

ANFREL, AGENDA partner with ECT to enhance PWD political participation



The Asian Network for Free Elections (Anfrel), AGENDA – General Election Network for Disability Access, and the Election Commission of Thailand (ECT) are currently engaging in projects to improve accessibility of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Thailand during elections. The project aims to spread awareness on the needs of PWDs by providing the ECT with training on tools to ensure PWD access in polling stations, holding trainings for PWD organizations to build their capacity on political participation, and improving media sensitivity on delivering news about PWDs.

The first of its kind in Thailand, the ECT and PWD groups have been enthusiastic about the endeavor. Currently, the ECT is doing moves to ensure that persons with disabilities and the elderly can participate in exercising their right to vote. According to ECT Member Mr. Somchai Srisuttiyakorn, the election commission is considering moves such as providing assistance and setting up polling stations in venues conducive for PWD participation.

Mr. Pongsak Channon, Anfrel's Thailand Program Coordinator, sees the project as an opportunity for the stakeholders to promote equality in the society by ensuring that marginalized sectors are given voice in crucial political events such as elections.