

# Japan Centers

## Training Business Professionals in Countries Transitioning to a Market Economy

### Centers Established in Eight Countries from 2000

The Japan Centers for Human Resources Development (“Japan Centers”) were established as bases for training business personnel in countries transitioning to a market economy, including nations in the Indochina region and Central Asia. The first Japan Centers were established in Viet Nam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) and Laos in September 2000, and this network was subsequently expanded with the opening of additional centers in Cambodia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Ukraine. Presently there are a total of nine centers in operation in eight countries.

### Supporting the Development of Business Professionals

To develop business professionals capable of undertaking economic activities, which is an urgent task in these countries, the Japan Centers carry out various activities, with the business program serving as the central pillar. To the present, training has been provided to more than 65,000 persons. Primarily targeting proprietors of small and medium-sized businesses, managers, as well as entrepreneurs, the program provides practical training covering business management, including Japanese-style management, as well as business skills and factory-floor diagnostics and leadership. This program has earned high acclaim



Group work in the Human Resources Management course

from local companies and business communities. Among the participants in this program are proprietors who have achieved significant growth in their businesses and entrepreneurs who have launched businesses based on a business plan featuring preparation methodologies learned during training.

### Functioning as Bases for Interchange with Japan

Knowledge of the underlying Japanese language and culture is valuable in understanding Japanese-style management. The Japan Centers have set up a “Japanese-language course” in association with the Japan Foundation as support for the business program. Open to ordinary citizens, this course provides Japanese-language education with a choice of classes that range from introductory to advanced classes in accordance with the circumstances in each country.

Also, to deepen mutual understanding between the citizens of Japan and partner countries, the Japan Centers widely convey information covering the cultural aspects of both countries, traditional events, and social and economic conditions. In recent years the program has also focused on promoting exchanges with Japanese universities and supporting study abroad programs to Japan, and in May 2009 Japan Study Fairs were held at Japan Centers in five countries.

JICA will continue to encourage the use of Japan Centers by universities and other educational institutions, private companies, NGOs, government institutions, local governments and other organizations as venues for their activities. By doing so, JICA aims to position Japan Centers as platforms for cooperation and exchange between Japan and partner countries.

### Case Study

## Mongolia Japan Center Welcomes Its One-Millionth Visitor

The business program at the Japan Center in the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator enjoys high popularity. In fact, one out of every 15 Mongolian medium and large-sized companies with 10 employees or more are participating in the regular course (six-months), which provides practical management knowledge and know-how. The Japan Center commenced the “model enterprise development” program in fiscal 2008. In this program, an excellent company is selected from among the participating companies and is provided with intensive on-site guidance. In this manner, the regular course is expanding the scope of its education from human resource development to enterprise development.

In the field of Japanese-language education as well, the Japan Center is building a network of Japanese-language teachers and striving to promote the spread of Japanese in regional areas by offering Japanese-language classes via TV and radio. The center’s library was opened in 2002 as a base for promoting mutual understanding and it has been experiencing a steady increase in visitors. In July 2009, the Mongolia Japan Center marked a noteworthy milestone when it welcomed its one-millionth visitor, equivalent to the entire population of Ulan Bator.



Enterprise diagnostic guidance in the model enterprise development program



Altan Tsetsegu, who operates this supermarket, participated in the business program in 2003. In addition to applying knowledge learned at the Japan Center in the operation of his store, Mr. Tsetsegu also works to promote the spread of this knowledge in his role as commissioner of a study group of graduates from the program. (Altan Tsetsegu’s store)