

# **I . Reference for Selection of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs**



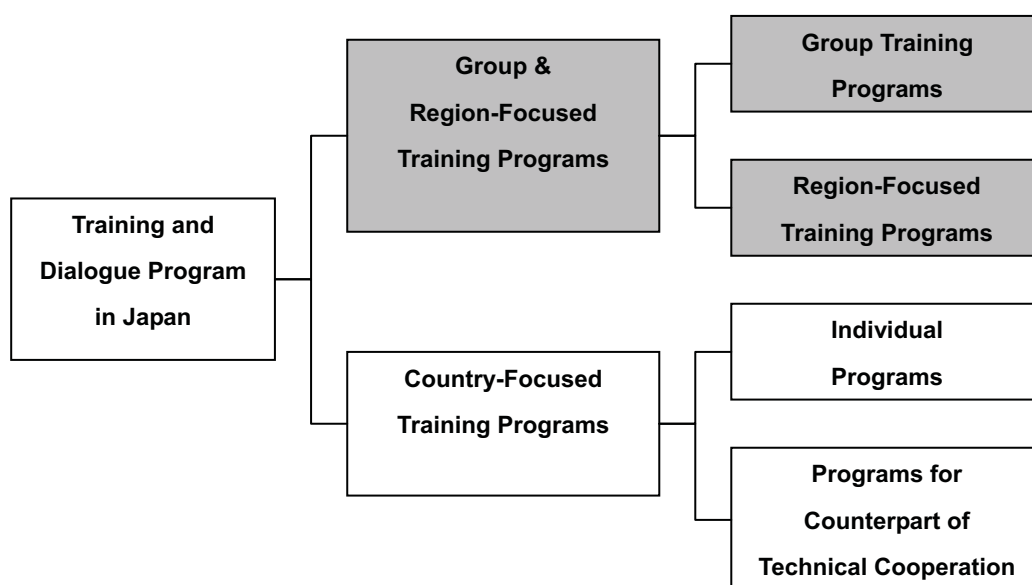
(Photo: Kenshiro Imamura)

## Reference for Selection of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs

### 1. What are Group and Region-Focused Training Programs ?

Being conducted in Japan, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs of JICA offer rare opportunities for those who are interested in Japanese experiences. Around five hundred programs are designed in collaboration with leading organizations in respective fields and offered to partner countries. While Group Training Programs target the whole world, Region-Focused Training Programs are offered to specified regions with contents specific to issues in the region. In the Japanese fiscal year 2008, totally 583 programs are implemented.

**<Chart1: Types of Training and Dialogue Programs in Japan>**



Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have the following features which are not seen in other types of technical cooperation, because the programs are proposed by Japan and implemented inside Japan.

- (1) The programs will be opportunities for leaders of partner countries to share knowledge, experience, and idea of practitioners at the forefront and professionals in Japan who cannot be dispatched as a mission member or expert to partner countries
- (2) The programs will be opportunities to transfer the tacit knowledge to participants effectively such as sense of value, concepts, systems, machinery of organization which are unique to Japanese society and can be understood only through first-hand experiences by participants
- (3) The programs will be opportunities for partner countries to share experiences and create innovative knowledge together with other partner countries which face similar difficulties or

issues

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs, which have the advantage of being implemented inside Japan as explained above, can produce significant effects when organically combined with other technical cooperation or financial aid for partner countries.

## **2. Recent Changes in Group and Region-Focused Training Programs**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have been conducted for many years as one of the oldest forms of technical cooperation. Their main objective has been human resource development focused on mid-level personnel in partner countries.

While the Programs have been contributing to the empowerment of future leaders, JICA decided to review their objective and modality, considering recent changes in the business environment surrounding the programs. They include among others, changes in the needs of the partner countries, changes caused by the progress of the program approaches in Japan's international cooperation, as well as the administrative reform of the Government of Japan to further improve efficiency. As a result, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs are being largely transformed as explained below.

### **(1) Change in objective: Problem solving in addition to human resource development**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have traditionally aimed at human resource development of mid-level personnel. These traditional training programs have come to be reviewed in terms of efficiency since training opportunities in partner countries have been expanded and improved in recent years. Training in Japan should be re-focused at truly core professionals or decision makers in organizations or should be offered to only those organizations which are ready to take concrete steps in dissemination of the knowledge brought back by their personnel dispatched to the programs.

On the other hand, the objectives of partner countries in sending personnel to Japan are not limited to medium- and long-term human resource development. They also could send their personnel to study Japan's experiences to re-create their own solutions for their specific issues such as the introduction of a new institution/system or improvements in the operation of their organization. JICA is strengthening those programs which could effectively facilitate partner countries to create their own solutions by utilizing the advantages of the training program that is technical cooperation conducted in Japan.

JICA has classified Group and Region-Focused Training Programs into four standard categories as shown below, in order to clarify the objectives of the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs whose contents are becoming more diverse in response to changes in the environment surrounding the programs.

**<Chart 2: 4 standard categories of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs>**

Standard category	Concept
Leaders Training Programs	The primary objective is to enhance the capacity of personnel who are involved in important decision making in an organization or who are engaged in highly specialized areas.
Trainers Training Programs	This type aims to disseminate the kinds of knowledge and skills which become significant when many people learn them. This type of programs target at mid-level personnel of “front-line” occupations such as teachers, nurses and extension officers. Such program is implemented with the aim of the specified final beneficiaries gaining knowledge and skills thorough program participants, in addition to the development of the abilities of the participants themselves.
Solution Creation Programs	This type aims to facilitate problem solving in an organization or a society such as making improvements in the operation of an organization, the creation of political measures and the establishment of systems. Programs of this type provide an opportunity for partner countries to consider the measures needed to solve the problems in their countries by using the Japanese experience as a reference.
International Dialogue Programs	This type aims to share experience related to regional or global problems and to develop new knowledge. It promotes international dialogues and the creation of networks for important problems.

