

# Chapter 5

## The Approaches and Mechanisms of JICA's Triangular Cooperation: An Analysis

Shunichiro Honda

### 1. Introduction

Triangular cooperation (TrC)<sup>1</sup> is increasingly attracting global attention as a promising approach for development cooperation. This is in part a reflection of the changing global development landscape in which new development actors, such as non-DAC donors, have widened their activities while the aid from “traditional donors” has relatively declined. In spite of the growing interest in TrC, there is a dearth of information on how major bilateral donors are planning and managing TrC practices. This paper aims to address this by providing a description of the systems used by JICA, a recognized major bilateral aid agency in TrC. This paper outlines several key characteristics of JICA's approaches to TrC, their patterns, and operational mechanisms in place. Specifically, this paper examines the following points:

- TrC is firmly positioned in the key policy and planning documents of the Japanese Government and JICA, which include the national ODA Charter and JICA's medium term plan.
- Japan's commitment to South-South cooperation (SSC) and TrC has a long history; it started its TrC early in its history of international development, in 1974. Since then, Japan's TrC has increased steadily, and in 2012, there were over 3,500 participants from all over the world in JICA-supported triangular training programs—its main TrC instrument.

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1. Unless otherwise stated, this paper applies the widely-used UN definition throughout: “Triangular cooperation involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country (ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programs and projects (UN 2012, p.5).” This definition is broadly in line with the one that JICA currently apply. Until 2010, more descriptive phrases such as “the support to or the promotion of South-South Cooperation (SSC)” were widely used in the official documents and guidelines. The official use of TrC broadly in line with UN definition has been quite recent.

- The patterns of implementing TrC have widened and diversified, and range from the simple dissemination of knowledge from a pivotal country to other—usually neighboring—country(ies), to more complex patterns involving thematic networks for mutual learning among multiple stakeholders.
- Today, while JICA's main TrC instruments continue to be training and expert dispatch, other instruments such as the packaged technical cooperation projects have increasingly been applied.
- JICA's TrC management mechanism is broadly characterized by its decentralized structure, with country offices playing increasingly larger roles.
- JICA has continuously improved instruments and management structure, including the organization-wide knowledge management on TrCs.
- JICA collaborates with other international partners such as the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). In this framework, JICA has supported the Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo since 2008, and recently JICA and the UNOSSC launched a joint capacity building course for SSC/TrC practitioners.

These systems and practices are built on the forty-year evolution of JICA's bilateral and TrC operation. As this paper will detail, this operation is a well-developed mechanism of TrC engagement from planning to practice, with several practices and mechanisms worthy of particular attention.

## **2. Policies and Plans for JICA's TrC**

As is reported by the OECD/DAC study (OECD 2013b), DAC bilateral donors, with only a few exceptions, lack clearly stipulated TrC policies incorporated into their aid policy framework. Along with Spain and Germany, Japan is one of the few exceptional bilateral donors<sup>2</sup>. Japan's policy framework on TrC in particular and SSC in general is defined at the highest level by the ODA charter and at the operational level by JICA's policy document.

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2. Through various public documents, other donors such as Germany, Spain and Korea expressed their commitment to TrC or the promotion of SSC (OECD 2013b)

## 2.1 Japanese government policies guiding JICA's TrC practices<sup>3</sup>

The ODA charter of 2003, the highest official document defining the direction of Japan's ODA, has taken clear notes of the support to and promotion of SSC in one of the five basic ODA policies. It states:

Japan will actively promote South-South cooperation in partnership with more advanced developing countries in Asia and other regions. Japan will also strengthen collaboration with regional cooperation frameworks, and will support region-wide cooperation that encompasses several countries. (ODA Charter, Basic Principles (5) Partnership and collaboration with the international community)

Japan's Mid-term ODA plan of 2005, which translated the ODA charter into actionable policies, also underscored the above basic policy related to SSC.

Other frequently cited high-level policy documents are those adopted at the successive conferences of TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development), since the first TICAD held in 1993. While TICAD itself is a joint global policy process in support for African development, the Japanese government has played a central role in organizing the conferences in partnership with other co-organizers, including UNDP representing the UN Development Group, the World Bank, and the African Union.<sup>4</sup> The official declarations and action plans adopted at the conferences, which have repeatedly emphasized the SSC and Asia-Africa cooperation, have long guided JICA's TrC for Africa. The following statement is included in the Tokyo Declaration for African Development (1993):

We, the participants of TICAD, recognize that development achievement in East and South-East Asia have<sub>[sic]</sub> enhanced opportunities for South-South cooperation with Africa. We welcome the interest shown by some Asian and African countries in promoting this cooperation. (TICAD 1993, Paragraph 26)

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3. The operational structure of Japan's ODA is largely divided into two functions, policy and implementation, with the former under the responsibility of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) as the central coordinating government body for ODA and the latter under JICA responsibility.

4. The African Union (AU) has officially become one of the co-organizers of TICAD, as of TICAD V.

## **2.2 JICA's organizational plan and the rationale on TrC**

### **(1) The rationale for engaging in TrC**

In its official brochure on TrC, JICA has made clear the rationale behind its active support of TrC (JICA 2013a)<sup>5</sup>. The brochure sets out two points. Firstly, JICA recognizes that SSC is an effective tool for developing countries that shares similar economic, social, and cultural conditions to exchange ideas for development. By combining the North-South and South-South cooperation through its flexible TrC, JICA aims to enhance the impact of SSC.

Secondly, in this brochure Japan recognizes its own past experiences as an “emerging donor.” Japan started its technical cooperation when it joined the Colombo Plan in 1954, while the country was still receiving a large volume of external assistance in rebuilding itself in the aftermath of World War II. This past experience having been an SSC actor has formed a basis of Japan as the active partner in TrC (JICA 2013; Watanabe 2013, pp. 151-157).

### **(2) TrC in the mid-term plan**

In accordance with the ODA policy and rationale, JICA has identified TrC in its current mid-term plan<sup>6</sup> as one of the key prioritized approaches of development cooperation (2012-2016).<sup>7</sup> As one of four actions towards the enhancement of strategic orientation and management of JICA's programs and projects, the document states that:

JICA strives to strategically engage in TrC in recognition for its relevance and effectiveness of development cooperation. JICA will also make an effort to take stock of JICA's experiences and lessons learned on TrC and share them with other interested international partners (JICA, 2013b, p 3, the author's translation).

