

II Promoting Mutual understanding and Exchange

1. Raise awareness and public information

To realize a cohesive society as set out in the “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities”, it is necessary to spread awareness among people and promote the understanding regarding disabilities and persons with disabilities. At the same time, it is important to actively promote enlightenment and publicity activities in order to get the cooperation by the citizens with regard to considerations for persons with disabilities.

Based on the “Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities”, to enhance the awareness and understanding regarding disabilities and persons with disabilities among the citizens, and to enhance the level of awareness among persons with disabilities about social participation, various activities are held especially in the “Week of Persons with Disabilities” (Dec. 3 – 9) throughout the country. Thus enlightenment and publicity activities are being executed to promote the awareness.

The government has promoted education on welfare, and Joint Activities and Learning of the children with and without disabilities as part of school education. Moreover, it has also promoted public understanding on persons with disabilities through enlightenment and publicity activities for local residents, and/or public service employees, and through promoting volunteer activities.

(Main measures taken)

- In the new 5-year plan, the level of knowledge about the cohesive society is set at 50%, the same level as for the whole generation, as enlightenment and publicity for youths who will take the lead in the future is important.
- “Project to Promote Understanding regarding Persons with Disabilities” were implemented that collect and give award to “Composition on the Experience that Widened the Circle of Hearts” that collect practical experience of communicating with persons with disabilities from elementary and junior high school students countrywide and “Poster for the Week of Persons with Disabilities”. And the best selected composition and posters were put together and were distributed among the elementary, junior high and high schools throughout the country to promote understanding by the citizens about persons with disabilities.
- In fiscal year 2007, among the activities during the “Week of Persons with Disabilities”, a “Convention regarding Week of Persons with Disabilities” was held in Tokyo on December 6th, in the presence of Imperial Highness, celebrating the mid-term of “The Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012)”. Persons/organizations of merit involved with affairs of the persons with disabilities, were honored at the function. Symposium regarding support activities for the persons with disabilities by Japan in Asia Pacific, and “Seminar regarding week of persons with disabilities” in which related organizations took turns to conduct with regard to various topics about the persons with disabilities, were held.



Prime Minister, Fukuda giving greetings in presence of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince



Awards given by Prime Minister

- In Osaka, a symposium which was hosted jointly by Cabinet Office, business circle, and private organizations, “Cohesive Society - deepening communication between the persons with disabilities and the society and the community” was held. 2 sessions were held exchanging the thoughts on the challenges for everyone to live equally in the community irrespective of having any disabilities or not.
- In the Miyagi prefecture, “Universal Sports Festa 2007” was held to introduce sports that can be enjoyed together with the persons with disabilities. And panel exhibitions were held exhibiting the “Poster for the Week of Persons with Disabilities” in 6 major cities (Tokyo, Miyagi, Nagano, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Fukuoka).
- Throughout “Month of Promoting Employment of Persons with Disabilities” (from September 1-30), “Activity for Promoting Mental Health Welfare” (from October 22-28), and “Week of Human Rights” (from December 4-10), enlightenment and publicity activities were held to enhance understanding regarding persons with disabilities.
- “Campaign Project regarding Week of Persons with Disabilities in fiscal year 2007” homepage that was set up with the corporation with International Disabled People’s Year Memorial Nice Heart Foundation registers activities held countrywide during “Week of Persons with Disabilities”. The number of activities registered on the homepage exceeded 380.
- In order for everyone including the persons with disabilities to be able to live safe and a comfortable life, and from the perspective of having a barrier free society, awards from Prime Minister were given to most prominent and creditable personalities and organizations promoting barrier free.
- In fiscal year 2007, Young Core Leaders of Civil Society Groups Development Program was held in order to develop young core leaders who play the main roles of the social activities aiming at building a "Cohesive Society." Regarding the fields relating to the activities for people with disabilities, 9 Japanese youths were sent to New Zealand, as well as 13 youths were invited from Sweden, New Zealand and the UK.

2 International Cooperation

One of the basic policies of Official Development Assistance the Government of Japan is assurance of fairness, including consideration for persons with disabilities. In this regard, Japan provides both grant aid for construction of rehabilitation facilities and vocational training facilities for persons with disabilities, and also carries out wide-ranging technical cooperation such as invitation of personnel from developing countries and dispatching experts and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers.

Japan signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in September 2007, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2006.

(Main measures taken)

- Japan has implemented grant aid projects such as building rehabilitation centers and vocational training centers, and providing mini buses for persons with disabilities. In fiscal year 2007, Japan has implemented 48 disability-related projects by the scheme named Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Human Security Projects assisting NGOs, educational institutes, local government authorities.
- Japan has implemented wide-ranged technical cooperation via Japan International Cooperation Agency, such as invitation of personnel from developing countries for training and dispatching experts. Regarding the technical cooperation project, in fiscal year 2007, Kirghiz “Inclusion of the Disabled People into the Society” and Thai “Asia Pacific Center for on Disability (Phase 2)” were newly started.
- 4 disabilities-related projects received support from the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects in fiscal year 2007.
- To the UN Voluntary Fund on Disability, consistent contribution has being made. In fiscal year 2007, approximately 500,000 US dollars were contributed. In the Asia Pacific Region, Japan has supported the activities of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), through Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund(JECF), contributing approximately 180,000 US dollars in 2007.
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by consensus at the Plenary Meeting of the 61st UN General Assembly in December 2006. Japan signed the Convention in September 2007. The Convention entered into force on 3 May 2008. With a view to the earliest possible conclusion of the Convention, necessary arrangements will be made in relevant laws and regulations.

Chart 6 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Contents

Preamble	Article 26 - Habilitation and rehabilitation
Article 1 - Purpose	Article 27 - Work and employment
Article 2 - Definitions	Article 28 - Adequate standard of living and social protection
Article 3 - General principles	Article 29 - Participation in political and public life
Article 4 - General obligations	Article 30 - Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
Article 5 - Equality and non-discrimination	Article 31 - Statistics and data collection
Article 6 - Women with disabilities	Article 32 - International cooperation
Article 7 - Children with disabilities	Article 33 - National implementation and monitoring
Article 8 - Awareness-raising	Article 34 - Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Article 9 - Accessibility	Article 35 - Reports by States Parties
Article 10 - Right to life	Article 36 - Consideration of reports
Article 11 - Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies	Article 37 - Cooperation between States Parties and the Committee
Article 12 - Equal recognition before the law	Article 38 - Relationship of the Committee with other bodies
Article 13 - Access to justice	Article 39 - Report of the Committee
Article 14 - Liberty and security of person	Article 40 - Conference of States Parties
Article 15 - Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	Article 41 - Depositary
Article 16 - Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse	Article 42 - Signature
Article 17 - Protecting the integrity of the person	Article 43 - Consent to be bound
Article 18 - Liberty of movement and nationality	Article 44 - Regional integration organizations
Article 19 - Living independently and being included in the community	Article 45 - Entry into force
Article 20 - Personal mobility	Article 46 - Reservations
Article 21 - Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information	Article 47 - Amendments
Article 22 - Respect for privacy	Article 48 - Denunciation
Article 23 - Respect for home and the family	Article 49 - Accessible format
Article 24 - Education	Article 50 - Authentic texts
Article 25 - Health	

- In September 2007, “High Level Convention by government officials on the Midterm Evaluation of Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012)” was held in Bangkok, Thailand. To support the implementation of “Biwako Millennium Framework” from 2008-2012, “Biwako Plus Five”, the guideline for action, was adopted.