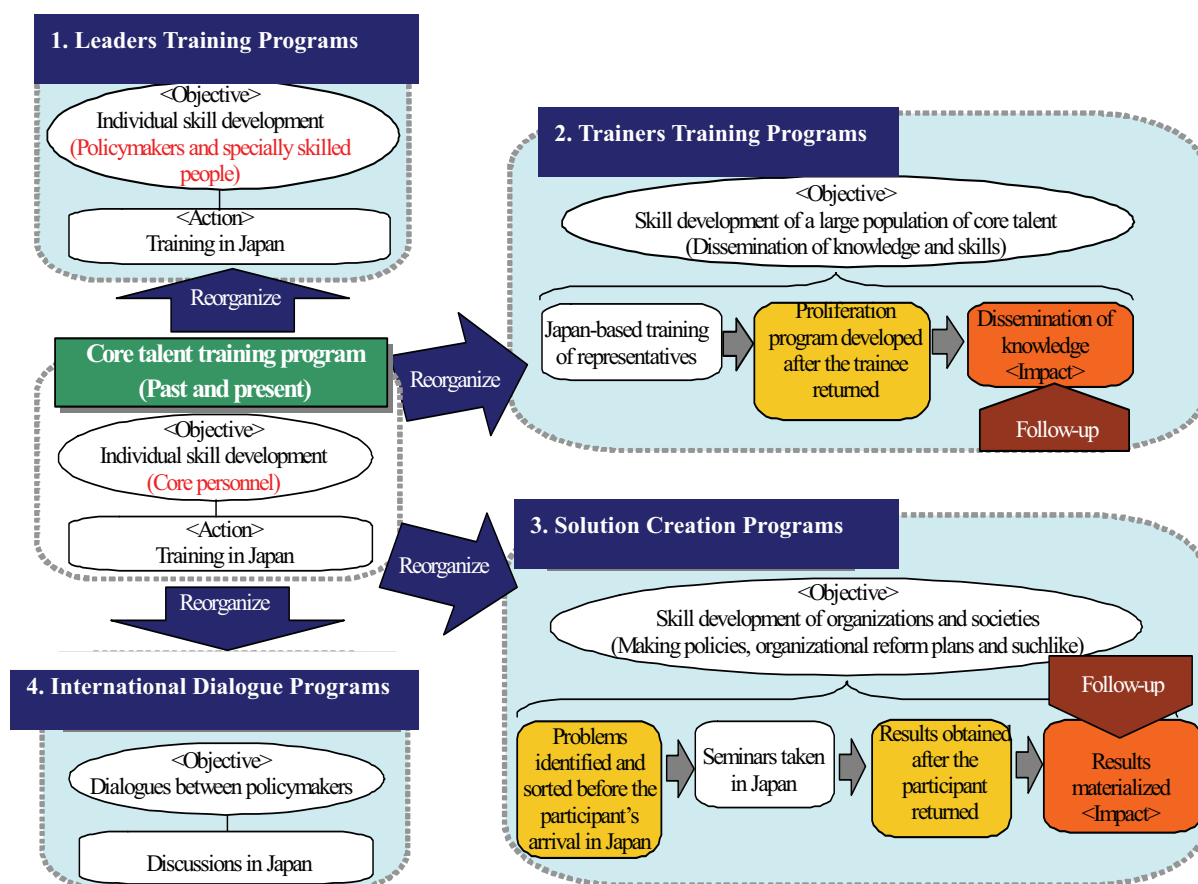
## **(2) Change in modality : From individuals to organizations**

Conventional Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have been completed in Japan. However, when the program aims to disseminate knowledge or to solve problems of an organization rather than enhancement of the capacities of individual participants, it is necessary to have the involvement of the organizations which send participants to the program and to have activities before and after a program in Japan. Therefore, JICA is expanding the scope of program methods to include a “preliminary phase” which is held prior to a program in Japan, a “finalization phase” which is held based on the results of the program in Japan after the participants return to their own countries and “follow-up cooperation” after the program ends. JICA is also diversifying the tools for programs, to include distance learning using a teleconference system and a complementary program in a third country.

Such flexible approaches have led to the creation of various forms of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs which go beyond the traditional image of Group Training Programs. Examples of the new forms of programs include a project-type training in which a program is held targeting similar countries for three years with different contents in each year to

gain final results within three years and one in which distance learning and a program in Japan are combined and participants can obtain an academic degree in one year.

**<Chart 3: Reorganization of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs and the establishment of standard category-clarification of the aims and more flexibility in approaches>**



### (3) Change in contents: More focus on “Japanese ways”

In the context of the administrative reform by the Japanese government, from the viewpoint of cost-effectiveness, the training programs in Japan are expected to be implemented only when they are really worth being carried out in Japan.

It is assumed that training programs in other countries than Japan would be more effective to transfer universal technologies and theories. However, as a result that Japan has actively adapted the Western systems, approaches and technologies in accordance with own conditions, it has unique experiences and knowledge which cannot be found in the Western countries, ranging from organizational systems like organizational management and personnel management to social systems like campaigns for improvements in daily lives and local

administration.

It may be difficult for partner countries to apply these unique experiences of Japan as they are because conditions of these countries would be very different from those of Japan. But they can utilize the Japanese experiences and knowledge as useful catalysts when they invent their own approaches or measures to solve problems they face.

Recently JICA has formulated more programs than before that make the most of the advantages of the Japanese unique experiences and knowledge. It also has developed learning materials by which partner countries can understand the Japanese unique experiences easily, overcoming the difference between the both sides.

**<Chart 4: Recent Examples of programs that make full use of the unique experiences of Japan>**

Subject	Name of program	Details
Japanese-style management	Seminar on Creating a New Methodology for the Knowledge society (Since 2004)	Internationally renowned economists summarize and systemize the approaches of Japanese-style organization management.
Japanese-style management	Management of Human Capacity Development Programs (Since 2006)	Some of Japanese leading companies cooperate in the systemization of Japanese approaches to personnel affairs and human resource development.
Japanese-style administrative reform	Top Management Forum on Local Government Reform for Asia and Africa (Since 2006)	Reflecting the internationally unique development of Japan, administrative and financial reform systems in Japanese local communities are programmed into a bidirectional international forum.
Japanese-style participatory development	Promotion of Enabling Environment for Civil Society and Community Development (Since 2006)	What is referred to as hometown science and other approaches unique to Japanese local development are systemized from the viewpoint of development.
Livelihood Improvement Approach	Rural Community Development by Livelihood Improvement Approach (Since 2006)	The combination of Japanese life improvement movement and agrarian reform was the driving force of the postwar rural development. The experience of the commitment is systemized.
Recycling-based Society	Construction and Designing of Recycling-based Society (Since 2006)	Japans' unique values and ideas, represented by Mottainai, the abhorrence of waste, are systemized.
School health	School health (Since 2006)	The internationally rare system of our school health and the experience of its application are systemized.
Experiences of Okinawa	Maternal and Child Health Promotion Based on Community (Since 2006)	The Okinawa Prefecture's unique experience of stationed nursing staff is systemized.

### **3. Utilization of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs**

#### **(1) Combination with the JICA Programs**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs has increasingly been combined with a technical cooperation project or an individual program such as expert dispatches, an in-country training, and so on. As a result of the operation review of the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs, it has become easier to combine them with other projects.

Major changes in the operation are as follows;

#### **Changes in the allocations of programs**

- In order to make it possible to utilize the Programs in a systematic manner, the allocation of each program is fixed for the period of its implementation, which is generally three years. Accordingly, the official requests by partner countries and subsequent bilateral agreements are made for the period of three years.
- In order to make it possible to utilize the Programs intensively, the maximum number of participants for each program in one year is set at two for the Group Training and four for the Region Focused Training.
- While allocation of a program is fixed for the period of its implementation, partner countries can cancel the allocation of the second or third year. On the other hand, it would be possible as well to request allocation for a program on its second or third year even if the program wasn't allocated on its first year, while realization of the request may depend upon situation of the program.

#### **Changes in the procedures of the request survey**

- To enhance the realization of requests and predictability of the training request survey, the number of participants is to be determined flexibly based on the request survey in the planning of JFY2008, instead of the previous system that conducted the survey after allocations of programs and the number of participants to partner countries.
- In the planning for JFY2008, a request survey for the Group Training Programs and the one for the Region Focused Training Programs have been unified, and the number of programs of each type will be determined based on the magnitude of requests. It is envisioned that programs conducted in other than English or regionally tailored programs will increase.
- In the planning for JFY2008, the Long Term Training Programs have been integrated

into either the Group Training Programs or the Region Focused Training Programs. This will enable the partner country, the Embassy of Japan, and the JICA overseas office to select as many “long term type” programs for academic degree as they wish. In this relation, it is to be noted that a request for a seat of “long term type” programs is regarded as two seats for ordinary programs due to difference in costs.

