



**ភាពជាដៃគូអប់រំនៃអង្គការក្រៅរដ្ឋាភិបាល**  
**NGO EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP**

**Report on:**

**THE 8<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL FORUM ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**  
**“Increase in Investment in Building Capacities of Teachers and School Management regarding Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities”**



Wednesday, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the waxing moon, to Thursday, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the waning moon, of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month, in the Year of Pig, EKASAKA, BC. 2563

Phnom Penh Capital, December 11-12, 2019

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## ACRONYM

AAR Japan	Association for Aid and Relief, Japan
CDPO	Cambodian Disabled People's Organization
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Disability Action Council
DOE	District Office of Education
EMIS	Education Management Information System
IE	Inclusive Education
KPF	Komar Pikar Foundation
MoEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoLVT	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
MoSVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NFIE	National Forum on Inclusive Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NISE	National Institute of Special Education
POE	Provincial Office of Education
RSO	Rabbit School Organization
SED	Special Education Department
SWD	Students with Disabilities
TTD	Teacher Training Department
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WGED	Working Group on Education and Disabilities

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The 8<sup>th</sup> National Forum on Inclusive Education under the topic “Increase in Investment in Building Capacities of Teachers and School Management regarding Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities” was held on December 11-12, 2019, at the Administrative Building (First Floor) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, under the presidency of His Excellency CHEA Cheat, the Undersecretary of State of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the highly-esteemed representative of His Excellency the Academician-General; Mr. THONG Ritthy, the Director of Special Education Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Mrs. NEANG Phalla, the Director of Institute of Special Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Ms. Natascha Paddison, Representative of UNICEF Cambodia, with participation of representatives of partnership organizations and representative of Capital-Provincial Departments of Education, Youth and Sports. This forum is organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports without cooperation and sponsors from NGO Education Partnership (NEP), UNICEF, EU, USAID and Cambodian Disabled People’s Organization.

Agenda of this Forum includes (1) Welcome Speech and Report on Work Progress of Special Education, (2) Speech by Mr. Seng Hong, the Executive Director of the NGO Education Partnership, (3) Speech from Representative of UNICEF, (4) Speech by His Excellency CHEA Cheat, (5) Presentation about Update of Policy on Inclusive Education and Action Plan of Inclusive Education, (6) Presentation on Experiences Sharing by many stakeholders, (7) Roundtable Discussion, and (8) Group Discussion.

### 1.1 Welcome Speech and Report on Work Progress of Special Education

To begin with, Mr. THONG Ritthy, the Director of Special Education Department, made a welcome speech and give a report on work progress of special education so far.

In order to make teaching a quality, equity and inclusive work, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, in cooperation with development partners, created and implemented the Inclusive Education for Lifelong Learning in order to develop physical fitness, skill and conduct to become good citizens and live together harmoniously in the society with purpose to response to the policy and the 4<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goals.

Regarding the implementation so far, we have seen that there were 64,700 students with all kinds of disabilities, 20,029 females, at all educational levels; there were 28 staff members in total, 9 females; there were 4 contract officers; there were 39 staff members, 7 females, at the National Institute of Special Education; there were 159 staff members in total, 74 females, at the five schools for special education; there were 702 blind and deaf

students in total, 22 females, at the five schools for special education for the school year 2018-2019; 18 blind and deaf students, 9 females, equivalent to 100% passed the High School Examination for the school year 2018-2019; and 9 blind and deaf students, 2 females, at the High School for Special Education, were admitted to higher education institution.

In the meanwhile, the Special Education Department issued the Policy on Inclusive Education in June 2018, implemented the Plan of Action of Inclusive Education for 2019-2023 in April 2019, held a meeting on request for allowance for teachers of students with disabilities with participation of the Ministry of Civil Service, Ministry of Economy and Finance on October 16, 2018; made a request for budget of 800.000 riels per month, from January to December 2019, as additional salary for 169 framework officers serving at the National Institute for Special Education and the five High Schools for Special Education; made a request for budget of 800,000 riels per month, from January to December 2019, for 5 contract officers serving at the National Institute for Special Education and the five High School for Special Education, with approval from *Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN*; have prepared scholarship budget for 702 students of the five High Schools for Special Education, where each student has received an amount of 200,000 riels per month, have filed documents of inclusive education for children with disabilities; have prepared help documents for identification and referral service for children with disabilities; has form a Directive on System of Identification and Referral Service for Children with Disabilities; has prepared *Prakas* No. 1687 MoEYS.P. on Management and Implementation of Special Education Program at the Public Institute for Education and Integrated Class for mute, deaf, blind and intellectual disabled students.

Regarding staff affairs, the Special Education Department has integrated 47 teachers, 22 females, of blind, mute and deaf students of Krousar Thmey Organization into state framework in accordance with *Prakas* No. 1306 MoEYS.P., dated April 22, 2011, and integrated 21 teachers, 7 females, of blind, mute and deaf students of Five High Schools for Special Education into state framework in accordance with *Prakas* No. 1842 MoEYS.P., dated November 19, 2018. In the meantime, the Department has arranged and appointed leadership for the National Institute for Special Education, its offices and departments, and has appointed Vice Principals of the Five High Schools for Special Education.

In relation to capacity building, the Special Education Department has organized Training on Teaching Methodology for Blind, Mute and Deaf Students, for 125 teachers, 76 females, for a period of five weeks in 2018, and has recruited 20 teachers for special education, 17 females, to be trained at the National Institute for Special Education in 2019;

have provided training to focal teachers of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of capital-provincial level and the Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sports within the framework of inclusive education at primary school in 7 capital-provinces with budget sponsored by partnership organization, UNICEF.

In order for the education of children with disabilities to get success, to be proudly achieved and to be smooth, we have work mechanism and organization structure according to hierarchy, which we have established Disability Action Council and Working Group on Children with Disabilities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports at Capital-Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sport; City-District-Khan Office of Education, Youth and Sports and Action Group on Children with Disabilities at School Level. We have Policy on Inclusive Education and Action Plan for 2019-2023 in order to indicate clear direction for giving assistance to stakeholders in system reforms and also to act as road maps for project implementation. We have received support from a number of national and international organization, such as UNICEF, AAR Japan, CRS and various other development partners. We have received motivation and encouragement from students' parents and good support from communities. We have documents for giving Training on Inclusive Education for teachers, we have human resources at national and provincial levels for program implementation; in particular, we have teachers and students who understand about disabilities and pay attentions on students with disabilities. The Special Education Department plays an important role in coordination with relevant development partners.

Though we have received lot of supports and sponsors, we have still faced some difficulties, including budget have not responded to actual need, children with serious disabilities have been outside the school and have not received treatment and rehabilitation services yet. There has been a lack of teachers specialized in special education for teaching children with disabilities at public institutions; there has been a lack of residential building for blind, mute and deaf students at the five high schools; our human resources have not responded to our demands yet, and they were yet to have experiences according to various types of disabilities. Poverty in families of children with disabilities has prevented them from sending their kids and children with various difficulties to school. Dissemination of information and understanding about disability in the community has not yet been widespread. Cooperation between development partnership organization and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is still limited. Organization of integrated class for mute, deaf, blind and intellectual disabled students has not yet been widespread throughout the country, and provision of rehabilitation services has not responded to the needs of children with disabilities yet.



