

JICA-Net — A New Form of International Cooperation That Transcends the Restrictions of Time and Distance

JICA-Net is a distance Technical Cooperation modality promoted by JICA. JICA-Net uses a wide range of information and communication technologies, including those for providing remote lectures and seminars, creating multimedia-based learning materials, and using the website for information about learning materials and their distribution. By transcending time and distance restrictions, these activities improve the efficiency and quality of JICA projects.

JICA-Net was launched in response to the Japanese government initiative announced at the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000. Since then the benefits provided by JICA-Net have come to be widely recognized along with the growth in the storage of content, including multimedia teaching materials and distance lectures and seminars, and an expansion in overseas videoconference network bases.

In fiscal 2011, videoconferencing was utilized approximately 6,200 times, with around 9,900 connection hours and over 66,000 participants in remote seminars and videoconferences. At present, videoconference systems have been installed at 18 organizations in Japan, including JICA's headquarters, and in 72 offices in 68 foreign countries. By using the networks of external organizations, mutual use is also possible. For the World Bank's Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), in addition to the mutual utilization of facilities, there are measures involving content, such as the joint planning and implementation of remote seminars and other events.

JICA-Net endeavors to disseminate remote technical cooperation through the following methods.

Remote Lectures and Seminars

As a means of enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of activities, JICA has held remote lectures and seminars via a videoconference system in such situations when it's difficult to dispatch Japanese experts or when JICA needed to hold a regional workshop for multiple countries simultaneously. In the Japan Center Project, for instance, we used videoconferencing to hold training for partner country counterparts on a regular basis. All counterparts need to upgrade their skills in the same areas, such as learning how to operate these centers and studying Japanese culture. Remote training for a single subject gives more counterparts the opportunity to participate. Another advantage is the creation of opportunities for collaborative learning that exposes participants to new viewpoints from other countries (See chart below).

Creating Multimedia Teaching 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, approximately 250 types of multimedia teaching materials have been developed. One example is "An Infrastructure for Everyone – The Asia Highway", which was produced in fiscal 2011 to present information about the national highway route 1 that links the capitals of Viet Nam and Cambodia. The purpose is to explain the activities of Japan's ODA in the transportation sector. This sector is one of the most important of the many development issues in developing countries because highways, bridges and ports are key components of a country's infrastructure.

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 practices in distance Technical Cooperation and on the usage of JICA-Net to promote further use of it. (JICA-Net URL: <http://jica-net.jica.go.jp/en2/index.html>)

Upgrading Counterpart Skills with Remote Training

A network that links Japan Centers in eight countries

Using JICA-Net allows performing remote training at Japan Centers in eight countries. JICA-Net provides several benefits: (1) facilitating cooperation over a large area, (2) implementing speedy cooperation, and (3) cutting cost involving time and the movement of people.

