

Training and Dialogue Programs in Japan

Cornerstone of an Intellectual Platform

Working to Accumulate and Circulate Knowledge and Experience

Working closely with its overseas offices, Regional Departments and Issues Departments* engaged in the implementation of projects in developing countries, the Department of Training Affairs and Citizen Participation and JICA's domestic offices manage and operate domestic-based training and dialogue programs, citizen participatory cooperation programs, long-term programs for degrees, donation programs and collaboration with universities to support developing countries in resolving their development issues.

As shown below in the diagram, each domestic office is accumulating knowledge for responding to development sector issues in developing countries utilizing JICA's strengths in each geographic region and its relationships with resources cultivated to date that include human and training resources. The domestic offices work toward the realization of projects integrating the features of sector issues based on this accumulated knowledge that will be highly effective for cooperation in developing countries.

Domestic offices can be thought of as platforms for knowledge accumulation and intellectual creation. The on-site experience and know-how accumulated by JICA's experts, volunteers, study team members and other human resources who carry out activities in developing countries are all utilized in domestic programs. This experience and know-how are then combined with the activities of

major cooperation organizations and groups in each region and later utilized in development projects in developing countries.

Training and Dialogue programs in Japan link cooperation project sites in developing countries with domestic resources and play a key function in circulating knowledge and experience accumulated at on-site assistance projects overseas and in Japan.

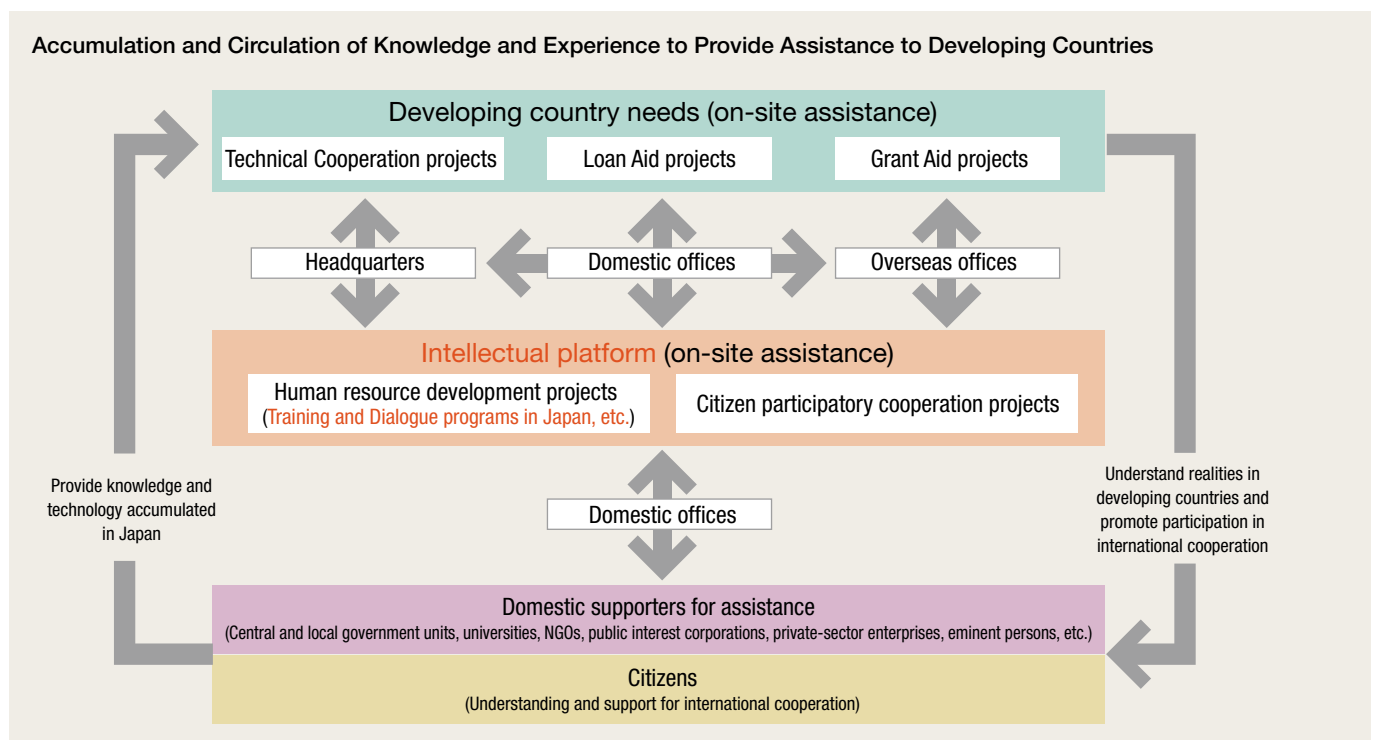
* JICA's organization consists of six Issues Departments: the Economic Infrastructure, Public Policy, Human Development, Global Environment, Rural Development and Industrial departments.