Regarding plan for further action, the Special Education Department plans to prepare a budget package for learning and teaching materials, food, transportation fee, process of the five schools and high schools for special education for the following semester in 2020, and prepare budget package for learning and teaching processes at the Five High School for Special Education and for transfer to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the future. We also have plan to prepare teachers specialized in special education, which is to teach children with disabilities, at all school levels for the Five High School for Special Education; to include the allowance for special duty of 800,000 riels into a Sub-Decree on Reform of Salary of Civil Servant, and prepare a budget plan for repairing school buildings and purchasing office stationery at the Five High Schools for Special Education as operational budget at an amount of 60 million riels per high school. We will implement the plans as stated in the Policy on Inclusive Education and its Action Plan, develop capacity of national and provincial officers on inclusive education, continue strengthening and expanding the implementation of inclusive education program for children with disabilities throughout the country, monitor targeted districts-provinces and those who are implementing the inclusive education program for children with disabilities, continue producing clear statistics of children with disabilities in all capitals-provinces and continue building relationship with development partners in order to ensure the sustainability and quality of education.

In the meantime, we would like to make some suggestions, including we would like to request for more PB budget for capacity building at basic level of district-Khan, request the development partner to help sponsor and support activities and plans set out by the Ministry, request all development partners who implement the educational program for children with disabilities to give assistance in term of budget for building capacities of teachers in city-district-Khan which have not been reached yet and for spreading dissemination to communities and guardians of children with disabilities as well as providing assistive devices.

Finally, inclusive education for children with disabilities has been improved continuously thanks to efforts of officers at all levels and supports in term of budget from national and international organization. From now on, all children with difficulties, especially children with disabilities will receive education with equity, quality and high effectiveness.

## **1.2 Speech from Mr. SENG HONG, the Executive Director of NGO Education Partnership**

At first, Mr. SENG Hong expressed his congratulations to the efforts of the government, especially the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, who has coordinated

and set out important directions into practice in 2020-2030 which were stated in the fourth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals and appeared in the Action Plan for 2019-2023 as well as various other policies and action plans which gave clear assurance for trend of efforts of the government which to do everything in order for all citizens to receive quality education, such as new ideas and goals in relation to Lifelong Learning, and so on. In the meantime, NEP, as a civil society organization, has actively contributed to various initiations within the frameworks, polities and projects which have been implemented and prepared so far. NEP has coordinated the formation of one working group called “Working Group on Education and Disabilities” with colleagues from more than 30 organizations. As for the organization of this forum, in order to support the Department of Inclusive Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, this civil society working group has contributed to discussion and establishment the trend of this forum. NEP has also made technical and financial contributions to coordinating works in order to enable the process of this forum. In the meantime, in the space of civil society organization and under coordination of work group for sub-factor, inclusive education, this working group has also arranged order of important meetings to be held among the group in order to conduct inspection on how efforts of the group could made further contributions with aim to coordinate all policies and important programs of the government in relation to the goal of Education For All to be highly effective. Moreover, NEP’s working group has also held deep discussions regarding setting out a future goal to act as a road map of the civil society organization on what changes they should make in order for the inputs from the civil society to contribute more initiatives and high benefits for development of educational sector in Cambodia. However, we have seen all efforts happened together at the same time, including efforts from stakeholders of public institutions, civil society organization and development partners. We have seen many interventions in relation to policy and a number of activities in order for the effectiveness of the Education for All, especially works in relation to inclusive education. However, in order to improve these works to be highly influential and effective, we might have to make some additional interventions in order to promote the preparatory and preventive initiations; therefore, we might need additional participation from school, health educational center or the Ministry of Health at any level; moreover, as the topic for today, it is very important that teachers at schools, from early childhood education until high school should have an appropriate capacity for carrying out pre-assessment and giving assistances with aim to promote the intervention of this inclusive education to be universal and widespread in all schools.

Finally, Mr. SENG Hong expressed his congratulations to some figured which had been mentioned by the Director of Special Education Department which there was a large number of persons with disabilities, and he thought that if we can enlarge this figure further, and if they had received high quality education with additional coordination from all parties, the process of human resource development in Cambodia would be improved.

### **1.3 Speech from Representative of UNICEF**

At first she expressed her thanks to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, NGO Education Partnership and leadership for bringing together this important annual dialogue on inclusive education. She also mentioned that this year, we could see a constant progress on inclusive education for children with disabilities through increase in investment in building capacity of school management and teachers. This was an important activity of all of us in supporting the delivery of inclusive education and



services to children with disabilities in Cambodia. After that, she acknowledged the great efforts and achievements of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in accruing the access to education for children with disabilities. Recently, she just went over the management and operation of Cambodian Five Special Schools, previously operated by the NGO Krousar Thmey, where she saw the running of these schools and building of future teachers, so that there would be more teachers with expertise in assisting visually and hearing in the special education. UNICEF approach pleased to support this important work; we are looking forwards to continuing supporting this National Institute for Special Education and its mission. Moreover, she also acknowledged the Ministry's efforts in developing the Policy on Inclusive Education and various documents, which established a clear plan for great works. These achievements were all important for people with disabilities in Cambodia, where 9.5% of Cambodian population experienced at least one form of disabilities and estimated 15% of children had an impairment in 2009. Children with disabilities in Cambodia were 2 times more likely to be out of school. Many children with disabilities in Cambodia remained in business cycle and deprivation. Now, as you may have agreed, the inclusion of inclusive education in lesson plan was an important and essential step. However, work did not stop here. An important priority would be functioning inclusive and special educational system in the development of professional competency and educated; so that they were able to provide better quality services to children with disabilities. At UNICEF, we are committed to provide technical supports to the Ministry through the Special Education Department and the Nation Institute for Special Education to deepen the knowledge and skill of educated person and include them in special education over three Administrative Service Trainings. We still hope that the UNICEF's contribution to building professional teachers in this area will enable children with disability to have pride in school until they are sure that nurture was not left behind. Lastly, she mentioned that inclusive education required a very strong collaboration across sectors and with multiple stakeholders to ensure the need of children with disabilities were met.

#### **1.4 Speech by His Excellency CHEA Cheat;**

At first, His Excellency CHEA Cheat, the Undersecretary of State of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Highly-Esteemed Representative of His Excellency the Academician, the Minister, said that it was his great honor to represent His Excellency the Academician, the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, to participate in this 8<sup>th</sup> National Forum. His Excellency expressed his thanks to children from Phnom Penh Themy School and Epic Art Organization for their dancing and performance. He said that they had disabilities, but there were capable to give art performances. His Excellency also expressed his thanks to various development partners, such as UNICEF, AAR Japan and so on for always giving supports, and he also expressed his thanks to dignities and all participants who were present in the forum; their attendants showed great support to the inclusive education.

In that occasion, he reminded everyone about some national and international events, including a Meeting of Governments from Countries in Asia-Pacific Region, which

was held from October 29 to November 2, 2012, in Incheon city, Korea. That meeting mentioned about “the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities”, and that meeting would be held once every 10 years in order to set out a big strategy, called Incheon Strategy, which focused on giving assistances to persons with disabilities in Asia-Pacific region covering a population of 650 million persons (15%) among the 4,560 people in Asia continent, of which 80% were living in developing countries. This strategy mentioned about making rights of persons with disabilities become real. This strategy included 10 points, of which the 5<sup>th</sup> point talked about right to education, collecting children to be enrolled in Primary and Lower Secondary Schools, which was related to inclusive education in Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, our Cambodia applied this strategy in accordance with an evaluation conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) who had evaluated that Cambodia was the first country in Asia-Pacific region who had made an official declaration on commitment to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations, the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities for 2013-2022, Incheon Strategy “to Make the Right Real” for Persons with disabilities, on May 29, 2013, under the presidency of *Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN*, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia at the Peace Palace.

