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Introduction

1. Preface

The National Institute of Special Education (NISE), as one of the centers for cooperation with the Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID), has sponsored the “APEID Seminar on Special Education” since 1981. However since fiscal 2002, the Seminar has been held under the title of “Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education” jointly by the NISE and the Japan UNESCO Committee. The current seminar in FY2003 is the second under this title, and the 23rd international seminar in the aggregate since the 1st APEID Seminar on Special Education was held.

2. This Year's Seminar

The 23rd Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education was held from October 26 to 31, 2003 at the NISE under the theme “Educational Support for Children with Disabilities and the Utilization of ICT”. As the first trial, in addition to reports by delegates from participating countries, opportunities for research presentations were created through poster sessions and presenters from inside and outside Japan were invited. Furthermore, paralleling the research presentations and country reports, businesses developing or marketing educational and welfare equipment for the disabled displayed their equipments.

Delegates from thirteen countries, Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea and Sri Lanka and Thailand were invited to the seminar on the nominations of a UNESCO committee comprised of representatives from each country and one Japanese delegate. In addition to many NISE staff, there were seven foreign poster presenters and five other foreign participants, fourteen poster presenters and nineteen other participants from Japan. The overview of the Seminar is reported as follows.

3. Seminar Overview

1) Theme

“Educational Support for Children with Disabilities and the Utilization of ICT”

At the beginning, a draft was examined to clarify the definition of “Educational Support for Disabled Children by Effectively Utilizing ICT and Assistive Technology” with the hope that it would stimulate discussion by participants, not only on the practical application of so-called high-technology in education for disabled children, but the application of simple technologies as well. However, it soon became apparent that consensus on assistive technology between persons in the field of special education would be difficult. Whereas, there was a possibility that people might limit its interpretation to the practical application of the most-up-to-date technology if only the wording “effective utilization of ICT” was used. Moreover, since practical application of the most-up-to-date technology does not always permeate into special education in Asian and Pacific

nations, and faced with the prospect of the seminar becoming one-sided to some nations to be invited, the above-mentioned expression was adopted. By including the definition in a written request for reporters from each country, documentation and by inviting research presentations for poster sessions, we endeavored to create a seminar true to the original objective.

2) Sponsors

National Institute of Special Education (NISE)
Japan UNESCO Committee

3) Schedule and Location

Schedule: October 26 to 31, 2003

October 26 (Sun.): Arrival of overseas delegates

October 27 (Mon.): Opening ceremony, keynote lecture, poster sessions, equipment display

October 28 (Tue.): Country reports, equipment display

October 29 (Wed.): Country reports, general discussion, closing ceremony

October 30 (Thu.): Institutional visit (National Institute of Special Education, National Kurihama School for Children with Disabilities)

October 31 (Fri.): Departure of overseas delegates

Location: National Institute of Special Education

4) Keynote Lecture

In the morning of October 27 following the opening ceremony, Dr. Takuro Hatakeyama, professor of the Faculty of Care and Rehabilitation of the Seijo University, gave a keynote lecture on the theme "Effective Utilization of Assistive Equipment for the Disabled". Details on the lecture will be shown later. Professor Hatakeyama discussed in detail the importance of effectively utilizing assistive equipment for the disabled through various concrete examples and practical experience. Many in the audience were deeply impressed by his presentation.

5) Research Presentations Through Poster Sessions

In the afternoon of October 27, research presentations were conducted through poster sessions.

As mentioned earlier, we invited the public from inside and outside Japan, including researchers registered in research and educational institutions in the field of special education and practicing educators. However, despite a total twenty-nine applications - nineteen domestically including five NISE staff and ten overseas - three cancelled by the appointed day. On the other hand, presentations were also given and open-to-all by the delegates Mr. Ishaque Bhuiyan from Bangladesh and Mr. Diwakar Awasthi from Nepal, bringing the total number to twenty-eight. The names and themes of each presenter are listed in a separate table. All presentations were given entirely in English.

6) Country Reports

All day October 28 and in the morning of 29 October, country reports were made by fourteen delegates from the participating countries including Japan. The reports discussed the policy and measures concerning information and communication technology of each country, the policy and current state of introduction into educational fields, and the current state and prospects of effective utilization of ICT in education for the disabled children. The following country reports were presented.