- While allocations for new and renewed programs will be fixed for the period of implementation, they could be adjusted as mentioned in the previous section. As for the planning of JFY2009, allocations for continuing programs will be confirmed by the partner country, the Embassy of Japan, and the JICA overseas office based on allocations made in JFY 2008. The current allocations would be either confirmed or modified, which would be fixed up to the end of each program.

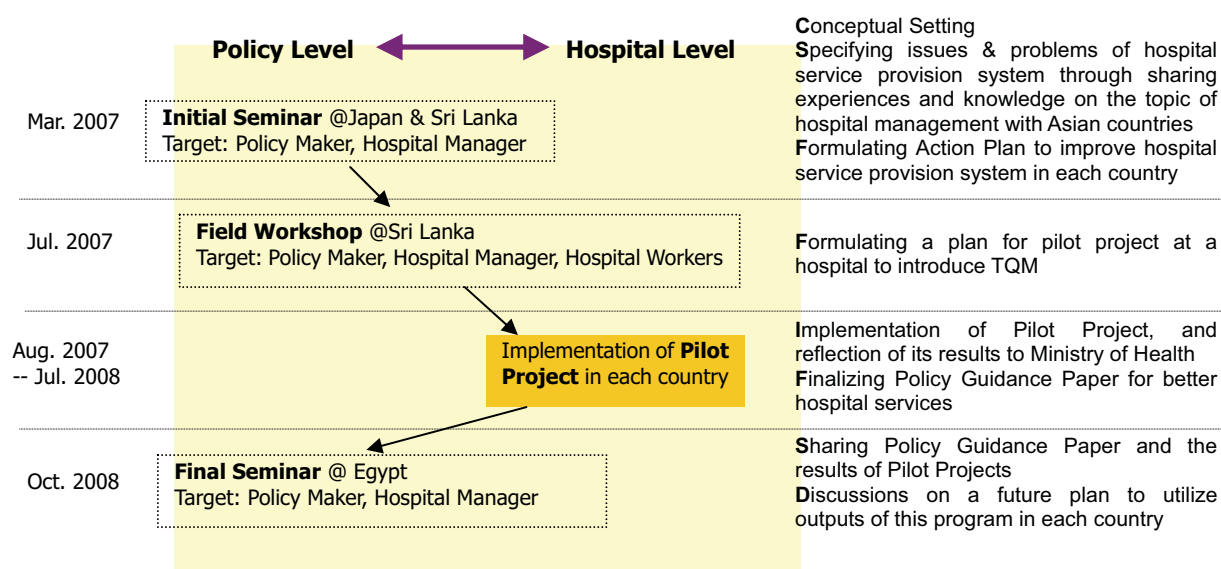
It is expected that more Group and Region-Focused Training Programs will be utilized for project formulation, follow-up activities after the completion of projects, and indirect support for ongoing projects. For more details, please refer appendix for the utilization of the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs in Bilateral Programs.



## Case 1: Strategic model to envision for further assistance projects

**Program: “Asia-Africa Knowledge Co-Creation Program (AAKCP) — Total Quality Management for Better Hospital Services: Holistic Approach to Utilize Existing Resources “**

**Target Countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Senegal, Madagascar, Nigeria, Eritrea**



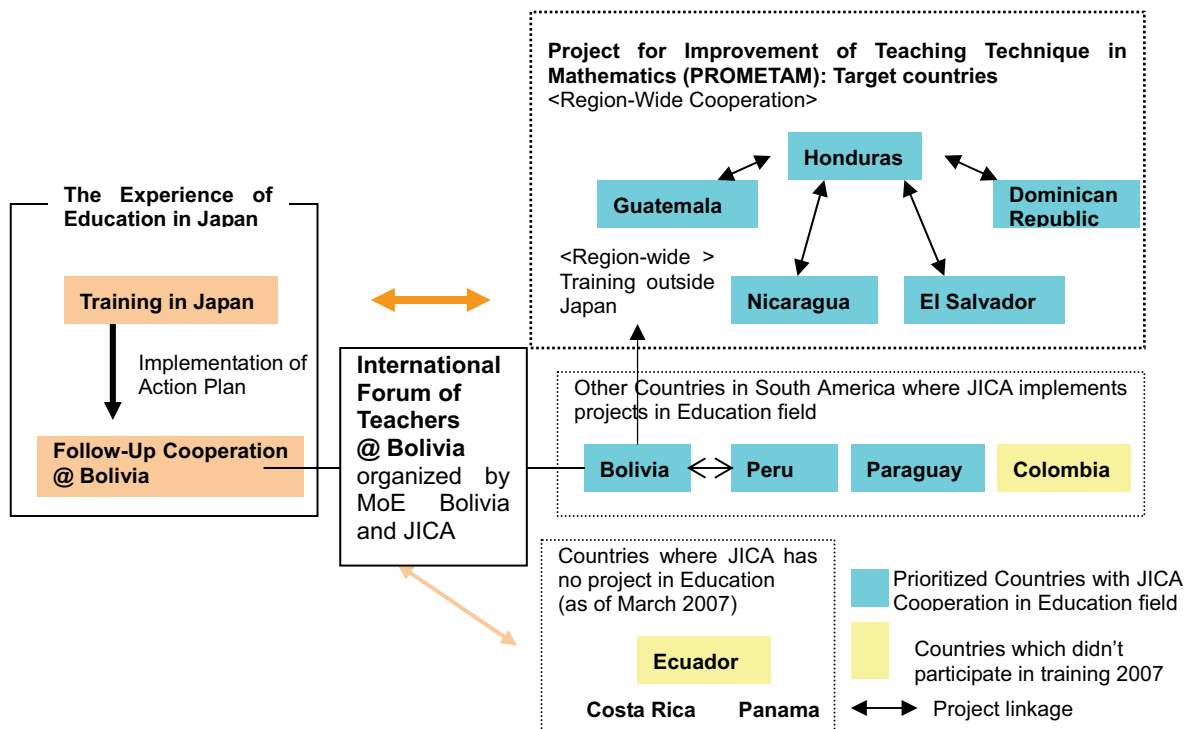
### <Key Points>

AAKCP aims to provide the forum where Asian and African countries share each experience and knowledge in several sectors, and thereby to facilitate each country to create its own method of development which suits mostly to its contexts. The second sub-program of the AAKCP covers comprehensively a wide range of issues for quality management in hospitals, such as improvement of hospital environment and awareness-raising of hospital staff. This second sub-program comprises four components throughout a program period of one and half year: (1) Initial Seminar conducted in Japan and Sri Lanka, (2) Field Workshop in Sri Lanka, (3) Implementation of Pilot Projects for one year in each country, and (4) Final Seminar to present overall achievements. For the countries whose initiatives in improving the quality of hospital services come out well, JICA examines the possibility of further support to put these countries' efforts and engagement into much wider practice such as developing a technical cooperation project, after AAKCP. In addition, a regional technical cooperation project may become an option to be developed, utilizing a health-sector network established among African countries through AAKCP. Effective utilization of JICA Training & Dialogue Program combined with other development assistance scheme can create the common “seedbed” to be developed for future support and leads to strategic development of JICA assistance projects.