In that occasion, His Excellency also reminded the participants about achievements of the Kingdom of Cambodia in relation to issues of persons with disabilities, which included *Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN*, the Prime Minister, declared the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations, the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities for 2013-2022, Incheon Strategy; the Royal Government integrated the National Institute for Special Education and the Five High Schools for Special Education to be under the supervision of the State, which was officially declared by *Samdech* the Prime Minister on July 1, 2019. In the meantime, the Royal Government also included the inclusive education into the Rectangular Strategy, Phase 4 and strongly promoted this inclusive education. Besides, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports created the Education Strategic Plan for 2019-2023, which promoted the inclusive education, and created the National Policy on Inclusive Education.

His Excellency also added that inclusive education was the education leaving no one behind, it was the education which collected all children of school age to receive education; all children with all kinds of disabilities were required to go to school with children without disabilities in order to create an inclusive education classroom; indigenous children who used their own language must have studied Khmer also, and intellectual gifted children must also have remained under the supervision of the Special Education Department. Therefore, the capacity of educational system must have been improved, included not only the creation of teaching methodology and student books for students without disabilities, but also improving the capacity of mute, deaf, blind and indigenous children to be able to study in the inclusive education classroom together with

the others. However, for children with serious disabilities who could not study in the same classroom with normal children, we allowed them to study separately by creating an integrated classroom; therefore, inclusive education completely applied human rights. Inclusive education was an important work which made parents feel satisfied to send their children to school in order for them to have opportunity to make a living instead of spending much time on taking care of children and could not go to make a living. Although children with intellectual disability could not be promoted to the next higher grade, but we somehow could teach them in terms of behavior, dressing and attitude adjustment. For example, at the Rabbit School, currently up to more than 180 have been brought by their parents to be enrolled leading to an issue of lack of teachers; however, the Ministry had already submitted a request to His Excellency the Minister, and we were waiting for the approval from the Minister. The inclusive education was very important because it improved the quality of education and responds to a desirable context of the world. Moreover, inclusive education also improved Cambodia's prestige in Asia-Pacific region.

Moreover, he also mentioned that forum was different from workshop since forum needed comments from all participants in relation to inclusive education in order for the inclusive education to be equitable and quality. He also asked for specific comments from representatives of partnership organizations, representatives of NGOs, representatives of Capital-Provincial Departments of Education, Youth and Sports, the National Institute for Special Education, High Schools for Special Education in attendance in the forum in order for the inclusive education to be more meaningful and receive greater success in line with the direction of the Royal Government and goal of the Ministry. He believed that after the conclusion of this 8<sup>th</sup> National Forum, we would receive many good inputs in order to promote the inclusive education. If we had the same level of understanding, we used the same language, we helped each other, we would truly get success.

In that occasion, he also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Academician the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports who had brought about reforms in all sectors, especially the inclusive educational sector. He, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and on his own behalf, would like to express faithful appreciation to the working group, teachers and partners who had implemented these works to receive fruitful results and to maintain the sustainability of implementation of inclusive education, especially everyone who had participated in carrying out activities in their localities and helped collect children of school age to be enrolled in schools, and he also express his appreciation to all teachers and development partners who had conscience for volunteering and participating in such work though they faced many difficulties. This work was really hard and complicated in terms of both infrastructure and technical works, which required officers in charge of this work at all levels, committee and teachers to show complete devotion to participate and close cooperate with partnership organizations in order to help all children with disabilities to receive lifelong education. He showed his strong hope that this National Forum would provide all participants with important

contents to be applied for good results. He also expressed warm hope towards relevant partnership organizations who had provided assistances in cash and technique that they would continue helping strengthen and expand the inclusive education to receive good results. Finally, His Excellency officially declared the opening of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Forum.

## **2. PRESENTATION ABOUT UPDATE OF POLICY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND ACTION PLAN OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

### **2.1 Presentation by Mr. TOEM Sahen**

Mr. TOEM Sahen, the Deputy Director of Special Education Department, showed the background of the Special Education Department, which began from the Special Education Office established under the supervision of the Primary School Department in 2000. However, in 2016, the Special Education Office was transformed into the Special Education Department with Mr. THONG Ritthy as the Department Director together with other three Deputy Directors, two of which had been retired. The Department had four offices, including Administrative Office, Special Education Office, Planning and Cooperation Office and Intellectual Giftedness Office. He gave a brief explanation about Policy on Inclusive Education, including introduction, vision, purpose, goal, strategies (9 strategies), action plan, monitoring and evaluation and conclusion.

The vision of this policy was to develop every person with special needs in order for them to receive the lifelong quality, inclusive and equitable education.

The purpose of this policy was to give knowledge to persons with special needs in order for them to be knowledgeable, to have complete physical skill and conduct to participate in national and social development. Its goals were to ensure identification, evaluation and timely intervention, to provide quality, inclusive and equitable educational services and lifelong education, capacity building, to promote professional development of teachers and school management, and to promote awareness and participation of all stakeholders.

This policy consisted of nine strategies, including development of legal framework and mechanism, inter-ministerial cooperation in identification, development of database and information, provision of quality, inclusive and equitable education, ensuring of quality, inclusive and equitable educational opportunity for female students with special needs, development of a layout for domestic context regarding building construction and good hygiene, building of capacities of teachers and school management, promotions of awareness of the Policy on Inclusive Education, improvement of knowledge, roles and responsibilities and dissemination of information to stakeholders.

This policy had plans to create mechanism and legal framework to give financial support and to process the project implementation. All plans which had been set out were required to be properly examined in order to receive an acceptable result.

The Policy on Inclusive Education was adopted on June 25, 2018 and disseminated on December 5, 2018 in Kampong Cham province.

In order to respond to the Policy on Inclusive Education, the Special Education Department created an Action Plan to support this policy and set out long-term and medium-term activities to be implemented for five years, from 2019 to 2023. Among others, the prioritized plan of actions for 2020 included:

- To Validate and disseminate documents and regulations in relation to inclusive education and talented and/or intellectual gifted students;
- To hold meeting for preparation of actual plan of action to respond to the inclusive education, to include it into the Annual Operational Plan of the Ministry, Capital-Provincial Departments, City-District-Khan Offices of Education, and schools;
- To prepare tools for identification of disabilities;
- To prepare tools for setting out criteria for talented and/or intellectual gifted students;
- To create tools for monitoring of studies on demands and challenges in studying of persons with special needs twice every year;
- To conduct a campaign on dissemination of right to educational services for persons with disabilities to communities and parents in order to collect children with disabilities to be enrolled in schools;
- To give support to children with disabilities in order to ensure that those students have received equitable and quality education (accommodation, food and mean of transport);
- To revise curriculum and core student books in braille letters and sign language for teaching children with disabilities at all levels, and standards for teachers and students will be set out according to actual need of students;
- To give training to teachers on use of curriculum according to their skills (blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disability);
- To strengthen integrated classroom at all school levels in order to provide education in proper accordance with ages of persons with special needs;
- To strengthen physical infrastructure and toilets for persons with special needs;
- To train 20 teachers for teaching persons with special needs in 2020;
- To encourage teachers who have received training or improvement and are experienced in special education to obtain Certificate and Diploma in Special Education;
- To develop time for long-term training program and short-term in-service teacher development;
- To implement the Directive on Roles, Duties and Responsibilities of Stakeholders at Ministry, Capital-Provincial Departments of Education, Youth and Sports, City-District-Khan Offices of Education, Youth and Sports and school levels;

