Active Use of Communications Technologies Linking Distant Places

JICA-Net is a distance Technical Cooperation project promoted by JICA. JICA-Net uses a wide range of information and communication technologies, including those for providing distance lectures and seminars, creating multimedia-based learning materials, and delivering learning materials via our website to transcend time and distance restrictions and thereby improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of JICA projects.

JICA-Net was launched in response to the Japanese government initiative announced at the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000. Subsequently, the benefits provided by JICA-Net have come to be widely recognized along with growth in the storage of multimedia-based learning materials as well as distance lecture materials and an expansion in overseas videoconference network bases. Moreover, JICA-Net is widely used not only by parties related to JICA but also by NGOs, universities, local governments and companies.

In fiscal 2009, statistics show videoconferencing was utilized approximately 5,200 times (up 1,000 from the previous fiscal year), with around 8,600 connection hours and over 64,000 participants in distance seminars and videoconferences. At present, videoconference systems have been installed at 19 organizations in Japan, including JICA’s headquarters, and in 89 offices in 65 overseas countries. This system can also be mutually used through the networks of external organizations, such as with the World Bank’s Global Development Learning Network (GDLN).

A Rich Digital Collection of Multimedia-Based Learning Materials

Multimedia-based learning materials incorporate a variety of media, including video, photographs and text that are recorded on CD-ROMs or DVD. These materials are created to digitize knowledge related to JICA projects and to share this JICA knowledge and experience with persons in developing countries and people engaged in JICA activities. The materials are used mainly as learning materials for Technical Cooperation. To date, JICA has produced approximately 230 multimedia materials. “Biodiversity Conservation—JICA’s Approach,” one of visual materials produced by JICA in fiscal 2009, shows an easy-to-understand explanation of the current state of and issues about biodiversity conservation, which are not widely known in Japan. At the same time, this multimedia training material introduces example projects taking JICA’s approach in various regions of the world.

Sharing Digital Content via JICA Website

JICA stores digital content, including syllabuses and materials for distance lectures and seminars, as well multimedia-based learning materials, on the JICA-Net website. This web environment allows counterparts or partners of JICA activities throughout the world to share and reuse this content. The website also introduces best practices in distance Technical Cooperation and on usage of these, which helps to promote their effective use.