## Case 2: Effective linkage between a Training Program and a Technical Cooperation Project: Training Program incorporated in Technical Cooperation Projects

**Program:** “Education in Japan: Applying Japan's Experience to Developing Countries”

**Target Countries:** Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru



### <Key Points>

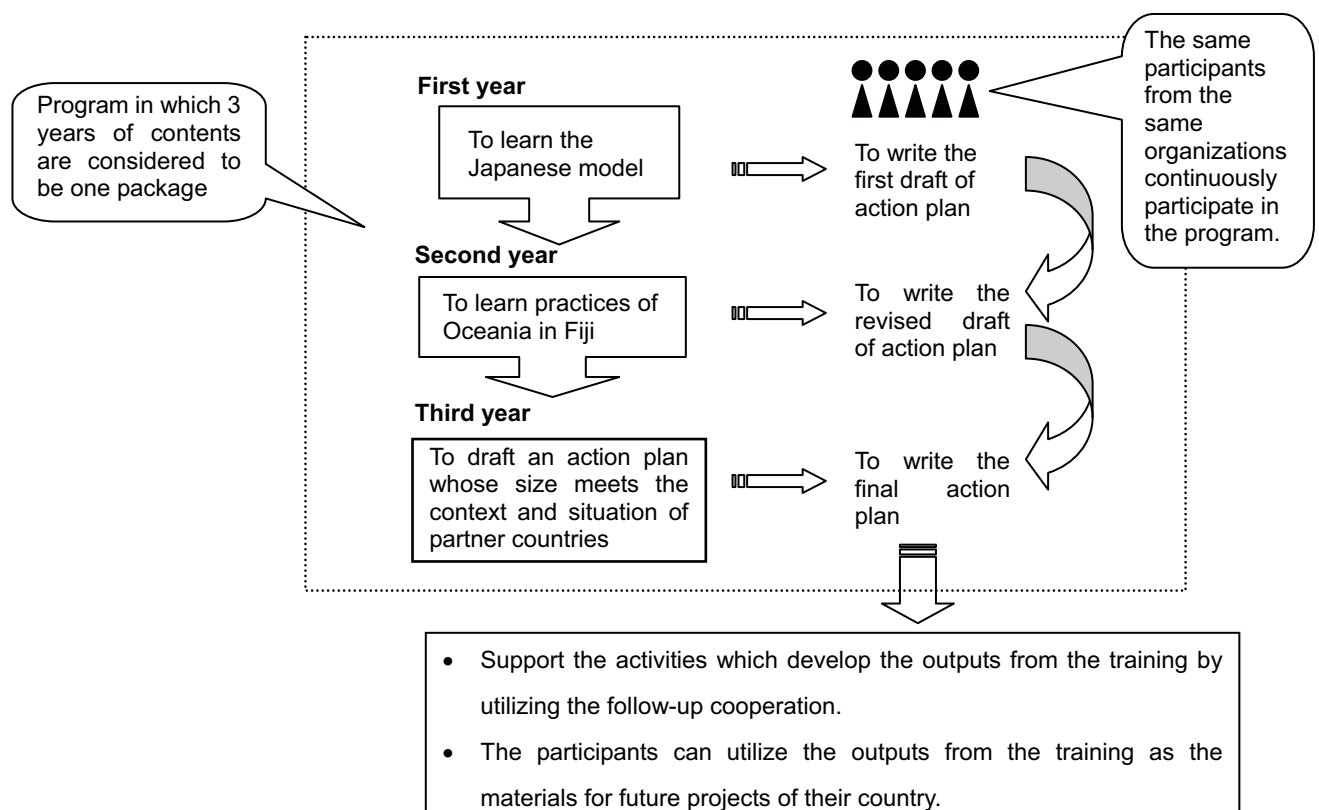
This training program, which mainly targets prioritized countries in Latin America in JICA Educational Cooperation, is considered as a component of development program in respective countries. JICA overseas offices and JICA project staff actively engaged in the selection process of nominees. These participants of senior officials, who are supervisors of JICA project counterparts, joined the training program with high motivation, and proposed the finalized action plans developed in line with JICA technical cooperation projects in their own countries.

Effective linkage between trainings and projects enables JICA and partner countries to design a training program tailored to the needs of partner countries, select appropriate participants for training, and utilize strategically a Follow-Up Cooperation scheme based on the training result.

### Case 3: Regional program which continuously supports target groups for three straight years

**Program:** Region-Focused Training Program “Community-based Fisheries Diversification in Pacific Small Island States”

**Target countries:** Fiji, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu



#### <Key Points>

Working on common issues in multiple countries, this program is a new approach which accepts the same participants from the same organizations for three consecutive years in order to educate personnel from a long-term point of view. It is thought that the approach where “three years are considered as one package” is an efficient and effective training method for countries in Oceania with limited personnel.

By integrating this Region-Focused Training Program in the regional fishery program for Oceania, further strategic projects can be developed under the same concept, utilizing the ex-participants as the contacts or the starting personnel for the projects in each country.

## **(2) Promotion of organizational involvement**

If Group and Region-Focused Training Programs meet the organizational needs of partner countries, the programs produce considerable results. On the other hand, greater importance needs to be attached to the cost-effectiveness since the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs requires as much cost as that of the short-term expert dispatches. Consequently, programs that require the organizational involvement of partner countries have been increased. In response to this trend, partner countries have begun to strive for more active organizational utilization of the training results obtained in Japan.

Continuous results will be produced efficiently by encouraging the efforts of the partner countries on their own initiative. It is therefore expected that the respective country offices of JICA will be involved as much as possible in the following actions.

### **■ Selection of the target organizations and nominees**

In order to attain objective outcomes in programs, target organizations and the nominees should be carefully chosen by confirming their commitment and readiness. From this viewpoint, priority should be given to organizations and people which are related to on-going or planned bilateral cooperation projects and activities as their commitment and readiness are already confirmed. Accordingly it is appreciated that target organization(s) and nominee(s) for each allocated program would be selected by the Government of partner country in close consultation with the JICA overseas office. Organizations and nominees without linkage to bilateral cooperation projects and activities are eligible for programs on condition that their commitment and readiness are confirmed by the JICA overseas office. As for programs selected in relation to activities of JICA experts and volunteers, it is advised to involve them in the selection process as in a case of ordinary counterparts training.

### **■ Promotion of continuous participation**

As most programs are to be allocated successively for three years, it is advised that the same organization or a group of mutually interrelated organizations should be selected for each program. Particularly programs categorized as “Solution Creation” require the same organization or a group of mutually interrelated organizations to achieve a goal at the end of three year program. In this connection, the application form, formerly called as “A2A3 form”, has been revised so that commitment and readiness of applying organizations should be clearly described.

### **■ Involvement with activities before and after core phase in Japan**

Each selected organization should be reminded to take necessary actions within the organization according to program plan described in “General Information”. Special attention should be paid to programs categorized as “Trainers Training” and “Solution Creation” since those programs include activities to be conducted in participating organizations before and/or after core phase in Japan. Participating organizations are requested to prepare and send final reports to JICA overseas offices upon completion of programs. On the part of JICA, programs categorized as “Trainers Training” and “Solution Creation” are enriched with special components such as a supplementary program in third country, follow-up support and so on.

## **Appendix:**

### **Manual for Utilizing Group and Region-Focused Training Programs in Bilateral Programs**

#### **I. How to utilize Group and Region-Focused Training Programs**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs in which several countries participate have been carried out with about 500 diverse and unique programs. They have an advantage over Country-Focused Training Programs because they are elaborately prepared for a substantial period of time in cooperation with Japan's leading organizations and experts.

