

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 – JICA-Net Library – for archiving and utilizing the learning materials. 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 growing number of digital contents including multimedia-based learning materials, reference materials for distance lectures and seminars and the expansion of overseas video-conference network bases.

In fiscal 2012, the JICA-Net video-conference system was utilized approximately 6,100 times, with around 9,700 connection hours and over 65,000 participants in remote seminars and video-conferences. At present, the systems have been installed at 18 JICA offices in Japan, and in 74 foreign countries. In addition, the JICA-Net video-conference system can be used for setting multipoint video-conferences between JICA and external organizations. Especially with the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) coordinated by the World Bank, JICA has been planning distance seminars and cross border event.

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 project activity, JICA has held remote lectures and seminars via the video-conference system in the situations when it is difficult to dispatch Japanese experts or when JICA needs to hold a regional workshop for multiple countries simultaneously. For example, individuals from four Central and South American countries (Honduras, Bolivia, Dominican Republic and Colombia) participated in “the Region Focused Training Program on Study on Education Improvement of Training Courses for Teachers”. After finishing the training course in Japan, the video-conference system was used to keep the relationship between participants and to share the information gained through the regional activities. As in the case above, the JICA-Net video-conference system helps improving the efficiency and effectiveness of JICA projects.

Creating Multimedia-based Learning Materials

Multimedia-based learning materials consist of various types of data such as video, photographs, animation and text.

They are uploaded to JICA-Net Library and also packaged in CDs and DVDs to exploit knowledge and experience gained from JICA projects. The learning materials are used mainly in the JICA’s Technical Cooperation projects (some of the materials are open to the public).

Until now, approximately 270 types of multimedia learning materials have been provided mainly in English, Japanese, French and Spanish. Furthermore, some of them are available in other languages as the need arises. They are used to disseminate knowledge and information about broad themes such as Japan’s own experiences and successful projects in other countries. For Example, “IRODORI - Rural Community Empowerment through Exploring Local Resources” which introduces a rural community empowerment project in Kamikatsu-cho, Tokushima prefecture in Japan was produced in order to help learning a regional development method that exploits local resources. “IRODORI” originally created in Japanese, English and Spanish, has been translated into other languages such as Sinhala and Nepalese to spread knowledge to the people in developing countries.

Providing Digital Contents via JICA-Net Library

JICA-Net Library stores a wide range of multimedia-based learning materials and other digital contents such as reference materials for distance lectures and seminars in order to make them available to counterparts and partners of JICA activities across borders. The JICA-Net Library also introduces JICA’s practices in the distance Technical Cooperation and effective use of JICA-Net video-conference system in the projects. (JICA-Net Library URL: <http://jica-net-library.jica.go.jp/>)