### **(3) “Thematic Guideline on South-South Cooperation (Support to SSC)”**

JICA's operational documents include detailed guidance on how TrC

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5. In this specific brochure, JICA applies SSC support in place of TrC (JICA 2013).

6. JICA's mid-term plan is a statutory document which outlines the five year commitment of JICA as the independent administrative institution. The document requires the formal approval of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

7. In line with the Japanese financial year, the duration of the mid-term plan is from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. JICA also needs to prepare an annual plan within the framework of the current mid-term plan and then submit the annual performance report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for scrutiny at the end of each Japanese fiscal year.

programs and projects are planned, implemented, and evaluated. Among these, the central document is the "Thematic Guideline on South-South cooperation (Support to SSC)" prepared in 2005 by JICA's working group on SSC,<sup>8</sup> established inside JICA (JICA 2005). To help JICA's practitioners in planning and implementing TrC, this document classified JICA's TrC practices according to their main objectives and functions, which this paper makes reference to in the following section on the JICA's TrC patterns. The two major categories by objectives are:

- 1) Support developing countries (pivotal countries) in implementing SSC
- 2) Mobilize southern knowledge to enrich the body of knowledge provided by JICA's bilateral assistance for better effectiveness and efficiency.

The guideline also establishes the regional direction and prioritized actions in TrC. They are broadly as follows:

- ASEAN region: The emphasis is placed on intra-regional cooperation to address disparities in development progress among ASEAN members;
- Latin America and the Caribbean: The prioritized actions include the effective application and combination of different TrC instruments and the capacity development (CD) support to SSC implementing agencies in pivotal countries;
- Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): In keeping with the TICAD process, TrC in the region promotes both intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation, particularly between Asia and Africa; and
- Middle-East: Two priorities for TrC are to support efforts to restore peace in conflict-affected areas and foster partnerships among Arab countries.

The documents also makes reference to the remaining challenges facing JICA: 1) identifying the development themes and issues where in which the mobilization of southern knowledge resources will be most effective; 2) balancing the ownership of pivotal countries in their SSC activities (TrC) and the development needs of the beneficiary countries; 3) identifying strategies to select main southern partners for JICA's CD

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8. In spite of organizational and other changes, this guideline continues to be used as the key reference document with other newer supplementary materials.

support of their SSC; and 4) outlining exit strategies for the CD support of SSC and deciding how long such CD support should continue.

Following the publication of the guideline, JICA has built on these recommendations, preparing and issuing operational manuals for key TrC instruments. These guidelines and manuals prepared during the second half of 2000s are key documents informing JICA's TrC practices until now.

### 3. JICA's Current TrC Practices: A Short Overview of Trends and Patterns

Below is a quick glance of what JICA's global TrC engagement looks like.

#### 3.1 The current status of JICA's TrC

Table 1 below illustrates the current trends and characteristics of JICA's triangular training program by region (Third Country Training Program/TCTP in JICA terminology). In terms of magnitude, JICA assisted its southern partners to accept a total of about 3,600 training participants during the Japanese fiscal year of 2011.

**Table1. The number of TCTP participants (by region in 2011)**

		Number of TCTP Participants sent (by regional origin)					
		<i>Asia-Pacific</i>	<i>LAC</i>	<i>Middle-East*</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>SSA</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of TCTP Participants received	<i>Asia-Pacific</i>	885	15	50	0	279	1229
	<i>LAC</i>	16	598	0	0	96	710
	<i>Middle-East*</i>	78	0	647	0	472	1,197
	<i>Europe</i>	30	0	28	6	0	64
	<i>SSA</i>	0	0	0	0	381	381
	<i>Total</i>	1009	613	725	6	1,228	3,581

\*Note: Middle-East here includes North Africa according to the JICA's regional classification for its operation.

Source: JICA 2011

The table illustrates several general features. First and not surprisingly, roughly two thirds of TCTP participants receive training within their respective regions, with a country in the region working as a provider in

support of other countries in the region (Asia-Pacific 885, LAC 598, Middle-East 647, SSA 381).

Second, JICA's main TrC engagements occur in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>9</sup> The countries in this region have accepted the largest number of trainees (1229).<sup>10</sup>

The Middle-East region has provided the second largest number of trainees (1197), of which over half come from the same region. Here again, the SSA region is the second largest beneficiary (472) of training programs taking place in the Middle-East. This is due to the presence of Egypt and Maghreb countries, which have been very active in providing knowledge opportunities to SSA participants (Honda, Kato and Shimoda 2013).

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is another region active in JICA-supported TrC. Though the total number of TCTP activities is smaller than in other regions such as Asia-Pacific (710), LAC countries with JICA support have undertaken a number of good regional knowledge exchange practices in broad areas including health, disaster prevention, sustainable agriculture, and the environment. Such a high commitment to regional exchanges in part reflects the similarities in languages, geographical features, and cultural and historical heritage.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) received the largest number of trainees (1228). The fact that nearly 300 of these SSA participants (279) were trained in Asia-Pacific Region underscores the importance placed on the promotion of Asia-Africa cooperation through the TICAD process. It is also interesting to note that quite a large number of SSA participants (381) were trained in other SSA countries, demonstrating an active inter-regional exchange. Another notable trend is the increasingly active exchanges between SSA and Latin America (96), the sizable portion of which seems to be the exchange between Brazil and Lusophone African countries, according to other sources (Honda, Kato and Shimoda. 2013).

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9. An analysis of the past trends shows that the proportion of SSA trainees has consistently increased over the years, whereas those in the Asia-Pacific have been decreasing (JICA 2011). LAC has consistently engaged in large numbers of TrC practices.

10. Though not shown in the table, the general trend within the South-East Asia sub-region is that more advanced ASEAN countries including Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia support CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) in lower income brackets (JICA2012b).

The above table illustrates the global coverage of JICA's TrC partnerships, extending from Asia-Pacific, which has been the traditional focus of Japan's ODA, to other regions of SSA, Middle-East and LAC. This implies that a quite large number of JICA's divisions, offices, and personnel are engaged in TrCs in one way or another, forming a backdrop of JICA's TrC mechanism.