In the meantime, the Special Education Department also faced difficulties, including:

- The program budget did not respond to actual need;

- Children with serious disabilities were outside schools, had not received education, treatment and rehabilitation services yet;
- Lack of teachers specialized in special education for teaching children with disabilities;
- Lack of building for accommodations of blind, mute and deaf students;
- Human resources were yet to have experiences according to types of difficulties;
- Poverty of families of children with disabilities prevented them from sending their children with disabilities and children facing various other difficulties to school;
- Dissemination and understanding about disability in the community was not yet widespread;
- Cooperation between NGOs and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports was still limited;
- Preparation of integrated classroom for mute, deaf, blind and intellectual disabled students was not yet widespread;
- Provision of labor rehabilitation services was yet to respond to needs of children with disabilities.

After that Mr. TOEM Sahen presented about plan for further actions set out by the Department, including:

- To continue including allowance for duties of special education of 800,000 riels in the Sub-Decree on Reform of Salary of Civil Servants;
- To prepare a budget plan for repairing school buildings and purchasing office stationery at the Five High Schools for Special Education at an amount of 60 million riels per high school;
- To implement the plans in accordance with the Policy on Inclusive Education and its Action Plan;
- To develop capacity of national and provincial officers on inclusive education;
- To continue strengthening and expanding the implementation of inclusive education program for children with disabilities;
- To monitor targeted areas and those who are implementing the inclusive education program for children with disabilities;
- To continue producing clear statistics of children in all capitals-provinces;
- To continue building relationship with partnership organizations.

In that occasion, Mr. TOEM Sahen made some suggestions as follows:

- Request the creation of PB Budget for opening a course for development of teachers' capacities in localities of city-district-Khan;
- Request all development partners to help support activities and plans set out by the Ministry;
- Request all development partners to help implement the educational program for children with disabilities, to help provide budget for development of



teachers' capacities in city-district-Khan where development have not been made yet;

- Request an increase of dissemination to community and help provide treatment as well as assistive tools to children with disabilities;
- Request relevant development partners to help provide budget for supporting the education of children with disabilities to the Special Education Department.

Last but not least, Mr. TOEM Sahen made a conclusion that implementation of inclusive educational program for children with disabilities had been continuously improved thank to efforts made by educational officers at all levels and technical and financial supports from national organizations and relevant partners. From now on, all children with difficulties, especially children with disabilities would receive equitable, quality and effective education.

## **2.2 Summary Presentation about Functioning of the National Institute for Special Education by Mr. VORN Vy, the Deputy Director of the National Institute for Special Education**

In response to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Education Strategic Plan for 2019-2023, the National Institute for Special Education in cooperation with national and international organizations and development partners prepared the Policy and Action Plan of Inclusive Education for 2019-2023. This policy set out vision, purpose, goal, strategy and action plan of inclusive education in order to promote the rights of persons with special needs to receive quality, inclusive and equitable lifelong education.

The National Institute for Special Education was created by Sub-Decree No. 117 S.E., dated July 25, 2017, and *Prakas* No. 138 MoEYS.P., dated January 30, 2018, on the Organization and Functioning of Departments and Offices under the Supervision of the National Institute for Special Education.

The National Institute for Special Education (NISE) had one Director and two Deputy Directors and 39 staff members. NISE had two offices and four departments, including the Administrative, Personnel and Planning Office, Study and Professional Development Office, Department of Mute and Deaf, Department of Blind, Department of Intellectual Disability and Department of Research, Information Technology and Library.

The National Institute for Special Education had its roles and duties to provide training to teachers and professional development to educational staff members at all educational levels for blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled students; to develop capacities of educational staff members at all educational levels for students with disabilities; to develop training program and professional development in accordance with national standard and qualification and employment market for persons with disabilities; to conduct research and to develop new notion of Khmer sign language, assistive tools and various teaching materials for teaching blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disable students; to collect resources from various sources for supporting the

training, research and education of persons with disabilities and carrying out various other duties as assigned by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports.

So far, the National Institute for Special Education had trained 18 student teachers, 14 females, of the 1<sup>st</sup> batch; among them, 10 persons, 8 females, majored in teaching mute and deaf students while the other 8 persons, 6 females, majored in teaching blind students. The National Institute for Special Education also conducted professional development for teachers of mute, deaf and blind students coming from the Five High School for Special Education (Chbar Ampov, Phnom Penh Thmey, Kampong Cham, Siem Reap and Battambang), Phnom Penh Teacher Education College, Regional Teacher Training Center of Kampong Cham Province, Provincial Teacher Training College of Kampong Cham and Provincial Teacher Training College of Siem Reap, for five times, with a total of 165 trainees, 58 females, and 22 staff members with disabilities, 7 females. In the meanwhile, the National Institute for Special Education also provided support in term of sign language interpretation for mute and deaf students studying at Asia Europe University and deaf persons who were seeking for employment or receiving vocational training at various television stations in Cambodia, such as Bayon Television, the National Television of Kampuchea, Phnom Penh Municipality Television Channel 3, Channel 8, Cambodian Television Channel 9, Southeast Asia Television and various other televisions. Moreover, the Nation Institute for Special Education had produced books with Cambodian sign language (dictionary of all subjects, from Grade 1 to 7), Cambodian braille books of all subjects from kindergarten to university levels and filed documents for teacher training and professional development.

Besides, the National Institute for Special Education planned to provide training to student teachers of 2<sup>nd</sup> batch, to continue work of capacity development for staff members of the National Institute for Special Education and High School for Special Education, to develop training program in relation to intellectual disabilities, to file documents regarding Cambodian sign language and braille, to conduct a research on new methodology for teaching blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled students.

### **2.3 Video Presentation and Instruction on Package of Early Grade Reading Materials**

Mr. Ouch Kim, the representative of RDI organization for the project “All Children Reading in Cambodia”, showed a video of Early Grade Reading Package of Materials which had been put into practice in Kampong Thom province by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the last school year, and it had been implemented till this school year and also expanded to some targeted provinces. The Project “All Children Reading in Cambodia” with financial support from the United States Agency for International Development, referred to as USAID, was working with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and development partners to develop the Early Grade Reading Package of Materials in order to improve study results of all students at upper kindergarten to grade 2 for Khmer Language subject.

He showed only a part of the Early Grade Reading Package of Materials, which was about storybooks. Storybooks were divided into two types, including short storybooks under 30 titles and storybooks using variety of senses under 11 titles, there were 41 titles in total, and these storybooks, and these storybooks had also been published in Cambodia braille for blind students. In the meantime, he also showed leaflet of these storybooks under 41 titles. Moreover, these storybooks under the 41 titles had been turned into video with sound for blind students and sign language for mute and deaf students, and texts according to each page on the storybook had been used as background. These 41 storybooks could be used for students with different learning methodologies, which blind students could hear the sound and deaf students could see the sign language existing in those videos; therefore, these videos are inclusive. Besides, all the 41 storybooks which had been turned in video were uploaded into Youtube, and they were put together in one list in the channel of the project, All Children Reading-Cambodia.

