



Enhancement of the media sector: Multi-scheme support

Ambassador Enoki, the Japanese Ambassador to Bhutan in Delhi, recently visited to attend a hand over ceremony for the Grass-roots Human Security Project (The Recycle Grants). Conducted by the Embassy of Japan, this programme supports small-scale projects proposed by local governments and small organizations benefiting the grassroots level. Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS Corporation) received a second-hand outdoor broadcasting van previously used by the Japanese Broadcasting Service (NHK). This has assisted in the live broadcasts of events such as the National Assembly, the National Archery Tournament and music concerts and has also improved the BBSC's capacity to produce programs using online editing.

The Japanese Ambassador also signed cultural grant aid worth 39.9 million yen (approximately Nu.15.5 million) to improve BBSC television programming. The grant will be used for buying television programmes from NHK, which will be telecast by the BBS. "BBS is trying to expand its activities but is facing a shortage of programmes to broadcast, so we are providing programmes on subjects like mathematics, chemistry, beauty, nature, international affairs and successful individual business projects," said the Japanese Ambassador speaking to Kuensel.

The Technical Co-operation project on **Enhancement of Bhutan Broadcasting Service** was launched in July 2005. This project was designed after a series of discussions between a JICA Implementation Study Team and the Managing Director of BBSC in preparation for the upcoming satellite system for nation-wide broadcasting supported by the ITU and the Indian Government. The project focuses on human resources capacity development for program production and news reporting. Short-term experts will also be dispatched to train local staff in technical matters, programming and news reporting.

JICA and BBS have had a relationship since 1989. Mr. Hajime Kikumura was assigned as a JICA Expert in June 2003 to improve the human resource capacity of the technical department and has been working closely with counterpart Bhutanese engineers. He has been actively involved in the preparation of project proposals under the Japanese ODA schemes for technical co-operation projects, cultural grants and grass roots grants. This project will have a positive impact on the Bhutanese people in terms of improved variety and quality of programmes available for viewing.

JICA schemes

- Technical cooperation project
- Grant aid
- Training programme
- Development studies
- Emergency disaster relief
- Citizen participation
- Follow-up cooperation
- Volunteer programme

JICA target areas in Bhutan

- Agriculture and rural development
- Infrastructure development
- Local governance
- Social services development (Health, Education and IT)

JICA members in Bhutan

- Office staff: 16 (Internationals: 7, Nationals: 9)
- Experts: 8
- Senior Volunteers: 21
- Senior JOCVs: 3
- JOCVs: 19

Broadcasting and communication sector trainings in Japan

Every year several Bhutanese participants are invited to Japan for participation in broadcasting and communication related technical trainings. In the 2004, two participants from the Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) and six from Bhutan Telecom Corporation (BT) participated; in 2005 one participant from BBS and one from BT received technical training in Japan. More technical trainings are foreseen in the future with the recent signing of Technical Cooperation Projects with BBS and BT.

Collaboration between Bhutan Telecom and JICA Technical Cooperation Programme: Training Center for Engineers

On 2 August 2005, Bhutan Telecom Corporation organized the handing over of equipment and an opening ceremony for a Training Centre. An OSP emergency van and a forklift were donated through the technical cooperation project **Local Network Expansion Technology Improvement and Human Resources Development**.

The project will be completed next month after a period of two years. Mr. Yamaguchi, a JICA Expert who started the project in 2003, has supported BT to execute activities and train technical staff since June 2001. This project's main objectives are:

1) to improve the network infrastructure to meet the increasing demand for telephone networking in Bhutan (JICA granted construction machinery to maintain and construct the network in Thimphu, Paro, P/ling, Trongsa, Mongar and Trashigang telephone operational areas) and; 2) to support human resources development.

Mr. Yamaguchi first focused on the training environment as BT's training rooms and equipment were insufficient for providing proper training. He proposed to the Bhutan Telecom Board members for a training center after convincing them on its importance. BT in turn built the new training center with its own budget. JICA supported with training materials and equipment. The training texts and some equipment were developed by BT engineers in collaboration with Mr. Yamaguchi. Fifteen manuals and standards of design were initiated throughout the project. These are being used for various training programs including basic engineering courses for junior engineers, refresher courses for senior engineers, safety management and GIS/GPS. All of the instructors are BT senior engineers who were trained by JICA experts and through JICA training programmes in Japan. This is an example of ideal collaboration within a project by both sides that impacts the beneficiaries both efficiently and effectively.



A JICA Senior Volunteer, Mr. Kido, also supports the enhancement of telecommunication services in another area. He has been working at the switching section of Thimphu as a switching maintenance expert in order to provide and develop sustainable telecommunication services and infrastructure in Bhutan. His section plays an important role in covering the other Dzongkhags. He directly supports BT telecommunication, whose capacity has grown from 15,500 to 39,244. The number of connections has also grown from 13,600 to 30,420 as of January 2005, representing a 153% growth in capacity and 124% growth in connected lines.

JICA Bhutan News in Brief

- **Next month's focus will be on the Agriculture Sector.**
- **Mr. Ito the Deputy JICA Resident Representative in India, is the officiating Resident Representative of the JICA Bhutan Office** during the leave of Residential Representative Mr. Sugimoto between 13 August - 10 September.
- A JICA Development Study group is visiting Bhutan from 4th-11th September to finalize the final report for Dzongkhag-wise electrification. The final report will be published in November.
- Mr. Sehata, a JOCV IT specialist at RIM, left after two years and four months of service in Bhutan. He supported IT education and development of an e-library. Mr. Samejima, a vegetable researcher, has been assigned to succeed Mr. Yamada at the Renewable Natural Resources Research Center, Khangma, Trashigang.
- **The Japanese Ambassador in Delhi visited Bhutan from 7-11 August** to attend a ceremony for equipment donations at BBS and Kuensel through grant assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects. He also received an audience with His Majesty the King and called on Bhutanese authorities to discuss future cooperation.



Ambassador Enoki inaugurating the printing machine at Kuensel Corporation Ltd.

For more information

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