



used the time to meet the Head of Education Office, which was under the Provincial Government of South Kalimantan. The objective of this meeting was to encourage the Provincial Government of South Kalimantan to develop necessary policy and action plans in order to develop inclusive education system in primary and secondary education for students with disabilities.

#### **5. Seminar on Inclusive Higher Education in Banjarmasin**

In March 2015, Pertuni Higher Education Project, in cooperation with Lambung Mangkurat University, conducted a seminar to promote inclusive higher education, which was attended by 175 participants.

#### **6. Counselling Session for High School Students with Visual Impairment in Banjarmasin**

The teachers attending to the students with visual impairment in the high schools of South Kalimantan were trained by the Pertuni Higher Education Project on counselling skills and this one day event was conducted at the Lambung Mangkurat University on 25th March 2015. The objectives of this meeting were as follows:

- To inform the students that Lambung Mangkurat University was developing itself as an inclusive university;
- To encourage the students to continue studying in the university and to make them know what benefit they might gain by pursuing university study;
- To develop the students' insight on what major they might be able to take during their university study and what future career they might be able to develop.



## MYANMAR

### 1. Laptop computer borrowing program

Five university students and seven graduated trainees are using laptops for their studies and also to build skills in technology.

### 2. Creating Accessible Environment in Western University, Yangon

Two staff of the Western University, Yangon, Professor Dr. Thida Myint and Librarian Ms. Yuyu Myaing were sponsored by the project in July 2014 to observe Universities in Bangkok to know about disability inclusive program, particularly for visually impaired students. They visited Thammasat University, Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, Mahidol University and Bangkok School for the Blind.

A workshop was conducted at the Western University on 17th September 2014 to start Disability Inclusive program, which was attended by thirty participants consisting of professors from Arts, Administrative and Student Affairs Departments. Dr. Thida Myint presented a report on the study visit and described how inclusive education could be facilitated at the University level.

### 3. Study visit to Sao Mai Center for the Blind, Vietnam

MNAB staff Mr. Benedict La Hkun and Mr. PyaePhyoPaing visited the Sao Mai Center for the Blind and National Library in Ho Chi Min city from 6 to 12 July 2014 to study the functioning of the higher education project.

### 4. Pre-university Preparation training

In the academic year 2013-14, six students passed high school examination and a preparatory training was conducted from 1 to 28 August 2014 to orient them to the procedures of enrolment in universities.

### 5. Negotiating with Sagaing University for Accessible Learning Environment program

A meeting was held on 1st July with the Rector and all Department Heads of Sagaing University to discuss the implementation of Higher Education Project and also about the concept of Inclusive Universities.

### 6. Setting-up of Studio

The project hired a small apartment in November 2014 to establish a studio with the required equipment which will be used mainly for education. Another purpose of this studio will be to train

visually impaired students to generate possible income for their studies. The studio became functional from December 2014 for recording School Books and also for the purpose of voice recording for Text-to-Speech (TTS).

## 7. Developing Text to Speech Engine

The Technical Team SCSDT has successfully completed the first stage in developing voice making diphone system in September 2014 and continues the process towards the development of a demo version. The Higher Education Project Director Mr. Larry Campbell visited the project on 4-6 November 2014 and had a meeting with the SCSDT members to discuss the challenges students with visual impairments encounter and the viable solutions to achieve the useful product. Mr. Larry also facilitated the project team in MNAB to get on track with the Google Team for the TTS development process. A Non-Disclosure agreement between Google and the MNAB related to the TTS was also signed.

## 8. DAISY Production

MNAB ICT staff, Mr. Benedict La Hkun and Mr. PyaePhyoPaing received technical skills training on DAISY production at Sao Mai Center for the Blind, Vietnam. Mr. Benedict continues to learn Web content page



writing in the local training center. They started implementing the program in January 2015 and DAISY production of Grade 11th curriculum subjects has been chosen for a pilot project. Learning material support for high school students is essentially needed to encourage them for university education. One contract staff has been hired and volunteers invited for audio reading of books and typing. All subjects except Mathematics and Science can be made available in DAISY format. A DAISY player has also been bought for the project.