Moreover, this Early Grade Reading Package of Materials has recently been approved by the leadership of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, especially His Excellency the Academician the Minister, as a national program of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, called Komar Rien Komar Cheh, in order to expand the implementation of this Early Grade Reading Package of Materials throughout the country.

Last but not least, Mr. Ouch Kim briefly demonstrated how to use those videos.

#### **2.4 Video Presentation on Actual Activities Implemented by Non-Governmental Organizations So Far**

Mr. SIEN Kosal, a Project Manager of CRS Organization, the representative of NGO Education Partnership, referred to as NEP, showed video of activities which non-governmental organizations implemented in educational sector and disability as actual experiences, so far. In that occasion, he also mentioned that NEP consisted of 9 NGOs specialized in each field, and those NGOs had been combined together to form a Working Group on Education and Disabilities under the leadership of NEP.

#### **2.5 Presentation on Experience Sharing about Implementation of Inclusive Education at Provincial and District Levels**

Teacher CHAN Vannak, representative of Takeo Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sports and her working group, shared their experiences of implementing inclusive education at provincial and district levels in Takeo province.

An inclusive education project of CRS in primary school was started in 2010 in one district, and it had subsequently expanded to other districts, and finally, it had been implemented in 26 primary schools in 5 districts of Takeo province. This project finished in December 2017.

In the meanwhile, CRS Organization had implemented two other projects, including:

- The Timely Intervention for Early Childhood Project was implemented in 9 target schools in 3 target districts of Takeo provinces in 2006-2017. The goal of this project was to identify disabilities of children and provide timely intervention. This project finished in December 2017.
- The Early Childhood Development and Protection was implemented in 7 target schools in Samraong district, Takeo province for the school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. Two activities, producing tools for early childhood identification and preparation of learning game, had been implemented in this project. The goal of this project was to promote the quality of learning of and teaching early childhood at kindergarten. This project finished in December 2019.

After each project run by CRS Organization finished, they were accepted for subsequent implementation by Takeo Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sports, by creating some mechanisms for implementing those projects, such as formation of Inclusive Education Working Group with acknowledgement from His Excellency the Governor of Takeo Province, inclusion of inclusive education project into monthly meeting agenda at Department level and District Office level in order to motivate schools to continue implementing those projects, cooperation with partnership organizations, such as CRS and CCT, and provision of Certificate of Appreciation to individuals and organizations who had provided cooperation. With support, encouragement and recommendation from the leadership of Provincial Department of Education, those projects remained successful and activities had subsequently been implemented to date.

In that occasion, Teacher CHAN Vannak and her working group also presented about various activities which she and her working group had implemented in target districts so far, including inclusion of activities of inclusive education into the Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 and the Annual Operational Plan (AOP), provision of training to school management, teachers and students' guardians regarding inclusion education, carrying out monitoring and evaluation of implementation of inclusive education at target schools, motivating the District Office of EYS and schools to implement the inclusive education and include it into monthly meeting agenda at provincial, district and school levels, improvement of dissemination of the Policy on Inclusive Education to school cluster and stakeholders, and cooperation with CRS and relevant institutions, the Special Education Department regarding filing of documents on identification and guidelines on learning games for inclusive education and kindergarten.

As a result, the Provincial Department of Education had implemented inclusive education in 26 target schools where 150 children with disabilities had been enrolled and sent to seek treatment services; among them, 120 had been promoted to the next higher grade. Target schools in the province had good cooperation with communities and development partners, had infrastructure for children with disabilities, such as slope, washbasin, toilets, and so on. In addition, the Commune Council had provided counterpart budget for commune development plan to schools in relation to inclusive education.

She and her working groups mentioned that though they had received many good results, they still faced a number of challenges, such as participation of working group and stakeholders were still limited, which some compositions were absent during the activity implementation, lack of supportive budget for implementing inclusive education, and some authorities and students' guardians did not understand about inclusive education clearly.

In response to these challenges, the leadership of Provincial Department of Education had come up with solutions, such as examination and revision of compositions of working group, inclusion of inclusive education in the Operational Plan of Department and Office of EYS, request for budget from development partners for supporting the implementation of inclusive education in line with the Policy of the Ministry and widespread dissemination of inclusive education.

Regarding plan for further actions, the leadership of Takeo Provincial Department of EYS planned to motivate the implementation of action plan in all educational institutions in the province, to continue including activities of inclusive education into the Annual Operational Plan, to motivate the collection and management of data of children with disabilities, to maintain the sustainability of inclusive education with development partners upon the partnership organizations finished their projects, and to encourage teachers of inclusive education classroom who have done good jobs by giving a Letter of Acknowledgement, a Certificate of Appreciation and so on.

## **2.6 Presentation on Experience Sharing about Implementation of Inclusive Education at School Level**

To begin with, Mr. EM Kal, the Principal of one Primary School in Samraong district, Takeo province, mentioned that with support from the District Office of EYS and the Provincial Department of EYS, a working group was formed in school with compositions of school, Commune Council, Village Chief, monks, health center, and so on. In the meantime, the school management included activities of inclusive education into a Strategic Plan for School Development and Operational Plan, strengthened the monitoring and motivated the implementation.

In that occasion, the Principal also presented about activities which the school management had done so far. The school organized training for teachers and school management, and conducted a campaign for collecting children, especially children with disabilities, to be enrolled in school. The school had identified children with disabilities, carried out monitoring and motivated the implementation and inclusion of inclusive education into monthly meeting agenda. The school had also included learning games and free play into inclusive education. Teachers mentioned about activities for helping children with disabilities in lesson plan, teachers had used proper teaching materials, learning games and free play, arranged seats according to types of disabilities and in proper manner; teachers and students without disabilities gave encouragement and assistances to students with disabilities. The school management placed a donation box in

pagoda to support the inclusive education. The school management included the inclusive education into the Commune Investment Program.

While the school management and teachers had done many activities, they had also received some good results, such as children with disabilities had been promoted to the next upper grade, they had received assistive tools and medicine; they were healthier, and they had participated in all classroom activities together with children without disabilities.

While there were many good results, the school also faced some challenges, such as teachers and school management were yet to have methodology and be qualified for inclusive education, students with different kinds of disabilities studied in the same classroom, children with disabilities were often absent due to poor living conditions or divorced parents, and so on. Moreover, their guardians were yet to give good cooperative to school regarding referring children to receive treatment services.

In response to those challenges, the school also had solutions, such as motivating and encouraging teachers of inclusive education classroom to give consultation to students' guardians in order for them to understand about the value of education and to arrange students with disabilities according to their ages and grades.

In order to maintain the sustainability of implementation of this inclusive education, the school had set out some plans for further actions, such as including inclusive education into the Strategic Plan for School Development and Annual Operational Plan, including activities of inclusive education into the Commune Investment Program, continuing developing capacity of teachers and the management regarding inclusive education and motivating teachers to implement the inclusive education and including it into monthly meeting agenda. Moreover, the school would continue raise fund and find donors to help support the inclusive education, continue motivating and encouraging children with disabilities to go to school regularly, give consultation to parents of children with disabilities to have a clearer understanding about inclusive education, continue cooperate with communities and development partners and refer children with disabilities to receive treatment services.