**3.2 Patterns of JICA's triangular cooperation<sup>11</sup>**

JICA's TrC is implemented in a variety of forms. In the early years, it was mostly limited to the support of training programs offered by southern countries and the dispatch of a small number of southern experts. During that time, the objectives were also generally confined to the dissemination of knowledge initially developed through JICA's prior bilateral technical cooperation. Since the 1990s, however, JICA's TrC practices have diversified. In order to respond to the variety of development needs in developing countries, JICA has introduced more complex patterns of TrC practices such as the regional multi-stakeholders' networks on specific themes. It also began to provide assistance to the capacity development (CD) efforts of southern partners in their SSC planning and management. The following section depicts some discernible patterns of JICA's current TrC. The first four are patterns of TrC, while the last two are related to JICA's support of CD efforts by pivotal countries.<sup>12</sup>

*Key patterns of triangular cooperation*

**a) Dissemination of excellent practices (Figure 1)**

This has been the most standard form of JICA's TrC. This framework allows the dissemination of knowledge co-created through prior technical cooperation between southern partner(s) and JICA to other beneficiary countries in the South. Training and the dispatch of experts are the usual instruments used for this pattern. This pattern often develops into a regional network as in

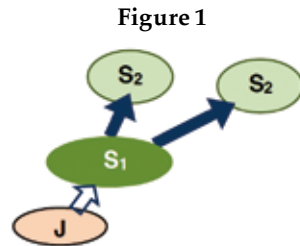


Figure 1

11. The patterns illustrated in this section are based on the patterns set out by JICA's thematic guideline on South-South Cooperation (JICA 2006), with some author's additions and changes.

12. In the diagrams included in this section, J stands for Japan and S stands for Southern partners. Arrows explain the flow of personnel, equipment, materials, and other input. Areas enclosed with dotted red lines indicate the scope of JICA's direct engagement.

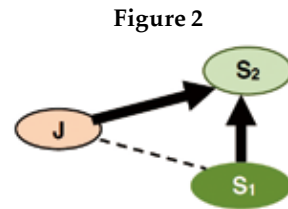


pattern d) below.

Examples of this type of cooperation abound in JICA's TrC practices. The Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) in collaboration with JICA has organized a triangular training program on social forestry, which was previously developed through bilateral technical cooperation between Kenya and Japan.<sup>13</sup> Senegal's Vocational Training Center (CFPT) actively hosts vocational training programs for instructors and trainers from French-speaking African countries in the field of industrial development, building on its strengthened capacity through bilateral cooperation with Japan (Honda, Kato, and Shimoda 2013).

### b) Collaborative support among Japan and southern development partners (Figure 2)

This is another pattern in which JICA and southern partner(s) jointly support a beneficiary country through strategic collaboration as equal partners. As many developing countries have developed into middle-income countries with unique technological and managerial strengths, it has become more beneficial to partner with these emerging countries in seeking for the synergy of knowledge from both Japan and partner country(ies).



One notable example of this pattern is the joint support by Brazil and Japan for capacity building of Angola's Josina Machel Hospital, the national reference hospital in the country's capital Luanda that was rehabilitated with the Japanese capital grant aid (Task Team on South-South Cooperation, 2011). The project was the first full partnership launched in 2007 between Brazil and Japan under the Japan-Brazil Partnership Program (JBPP).<sup>14</sup> In organizing twelve training programs for over 700 medical and health staff of the hospital during the three-year period, the government of Brazil with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and its Embassy in Angola has shared Brazilian expertise, fully taking advantage of the language and cultural

13. See chapter 4 of this volume by Akio Hosono for more details of the case.

14. The success of this partnership then led to subsequent joint cooperation on a larger scale to help strengthen the human resources for the Angolan health sector called "Project of Health Sector Human Resource Development in ANGOLA – ProFORSA." The ProFORSA is currently ongoing.

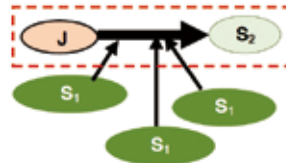
similarities between the two countries.

Another example of this pattern is Project *Taishin* (a Japanese word meaning “quake resistant”) or “Enhancement of Technology for the Construction of Popular Earthquake-resistant Housing,” which was implemented from 2003 to 2008 with the aim of alleviating the disaster risk for residents in the popular low-cost housing in El Salvador. The project was a collaborative response by Mexico and Japan to help El Salvador recover from the two successive tragic earthquakes in 2001 and rebuild the country. In the initiative, the National Center for Disaster Prevention (CENAPRED) provided capacity development assistance to El Salvadorian counterpart organizations, while the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXICAD) oversaw the support from Mexico to El Salvador at a policy level. JICA helped facilitate the triangular initiative while also providing technical advice, financial assistance, and equipment (Saito 2012a).

#### c) Bilateral TrC integrating southern knowledge (Figure 3)

For the objective of enhancing the impact of JICA’s bilateral TrC project, JICA mobilizes knowledge resources from southern partners either through TCTP or TCED (“third country expert dispatch”) in the field where Japan may not have a comparative advantage or readily available good practices relevant to the beneficiary country under concern.

Figure 3

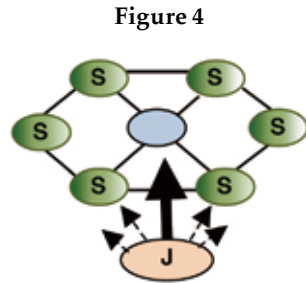


For example, the technical cooperation project “Capacity Development for Public Administration” in Ghana, sought expertise not only from Japan but also from a number of other countries including Singapore, Malaysia, and South Africa to enhance the training programs in ethical leadership and quality improvement at the Ghana’s Civil Service Training Centre (CSTC). The project design was based on the belief that the expertise from other commonwealth countries, which share many common features with Ghana, would add to the Japanese experiences in civil service management (Honda, Kato, and Shimoda 2013).

#### d) Network / platform among southern partners (Figure 4)

More complex forms of networks or platforms have been applied in recent years. In many of these patterns, no single southern partner

assumes the role of central knowledge dispenser,<sup>15</sup> rather, the alliance comprises a number of interested parties interacting among themselves, each bringing their own strengths and unique experiences. In other cases, the network mechanism may be introduced with the aim of connecting already ongoing and established practices in similar fields within the country.

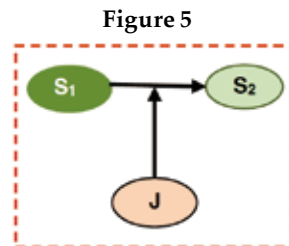


This has increasingly become one of the standard patterns of JICA's larger scale TrC projects, being implemented in various sectors and regions. In the field of solid waste management, the case of the promotion for improved solid waste among the Pacific states, J-PRISM, is a notable example.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) with its secretariat in Kenya is an example within the agricultural sector (Kubota 2013). This project strives to connect broad stakeholders ranging from government organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, and private sector and international donors, in the form of a multilateral knowledge platform for the development of the rice crop sector in Africa. In the education sector, Kenya played a key role as the knowledge hub for the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education project in Western, Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa (SMASE-WECSA). The project has developed into an even more horizontal network in which various countries are starting to share their own student-centered teaching methods in mathematics and science education (Ishihara 2012).