Globally Unparalleled Training Programs

Technical Cooperation methods can be broadly divided into the dispatch of personnel from Japan to developing countries for on-site cooperation and the inviting of people from developing countries to Japan for cooperation. This Technical Cooperation in Japan is generally referred to as "Training and Dialogue programs."

Gaining an understanding of "knowledge" accumulated by Japanese society often requires direct experience with various aspects of Japan such as its organizational know-how and the backgrounds underlying its social systems.

Moreover, a particular characteristic of Training and Dialogue programs is to provide opportunities for participants from developing countries to come into contact with Japan's different culture and to look at experiences and actual circumstances in their own countries from the perspective of Japan, which will better enable them to



examine problems in their respective countries from a multifaceted viewpoint. Training and Dialogue programs are a valuable means of Technical Cooperation for utilizing Japan's "knowledge" to promote human resource development and solve development issues in developing countries.

JICA accepts around 10,000 technical training and dialogue participants every year, primarily at three branches and its 11 International Centers, which have training and accommodation facilities, at locations across Japan, from Hokkaido to Okinawa. Although the majority of these participants are affiliated with governments or public organizations, recent years have seen an increase in NGO-affiliated participants. When implementing the programs, training is undertaken in almost all fields in cooperation with a broad range of sectors in Japan that include the national government, local governments, universities, private-sector enterprises, public interest organizations, NGOs and other organizations. JICA's Training and Dialogue programs in Japan are unparalleled globally in terms of scale and the diversity of fields and represent a major and outstanding characteristic of Japan's international cooperation.

As expressed in the phrase "*wakon-yosai*" ("Japanese spirit, Western skill"), Japan has a wealth of experience in skillfully adapting knowledge and technology obtained from abroad and harmonizing this with existing domestic resources. This experience is unique internationally, and there is much that developing countries will find useful in the process of nation building in response to globalization. In the future as well, JICA policy will be

to further fortify its abilities for communicating these Japanese strengths in Training and Dialogue programs in Japan.

To date, over 250,000 people have participated in Training and Dialogue programs in Japan. These participants have met numerous Japanese people while staying in Japan and return home with a deeper understanding and familiarity with Japan acquired during the process of learning about Japanese culture. JICA provides support to the JICA Alumni Association, a group formed voluntarily by ex-participants themselves in all their respective countries, and thereby raises the number of people with an understanding of Japan in developing countries.



Disaster prevention training
Trainees from various regions in Asia listen to an explanation about the structure of a fire pump at a Japanese company (Tohatsu Corporation) that manufactures fire-prevention equipment.



Environmental education training
Park rangers from Kenya receive an explanation on Japan's environmental protection and environmental education from Masanori Shintani, an expert in eco-tourism.

Case Study

Training Utilizing Experiences from Japan—*JIMOTOGAKU* (studying and learning about local communities through field work)

Group Training "Resident-led Community Development" (JICA Tokyo International Center)

Training that has been systemized starting with the development of Japan's community development know-how is provided in the form of Resident-led Community Development, a group training program that was commenced by JICA Tokyo in fiscal 2004. A prime example is *JIMOTOGAKU*, which involves building communities through initiatives led by local residents rather than relying on government. Trainees who have studied *JIMOTOGAKU* subsequently utilize *JIMOTOGAKU* when undertaking community activities after returning to their own countries.

The main point of this training is to "search for what already exists" within communities. The basic thinking underlying *JIMOTOGAKU* is that people should focus on finding things in their own communities and using these to build local communities, rather than asking advanced countries and international institutions for "something that does not exist." As part of *JIMOTOGAKU*, trainees actually walk

along a shopping street near JICA Tokyo and ascertain the characteristics of the community by "searching for things" and then listing what they found on a pictorial map.

During the latter half of this training, we hold a workshop on the "Japanese-style Soft Approach" that is based on the Japanese philosophy of "utilize the wisdom of people." The participants, who were accustomed to a scientific approach for analyzing information and data and formulating plans, made many new discoveries using this method, whereby each person had to verbalize their own ideas and find common ground that they could accept in their role as relevant participants. Participants who learned methods for making new discoveries in local communities and for casting these discoveries into shape together with residents are now putting together initiatives in their own country.

JIMOTOGAKU originated with activities undertaken in Minamata city, which overcame

the problem of Minamata disease (disease caused by mercury poisoning) and transformed into an environmentally conscious city. At present, participants in other JICA training programs also visit Minamata city to listen to stories of local residents. Through JICA training, this unique method spawned in one of Japan's regional areas is being applied to the building of local communities in developing countries.



Trainees listen to the story of a local resident on the Shiranui Sea.