## **2.7 Presentation about the Progress of Tuol Kork Primary School**

At first, Mr. PHAT Sokha, the Principal of Tuol Kork Primary School, briefly described about conditions of Tuol Kork Primary School. Tuol Kork Primary School had its surface area of 24,609 square meters and was located on Land Lot No. 7, along Kim Il Sung Blvd., Village 10, Sangkat Boeung Kak 1, Khan Tuol Kork. It had 13 buildings with 80 classrooms, and there were 123 teachers in total, 104 females, and 2,768 students in total, 1,302 females.

With cooperation from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Rabbit School was established in Tuol Kork Primary School in 2008-2009, when there were only 16 students with disabilities, equivalent to one classroom, for the first school year. However, the number of students with disabilities had currently been increased up to 184



students. Although children with disabilities could not absorb knowledge 100% as normal children, at least we could mitigate the burdens of parents of children with disabilities who could take time out from taking care of their children for a whole day to go to work and operate various businesses in order to make a living, and when the children arrived the school, there were teachers who were skillful and paid attention on taking care of students at school. Though children with disabilities studied in integrated classroom different from that of students without disabilities, they still could run and play with students without disabilities during break time, and there were also teachers who followed them and took care of them during that break time. In integrated classroom, there were 7-10 students and 2 teachers. In Tuol Kork Primary School, students did exercise every Tuesday when all students had to wear red uniform, and children with disabilities also had to wear the same.

After that, the Principal mentioned about some difficulties which this primary school faced during the initial period of implementing the inclusive education regarding the issue of school management (a wide range of students), lack of teachers, lack of skill and method for teaching students with disabilities and discrimination from the community. In the meanwhile, he also mentioned about many positive results received by Tuol Kork Primary School, including support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; increase in number of classrooms, number of students, number of teachers; improvement of infrastructure (slope, toilet...); cooperation and support from children with disabilities and their guardians, improvement and better growth of children; decrease in discrimination in the community; and receipt of supports from development partners in term of budget, techniques, infrastructure and so on. However, this school still faced some challenges, such as lack of teacher for intellectual disabled children, lack of classroom since there were many students in each classroom and it was difficult to teach, and incentive for teachers of intellectual disabled children was yet to fulfill their actual need. Moreover, the Principal also requested everyone to open mind for accepting children with disabilities and to understand about them; he also requested for increase in number of classrooms in other schools, increase in number of teachers specialized in teaching children with disabilities in other schools in order to enable children with disabilities to go to school as normal children. In addition, he also requested for increase in incentive and allowance for teachers and schools providing education to children with disabilities. He requested the elimination of discrimination against children with disabilities by starting from our generation and continuing to the following generations. Last but not least, he expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Rabbit School and partnership organizations who had provided sponsors and supports to Tuol Kork Primary School for smoothly and successfully operating the integrated classroom for 12 years.

## 2.8 Presentation on Experience Sharing about Teaching Children with Intellectual Disability

Teacher NHEM Navy, a teacher of students with intellectual disability at Tuol Kork Primary School for nearly 20 years, expressed her point of view and described some experiences she had faced in teaching. She said that she had faced many difficulties in doing her work since children with intellectual disability could not communicate as normal children, she had to teach them how to help themselves, how to watch, how to read, how to communicate with other people and how to speak. She said that teaching children with intellectual disability was so hard since she had to teach two shift a day and received very little amount of salary. She used to resign from her job a few year ago; however, due to lack of specialized teachers and with her love for children, she returned to teach those children. She also mentioned about reasons why she returned to teach children with intellectual disability; one of which, she said that she wished to express her gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for keeping the teacher framework for her; and the other one, it was due to encouragement from students' parents who had expressed their happiness and gratitude to her after they had seen the improvement of their children.

She also mentioned about discrimination which she had faced; she said that discrimination did not happen only to students with disabilities, but also to teachers of students with disabilities. She raised an example that there was one guest coming to her classroom, showing her dissatisfaction then asked her "who allow students to disabilities to be enrolled in school?"

In the meantime, she also mentioned about better understanding of students' parents regarding inclusive education. By seeing the improvement of self-help and positive change of attitude of children with disabilities after going to the Rabbit School in previous school years, many parents sent their children with disabilities to be enrolled in the Rabbit School.

In that occasion, she requested for an increase in number of classrooms for children with disabilities everywhere, and she also requested for more teachers with pedagogical techniques and pedagogical practices to teach in inclusive education classrooms. Finally, she requested for increase in salary because she had to teach two shifts a day, and she did not take a break during vacation because she needed to create learning materials for the next school year.

## 2.9 Presentation about *Prakas* No. 1677

In that occasion, Mr. THONG Ritthy, the Director of Special Education Department, briefly showed *Prakas* No. 1677. He mentioned about Chapter 5 which stated about setting out norm for student-classroom. Article 15 of Chapter 5 stated that "Blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled children aged from 3 to 5 years old shall be entitled to be enrolled in kindergarten class at the School for Special Education or High School for Special Education while blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled children aged from 6 to 14

years old shall be entitled to be enrolled in Grade 1 at the School for Special Education or High School for Special Education.” Article 16 stated that “Norm of number of blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled students has been set out from 3 to 10 students per class for classroom at the High School for Special Education and the integrated classroom at public educational institutions at kindergarten, primary and secondary education. In case there are 11 or more students with disabilities, they shall be divided into two classes”. “Blind, mute, deaf and intellectual disabled students must study one more shift at the public education institution until completion of all educational levels.” It meant that they must have studied double shifts. If they studied in integrated classroom in the morning, they must have studied one more shift in the afternoon in normal classroom with students without disabilities. Regarding teachers, Article 17 stated that “One blind, mute and deaf teacher must teach one classroom at the High School for Special Education and one integrated classroom with one teacher without disability as assistant. One teacher without disability and specialized in sign language or braille must teach students in one classroom without assistant teacher. One teacher without disability and specialized in intellectual disability must teach students in one classroom with one intellectual disabled teacher (might be class monitor or student in upper grade) as assistant teacher.”

## **2.10 Presentation on Environment of Inclusive School**

In that occasion, Mr. TOEM Sahen, the Deputy Director of Special Education Department, gave a brief presentation on elements which inclusive school in capital-province must have. Those elements included:

- Attitude of teachers: teachers must have positive attitude towards children with disability;
- Methods for teaching children with disabilities: what methods did teachers have for teaching children with disabilities? In response to this question, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports had provided many training courses on inclusive education.
- Teaching approach: we had approach for teaching by placing children with and without disabilities together in order to implement classroom activities together;
- Teaching method must be flexible in order to enable children with disability to participate in all classroom activities;
- Assistive tools and teaching materials: Teacher must have examined whether the assistive tools were appropriate according to types of disabilities of those children and whether teaching materials fulfilled needs of children with disabilities. As a teacher of inclusive classroom, we must examine comprehensively;
- Participation of parents and communities: participation from only school and teachers were not enough and could not enable inclusive education to get success;

- School and teacher provided good supports: the school management gave support regarding the admission of children with disabilities to be enrolled in school, and teachers paid attention on teaching children with disabilities;
- No students dropped out of school or could not be promoted to the next upper grade;
- Had direction signs to go to school;
- School provided mean of transport for children with moving problem, such as cane or wheelchair, and so on;
- Had logo of school's name;
- School driveway was flat and free of obstacle;
- Security guard welcomed and helped guest;
- Receptionist gave warm welcome and was friendly;
- Information board gave useful information to guests and parents;
- School had bulletin or communication system with parents;
- Display of various cultures existing in school and various achievements;
- Sidewalks at various parts of the school were flat and free of obstacle;
- Door was big enough for access of wheelchair;
- Had staircase, had handler;
- Had appropriate slope where there was staircase;
- Stair case was painted with yellow or white for children with low vision;
- Had sign for dangerous place (hole);
- Had sign for room and entry-exit of library or storage room;
- Had obvious and understandable signs.