So far, Country-Focused Training Programs have generally been integrated into the JICA programs and projects, but we find Group Training Programs and Region Focused Training Program utilized strategically more than before. Such cases are shown below as "Options 1-10" for your reference as you plan and implement your program and project.

##### **<Promoting ownership by partner countries in project formation>**

Option 1: Facilitating identification and formulation of a project

Option 2: Facilitating decision-making

Option 3: Creating "critical mass"

##### **< For improving the effect and impact of project implementation**

Option 4: Dispatching key person to Japan outside of project's framework

Option 5: Building consensus among diverse stakeholders

Option 6: Substituting for a short-term expert

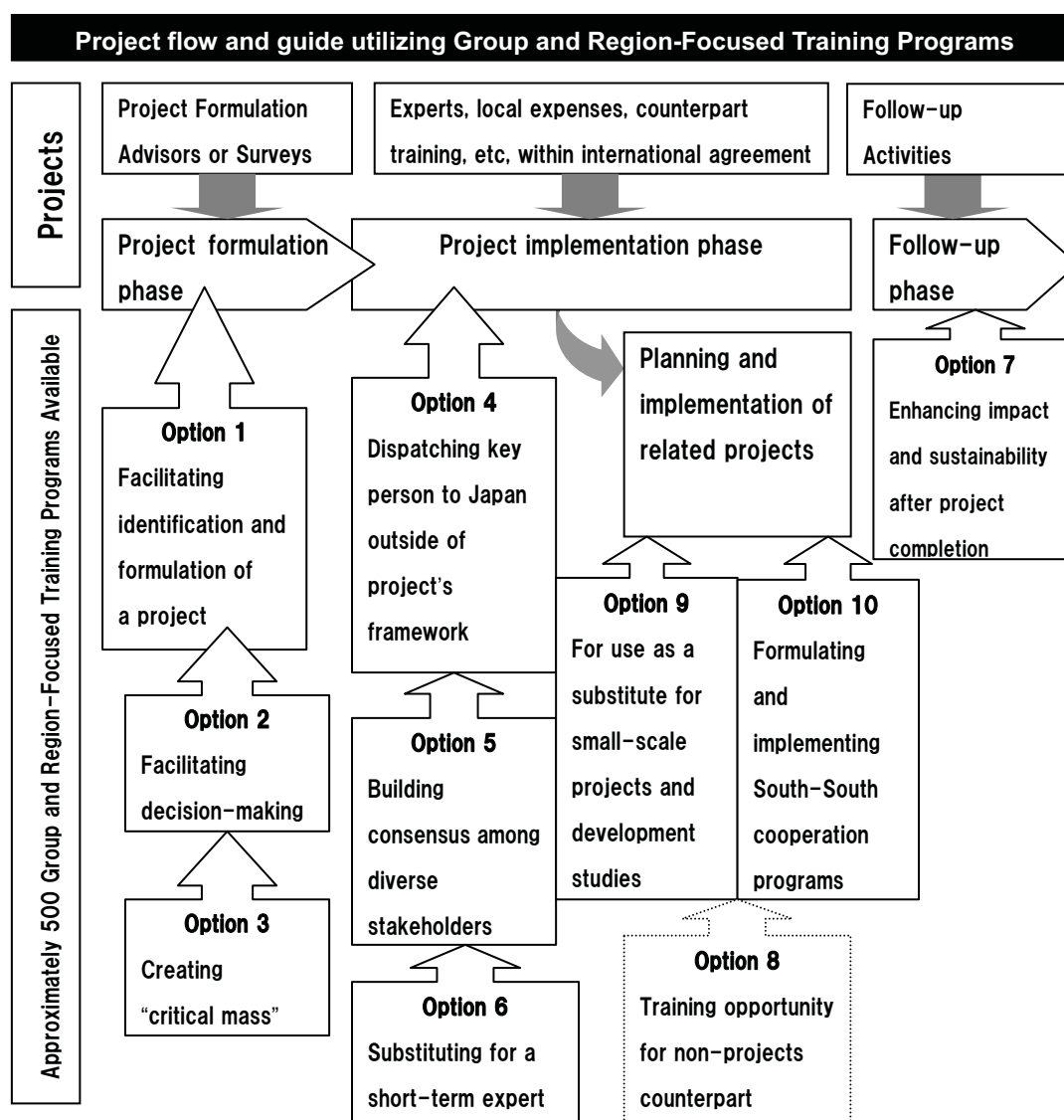
Option 7: Enhancing impact and sustainability after project completion

Option 8: Training opportunity for non-projects counterpart

##### **<Flexible responses to particular needs>**

Option 9: For use as a substitute for small-scale projects and development surveys

Option 10: Formulating and implementing South-South cooperation programs



**<Promoting ownership by partner countries in project formation>**

**Option 1: Facilitating identification and formulation of a project**

Ownership of partner countries is the most important factor which determines a project's success. In order to promote such ownership, various kinds of ideas have been put into practice. One of the most effective methods for a partner country is to play an independent role in the project formulation stage. Once realized, the sense of ownership on the part of a partner country will be enhanced in its project implementation stage, as well as after its completion.

Formulating a program/project is generally carried out through project formulation advisors or project formulation surveys. Group and Region-Focused Training Programs can be effectively used as a complementary measure. Either when planting the seeds of cooperation to reap five years later, or when a particular cooperation project is almost to be determined, Group

and Region-Focused Training Programs may be used as effective tool for partner countries to address their genuine needs.

To be more specific, a partner country will choose an Group and Region-Focused Training Programs which is related to the issue being addressed, dispatch a concerned official to a program to let him or her explore what the root of the issue in his or her own country is, and contemplate what of Japan's experiences might be applied. Then, the participant shall make a proposal when he or she returns to his or her country. Among such proposals, highly sophisticated ones may be linked with local-survey results that program formulation advisors or project formulation surveys have done. On the other hand, a partner country can also dispatch its officials who are suited for the related training program on the issue that the Japanese side has focused through their own surveys. It may enhance the quality of the project to be formulated. For instance, when a result of development study leads to a start of a new technical cooperation project, the ripeness of a project planned can be enhanced by using intensively the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs as a significant connector between them.

The training program which can be used for project formulation is classified as "Solution Programs". Although it is a group-type training program, it can closely correspond to individual needs. Moreover, in order to improve the usefulness of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs, we reexamined the principle of "one participant for one program" to be changed into a new system which will allow more than one participant per program for more than single fiscal year.

**Case: An urban environmental conservation program of the Dominican Republic**

*The urban environmental conservation program of the Dominican Republic was formally launched in 2004. Among the program a project for solid wastes issue, the intensive execution of training programs for the counterpart organization, Santo Domingo City Hall, played a great role in setting the foundation for the activities thereafter. Since 2004, concerned personnel have been dispatched intensively to Japan to participate in Group and Region-Focused Training Programs to study solid waste management, city planning, and environmental administration and formed a program-promoting group which was organized by more than 10 ex-participants. The year of 2005 marked the start of a development study, "Comprehensive Solid Wastes Management Plan of Santo Domingo City," as the core of this program. During the two-year preparation period, from the planning and proposal stage in 2003 to its commencement in 2005, the sense of ownership on the Dominican Republic side, as well as the effects of the study, were enhanced by the intensive use of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs.*



## **Option 2: Facilitating decision-making**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs include one- to two-week seminars and workshops which are available for a secretary or a director. Such programs, instead of the usual “training” programs, have the characteristic of being the place for international dialogues (referred to as the “Dialogue Programs”). Programs of such type are prepared by the initiative of high level officials of Japanese side like ministries or agencies concerned to welcome senior officials of partner countries.

