

Trainees taking fingerprints by using a special power and brush (Assistance for National Police Reform in Indonesia) (Photo: Kenshiro Imamura)

Training Program in Japan

Technical Cooperation within Japan

An Internationally Unique Project

Methods for technical cooperation can be separated into the two broad categories of: 1) dispatching related personnel from Japan to developing countries to implement projects on-site; and 2) inviting related personnel from developing countries to Japan to implement projects. This training program falls under the latter form as an undertaking of technical cooperation conducted in Japan. Some of the knowledge that Japanese society has accumulated, including its background in areas such as organizational know-how and social systems, can only be understood through first-hand experience. This training program is an important means of technical cooperation which utilizes this knowledge that is acquired through first-hand experience of Japan, supporting human resource development and resolving issues in developing countries.

Nearly 10,000 trainees are received each year (9,785 in FY2007) mainly at 11 specialized facilities located nationwide from Okinawa to Hokkaido. The majority of trainees are government or public institution personnel, though in recent years there has been an increase in NGO personnel. Meanwhile, training is implemented in nearly all sectors with the cooperation of various domestic sources including the national government, local governments, universities, private enterprises, public interest organizations, and NGOs in Japan. In FY2007, the number of cooperating organizations reached 1,400. The scale and diversity of this training program makes it unique throughout the world, and it is a significant feature of Japanese international cooperation.

Revision since the Program's Inception

While possessing such characteristics as mentioned above, this training program has served as a core program since the initial commencement of Japan's official development assistance in 1954. It was deemed necessary, however, to make further improvements to the program as a part of administrative and fiscal reform. Thereupon, the following two revisions were made relating to the project's core principals in FY2007.

The first revision was made to evaluations. It costs much more to conduct training in Japan than in developing countries. For this reason, the revision called for future training to go beyond having individual trainees acquire knowledge and

skills, to evaluating specific results such as operational improvements made in the organization in which the trainee was placed. Thereafter, a system was introduced in which external evaluators verify the appropriateness of new training from that perspective before it is implemented.

The second revision pertained to supply and demand. This training program grew through the level of enthusiasm at various domestic levels where every effort was made to share on-site experience. Against this backdrop, there existed the framework for a program centered on Japan providing developing countries with training. Such a project framework was made to center on the demands of developing countries while continuing to place importance on domestic ideas.

As is encapsulated in the expression "wakon-yosai," Japan possesses ample experience via trial-and-error in cleverly applying the knowledge and skills of other countries in harmonizing them with its existing domestic foundation. While this experience is unique at an international level, there are quite a few helpful methods for developing countries that seek a nation-building scheme that responds to globalization. JICA will further enhance the relaying of Japan's strengths through this training program while utilizing the major revisions of FY2007 to its advantage.



A trainee involved in molding skills training while a Japanese engineer watches over him (Tool and Mold Technology Development Project in Thailand)