



# NEWS LETTER

DISABILITY RESEARCH AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (DRD)

March 2014

## DRD PROMOTES ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

It is recognized that an accessible built environment is key factor for an inclusive society and this inclusive society enables all members to have an active social life. However, many people with disabilities are faced with many barriers, including attitudinal and physical and these barriers are hampering people with disabilities in having equal access to services. Being aware of the issues and with an aim at making communities have more understanding about how accessibility contribute to change life of people with disabilities, DRD has set up a Task Force of Accessibility Audit of 5 members, including 2 technicians and 3 persons with disabilities (one with wheelchair users, one with crutches and the last with visual impairment). A checklist of accessibility audit was also developed to cover different aspects such as car park, doors, corridors, toilets etc.

The first target of DRD in this period is universities and colleges in Ho Chi Minh City because they are educational service providers, and that will encourage more persons with disabilities to use the services and enable them to live independently.



*The Task Force of Accessibility Audit*

Since establishment in January 2014, the Task Force has managed to go to 3 places in Ho Chi Minh City to check the accessibility, i.e. British Council, RMIT Vietnam and Post and Telecommunications Institute of Technology. With collaboration and support from these partners, the task force has done a series of evaluation to check the current accessibility of the buildings and provide some areas for improvements. The report has got positive feedback of the partners. Ms. Gemma Thompson, lecturer at British Council said “we always try to make sure that our offices are accessible for all students. Therefore, we think it is good to invite experts from DRD to provide technical support in terms of accessibility to our buildings and they can advise us how to make it better. Based on their advices, we will discuss further with the management team and our colleagues to develop an amendments plan. We hope to create the most accessibility plan for people with disabilities”.

In the coming time, DRD plans to go to more schools and universities in the area to do the Accessibility Audit and can help more people with disabilities have better access to services as it is stipulated in the Vietnam Law on Disability and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities.

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