## 9. Online Library

The project started online library called <[www.mnablearninghouse.org](http://www.mnablearninghouse.org)> in March 2015. The aim of this library is to provide education resources both for basic and higher education and also for non-formal education in the long run. The project also planned to upload data consisting of school and university books, reference books and information directory for higher education, resources for non-formal education in DAISY format, MP3 format, electronic, audio and Braille files. Some text books are available on offline library at MNAB information center which will be opened in the second half of 2015 and also at resource centers in universities.

## 10. Building accessible learning environment in universities

The project had a successful negotiation to share curriculum in electronic file for students with visual impairments in Western University in Yangon and other two departments and the materials are being prepared for release in late 2015. The newly constructed Resource room for blind students will be opened in the second half of 2015.



## PHILIPPINES

### 1. **Workshop for University and College Administrators – Education as a Human Right in the UNCRPD**

The activity was successfully implemented in 8 locations, attended by 91 school administrators from 27 colleges and universities. The activity was aimed to equip universities to successfully accommodate students with disabilities in their institutions. In these sessions, emphasis was laid on the concept and practice of education as a human right issue for students with disabilities. Below are various topics included in the activity:-

- Education as Human Right as per the provisions of the UNCRPD
- Initiative on the Education of Students with Disabilities at the Tertiary Level also
- Testimonies of Outstanding Visually Impaired students
- Testimonies of University Administrators and Professors
- Courtesy Rules for Persons with Visual Impairment
- RBI Support Services for Tertiary Students

### 2. **Orientation on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Access for University Professors of Science, Technology and Math**

This activity emphasized the importance of STEM access for students with visual impairment just like their sighted peers. Activities included testimonies of professors and outstanding students in math and technology emphasizing strategies they utilized to access STEM. Also presented the video on “Strategies in Teaching Math and Science to Students with Visual Impairment” and provided them a copy. Students were asked to demonstrate the use of assistive devices they utilized to access the curriculum. Overall, 141 professors from 24 universities participated in this activity.

### 3. **College Preparation Course**

The objective of this activity was to equip the 23 incoming first year college students with the skills and confidence they needed to cope and succeed in their tertiary education. The student participants recognized the following sessions as the highlight of the training:

- What Faculty want from you (and What they don't want)
- College survival skills

#### **4. College Semestral Break Check-Up**

Recognizing the difficulties faced by new college students, particularly in math and science, it was decided to recall the participants again for the College Preparatory training, to assess the problem areas and suggest strategies for solving the problem. From the 23 participants of the College Preparation, only 21 students returned for the College check-Up. The following were the topics most liked by the participants:

- Intrapersonal Skills
- Career Education
- Power Point

#### **5. Maintaining Student Resource Centers**

Maintaining student resource centers in our three offices provided additional avenue for 101 higher education students with visual impairment to cope with their day-to-day academic demands. In the center, they were able to research online, print their output for their professors and braille it for review. The centers were also utilized for consultation and tutorial in various subject areas. The centers were also utilized to provide assistive technology training to interested elementary and secondary students for which the instructors were selected college students. Overall, there were 640 visits to the three centers from 101 higher education students and 30 secondary and elementary students.

#### **6. Equipment Loan with STEM Access for College Students with Visual Impairment**

Through the support of ICEVI, 91 students availed loan of assistive devices which they successfully used to meet their day-to-day school demands. The devices we loaned include netbooks, Victor Readers, scientific calculators, audio graphing calculators and the science assistive tools. The testimonies are given at the Students Speak section.

#### **7. One Day Technology Forum for IT Students, Professors and Companies**

The one day activity forum was conducted in February 2015 and was attended by 13 Information Technology professors, 12 Information Technology students and three employers who also have staff with visual impairment.

One of the highlights of the forum was the distinctive awards given to 4 colleges and universities who are accommodating students with visual impairments. The following are the highlights of the activity:

- Technology Matters in Social Enterprising and Integration
- Enhancing Work Capabilities and Independence through Technology
- Accessible Information Technology Initiatives

#### **8. Human Resource Disability Training in the Workplace**

Our first human resource disability training entitled "*Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) Sensitivity Training and Simulation Activity*" for partner employers was conducted on October 10, 2014 in

partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Central Visayas through the Area Vocational Rehabilitation Center II. The activity provided future employers about standards and behavioral norms for persons with disability in Central Visayas. There were 54 participants representing private companies, government agencies and other civic organizations. The activity emphasized that providing reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities are not too expensive and at the same time it improved the company's image and received additional tax exemption from the government. Second human resource disability training which was conducted on April 15, 2015 in partnership with the School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde was participated by 28 Human Resource staff from 14 private companies.