**JICA's CD support for TCDC: Indirect TrC engagement**

**e) Support for technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) (Figure 5)**

Apart from TrC types described above, JICA has also extended complementary support of technical cooperation among developing countries (previously termed generally as TCDC). The objectives of this support of TCDC are twofold. Firstly, it allows JICA to collaborate with southern



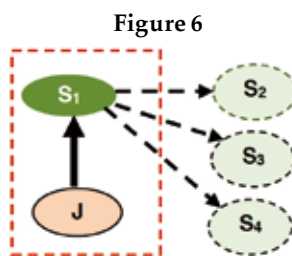
15. A central secretariat may be established to coordinate and facilitate the knowledge exchange activities among the network members.

16. See Chapter 10 of this volume for more details of the case.

partners even in fields where Japan may not have an absolute comparative advantage. Second, it provides Japan with opportunities to support the southern partners' CD through the complementary support of their TCDC practices.

#### f) Support for SSC organizational capacity development (Figure 6)

JICA has also assisted the CD efforts of southern partners more directly, dispatching a number of technical cooperation experts to share Japanese ODA experiences and practical approaches to planning and managing cooperation activities. It has also accepted key personnel to CD workshops for SSC in Japan and elsewhere.



One ongoing practice is JICA's support of the Indonesian efforts in strengthening capacity to deliver more effective SSC. JICA has been assisting Indonesia to this end, in close collaboration with other international organizations like UNDP and the World Bank (Shimoda and Nakazawa 2012).

### 3.3 Systematization of TrC planning and execution

Parallel to the diversification of TrC approaches described above, JICA and the Japanese government have introduced and experimented with several institutional approaches for systematizing its TrC practices. Two such notable exercises are Partnership Programs (PP) and the JICA-ASEAN Regional Cooperation Meeting (JARCOM), the latter of which has now been reorganized and aligned to the Initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI).

#### (1) Partnership Programs (PP)

In response to rapidly expanding and more complex TrC practices, the Japanese government introduced the "Partnership Programs (PPs). PPs are a bilateral cooperation framework between Japan and the key TrC partners.<sup>17</sup> The two main objectives of PPs are first to provide a platform for systematic joint programming and implementing of TrC, and second to share Japanese experiences on aid management with some of the

17. The conclusion of PP generally takes the form of formal memorandum of discussions signed by the high level representatives of both countries, many of which were signed by Foreign Ministers.

counterpart organizations. An example of the latter is the dispatch of experts to the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCI) in the mid-2000s. Since the launch of the first PP with Thailand in 1994, twelve PPs have been concluded throughout the Asian, African, and Latin American regions.

**Table2. Currently operational Partnership Programs**

Region	Countries	Launch year
Asia	Singapore	1994
	Thailand	1994
	Philippine	2002
	Indonesia	2003
Latin America and the Caribbean	Chile	1999
	Brazil	2000
	Argentina	2001
	Mexico	2003
Middle-East and North Africa	Egypt	1998
	Tunisia	1999
	Morocco	2003
	Jordan	2004

Source: JICA (2012a)

PPs generally start with the signing of documents or statements of commitment to the partnership which include the cost-sharing principle among the two parties,<sup>18</sup> the forms of triangular technical cooperation, and the annual joint planning cycle. Some PPs spell out priority areas for joint activities. Among the PPs, the Japan-Chile Partnership Program (JCPP), launched in 1999 and operating under strong Chilean leadership to which Japan extended catalytic support, has been the most active (Yamada 2007; JICA 2009b).

In spite of such notable good practices, PPs are not without their problems. For example, several past evaluations pointed out that the intensity of activities differs quite widely among PPs (Nomura Research Institute 2013). Given the rapidly changing global development landscape, some revisions of the design of PPs may be in order so as to make full use of the model as a unifying framework for increasingly voluminous and complex TrC practices, especially in key pivotal countries.

18. Some PPs specify the exact cost-sharing ratio in the document.

## **(2) JARCOM and its successor initiatives**

Another attempt at systemizing TrC practices was the JICA-ASEAN Regional Cooperation Meeting (JARCOM) launched in 2002. JARCOM is a multi-country, multi-sector process and mechanism to effectively meet the knowledge and capacity buildings needs of ASEAN countries.<sup>19</sup> It also represents JICA's conscious efforts at promoting more demand-driven, effective TrC. In JARCOM, CLMV countries<sup>20</sup> first submit a list of areas in need of support. This list is then carefully matched with the potential knowledge provider(s) in more advanced ASEAN countries such as Thailand and Indonesia, using various channels such as bilateral and multilateral meetings, fact-finding missions, and seminars organized under the auspices of JARCOM (JICA Thailand Office and UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok 2009).

Building on the achievement of JARCOM, the needs matching system further evolved into what is called J-SEAM (Japan-Southeast Asian Meeting for South-South Cooperation), which puts more emphasis on the quality of knowledge exchange as well as the network building. To further enhance the alignment of JICA-assisted regional TrC coordination efforts, JICA then dissolved J-SEAM, incorporating some of its constituent activities into the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) under the auspices of ASEAN. To extend necessary support to IAI, JICA, ASEAN Secretariat, and Laos, for example, are currently implementing the Laos Pilot Program for Narrowing the Development Gap toward ASEAN Integration with the focus on green economy and clean environment (JICA 2012b).

## **4. JICA's TrC Operation: Instruments, Management Mechanisms, and Organizational Structure**

Managing TrC is no easy task as it inevitably involves multiple stakeholders from multiple countries (OECD 2013a). As a long-standing bilateral donor in TrC, JICA has made continuous efforts to improve its institutional and organizational mechanism over the years.<sup>21</sup> This section provides a snapshot of the instruments, management

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19. The several related actions began in the late 1990s, culminating in the launch of JARCOM process in 2002.

20. CLMV denotes the lower-income group of ASEAN countries including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

21. These moves have been influenced and accelerated by Japan's recent ODA reform, in which JICA was re-established as an autonomous public aid agency handling three aid modalities of concessional loan, capital grant aid, and technical cooperation.

mechanisms, and organizational structure of JICA's TrC in its current form.

