

DSD/JICA Project on Disability



*Department of Social Development (DSD) / Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Project for the Promotion of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Disability Mainstreaming*

Activities for improving accessibility conducted in Limpopo and Free State!

The project is currently focusing on activities for improving accessibility. The project organised the accessibility workshops in Limpopo in October and in Free State in November 2018 and participants of the workshop have conducted activities based on the action plan developed.



[Photo] Wheelchair user checked the usability of the ramp to the toilet

In Limpopo, in order to make more people aware of the importance of accessibility, the participants of the workshop conduct a 2 day accessibility workshop in February 2019, taking charge of all presentations and facilitations. Around 30 people including the officials of the Department of Health, taxi association, managers of disability centres participated in and persons with

disabilities played leading roles in explaining the national accessibility standard of South Africa and checking the accessibility of the workshop venue. On the 2nd day, participants visited the disability centre which is under construction, checked accessibility and recommended to install accessible toilets and handrails for the ramps, etc. The owner and builder of the disability centre promised to install 2 accessible toilets to the centre and apply the recommendations. Mr Ren Kamioka, JICA expert proposed to revisit the centre a month later to check the usability of accessible toilets which will be installed and participants and stakeholders agreed. Through the workshop, more stakeholders recognised the importance of the accessibility. The project team will conduct the accessibility check at the taxi rank, hospital, disability centres, etc.



[Photo] Person with disability explained the necessary length of the ramp

In Free State, the project team in collaboration with the Department of Public Works has been conducting the access audit in the municipality, South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA), etc. At the request of the Department of Public Works, the project team conducted the accessibility check in the 2 community halls which the department is in charge of construction. One of the first surprises of persons with disabilities who visited community halls was the provision of accessible toilets based on South African accessibility standards. According to the officials of Public Works, after participating in the accessibility workshop conducted last year, the officials informed the builders of the community halls with accessibility standards and instructed to install accessibility toilets and ramps. However, the officials thought that it was not enough just to comply with the accessibility standard, and requested the project team and persons with disabilities to visit the community halls and make a recommendation to be improved.



[Photo] Accessible toilet built in the community hall

Persons with disabilities and the officials of the Public Works checked the ramps, toilet, parking, signage, etc. at the community hall one by one. Participants compiled the

recommendations including the installation of the handrails to the ramp, provision of the accessible parking space and its signage, etc. In addition, since the edge of the stage of the community hall is the same color as the floor and it is difficult for persons with low vision to see the border, thus, participants proposed to put fluorescent tape on the edge of the stage.



[Photo] Participants discussed the ramp of the entrance of the community hall

By continuing the access audits, participants seem to be aware of more points and have gained confidence. In addition, the participation of the Department of Public Works has a positive impacts in spreading the outcomes of accessibility activities. The project team will continue to conduct access audits and support creating a community that is comfortable for all people.

Please visit our Facebook page for the latest progress!

JICA SADEM :

<https://www.facebook.com/jicasouthafricadisabilityempowermentmainstreaming/>

Editor:

Daisuke SAGIYA DaisukeS@dsd.gov.za

Ren KAMIOKA RenK@dsd.gov.za