## **9. Higher Education for Students with Disabilities - Orientation for Western Mindanao State University**

To discuss and address issues of accepting and including visually impaired students in the regular class, an orientation was conducted on March 12 – 13, 2015 at Zamboanga City. Participants were school administrators headed by the president of the university, faculty and staff of Western Mindanao State University (WIMSU), Zamboanga City. The orientation provided a way especially for the teachers to understand that a visually impaired student should be involved in every class activity. A total of 24 faculty and staff attended the orientation. Some of them are already handling students with visual impairment and teaching science and math subjects. The orientation paved a way for the faculty and staff of WIMSU to understand the unique needs



## VIETNAM

During the course of the 2014-2015 project year, Vietnam has focused much attention on expanding access to on-line learning materials for blind and low vision students throughout the country and assuring that the system in place can be maintained and sustained in large measure through the work of a cadre of volunteers who have been trained by the Sao Mai Center. Vietnam has also placed considerable effort in preparations for work that will be carried out in the next cycle of the project which will focus greater attention on assuring that university students with disabilities are prepared and engaged in productive and satisfying employment upon graduation. Activities carried out during the past project year have:

- Provided five laptops to five blind students coming from the Central of Vietnam, Quang Nam, Quang Tri and Nghe An provinces.
- Built one more recording cabinet to increase the audio materials production, in June.
- Produced 125 required academic reading books and 33 handouts for the blind students from April to September 2014; 100% of the materials are available in accessible E-Book format and 54 books are available in audio/DAISY format. Completed 172 book titles and 27 lecturers' handouts from October 2014 to March 2015. Totally, from April 2014 to March 2015, the project could produce 297 book titles and 60 handouts. All materials are published in our online library and available for all blind students who have registered with us.
- Conducted two online courses for 15 volunteers to produce accessible materials, in July and August.
- Moved the database of book files from 4shared.com file hosting service to our local server in order to prepare for the next-year up-gradation of the library to run on cross-platform and added with more handy/management features.
- Organised one course on business basics for 16 blind students and graduates in July. The course provided general knowledge about the business to the blind students, especially focusing on the internet environment with the aim to give the students ideas/ways to run an online business based on their professional knowledge. In addition, trainees were also introduced to some popular recruitment models.
- Organized a preparatory training for employment to nine blind students/graduates, in August. The course focused on three main skills, 1) self-analyzing with SWOT method (Strength, Weakness,

Opportunities and Threats), 2) preparing job application and 3) experimenting with the interview simulation.

- Conducted an orientation and mobility (O&M) training for eleven persons from the Sao Mai Center and the volunteers, in September. The objective of this training was to have more O&M volunteer assistance to help blind students and the employees' on-site mobility.
- Initiated the process of getting permission from the RBI, Philippines and receiving the video clip on how to teach Math to blind students, in order to localize the same into Vietnamese. We have already finished the translation of the English script and conversations but still waiting for RBI support in translating those Pilipino conversations into English.
- Started working with the HCM Saved Children with Disabilities Association to legally have Sao Mai Center provide the vocational training and job placement related activities. Analyzing and designing the online career system to be ready in November 2014.
- Organised two short trainings for 22 volunteers to join our materials production team. The first training was conducted at Sao Mai Center and the second one was conducted at the University of Social Sciences & Humanities (USSH). Sao Mai materials production team trained these volunteers on basic skills and techniques to produce the accessible eBooks for the blind such as using Vietnamese OCR software to scan and recognizing the text, editing and compiling to the EBook format. They were also shown how to collaborate with other volunteers and our core team for troubleshoot.
- Organised one event for volunteers based in HCM before Tet holiday in February to exchange their ideas with the aim to help them better understand about their contributions as well as a motivational recognition for their voluntary work. Volunteers were given a chance to see direct beneficiaries who are blind and hear them talk about the important contributions.
- Completed transferring of 1720 book titles and handouts to new server, as we had started last year to upgrade our online system with the aim to better serve the users and interact effectively with other partners to share the information. We are expecting to finish the whole process by June 2015.
- Working with Danang and Hanoi job placement centers to bring their attention to employment opportunities for the blind and establish further collaboration with them with our online career management system, especially with interested job posts.
- Organised two job workshops, one in Hanoi and one in HCM for 110 participants in collaboration with our partner organizations including Hoang Kiem Blind Association, Diem Tua Center, Uy Linh



Psychology Group and VBA. These two workshops discussed the challenges the blind students are facing to find jobs and what the recruiters/employers think about them.