While they are in Japan, as the decision-makers of partner countries would come to realize the policy issues of their countries, and as they become more convinced of the necessity for improvements, their commitment to the project is expectedly reinforced with the program/project formation likewise expectedly promoted. Moreover, usually such high level officials hardly get to spend much time for a specific project in their own countries. However, as they participate in the program in Japan, away from their own busy office, they can spend substantial time enough to listen to the opinions of the Japanese side and to ponder their ideas as well.

In formulating a project that includes a policy or a system, the independent involvement of partner countries is particularly important. Such dialogue programs type of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs can be used as effective means.

### **Case: Group Training Programs: “Local Finance / Forum of Top Management Leaderships-Dialogue of International Reform from Local Finance Perspective-”**

*This program invites a pair of participants, a high-level government official who has the decision-making authority in intergovernmental reform policies and mid-level senior staff from an organization responsible for local administration and finance reform and provides them with a place to examine how to solve policy issues of local administration and finance in detail. They will be provided support in making their policies and plans to promote reform and implementation. It is not a “training” in the general sense, but it is a program that features dialogues among participants and puts emphasis on the presentation of issues by the partner countries. At the same time, an overseas scholar is invited as a resource person to deepen the discussion. In order to continuously ensure results, partner countries and organizations are fixed for three years.*

*This training program designates particular countries which are now implementing a technical cooperation program in the field of local administration, and countries which have implemented such program before. As a forum with leading resource persons, the program will get high-level commitments from partner countries and effectively promote formulation, implementation and follow-ups of technical cooperation programs.*

### **Option 3: Creating “critical mass”**

The number of projects that focus organizational and social standards is increasingly in demand, such as business improvement via a bottom-up approach and collaboration between government administration and local residents. The concept behind these standards cannot be obtained from textbooks, but rather through experiences. Therefore, it cannot easily be passed on from person to person. Only when people genuinely understand a new concept and a certain number of people identify with it, the concept will be accepted into organizations and the society, and take root as a new standard.

For creating “critical mass” of a certain number of people capable of changing organizational and social standards, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs are available for a functional purpose. In the case of a project aiming to change some organizational and social standards by referring to some noteworthy experiences of Japan, you can significantly promote the project’s development by providing several people with opportunities to learn them in Japan in the early stages of project formulation. Basically, planning Country-focused Training programs are given priority for that purpose, but it is often not carried out due to a capacity of implementing organizations or budgetary constraints. Instead, the effective use of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs would be expected.

#### **Case: The Project for Strengthening District Health Services in Morogoro Region in Tanzania**

*“The Project for Strengthening District Health Services in Morogoro Region” is a technical cooperation project in Tanzania which was carried out between 2001 and 2006. 26 members among the counterparts consisting of administrators and medical officers from the regional government and six districts in the target region (1 city, 5 prefectures) were dispatched to Japan to participate in the training programs of “local health services” and “maternal and child health”, and they formed a group to lead the project in each support region (22 participants for Region-Focused Training Programs, 2 participants for Country-Focused Training Programs, and 2 participants for Country-Focused Training Programs of other countries). These counterpart groups contributed to structuring the administration model to carry out formulation, evaluation and monitoring of regional and district health measures based on the actual data collected at the sites of medical activities. This project is also highly appreciated by the Tanzanian government and is to be implemented throughout the nation from fiscal year 2007.*

<For improving the effect and impact of project implementation>

**Option 4: Dispatching key person to Japan outside of Project's framework**

For technical cooperation projects and development studies, officials of partner countries are basically dispatched to Japan under the framework of Counterpart training. However, since program approach is becoming a standard, it is justified more than before that personnel from partner countries are dispatched to Japan who are involved in the projects but are excluded from the framework of R/D, for example, in the case that new policy concepts is introduced to a high-level official of a ministry which supervises a project and its counterpart or that problem solving is promoted which is usually regarded as an external factors but closely linked with the achievement of project objectives.

In these cases, it is generally required that a new official request be issued for a Country-focused Training program and that an international agreement be concluded to carry out the program. To save transaction costs, the effective use of a line-up of about 500 Group and Region-Focused Training Programs is recommended. Please apply for the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs of your needs at the time of the request survey.

Moreover, if partner countries take part in Group and Region-Focused Training Programs by using the allotment of Country-Focused Training program, it is possible to add special programs before or after the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs based on needs of projects. On the other hand, if they participate in Group and Region-Focused Training Programs by using the allotment of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs itself, addition of special program cannot be considered. However, it would be flexibly considered to give partner countries opportunities to individually discuss with some Japanese officials concerned during the time of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs.

**Option 5: Building consensus among diverse stakeholders**

In projects related to regional development and environmental management, stakeholders come with diverse backgrounds. The success of a project is often determined by the collaboration of the stakeholders. As projects become more comprehensive based on the concept of capacity development, these projects which involve people of various levels are expected to be expanded in the future.

As a way to coordinate diverse opinions among stakeholders, a steering committee meeting and a public hearing are generally organized, but it is not always easy to deepen the mutual understanding among participants in such public places. However, when a number of stakeholders participate as a team in Group and Region-Focused Training Programs, their mutual understanding sometimes generates rapid progress so that projects go smoothly

thereafter. In the first place, the participants find common experiences in Japan. In the second place, since they have a plenty of time ranging from a week to around two months in Japan, they can engage in thorough discussions to deepen mutual understanding and find ways to address their issues.

As a means to promote consensus building among these stakeholders, the Country-Focused Training programs are more convenient, but the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs are also being prepared to receive a multiple number of participants. When the Country-Focused Training program is not available for your needs because of a capacity of a implementing organization, the use of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs instead might be useful.

**Case: Technical cooperation project “The Local Management Cooperation Project in Thailand”**

*This project aims at formulating cooperation measures between local autonomies under the present law by holding many workshops at three pilot sites. High-level stakeholders of each bureaucratic level, including the Director-General of the Department of Local Administration and vice governors of the pilot sites participated in the training program held in Japan. Those executive counterparts who could not usually afford time for a series of meetings were confined in Japan for a certain period to give them time to focus on the magnitude of their project. After the training program in Japan is over, project activities, not only at the pilot sites but also on the part of the Department of Local Administration, have remarkably progressed, as well as achieved a marked improvement in the amendment of the Local Administration Code for local management cooperation.*

**Option 6: Substituting for a short-term expert**

Generally speaking, advanced Japanese knowledge of natural science can be transferred to partner countries. On the other hand, that of social science cannot be transferred easily because it is inseparable from a society and context and Japanese experiences can be only used for just a reference. Therefore, partner countries need to harness their own knowledge in making policies, structuring systems and promoting organizational and business improvement.

When a project requires inputs of these social scientific “software”, sending personnel from the concerned country to Japan to “uncover” its genuine problems and to create solutions is sometimes more effective than inviting an expert or a consultant from Japan to analyze the problem of a certain country and come up with solutions. In such cases, we substitute the short-term expert program with the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs. The programs focusing system and organizational issues, which are classified as the “Solution Programs”, are carefully prepared to promote problem solutions of partner countries with notable Japanese experiences.