Australia: Dr. Martyn Forrest

Secretary, Tasmanian Department of Education

Bangladesh: Mr. Ishaque Bhuiyan

Managing Director (Joint Secretary), National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons, Ministry of Social Welfare

China: Ms. Chen Yunying

Director, Special Education Division, China National Institute for Education Research

India: Dr. Janak Verma

Assistance professor, D.E.G..S.N., National Council of Educational Research and Training

Indonesia: Mr. Mudjito

Director of Special Education, Directorate-General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of National Education

Japan: Dr. Nakamura Hitoshi

Director, Department of Educational and Information Technology, The National Institute of Special Education

Malaysia: Mr. Kamaruzaman bin Mahayiddin

Assistant Director, Information and Communication Technology and SMART School for Special Education Unit

Nepal: Mr. Diwakar Awasthi

Deputy Director (Sectional Chief), Special Education Section, Department of Education Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

New Zealand: Mr. Cindy Diane Stewart

Occupational Therapist/Technology Co-ordinator, Special Education, Ministry of Education, Whangarei

Pakistan: Ms. Musarrat Abid

Deputy Director, National Institute of Special Education, Directorate General of Special Education, M/o Women Development, Social Welfare & Special education, Islamabad

Philippines: Mr. Romeo M. Mina

Education Program Specialist, II Special Education Division, Bureau of Elementary Education

Korea: Ms. Soo-kyoung AN

Educational Researcher, Korea Institute for Special Education (KISE)

Sri Lanka: Mr. Hetti Pathirage Nimal Lakshman

Deputy Director of Education, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Education and

Cultural Affairs

Thailand: Ms. Puangmanee Chaiseree

Chief of Planning and Budgeting Group, Bureau of Special Education Administration, Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education

7) Summary Discussion

In the afternoon of October 29, a general discussion was made based on the country reports and presentations through poster sessions and summarized by the chairperson.

According to the country reports, major differences were apparent among countries in policy and measures concerning ICT, the policy and the current state of introduction into educational fields, and the current state and prospects of effective utilization of ICT in education for the disabled children. Nevertheless, everyone agreed that effective utilization of ICT could make its way into education for disabled children. Consequently, in the general discussion, with respect to the establishment of measures at the policy level of and measures for introducing and promoting ICT into education for disabled children - in other words, various measures to secure funding - opinions and proposals not only by the delegates of participating countries but also the NISE staff and other participants were vividly expressed. Some of the opinions:

- Donation of computers by businesses and public organizations: Education does not always require the latest computers; secondhand computers are often enough
- To increase the number of users through universal design and lower cost
- To demonstrate and emphasize models that promote independence in disabled children by effectively utilizing ICT (However, some individuals responded saying that the continuous educational benefits are difficult to demonstrate if cost performance is emphasized, thus the dilemma that productivity should exceed funds invested in the case of severely disabled children.)
- To promote networking with NGOs

Furthermore, opinions on the feasibility of cooperation among participating nations and ways to realize the goals were also exchanged.

After the chairperson summarized the discussions, the Closing Ceremony was held.

8) Equipment Display

In the afternoon of October 27 and all day October 28 during the research presentations through poster sessions and country reports, businesses developing or marketing educational and welfare equipment for the disabled displayed their products.

9) Institutional Visits

In the morning of October 30, the delegates from the participating countries and other foreign participants visited the NISE and the National Kurihama School for Children with Disabilities. They visited and observed the Institute's exhibition room where various assistive devices through

effective utilization of information and electronic technology are on display as mentioned in the Japanese delegate's country report, and in the school, not only observed the facility and equipment, but also actual classes for infants and children in progress.

Nakamura Hitoshi

(Director, Department of Educational and Information Technology)

Seminar Participants

Delegates of Participating Countries

Australia

Dr. Martyn Forrest

Secretary,

Tasmanian Department of Education

Bangladesh

Mr. M. Ishaque Bhuiyan

Managing Director (Joint Secretary),

National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons (Ministry of Social Welfare)

China

Ms. YunYing Chen

Director of Special Education Division,

China National Institute for Education Research

India

Dr. Janak Verma

Reader,

D. E. G. S. N., National Council of Educational Research and Training, (NCERT)

Indonesia

Mr. Mudjito

Director,

Directorate of Special Education, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education,