In what follows, we will have a look at JICA's TrC instrument and mechanisms, whose major characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- JICA's main TrC instruments remain the conventional training programs and expert dispatch. Recently, however, other instruments such as the packaged technical cooperation projects have increasingly been applied.
- JICA's TrC management mechanism is basically decentralized, with its country offices increasingly taking on larger or leading roles.
- JICA has continuously improved instruments and management structure, which include the organization-wide knowledge management on TrC.
- JICA actively collaborates with other international partners such as the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in various fields such as joint capacity building.

#### **4.1 Key TrC instruments<sup>22</sup>**

The main modalities are training programs, the dispatch of experts, and TrC in project form.

##### **(1) Third Country Training Program (TCTP)**

The large part of triangular training programs, forming the core of JICA's TrC, has been supported through what it calls the Third Country Training Program (TCTP) scheme. TCTP has been the main instruments for the TrC pattern a) described in section 3-2 above, and has also been widely deployed in other patterns.<sup>23</sup> TCTP is undertaken through cost-sharing between JICA and the host country, the details of which will be explained in the later section on planning and implementation. It includes open or semi-open training programs ("group training" in JICA operational term) and the tailor-made training, specifically designed for a specific country or organization ("individual training" by

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22. TCTP and TCED are frequently complemented with other auxiliary instruments including the supply of equipment and the dispatch of Japanese experts to provide additional expertise to enrich TCTP training courses.

23. TCTP may be implemented in organizations of southern partners without any prior cooperation from JICA if the program specifically addresses the priority global and regional issues.

JICA's term).<sup>24</sup> Usually, one training program lasts for one to two months per year over for a period of three years<sup>25</sup>.

## **(2) Third Country Expert Dispatch (TCED)**

JICA's assistance to the southern experts dispatch has been through the scheme called Third Country Experts Dispatch (TCED).<sup>26</sup>

In comparison to TCTP, the total number of dispatched TCED personnel has been relatively limited, lingering at a little over one hundred in 2011 (JICA 2011). The detailed composition of TCED in terms of region and country of origin as well as beneficiary countries in 2011 is provided in the Table 3 below. Under the TCED scheme most experts come from middle-income countries. The LAC countries, such as Mexico and Brazil dispatched relatively high numbers of experts; these countries are important partners for Japan, where, through bilateral cooperation, useful practices and knowledge have been created and accumulated. These LAC countries are also where JICA has been actively engaged in promoting TrC.

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24. The beneficiaries of the latter are usually the counterpart organizations of JICA's ongoing bilateral technical cooperation.

25. An extension for another three years (2<sup>nd</sup> phase) may be granted upon the terminal evaluation of the expected impact of the first phase and assessment of the continuing needs and relevance of the program.

26. In the scheme, there are generally two sub-types: 1) TCED integrated into JICA's bilateral project and 2) stand-alone TCED with the main objective of disseminating knowledge and skills of southern country experts previously acquired through JICA's bilateral technical cooperation.



**Table3. The composition of TCED by country in 2011<sup>27</sup>**

Regional origins	Country Origin (# of experts in total)	Beneficiary countries	Number of TCED
Asia	Indonesia (2)	Madagascar	2
	Philippines (4)	Cambodia	2
		Tanzania	2
	Vietnam (10)	Mozambique	10
Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	Argentina (22)	Costa Rica	1
		Paraguay	21
	Chile (8)	Paraguay	8
	Brazil (31)	Angola	1
		Cambodia	3
		Nicaragua	2
		Paraguay	16
		Bolivia	1
		Mozambique	8
		Mexico (26)	El Salvador
	Guatemala		1
	Haiti		2
	Paraguay		3
	Honduras		13
<b>Total</b>			<b>99</b>

Source: JICA 2011

TCED can be used in multiple patterns with varied objectives. For example, in the project addressing regional solid waste management in the Pacific (Chapter 10), local experts in the Pacific are actively engaged in the regional initiative as advisers to share local experiences with other countries within the region. Other than this specific mobilization of TCED within the particular region, there are also cases of inter-regional dispatch from one region to another. For instance, Ghana's Civil Service Training Centre (CSTC) accepted experts from Civil Service College (CSC) of Singapore in various themes including quality and productivity improvement as part of JICA-supported bilateral technical cooperation project.<sup>28</sup>

### **(3) Triangular cooperation in project form**

In order to provide more systematic and flexible assistance to address

27. This figure mostly represents those of stand-alone TCED and excludes TCED dispatched as part of larger technical cooperation projects. JICA has not yet consolidated all data of TCED in various forms.

28. See Honda, Kato and Shimoda (2013) for details.

development challenges, programming TrC in a project form, called the “Technical Cooperation Project/TCP” in JICA’s operational terminology, is becoming increasingly common. TCP is a multi-year TrC scheme which can package ranges of technical cooperation instruments including the dispatch of experts, training, equipment, and complementary financial assistance. There are some variations in the way TCP is applied for TrC practices. One clear-cut approach are the projects specifically designed to promote TrC engagement, an example of which is the project for livestock hygiene improvement in South America, which aimed to develop and enhance the regional network of university-based veterinary professionals (Inamura 2012). Another noticeable variation is the case of TCP as described in pattern (c) of the section 3-2 above, in which a bilateral project incorporates TrC sub-components to take advantage of knowledge available in southern countries. The Project for Improvement of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Service in Madagascar, for instance, incorporated the learning opportunities in Brazil on the advanced practice of humanized care in maternity clinics into JICA-assisted bilateral cooperation involving Japanese advisers (JICA 2010).

#### **(4) TrC consisting of multiple programs and projects**

Often, a single project or program cannot effectively manage and coordinate continuous activities of knowledge sharing and dialogue among multiple stakeholders from multiple countries. Therefore, gradually, JICA began to form more extensive initiatives, consisting of multiple projects and programs. The “Better Hospital Services Program” (BHSP) in Africa is such a case. It is an inter-regional multi-country triangular cooperation connecting Sri Lanka, Japan, and 17 African countries to promote management change in African hospital services, applying the knowledge package for management called 5S-KAIZEN-TQM.<sup>29</sup> BHSP provides a broad cooperation framework which flexibly binds projects and programs using diverse modalities such as TCTP, TCED, and bilateral technical cooperation projects in the beneficiary countries for effective knowledge exchange. This BHSP approach has already resulted in the localization and institutional scale-up of the management change approach in Tanzania, which has come to play a role as a regional knowledge provider in Africa in recent years (Honda 2013).