In addition, the line-up of about 500 Group and Region-Focused Training Programs include programs focusing standard problem-solving methods which would be adapted for issues of specific sectors such as “institutional development,” “human resources development,” “project management,” and “project evaluation.” These programs are implemented with the cooperation of Japan’s leading authorities. However, dispatching such personnel to the local site of a concerned country as an expert or having them individually provide a Country-Focused Training program is generally extremely difficult. Rather, the use of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs is strongly recommended.

**Case: Region-Focused Training Program “Seminar on Creating a New Methodology for the Knowledge society ”**

*The seminar is conducted by Dr. Ikujiro Nonaka, Professor of Graduate School of International Cooperate Strategy, Hitotsubashi University. He is the world’s authority on knowledge management. This program features the “knowledge creation theory” applicable to foreigners, which theorizes on the strong points of Japanese organizations, such as Honda and Seven-Eleven to introduce the key concept of “tacit knowledge”. Public organization in concerned countries, that are interested in Japanese experiences to strengthen their organizations, dispatch a secretary, a director general, and university presidents to participate in the program. They work out practical measures to improve their organizations through the most noteworthy lectures and case studies. For your information, either dispatching heavily engaged Dr. Nonaka as an expert or individually asking him to provide a Country-focused Training program is practically impossible.*

**\*The Knowledge Creation Theory:** *The theory is based on the belief that converting “tacit knowledge” into “explicit knowledge” to share the knowledge of an organization, and increasing the knowledge asset of an organization and its members will boost organizational power as well as bring about the creation of renewed power and behavior to solve problems.*

**Option 7: Enhancing impact and sustainability after project completion**

After the completion of a technical cooperation project or development study, various measures are sometimes required to enhance impact and sustainability for the outcome. Group and Region-Focused Training Programs may be used as an effective measure just as well as dispatching an expert. If the allotment of a Group and Region-Focused Training Programs is already secured at the time of request survey, you can smoothly undergo it without any other international agreement.

#### **Option 8: Training opportunity for non-projects counterpart**

Unlike a technical cooperation project and developmental study, when a counterpart of an individual expert or an official who is involved in an individual project such as an in-country training, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV), or JICA Partnership Program (JPP), is sent to Japan, it is required in the same manner as Option 7 to issue an official request for an individual program of Country-focused Training and to conclude an international agreement to implement the program. In such cases, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs are also very beneficial. Particularly for the Senior Volunteer of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV), or JICA Partnership Program (JPP), we presume that there is significant potential need for these kinds of training programs in Japan.

In the case of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs, since partner countries sometimes autonomously select applying organizations and personnel, an intention of Japanese side may not be reflected. Nevertheless, when the Japanese side is able to negotiate with concerned organizations and personnel for the selection of an applying organization, it would be advisable to use the program effectively.

#### **<Flexible responses to particular needs>**

#### **Option 9: For use as a substitute for small-scale projects and development studies**

Although a partner country is interested in the use of Japanese methods in the improvement of hospital management or improvement in the system of agricultural extension, it cannot start a project suddenly. It is also not always possible to add a component by altering the R/D of existing project. In these cases, dispatching an individual expert has been the general solution so far. However, using the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs sometimes brings about a huge success.

On the other hand, diverse subjects, such as “support for persons with disabilities”, “criminal investigation” and “museum study”, are available in the line-up of Group Training Programs formulated by Japanese proposals. These subjects are often not conducted through the program approach. When the needs of partner countries are clearly outlined and an organization does commit itself, though it is not possible to start a project, its problem solutions can be promoted through the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs. For example three participants are dispatched to Japan yearly for three years and a Follow-up cooperation is integrated, it becomes a real “small-size project”.

To use Group and Region-Focused Training Programs in a similar way as a project is particularly suitable for the needs of small-scale development studies on organizations, systems and policies, which should be worked out independently by concerned countries. Dispatching personnel from the concerned country to Japan and formulating improvement measures often

produces qualitatively and economically better results than inviting Japanese consultants who are not qualified to give suggestions as they are not knowledgeable with the local situation. If the partner country has a clear sense of purpose and is ready to take action, the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs is an excellent choice.

**Case: Region-Focused Training Program: “Support for the establishment of Neonatal Screening for Congenital Hypothyroidism”**

*For those countries that are actually aiming to systemize neonatal mass screening, this program provides the curriculum to support the formulation of a public system by inviting a group of three experts consisting of a medical administrator, an inspection engineer and a pediatric doctor. In addition, follow-up cooperation will be carried out to grant examination equipment and reagents--which are indispensable for practicing a model examination to let them verify the practical methods and effectiveness of neonatal mass screening--to the persons concerned as early as they go back to their country so they can apply the knowledge and technique acquired through the program.*

**Option 10: Formulating and implementing South-South cooperation programs**

To handle issues such as environment or physical distribution which cover wide areas beyond national boundaries or to handle issues that countries in the same region share a background of common social similarities, it is advantageous to promote collaborative efforts among the countries concerned in the region beyond the framework of bilateral cooperation. However, in general, since formulating a wide-area project/program that involves several countries requires a considerable amount of transaction costs and difficulties, such programs are seldom formulated.

On the other hand, Region-Focused Training Program, with target regions limited, can effectively focus such wide-area issues or common issues, and are available to help formulate a wide-area program/project efficiently. For instance, within the framework of a Region Focused Training program, workshops can be carried out at the policy-making stage in the first year to determine common issues and to determine the contents of the program for the following years, and then in the second year a program can be done for personnel on the working level.

In addition to the training program held in Japan, it is possible to conduct supplementary training in a partner country, or to dispatch concerned Japanese officials to it. Furthermore, it is also possible to support local activities as part of follow-up cooperation. As far as Region Focused Training programs are concerned, although they are multi-national programs, it is easy to conclude an international agreement as it is signed in a form of a list collectively every year. In the case of wide-area programs regarding policies or systems which do not require large-scale local activities, practically the same objective as a project can be



achieved effectively by using the framework of the Region-Focused Training Program.

**Case: Region-Focused Training Program “Administration of Disaster Management in Central America”**

*The program began in 2000 to support the establishment of a region which is resistant to natural disasters. It features sequential activities: preliminary training; training program in Japan; action plans; follow-ups; and preliminary training for the following year’s program. The project is being developed autonomously by ex-participants, including expansion activities, with follow-ups and preliminary training. These are planned and executed by the former JICA participants from the previous year’s program. In 2006, a new program called “Intensive Disaster Management Program for the Central American Region” was to be launched. The program is expected to create further impact by designating former JICA participants as the core of the system, and integrating the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs with a wide-area technical cooperation program and a third country training program.*

**II. The Usefulness of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs**

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have different features from those of other cooperation scheme: it is a technical cooperation program conducted in Japan, and training is proposed by the Japanese side to partner countries. With these features, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs have the following strengths to help resolve issues in partner countries.

**Strength 1: Facilitation of ownership**

Promoting initiative from the partner country’s side is the most important and difficult in any technical cooperation. As is often heard, “His/her attitude and behavior have changed after participating in the training in Japan,” the training in Japan can effectively result in the enhancement of motivation and initiative on the part of the participants.

