

Kaewkul Tantipisitkul [Thailand, Hard of Hearing and Deaf]

Volunteering as a Board Member and Vice President, National Association of the Deaf in Thailand (NADT)

Duskin Leadership training in Japan 19th trainee

Liu/ Let me introduce myself. My name is Liu. I am both with hard of hearing and deaf as my identity. I am from Thailand. I am working and also studying at a university. I am volunteering as a board member of the National Association for the Deaf in Thailand, (NADT), while also acting as the vice president for this organization.

※Slide1,2

First of all, I would like to explain what we are doing in NADT in Thailand. The association is acting to improve the quality of life for deaf individuals and individuals with hearing impairments. We have members in 77 provinces nationwide, and 7 networking member groups.

※Slide3

Here, I would like to introduce the activities in which I am involved by explaining four of our main aspects. First, holding board meetings which are held once every two months. We also hold one annual meeting. Second is providing training. We train international sign language interpreters who are deaf as well as offering sign language interpretation training for individuals who are not deaf and wish to become international sign language interpreters. We also train the leaders of the 77 provinces on how to operate the Thai Telecommunication Relay Service. These leaders then train the members of their community.

※Slide4

Third, we have a project on assessments. On TV, one can see the sign language interpretation in a wipe transition. We support the assessment to improve the interpretation techniques not only for sign language but also to improve checks and assessments of captioning on TV. In addition, for the qualification test for sign language interpreters, we are working in collaboration with deaf and non-deaf individuals together.

Fourth, besides the meetings, we also hold training and assessment sessions, and several other services. One is the dispatch service of sign language interpreters. One more service is the Deaf Access Center (DAC). We also offer voice to text by captioning or sign language. We also provide the sign language to text and vice versa for any written document.

Next, I would like to talk about what we learned in the Pakistan Forum. By taking part in this forum, I was able to learn a lot. The first thing I learned is the importance of communication. The second is not only for the individual or private sector, but also it is necessary to involve the government sector. It is important to be aware of each sector. Third, we have to think not only about the merit of individuals, but we also have to consider the social benefit. The fourth thing is, about the target. We must identify and consider the specific needs of each group and association as we do not need to do these things for all people.

※Slide5

It became my focus to introduce what we are looking at through these concepts. We want to train guides who are deaf in the tourist industry. We found that individuals that are deaf are very much interested in the tourist industry and many of them would like to work in this industry. They can provide sign language interpreters for foreign visitors who are deaf or hearing impaired.

※Slide6

Deaf individuals can also be involved in tourism, but in order to do this, they have to be registered with the proper interpreter's license. Based on these needs and situations we would like to see these guides in the tourist industry. We would like to give opportunities to individuals that are deaf so they can get the proper licenses and qualifications. This corresponds to the self-support of deaf individuals and will be very useful as employment for these people because they can create their own businesses in this industry. Also, there are quite a lot of needs for foreign tourists. Thus, our involvement has a possibility to link this effort to economic development as well.

We organized the forum in a way that would address these issues (Slide7). In this first forum in Thailand, all the people related to guiding deaf individuals gathered. These groups are as follows: National Association of the Deaf in Thailand, government and agency members, especially those engaged in the tourist industry, NPO groups, members of the professional tourist guide association in Thailand, and the Association of Languages for Education and Tourism Careers.

※Slide7

In this way, we identified the following things. The first thing is in order to create guides who are deaf, we need some knowledge about the licensing process. Secondly, we found that there are some concerns regarding legality. In order to get the license, proficiency in the English listening comprehension test is required. To work in the tourist industry, deaf individuals have to have the chance to be business owners.

※Slide8

We considered a specific way to obtain the guide license. First, we need to remove the legal barrier to set up the qualification test to become a guide. In order to reach the goal, we have to follow the steps one by one located on the right-hand side of slide 8. In order to obtain success, first, we have the responsibility to research and learn various regulations in many countries for guides who are deaf and have to communicate them to the deaf individuals who are interested in the tourist industry. The modification of some regulations will be required as well. When the data is collected, we can give the information to the government to consider the regulations and then proceed. Once those laws and regulations are set up, they will be able to become a part of this industry. This made it possible for deaf individuals to become tour guides and properly engage in the industry. It seems a long way off, but we will try to clear these hurdles one by one to reach our target. Last, I would like to express my gratitude for giving me this opportunity to speak.

※Slide9