### **3. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ABOUT INCREASE OF INVESTMENT IN BUILDING CAPACITIES OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

A roundtable discussion was conducted with facilitation from Mr. YIN Sieng Someth, a specialist in education from Save the Children, with participation of guest speakers as follows:

- His Excellency PUT Samit, the Director-General of the Directorate General of Education;
- His Excellency TEP Phiyorin, the Director-General of the Department of Finance;
- Mr. THONG Ritthy, the Director of Special Education Department;
- Mrs. NEANG Phalla, the Founder of Krousar Thmey Organization and the Director of the National Institute for Special Education;
- Ms. PHORN Sothea, the Representative of Line Department;
- Mr. ITH Rithy, the Vice Chief of Kampong Thom Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sports;
- Ms. Satomi, the Representative of the NGO Education Partnership;

To begin with, His Excellency PUT Samit, the Director-General of the Directorate General of Education expressed his point of view towards the educational system reform

during the last two legislative mandates, under the leadership of His Excellency the Academician HANG Chuon Naron. He mentioned that since His Excellency the Academician saw that quality of education was a main issue and in order to enhance the quality of education, His Excellency the Academician had reformed the educational system, by starting with the implementation of the First Rectangular which was the High School Examination. After the examination reform, the MoEYS could see the whole picture of our educational system whether they should have adjusted any part of our educational system. As the forum had already mentioned, in educational system, teacher's capacity was a main factor, and curriculum, training, management work and other tasks were incidental. Therefore, the Ministry had prepared a new curriculum for general knowledge where they started to strengthen the teaching methodology by focusing on not only general knowledge but also non-formal education and education for children with disabilities and indigenous children. In order to strengthen the teaching capacity, the Ministry had upgrade the qualification of training to 12+4 from 2020 onwards to be in line with the Teacher Policy; meanwhile, teacher's salary was increased almost 3 times. In 2020, the minimum salary would be 1,200,000 riels for teacher of primary education. Regarding special education, so far the Ministry had provided budget for publishing books and in-kind sponsorship, and currently the Ministry took the entire burden over the management of the National Institute for Special Education and the Five High School for Special Education. Through a presentation made by Teacher Navy, the Ministry were happy to hear that they did a right thing that we kept framework for teachers although they had changed to teach at the school for special education. However, they would continue solving various other issues regarding teachers, especially for school where the number of students kept increasing, such as the Rabbit School where there were up to 15 students per class now, and as we had known, providing education to students with disabilities was a hard task. However, the Ministry would put all efforts in seeking support for solving this problem. In order to solve this problem, it was not up to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports only, but the Ministry must have held a discussion with the Ministry of Civil Service and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Moreover, His Excellency mentioned that in 2020, the Ministry would provide new framework to 3,600 teachers only due to budget constraint.

After that, Mr. Thong Ritthy, the Director of Special Education Department mentioned that development of special education could be done only by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Participation from stakeholders was very important. In the meantime, the Policy on Special Education was created at national level in order to respond to the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for 2019-2023, and this policy was an indicator for sub-national level, such as District-Khan Department, in implementation of the strategic plan set out by the Ministry. Moreover, at sub-national level, participation from the District-Khan Department only was not enough, there should have been participation from relevant departments, such as the Department of Social Affairs and Youth Rehabilitation, the Provincial Department of Health and district referral hospitals working in relation to disabilities, in order to seek treatment services for children

with disabilities. Regarding disabilities, there were communities as well as local State authorities, commune-Sangkat councils for preparing a plan to make the Inclusive Education Plan to be consistent with the Commune-Sangkat Investment Plan. With reference to presentations on implementation in target provinces and districts, the Ministry had found out the development and improvement arising out of participation of many parties, such as Pagoda Committee, Commune-Sangkat Council, and attention from the leadership, such as the District-Provincial Governors, District-Provincial Deputy Governors and so on. However, the most important point was the support from guardians, communities and parents of the students, working groups of the national, sub-national and school levels. They made these good results.

After that, Mrs. NEANG Phalla, the Director of the National Institute for Special Education, mentioned that lack of teachers was a challenge happened long time ago, and such challenge continued to present. Therefore, the National Institute for Special Education was established in order to respond to the issue of lack of teachers of children with disabilities. The National Institute for Special Education was a headquarters of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports which provided training and professional development to teachers of students with special needs. The National Institute for Special Education planned to provide training to teachers of students with disabilities. Currently, this Institute had provided training to teachers of mute, deaf and blind students. This institute continued implementing and developed this plan in order to provide training to teachers of students with intellectual disability and file necessary documents for teachers of students with disabilities. The institute also had an ambition to file documents for teaching students with other kinds of disabilities. The institute had published books in braille for students with disabilities, and conducted research on sign language in order to published books in sign language for widespread use by mute and deaf students. As all of us had already known and as what we could see through the presentation of Teacher Navy, teaching children with disabilities was so hard; therefore, resources for training teachers were very important. The institution, with cooperation from partnership organizations, UNICED, had provided training to 20 students teachers of new batch, and the institution also provided professional development to 156 existing teachers in response to this necessary need.

Thereafter, Ms. PHORN Sothea said that the Department of Teacher Training had carried out works in relation to this inclusive education since 2007-2008, with technical and financial support from partnership organizations. At first, the Department included the inclusive education into training program, but not as a subject. Later on, since the Department had a plan to expand the education at secondary level, the Department formed a working group with compositions from the Office of Special Education of the Primary Education Department, Curriculum Development Department, Secondary Education Department and various other relevant departments, where they filed document on Inclusive Education Program then the inclusive education had officially been included as a separate subject in 2011. In 2015, the Teacher Training Department



implemented Teacher Action Plan, consisted of 9 strategies, of which 4 strategies were related to inclusive education. Strategy One was in relation to recruitment of candidates for being enrolled in Teacher Training Institution which existed in Teacher Education College, Regional Teacher Training Center, Pre-School Teacher Training Center and Teacher Training Institute, where the Department removed one condition of recruitment stated that “candidate must have good physical fitness”. Another strategy was that the Department organized a Training Course on Professional Development for Teachers of Grade One Throughout the Country. In 2017, the Department revised various documents in relation to inclusive education. With support from UNESCO, the Department translated and filed documents in Cambodian context and uploaded them into the website of UNESCO in Khmer language. Another strategy related to infrastructure and environment at teacher training institutions regarding inclusive education, such as provision of dormitory for possibility of students with disabilities, poor students and so on, to go to school. Currently, GPE Project was giving assistance to repair and construction of some Teacher Training College.