Ministry of Education INDONESIA

Japan

Dr. Nakamura Hitoshi

Director, Department of Educational and Information Technology,

The National Institute of Special Education

Malaysia

Mr. Kamaruzaman bin Mahayiddin

Assistant Director,

Information and Communication Technology and Smart School for Special Education Unit,

Special Education Department, Ministry of Education MALAYSIA

Nepal

Mr. Diwakar Awasthi

Deputy Director (Section Chief),
Special Education Section, Department of Education NEPAL

New Zealand

Ms. Cindy Diane Stewart

Occupational Therapist/ Technology Co-ordinator,
Special Education, Ministry of Education NEW ZEALAND

Pakistan

Ms. Musarrat Abid

Deputy Director,
National Institute of Special Education, Directorate General of Special Education, M/o
Women Development, Social Welfare & Special Education, NISE, PAKISTAN

Philippines

Mr. Romeo M. Mina

Education Program Specialist II,
Special Education Division, Bureau of Elementary Education, Department of Education, PHILIPPINES

Republic of Korea

Ms. Soo-kyoung An

Educational Researcher,
Korea Institute for Special Education (KISE), KOREA

Sri Lanka

Mr. Hetti Pathirage Nimal Lakshman

Deputy Director of Education,
Ministry of Human Resources Development, Education and Cultural Affairs, Non-formal
and Special Education Branch, SRI LANKA

Thailand

Ms. Puangmanee Chaiseree

Chief of Planning and Budgeting Group,
Bureau of Special Education Administration, the Office of the Basic Education Commission,
the Ministry of Education, THAILAND

Schedule of the 23rd

Asia-Pacific International Seminar

Oct. 26 (Sun) Arrival in Japan

16:00 Check in Hotel Harbour Yokosuka

Oct. 27(Mon) Registration & Orientation, Opening Ceremony, Keynote Speech, Group Photograph, Poster Presentation & Equipment Exhibition and Welcome Party

8:20 Meeting at hotel lobby (NISE staff escort)

Leave hotel by bus

9:00 Arrive at NISE

9:00- 9:30 Registration & Orientation

1.Orientation

2.Further Information of Seminar Schedule

3.Registration

4.Others

10:00 -10:30 Opening Ceremony

1.Opening Address by Mr. Hosomura, Director General, NISE

2.Address by Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

10:30 -12:00 Keynote Speech by Dr. Takuro Hatakeyama, Professor, Seijoh University(invited)

Theme: “(theme to be announced)”

12:00-12:15 Group Photograph

12:15-13:30 Lunch

13:30-17:00 Poster Presentation & Equipment Exhibition

17:15-18:45 Welcome Party at NISE

18:55- Leave NISE by bus

19:35 Arrive at Hotel Harbour Yokosuka

Oct. 28 (Tue) Discussion

9:20 Leave hotel by bus

10:00 -12:00 Discussion

10:00-10:30 (Australia)

10:30-11:00 (Bangladesh)

11:00-11:30 (China)

11:30-12:00 (India)

12:00 -13:30

Lunch

13:30 -16:00

Discussion

13:30-14:00 (Indonesia)

14:00-14:30 (Japan)

14:30-15:00 (Malaysia)

15:00-15:30 Break 30 minutes

15:30-16:00 (Nepal)

16:00-16:30 (New Zealand)

16:30-17:00 (Pakistan)

17:10

Leave to hotel by bus

Oct. 29 (Wed) Discussion, General Discussion, Summary and Closing Ceremony

9:20

Leave hotel by bus

10:00

Arrive at NISE

10:00-12:00

Discussion

10:00-10:30 (Philippines)

10:30-11:00 (Republic of Korea)

11:00-11:30 (Sri Lanka)

11:30-12:00 (Thailand)

12:00-13:30

Lunch

13:30-15:30

General Discussion

15:30-16:00

Summary

16:00-16:15 Closing Ceremony
16:25 Leave to hotel by bus

Oct. 30 (Thu) Study Visit & Transfer to Shinagawa

9:40- Leave hotel by bus
10:00 Arrive at NISE
10:00-12:00 Study Visit
National Institute of Special Education
National Kurihama School for Children with Disabilities

12:00-13:00 Lunch
13:10 Leave to Shinagawa by bus
15:10 Arrive at Shinagawa Prince Hotel

Oct. 31 (Fri) Leave Japan

Check out
Move to Narita Airport