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29. 5S-KAIZEN-TQM is the acronym of three inter-connected but distinct management change approaches of 1) 5S (“Sort,” “Set,” “Shine,” “Standardize,” and “Sustain”), 2) KAIZEN and 3) Total Quality Management (TQM).

## 4.2 Planning and implementation

Under JICA's approach to TrC, a project can be initiated by pivotal countries or by the beneficiary countries, or by a combination of both.

However a project begins, the planning and implementation facilitated by JICA is largely decentralized to country offices which increasingly play key roles in helping partner countries to formulate and execute TrC programs.<sup>30</sup> The greater weight is now placed on the opinions and recommendations of the country offices in the formal approval process, while the headquarters is taking on more supportive roles. The final authority over new projects and programs does still rest with the headquarters.<sup>31</sup>

As an example, we can examine a triangular training program (TCTP), the major form of JICA's TrC. Figure 7 is a stylized image of the process.

Figure 7. TrC planning and implementation: A stylized image in the case of TCTP<sup>32</sup>



30. Such general characteristics of JICA's TrC planning have been further reinforced by the recent institutional and organizational reform of Japan's ODA and JICA, moving more towards the country-based planning and implementation, and the closer dialogue with the partner country governments.

31. The authority of the very final authorization lies with the International Cooperation Bureau of MoFA, which receives the official request through its diplomatic channel in parallel with the internal transaction within JICA. This is to ensure the effective diplomatic communication among TrC stakeholders whenever any matter arises.

32. In the above figure, EoJ denotes Embassy of Japan.

Suppose that the planning process starts at JICA's partner organization(s), which decides that it would like to share their expertise with other countries. If JICA is ready to support such an initiative, the preparation process then usually starts with a quick needs survey (conducted jointly by JICA and its partner country/organizations) for the proposed subject area among the potential beneficiary countries (Arrow *i* in Figure 7). If necessary, JICA also conducts a capacity assessment of the organization proposing a TrC, to see if it is adequately equipped to plan and manage the proposed TrC. After these preparatory surveys, an official request of support containing the details of the proposed training program is then sent to the JICA headquarters for consideration (Arrow *ii* in Figure 7).

When the request is approved, the counterpart organization then goes on to further concretize the program design with support from JICA's country team (Arrow *iii* in Figure 7). They also develop the curriculum of the program, and go through the administrative procedures pertaining to the program, including the preparation of course information. Once preparatory works are completed, the host organization invites applications to the course from the target countries through its own diplomatic channels (Arrow *iii* in Figure 7). JICA also helps facilitate the process of application by sharing the course information through its country office's network (Arrow *iv* in Figure 7).

Following the selection of applicants using the agreed criteria, the host organization then actually organizes the training.

The costs of organizing TCTPs are usually shared by JICA and its partner countries. In the case of standard TCTP, southern partners are expected to provide appropriate venues and facilities, develop and prepare curriculum, select participants, and organize the actual training. JICA provides, as matching contributions, its partners with various resources, including the advisory support to develop curriculum and select participants, and the complementary financial contributions including travel and accommodation expenses of the participants and honoraria for guest instructors from overseas. The proportion of the required contributions from the southern partners is determined through dialogue, taking into account their financial capacity and other factors.

The specific allocation of JICA's matching contributions to TrC will depend on the TrC pattern and instruments used. Most of the TCTP budget is allocated to country offices within the pivotal country where host organizations are located. In other cases, such as when a TrC sub-component constitutes part of larger project, the cost of sourcing southern expertise is usually budgeted at a JICA office in the beneficiary country.

### **4.3 Evaluation**

#### **(1) Operational evaluations**

In line with the result-based management of Japan's ODA and JICA's operation, JICA conducts operational evaluations of all TrC programs and projects. The evaluation is conducted at different places and focuses on different aspects of TrC, depending on the type of TrC. For example, in the case of standard TCTP, the focus of the operational evaluation is usually on how effectively the partner organization has conducted the program, and the evaluation is therefore conducted in the pivotal country. On the other hand, in case of tailor-made TCTP programs for the specific needs of groups of people or organizations of beneficiary countries, stronger attention is paid to the impact on the beneficiary countries and how the program has contributed to actual problem-solving.

Though JICA applies differentiated evaluation methods and approaches depending on the instruments used and the size of operation, they are all in line with the general evaluation rules for bilateral cooperation. For most TrC practices, which are largely small operations, simplified evaluation methods are applied.<sup>33</sup> For a limited number of large scale operations, JICA applies the full-scale evaluation methods based on the five DAC evaluation criteria through the project cycle.<sup>34</sup> In conducting the evaluation, JICA's thematic guideline on SSC advises that counterpart organization and the government should be appropriately

33. According to JICA's evaluation guideline published in 2010, the projects with the total planned input of 200 million yen or less for the entire duration can be evaluated in simplified methods (JICA 2010). In such case, the main focus of the evaluation is usually placed on the three criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency out of five DAC evaluation criteria though other two items of sustainability and impact may also be included depending on the nature of the program.

34. JICA undertakes evaluation exercises with the view to the continuous cycle of learning and feedback in the form of PDCA (Plan, Do, Check and Action). In the case of full scale evaluation, JICA conducts series of exercises including ex-ante, mid-term review, terminal and post-project.

consulted in all the steps of the evaluation exercise.<sup>35</sup> For instance, in the case of a small-scale triangular training program, JICA set a general rule that the host organization, JICA, and the participants hold an interactive evaluation session on the relevance and usefulness of training toward the end of each training course, at which point the course participants submit their evaluation sheets. The findings and recommendations from these are then used as the key referential information for the improvement of the next round of training. For example, the JICA-supported triangular training project organized by the Dominican Republic illustrates a case where the project made continuous improvement in response to the opinions gathered at the course evaluation workshop (Saito 2012).

For the objective of drawing lessons for further program improvement, JICA has also conducted ex-post evaluations of the past triangular training programs at the pivotal country level in collaboration with partner governments.<sup>36</sup> These studies usually consist of questionnaire surveys and field interviews to the ex-participants as well as other stakeholders including the government organs in the beneficiary countries.