- Working with the Vietnam Computer Institute and signed collaboration agreement to have Sao Mai Center do the preparation for employment of all visually impaired candidates for their call centers.
- Completed the online career management system in March 2015 and going to conduct one small workshop in May 2015 together with the Vietnam Computer Institute to introduce this system to blind students and media. Through this, we can spread the words to potential recruiters to promote the employment opportunities for the blind.
- The following related materials were also prepared: The lesson plans for: Logical Thinking, SWOT analysis, Internet business basics and online accessible e-book production.



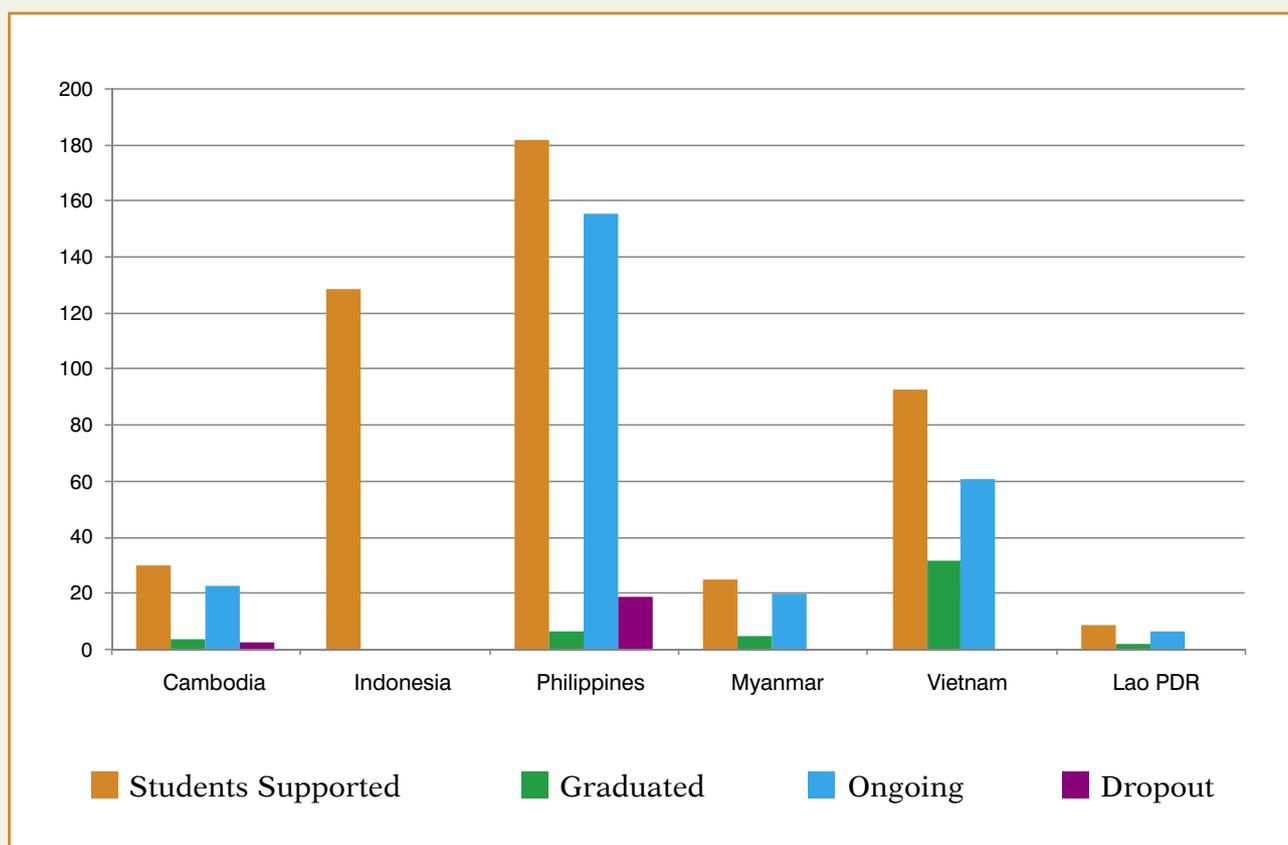
The past project year is the first that the Lao PDR has been involved in the higher education project. As anticipated at the outset, progress has been limited and slower than we have experienced in the other member countries of the higher education network. Often government rules and regulations make accomplishment of even the most basic steps in building inclusiveness within existing universities, painfully slow and time consuming.

