

Japan Centers

Training Business Professionals in Countries Transitioning to a Market Economy



A marketing class in the business program (Uzbekistan)

Overview

The Japan Centers for Human Resources Development (“Japan Centers”) were established to train business personnel who could further market-oriented economic reform in countries transitioning to a market economy, such as those in the Indochina region and former Soviet republics. The first Japan Centers were established in Viet Nam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) and Laos in September 2000, with additional centers following in Cambodia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Ukraine for a total of nine centers in operation in eight countries. Each location is recognized by local residents as a “wide open” center. The Japanese business and language courses provided by the Japan Centers have a particular significance in Central Asian countries, where there has been little opportunity for people to experience Japan.

Reflecting the urgent need to train business professionals to undertake actual economic activities in these countries, the Japan Centers focus

mainly on offering a business program. The business program targets the businesspersons, managers, entrepreneurs and others who work in the private sector in these countries, providing them with practical seminars and hands-on training. The practical nature of these courses, incorporating such content as lectures on Japanese-style management, case studies and factory diagnosis and guidance, has been highly praised by local corporations and business communities.

As knowledge of Japanese language and culture is valuable in understanding Japanese-style management, the Japan Centers also offer Japanese-language and mutual understanding programs to support the business program. The Japanese language program, conducted in association with the Japan Foundation, consists of beginner to advanced classes tailored to the unique circumstances of each country. It offers language training to citizens interested in the Japanese language, businesspersons trading with Japan, prospective

exchange students and other learners. At the same time, the Japan Center plays an important role in Japanese language education by supporting the Association of Japanese Language Teachers.

The mutual understanding program introduces cultural aspects, traditional events, social and economic conditions and other characteristics both to and from Japan with the aim of deepening mutual understanding among the citizens of both countries. In recent years the program has also focused on exchange with Japanese universities, and supporting study abroad programs to Japan.

JICA will continue to promote ties and cooperation with Japanese government agencies, local governments, universities and other educational institutions, as well as private industry in order to further enhance the functions of the Japan Centers. Our goal is to make the Japan Centers a platform for cooperation and exchange between Japan and the target countries.

Example

Kyrgyz Japan Center Business Program

An Impact Noticed by the Local Media

The Kyrgyz Japan Center’s business program has come to be regarded as in effect the only course for practical, general business training in the Kyrgyz Republic. The program consists of a varied and flexible curriculum adapted to reflect the state of development of the Kyrgyz Republic’s economy. Many owners and employees of major corporations in the Kyrgyz Republic have attended the program. One particularly popular course on

new product development focused on market-oriented product development in the area of crafts and interior/exterior products. Along with lectures and practical training, students presented public seminars, created catalogues, and held an exhibition. The exhibition attracted approximately 1,800 visitors, and was featured in major local newspapers. Its popularity had a broad impact on manufacturing in the Kyrgyz Republic as well as the students, and provided many of them with real business opportunities.



Exhibition held as part of a business course