Ms. Satomi, the Representative of NEP, said that currently there were many organizations working on strengthening education of people with disabilities; among them, some organizations focused on inclusive education and integrated classroom while the others focused on specialized school. However, important points in implementation were meeting and sharing experiences among members in order to understand about the process of implementation and further develop it. For example, so far, AAR Japan had provided support to many organizations who run projects in relation to persons with disabilities, and we held discussions with one another in order to obtain good practices from those projects. So far, we had faced many difficulties and challenges in project implementation, but we tried to discuss with other members and got suggestions and advises from them. Moreover, she also mentioned that capacity building of teachers should not have focused on only good teaching methodology for children with disabilities, but we should have focused on implement of teachers’ attitudes as well; attitudes here referred to acceptance of students from a wide range of area to be enrolled in school and belief that each child, whether they came from any area, was capable and willing to learn. Therefore, when we discussed about teacher’s capacity, we should have thought about both teaching methodology and teacher’s attitude.

In that occasion, Mr. ITH Rithy, the Vice Chief of Kampong Thom Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sports, said that in last two years, the Primary Education Department created a table of data collection regarding disabilities; since no training had been provided yet, the data that collection was very hard. However, after officers in many districts had received training on this work, which was organized by the Special Education Department recently, he saw that last data collection was more accurate than before. In the meantime, he said that we should had training and widespread dissemination to local teachers about data collection and identification of persons with disabilities in proper manner, according to each type of disabilities, in order to give timely

assistance to persons with disabilities. Moreover, in this school year 2019, it was so surprise for Kampong Province that there were 3 children with disabilities (100%) passed the high school examination, and among them, one student with disability was currently pursuing his/her undergraduate education in Year 3 at the Royal School of Administration. He also mentioned that Kampong Thom province felt proud for this, and such success occurred thank to supports from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Ministry of Economy and Finance and partnership organizations, and he also expressed his gratitude to them.

Regarding financial issue, His Excellency TEP Phiyorin, the Director-General of the Financial Department, said that expenses at national level were divided into four types, including expense on activity, expense on training, expense on mission and expense on other purposes. From 2006 that the Ministry established the Special Education Office under the supervision of the Primary Education Department until 2016 that this office was transformed into the Special Education Department, during the last three years, the budget package for this Department was increased from nearly 50,000 dollars to 100,000 dollars, which was the state's budget only; however, there were other budgets from partnership organizations, including UNICEF and UNESCO, and various other sources of budget. If we looked at the Special Education Department and the National Institute for Special Education, among the budget of half a million dollars which they had received, half of them, about 250,000 dollars was contributed to teacher training. If we looked at the whole picture, inclusive education was a new sector which we needed time to accept. Therefore, during the annual budget protection, if they had a clear policy, the leadership of the Department and the Institution could protect their budget by presenting the reason why this sector was important. Moreover, he also mentioned that the Ministry would decentralize the process of budgeting, but they would do it in Battambang province only, and they would focus on three factors first, which included early childhood education, non-formal education and primary education. As for inclusive education, they would not include it due to resource and technical issues.

#### **4. GROUP DISCUSSION**

At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Forum, a group discussion was conducted, and all participants were divided into five groups. Among them, one group discussed about the issue at national level, and its members were officers from various departments of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; and four groups discussed about the issue at sub-national level, and their members were participants from various provinces. Group 1 consisted of participants from Kratie, Stung Treng, Ratanakiri, Kampong Cham, Tbaung Khmum and Kampong Thom province. Group 2 consisted of participants from Banteay Meanchey, Udor Meanchey, Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and Pailin provinces. Group 3 consisted of participants from Preah Sihanouk, Kampot, Kep, Koh Kong, Takeo and Kandal provinces. Group 4 consisted of participants from Kampong Speu, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng and Siem Reap provinces, and Phnom Penh capital. The five groups must have held discussion about two questions:

- What are the main challenges you have faced in implementing activities of capacity building of teachers in inclusive education so far?
- What are the main challenges you have faced in implementing activities of capacity building of school management in inclusive education so far?

Moreover, each group was requested to select three to five prioritized challenged and give recommendations in response to each challenge, and each recommendation must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound.

After holding the discussion for an hour, the five groups came up with the following answers:

▪ **Group 1:**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Capacity of teachers and school management was still limited	Provide training and capacity development in term of inclusive education to teachers and school management
Lack of teachers in inclusive education sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruit teachers with the right skills;</li> <li>- Prioritize persons with disabilities who are skillful to be recruited as teachers of inclusive education classroom;</li> <li>- Provide training and professional development to teachers according to their skills</li> </ul>
Lack of Budget and supporting materials for inclusive education classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Ministry contributes budget to give support;</li> <li>- Request development partners to give support to activities of inclusive education.</li> </ul>

▪ **Group 2:**

• **Capacity Building of School Management:**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Some School Directors did not understand clearly about inclusive education	File documents and use the existing Working Group on Children with Disabilities (Directive No. 22) for exchange of knowledge.
Identification of Children	Use handbook of the Department (អំពីសៀវភៅ)

with Disabilities	
Physical environment	Improve and develop potential according to actual situation

- **Capacity Building of Teachers:**

Challenges	Recommendations
Capacity and understanding about inclusive education of focus teachers were still limited	Identify specific compositions to receive training
Discrimination against parents and students with disabilities	Explain and disseminate information to groups of stakeholders in order for to clearly understand about the value of education
Some teachers did not get through pedagogical training on inclusive education	Request line department to conduct a survey of teachers providing special education at schools with disabled students.

- **Group 3:**

- **Capacity Building of School Management:**

Challenges	Recommendations
Cooperation between schools and stakeholders was still limited	Increase cooperation between schools and stakeholders
Difficult to recruit volunteering and specialized teachers	Provide short training courses and encouragement to teachers
Infrastructure	Build infrastructure according to types of disabilities

- **Capacity Building of Teachers:**

Challenges	Recommendations
Lack of budget and materials for training	Request for budget and materials
Difficulties in classroom arrangement and management	Give short training courses and encouragement of contract teachers
Teachers faced difficulties in teaching	Prepare norms of classroom-

and producing teaching materials according to types of disabilities	teacher-student
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- **Group 4:**
  - **Challenges in Capacity Building of Teachers:**
    - Most teachers did not receive training on inclusive education;
    - Lack of budget for training, purchasing and producing teaching materials for teaching and learning;
    - Lack of focus teachers specialized in inclusive education;
    - Houses of teachers were far away from schools;
    - Lack of support from stakeholders.
  - **Challenges in Capacity Building of School Management:**
    - School management did not clearly understand about inclusive education;
    - It was difficult to communicate with relevant authorities;
    - School management did not study about regulation in relation to inclusive education;
  - **Recommendations:**
    - Provide training to teachers;
    - Provide training to school management;
    - Provide budget for implementation.
  
- **Discussion Group at National Level:**
  - **Challenges:**
    - Teachers were lack of technical skill;
    - Lack of teaching and learning materials;
    - Lack of assistive tools;
    - Lack of student books (in sign language-braille);
    - The participation (community) was not widespread yet;
    - School environment did not meet the standard;
    - Dissemination of information was not widespread yet;
  - **Solutions:**
    - Form a technical working group to participate in providing technical training to teachers;

- Provide training on producing materials;
- Improve dissemination of information about inclusive education to be widespread (to the community, rural and urban areas);
- Raise supports;
- Give incentive to teachers who directly implemented it;
- Carry out monitoring and evaluation.