Following the initial training in Thailand of 9 of the 10 blind students in the effective use of technology as a study tool, a netbook computer loan program has been established with the Lao Association of the Blind. Additionally a system for the production of braille textbooks and other learning materials for blind university students have been established and is moving forward at a reasonable, but less than optimal pace. Much more attention needs to be focused in the year ahead on reaching out to a number of universities that currently make it difficult even for the most qualified blind students to secure admission. We are working closely with the Inclusive Education Center of the Ministry of Education and Sports to facilitate a more open dialogue with all major universities and are guardedly optimistic that progress can be achieved.

## 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 2014-15:

S.No.	Country	Students Supported	Graduated	Presently Studying	Dropout
1	Cambodia	30	4	23	3
2	Indonesia	129	will be available in September 2015		
3	Philippines	182	7	156	19
4	Myanmar	25	5	20	0
5	Vietnam	93	32	61	0
6	Lao PDR	9	2	7	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>468</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>22</b>



# Students Speak.....

## SENG Vandy (Cambodia)



SENG Vandy, male, 24 years old was born in Banteay meanchey province, in north-west part of Cambodia. Vandy lost his father when he was 7 months old. He stopped studying from public school in grade 2 because he accidentally injured his eyes and at the age of 8, he became totally blind.

In 2001, Vandy started to learn in Krousar Thmey (KT) school for blind or deaf in Siem Reap province after he got information from Mrs. Phalla NEANG, who conducted home visit to meet him and his mother. During study in KT school, Vandy also learnt music, computer and English. He got very good result in study since grade 3 until grade 12 and ranked number 1 in the final examinations.

In 2013, he finished high school successfully and started to pursue higher education at Angkor University (in Siem Reap province) with Business Administration as his major. Besides, he also studied English course at Pannasastra University of Cambodia. Every weekday, after university, Vandy taught English to his friends one hour a day.

He is happy to have studied in KT and to go further to university. *"I am happy and would like to thank Krousar Thmey and donors for helping me to have opportunity to study as other people"*, said Vandy. In future, he wants to be a leader of an organization which works toward providing education, skills and jobs to people with disability.

## Dendi Arifianto (Indonesia)



Dendi Arifianto, called "Dendi" is currently studying in Brawijaya University in Malang, East Java, majoring in "law". Dendi became blind when he was in third semester in his university. He was in such a difficult situation for almost one year as the condition of becoming newly blind was not easy. Fortunately he heard that the university where he was studying established a service center for students with disability and decided to approach them to know how a blind student like him could continue his study. For Dendi, learning how to read and write Braille was very challenging and with the support of his friends, Dendi learnt how to use talking

computer to enhance his learning experience.

Dendi was one of the participants of the orientation meeting held in October 2014 and he was very glad having the opportunity to meet and discuss with other university blind students who came from other parts of the country. The most interesting thing on his trip to Jakarta was that it was the first time he travelled alone after becoming a blind person. He proudly told the participants that travelling alone – after becoming blind – helped him develop self-confidence and Dendi's dream is to become a lawyer,

having his own law firm and providing advocacy services for people with disability who suffer from discrimination.

### **Christopher N. Planas, 1st Year B.S. Computer Science, STI, Cubao (Philippines)**

As a visually impaired student, I am so thankful to ICEVI and the Resources for the Blind (RBI) because they assisted me to use gadgets like netbook. Through this netbook, I was able to save my teachers' lessons and review them independently anytime I wanted. I also had opportunities to use the internet for my research and assignments. Lastly, netbook served as my personal electronic notebook.

This project of ICEVI and RBI is such a brilliant one because it doesn't only open our minds that there are still ways to sustain our studies, but it also teaches us the value of being responsible and accountable on the things that are entrusted to us. It is really a big help for the less fortunate visually impaired students.

I pray and hope that this program will continue so that the college life of the visually impaired students would become easier and accessible.