## **(2) In-depth evaluation studies**

Beyond these operational evaluation exercises, JICA has also undertaken a series of in-depth evaluation studies on triangular cooperation. They include thematic evaluations of the broader impact of JICA's support of South-South cooperation as well as the series of country-level evaluations over the triangular training programs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the policy making body of Japan's ODA, has also undertaken evaluation studies on the effectiveness of Japan's SSC Support/TrC in 2003 and a third-party evaluation in 2012.<sup>37</sup> The scope and some of the key findings from major in-depth evaluation

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35. In the case of stand-alone dispatch of short-term third country experts, the evaluation is usually substituted by the submission of completion report by the experts to partner organization that received the expert and JICA offices of both in the beneficiary country and pivotal country.

36. Recent country-levels evaluations of TCTP include Egypt (2007), Morocco (2010), and the Philippines (2010).

37. MoFA has also conducted studies on the trend of "emerging" donors with reference to South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The recent studies include "The Study on Current State and Prospect of South-South and Triangular Cooperation by ASEAN Emerging Donors" (MoFA 2011) and "Effective Utilization of Asia's Resources in Africa: Potential for South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation" (MoFA 2012).

studies are summarized in the Table 4 below;

**Table 4. The scope and key findings of major in-depth evaluation studies on TrC**

Year	Done by	Type of Evaluation	Scope and Findings
2001	JICA	Thematic Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The study focused on the two TrC instruments of TCTP and TCED conducted between 1994 and 1999 by Singapore and Thailand.</li> <li>· The report identified several challenges including goals and objectives not clearly defined and practices and procedures which tended to be tedious and supply-driven. It also found several promising results such as the contribution to the capacity building of the beneficiary countries' professionals in fields such as health.</li> <li>· Based on the findings, the study recommended the move towards more equal partnership between JICA and pivotal countries, an increased focus on the demand, and a more systematic, streamlined and flexible operation.</li> </ul>
2003	MoFA	Thematic Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The study analyzed the broad spectrum of Japanese TrC covering not only TCTP and TCED but also other assistance including the Japan Human Resources Development Fund (JHRDF), a UNDP-administered trust fund, part of which is earmarked for SSC.</li> <li>· The evaluation positively assessed the Japanese long-term commitment and achievements to SSC both in terms of Japan's global diplomacy and its developmental impact. It also made several recommendations, including strengthening partnership programs, engaging in closer communication with beneficiary countries, and providing extra support to the CD efforts of pivotal countries for SSC implementation.</li> <li>· While assessing favorably the impacts of SSC Support and TrC by Japan, it made recommendations for enhancing the strategic orientation of Japan's support including the expansion of Partnership Program to other pivotal countries and the CD support to pivotal countries.</li> </ul>

2006	JICA	Third Party Thematic Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The study covered selected case studies, questionnaire surveys, and cross-regional analysis of JICA's TrC covering Asia, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa.</li> <li>· This evaluation found several key success factors of TrC. These included the presence of leading organizations, the engagement of stakeholders, and the clear roles assigned to each partner engaged in the TrC. It also pointed out some impeding factors like the lack of communication between the pivotal and beneficiary countries, and the misalignment of program contents with the exact needs of recipients. One challenge was that often TrC was not fully aligned to the development strategies of the beneficiary countries.</li> <li>· It made reference to the wide-range of patterns and instruments at JICA's disposal as its advantage in TrC.</li> <li>· The evaluation made comparisons that demonstrated variances among regions.</li> <li>· Based on these findings, it recommended stronger alignment of TrC into country policies and systems, deeper partnerships among TrC partners including more information sharing, and further enhancement of TrC implementation mechanisms including the strengthening of follow-up mechanisms.</li> </ul>
2012	MoFA	Third Party Thematic Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The study revisited historical pathways, policies and plans, and instruments and mechanism of TrC mainly conducted by JICA. In the analysis, special emphasis was placed on the aspect of Asia and Africa Cooperation with a concrete case study on the TrC knowledge exchange on export promotion between Malaysia and Zambia.</li> <li>· The evaluation found Japan's past TrC to be effective and relevant to policy, specifically in terms of the coherence with the Japanese government policy, the high global recognition on Japan's past contribution in TrC, and its refined procedures.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· It also suggests a few potential areas for further improvements, including strengthening Japan's TrC strategy with a view to the context of the changing global development landscape, and a more strategic selection of key partners with which Japan should further deepen its partnership.</li> <li>· It made five key recommendations: 1) align the use and definition of TrC in Japan's ODA mechanism, 2) create a stronger strategic orientation of its planning and implementation, 3) rationalize further the use of TrC instruments, 4) revisit the partnership strategy including partnership program, and 5) strengthen TrC policies and systems to more effectively utilize TrC as one of the key diplomatic instruments.</li> </ul>
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Many of the findings and recommendations from these studies have been incorporated into the TrC instruments and mechanisms. Some of the actions that have already been taken to address issues, which were recommended by previous evaluations, include the following:

- Introduce indicative TrC patterns with clearer objectives to promote systematization of TrC planning, implementation, and evaluation following the launch of the thematic guideline on SSC in 2005;
- Incorporate regional orientation into TrC, which can result in more projects in the form of region-wide networks including the solid waste management in the Pacific through the project of J-PRISM in the Pacific (Chapter 10 of this volume), the region-wide rice development initiative of CARD (Kubota 2013; Honda, Kato and Shimoda. 2013) and, professional network building among specialists in livestock hygiene in South America (Inamura 2012);
- Streamline and simplify procedures for TrC practices, such as the promotion of multi-year planning in TCTP to reduce the transaction cost of annual official requests and approval procedures; and
- Strengthen the communication between JICA offices engaged in TrC practices by, among other things, holding regional staff workshops in south-south/triangular cooperation in the LAC region for the objective of sharing experiences and establishing

consensus towards the further enhancement of TrC effectiveness.<sup>38</sup>

#### **4.4 Organizational management**

To strengthen the capacity of its country offices to manage TrC, JICA has instituted several support mechanism.

##### **(1) Staffing**

First, it has strengthened its country offices, especially those in key southern partner countries, by reinforcing the staff in charge. It assigned dedicated staff to its Malaysia and Indonesia offices, for instance, to help their counterpart organizations coordinate JICA-supported TrC activities.<sup>39</sup> Other actions for staffing include the nomination of the TrC focal point in the country offices of key TrC partner countries. Nationally-recruited staffs have also played a critical role in supporting the planning and execution of TrC in all country offices.<sup>40</sup>

Second, JICA has been trying to strengthen the intra-organizational network among country offices, in response to the recommendations by JICA's successive thematic evaluations on TrC (SSC support) on the necessity of further strengthening communications among country offices. To that end JICA has organized regional meetings of staff in charge of TrC including national staff to provide face-to-face opportunities to reinforce the human network within the organization.