In the first place, it is very difficult to impart a Japanese behavior pattern such as “teaching others by showing a good example” or “placing importance on actual working sites” to people in partner countries at their own working spaces. Rather, participants from partner countries often appreciate such values through first-hand experiences of being in a Japanese organization and society. It is also true that people tend to act on something when they themselves have come to realize certainly rather than when being told to do something by someone else. In this regard, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs is a program wherein participants themselves are expected to come up with solutions to the issues of their society and organization instead of being prescribed solutions by the Japanese side, thereby



drawing out initiative from the partner countries' side through a proper follow-up after the training.

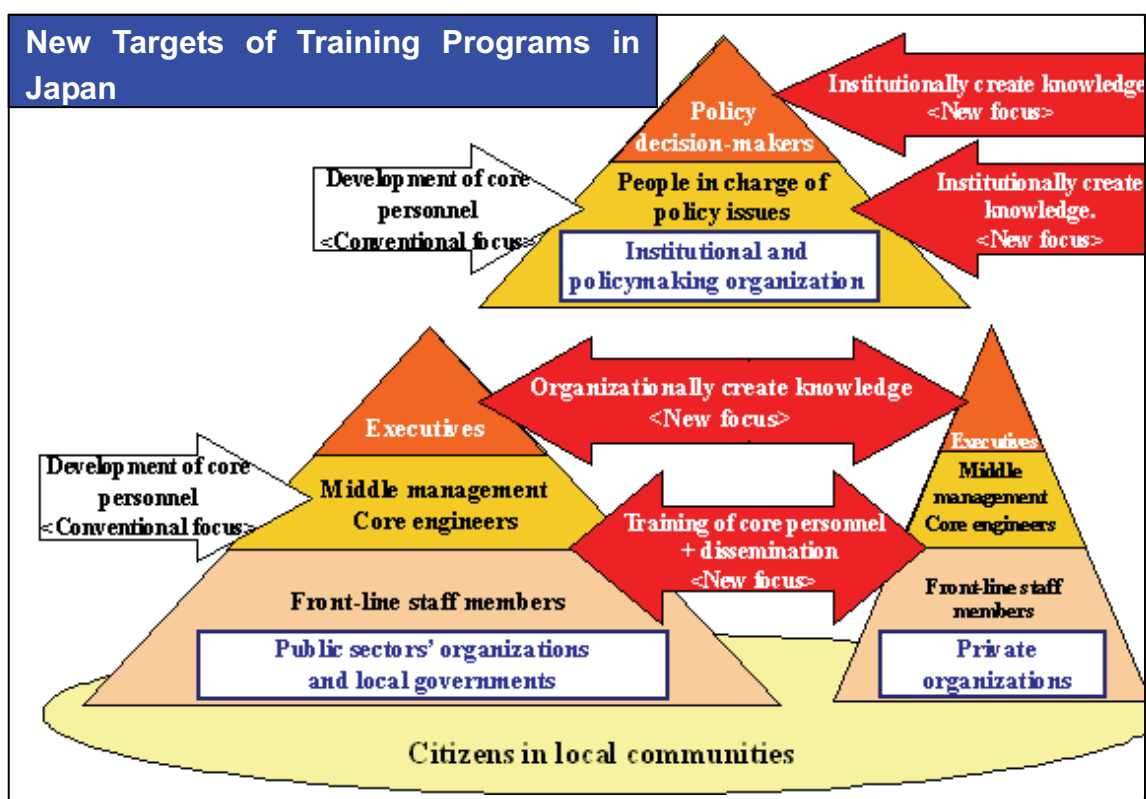
A training program in Japan gives participants from partner countries a situation different from their daily routine. This aspect of training, when conducted during the formulation stage or implementation stage of a project, will help draw out a sense of ownership of a JICA program/project on the part of the partner countries and help enhance the impact and sustainability of the programs/projects.

<b>Strength 2: Facilitation of organizational &amp; institutional changes</b>
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As the review of technical assistance is going on globally, much attention is being paid to the importance of organizational and system aspects. Operations of an organization and systems of society are closely linked with the mechanism peculiar to each country or society. Therefore, it is essentially desirable that such be improved by the ideas and actions of the people of the country or society. Consequently, technical cooperation with regard to such field needs to take a different approach from cooperation in other areas of knowledge such as natural science, various skills, economic theory, etc. which is universal and transferable.

Group and Region-Focused Training Programs appropriately supports an organization/system. To uncover the genuine root of their issues, and to be convinced of the necessity for improvement, it is most effective for participants from partner countries to have firsthand experience in an actual work setting in Japan. Furthermore, they may come up with a solution to problems better suited to their situation by applying Japan's experiences. The outcome brought about through such a process will be very good in the light of effectiveness and the will of execution. Currently, the support for organizational and system aspects are mainly conducted through the proposals and the advice of experts and consultants dispatched from Japan. In JICA's efforts to strengthen involvement in "capacity development" on an organizational and social level, there is still much room to further utilize these strengths from this type of training in Japan.

While there is much difference between a situation in Japan and that of a partner country, there are often cases wherein Japan's experiences cannot be applied as they are. Therefore, as part of the reform in training programs, efforts are being made to improve the "commercial value" of Japan's experiences, which will further help promote recognition and creativity in partner countries. These efforts include systematizing the method of introducing Japan's experiences, the development of core text materials, conversion from one-way lectures and observational tours to case studies, and such.



### Comparative advantages of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs over Country-Focused Training Programs

The training programs in Japan are mainly divided into two: Group and Region-Focused Training Programs and Country-Focused Training Programs. The former comprises Region-Focused Training which is limited to particular regions and Group Training Programs which is not limited to any region. Country-Focused Trainings Programs are planned and implemented based on the request of a recipient country, and therefore the programs can generally correspond to the particular needs of the participants as compared with Group and Region-Focused Training Programs. Therefore, when considering the utilization of training under a JICA program/project, a recipient country generally requests a Country-Focused Training Program. However, as is written below, items a) and b), when Group and Region-Focused Training Programs can provide higher quality substance, or when it is difficult to implement a Country-Focused Training, it would be advisable to select from the list of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs which is most suited to your needs.

- When it is difficult for a Country-Focused Training Program to provide high quality substance

There are quite a number of Group and Region-Focused Training Programs proposed by

the Japan side which have been improved over the years and are carefully prepared before implementation of every program. As for knowledge in the social sciences, which is difficult to acquire through a routine visit, Group and Region-Focused Training Programs often provide more appropriate contents that contain various clues to recognize what is important, as compared with Country-Focused Training Programs, which is prepared in 2-3 months.

b) When a Country-Focused Training Program is difficult to implement due to implementing circumstances

Due to recent circumstances in Japan, it has become more difficult to have cooperation from domestic organizations concerned if a training program gives them little financial advantage. Regardless of the number of participants, whether it is one or more than ten, the amount of effort needed to plan and prepare a program is not much different. Therefore, it has become more difficult to obtain cooperation as far as Country-Focused Training Programs are concerned. Moreover, it is not easy to obtain consent for an additional training program from an organization that already conducts an Group and Region-Focused Training Programs of the same content.

Furthermore, other improvements are being carried out to make the Group and Region-Focused Training Programs more useful in support of the JICA programs/projects: for example, making a group training program respond better to individual needs, and making the most of the synergy of multinational programs where different experiences can be shared.