### **Đinh Việt Anh (Vietnam)**



Born in 1978, the little Đinh Việt Anh was growing up as normally as any other children. However, when she was 3, her parents discovered that she had macular degeneration. All the attempts of Việt Anh's family could only help her maintain her good vision until she was 15, which was enough for her to complete her education at grade 9. Since then, she was experiencing visual impairment and it is unbelievable that 14 years later, that girl possessed two bachelor's degrees: BA of Social Management at Hanoi University of Social Sciences and Humanities (2000 - 2004) and BA of English at Hanoi Open University (2002 - 2007). Seven years later, Việt Anh successfully defended her master thesis majored in administrative management at National Academy of Public Administration (2014).

Now she is a standing member of the Vietnam Blind Association, editor in chief of *Đời Mới* Magazine, head of the Association's Section for Women and Children and also the holder of some other positions. Her proficiency in both English and Japanese has brought her chances to participate in a lot of international special courses and conferences for the disabled.

Đinh Việt Anh, who always lives by the motto "Words mean nothing without actions," fully embodies the virtue of Vietnamese women. Her success both at work and in family life has made her a fine example to not only the disabled but also every woman.

## Next cycle of the Higher Education project

While these results are gratifying, all involved with this initiative are acutely aware of the many remaining challenges that need and will be addressed by the next phase of this project between 2015 and 2018. During the partners meeting in Bangkok in October 2014, the partners from the implementing countries resolved the following strategies for the 2015–2018 project phase:

- Continued attention to the existing programme to increase the enrolment of students in higher education institutions and providing them necessary IT skills to enhance their performance.
- Attention to advocacy and public policy with universities and with the key government agencies.
- Preparing students for admission into a variety of courses in higher education institutions and Universities instead of selecting conventional courses in humanities.
- Attention to better preparing higher education students for the world of work with increased numbers gainfully employed in jobs commensurate with their education.

## CONTACT DETAILS

### **Lord Low of Dalston**

*President, ICEVI*

Royal National Institute of  
Blind People  
105 Judd Street  
London WC1H9NE  
UNITED KINGDOM  
E-mail: [colin.low@rnib.org.uk](mailto:colin.low@rnib.org.uk)

### **Lawrence F. Campbell**

*President Emeritus, ICEVI*

& Project Director  
1, Center Street  
Rockland  
Maine 04841  
USA  
E-mail: [larry.icevi@gmail.com](mailto:larry.icevi@gmail.com)

### **M.N.G. Mani**

*CEO, ICEVI*

# 5030, 3rd Floor  
Sreevatsa Centre  
G.N. Mills Post  
Coimbatore 641 029  
Tamil Nadu, INDIA  
E-mail: [sgicevi@vsnl.net](mailto:sgicevi@vsnl.net)

## PROJECT PARTNERS

### **CAMBODIA**

**Krousar Thmey**

4 Street 257  
Kampuchea Krom  
Phnom Penh  
E-mail: [direction@krousar-thmey.org](mailto:direction@krousar-thmey.org)

### **INDONESIA**

**Pertuni (The Indonesian Blind Association)**

P.O.Box 386, Jalan Raya Bogor, Km.19  
Ruko Blok Q No. 13-L  
RT01 Rw04, Kramat Jati,  
East Jakarta  
E-mail: [aria.indrawati@gmail.com](mailto:aria.indrawati@gmail.com)

### **VIETNAM**

**Sao Mai Vocational & Assistive Technology  
Center for the Blind**

74/17 Bui Quang La St., Ward 12,  
Go Vap Dist., HCM  
E-mail: [danghoaiphuc@gmail.com](mailto:danghoaiphuc@gmail.com)

### **MYANMAR**

**Myanmar National Association  
of the Blind (MNAB)**

165, Baho Road  
Mayangone Township  
Yangon  
E-mail: [mnabmyanmar@gmail.com](mailto:mnabmyanmar@gmail.com)

### **PHILIPPINES**

**Resources for the Blind**

P.O. Box 1831  
Manila 1099  
E-mail: [randy@blind.org.ph](mailto:randy@blind.org.ph)

### **LAO PDR**

**Lao Association of the Blind**

217/05 02 HongkaikooSt  
Hongkaikoo Vientiane Cap.,  
Vientiane Cap  
E-mail: [lab.laos@yahoo.com](mailto:lab.laos@yahoo.com)