##### **(2) Knowledge management**

In the mid-2000s, JICA established an internal cross-functional working

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38. The team responsible for the third-party thematic evaluation of TrC under the auspices of MoFA discovered that staffs working at the headquarters and overseas offices in LAC countries, for instance, consciously engage in systematic communication among themselves so as to ensure the needs-driven aspect of TrC with more of a focus on results. It also reported that JICA offices in ASEAN countries are closely communicating with each other and with IAI secretariat of ASEAN, especially during the formulation process of TrC programs (Nomura Research Institute 2013).

39. In Indonesia, JICA recently started to dispatch a Japanese expert to BAPPENAS, the Indonesian Development Planning Agency, to help further build capacity in SSC planning and management.

40. For example, in the JICA Indonesia office, a senior Indonesian staff in the position of Deputy Chief Representative oversees the entire triangular cooperation programs in Indonesia.

group on SSC/TrC at its headquarters.<sup>41</sup> The main activities included taking stock of JICA's globally-spread and increasingly diverse TrC practices and thinking of ways to systematize and improve the approaches and instruments. Following the launch, the working group has produced the Thematic Guideline on South-South Cooperation, which, along with manuals for SSC support<sup>42</sup>, has been the key document for JICA's TrC operation. The group has also compiled cases of good practices as support materials for JICA staff and experts. It also uploaded the key TrC data and reports from country offices and other HQs departments onto a dedicated website for SSC (mostly in Japanese). In the last few years, JICA has also started to reinvigorate its knowledge management activities on SSC/TrC.

### **(3) International partnership for TrC promotion**

JICA, through its Office of the Global Development Partnership, has also collaborated with other bilateral and multilateral organizations. One example is a collaborative learning and dialogue program hosted by JICA in Tokyo which aims to help develop capacity in pivotal countries to effectively organize international training. Participants in the program came from Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Egypt, and Kenya, among others countries,<sup>43</sup> and included resource persons from German GIZ, International Labour Organization, and UNDP,<sup>44</sup> along with JICA specialists. Another example is a joint CD program addressing the management of SSC/TrC planning and operations among the Brazilian Cooperation Agency of the Ministry of External Relations (ABC), UNOSSC, and JICA. It aims to create spaces for sharing knowledge and experiences among the government staff in SSC/TrC technical cooperation. In March 2013, its first "international training course on management of South-South and Triangular Technical Cooperation"

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41. The working group was launched as an integral part of the organization-wide move to form sector and thematic networks cutting across the formal divisions as part of the JICA's knowledge management. The secretariat of group was initially placed in Latin American and the Caribbean Department, which was instrumental in its establishment and where SSC support (TrC) was proportionately the most significant in the regional operation. Later, the secretariat moved to the Operations Strategy Department.

42. Here, SSC means "JICA's support to SSC", which then implies that the guideline and manuals are on JICA's TrC in the current use of terminology.

43. Three programs were organized between 2009 and 2011.

44. A resource person was invited from the then Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, the predecessor of the current UNOSSC.

was held in Brasilia<sup>45</sup> as part of the three-year initiative. The concrete topics discussed during the course included legal and institutional framework, human resources and project management, information sharing, and partnership building among others, all in connection with SSC/TrC.<sup>46</sup> Through such partnership, it is expected that JICA will also learn about the excellent practices of other international partners.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

This paper has attempted to provide an overview of JICA's policies and plans, mechanisms, and instruments for the management of its TrC. As was shown, the mechanism and instruments have evolved into a quite complex array of patterns with a broad range of instruments under the commitment of both Japanese Government and JICA. This is a result in large part of JICA's response to increasingly diverse development needs in its partner countries.

The current mechanism can also be understood as a product of JICA's continuous endeavor to balance the two aspects of both the ownership of southern partners, especially of pivotal countries, and the development impact at the beneficiary countries. Fulfilling both aspects in TrC can be a challenging one especially if the southern knowledge provider is very new to the act of international cooperation and has not fully established the systematic management mechanism for international cooperation.

This paper demonstrates that JICA has already made a number of efforts to address such TrC challenges through many of its innovative practices and mechanisms, with reasonable results as assessed by a series of thematic evaluations. The progressive decentralization of the planning and implementation of TrC practices into country offices both in pivotal and beneficiary countries is one action that has enabled JICA to get

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45. The target countries of the course include both middle-income countries, such as Brazil, acting mainly as SSC/TrC providers, and low-income countries, which are mainly beneficiaries. A total of 39 practitioners from 36 countries participated in the inaugural course.

46. Most of the lectures and presentations can be viewed from the dedicated space of Global South-South Development Academy in the UNOSSC web page at: <http://academy.ssc.undp.org/GSSDAcademy/video/default.aspx>. Also, UNOSSC, ABC, and JICA are currently compiling a study report on the management of SSC/TrC based on the information shared and discussion results during the course, which is expected to be available at the GSSD EXPO 2013 in Nairobi.

closer to both the source of knowledge and its beneficiary for better knowledge exchange facilitation. Closer communication between country offices is expected to provide complementary actions to help match the needs and supply of southern knowledge. JICA's support of an increasing number of regional networks is also a manifestation of JICA's efforts to enhance the virtuous cycle of the continuous mutual learning process among member stakeholders. JICA's past and current assistance with capacity development in pivotal countries, undertaken within the framework of Partnership Programs in most cases, can be also viewed in this light as the attempt to improve the quality of TrC practices under southern ownership.

Such generally positive assessments of JICA's current TrC mechanism, however, do not imply that its mechanism is in perfect shape. The author is of the view that it is an opportune moment for JICA to undertake another serious review of its TrC in light of the changing operational environment. The author recommends several actions in this regard. The first is to reinforce the data collection of JICA's TrC, which has not still been able to fully capture the entirety of TrC actions. The second is to undertake more systematic and comparative case analysis of JICA's TrC with reference to both global discussions on SSC/TrC and the latest practices by other major international donors. The case documentation exercises recently started at the JICA Research Institute might form the basis of such action. Third, the activation of JICA's organizational learning on TrC practice is lacking. Improved data and the results of systematic case analysis will inform the learning process. Last but not the least, the author would like to emphasize the importance of JICA's continuous and enhanced engagement in the global and regional learning on TrC practices, and hopes that this paper will be a modest contribution to such an endeavor.

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\*\*Publications with double asterisks can be downloaded from JICA's main web page: <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/index.html>.