

**Summary of NS. Network Meeting at the 4th JARCOM  
24 April, 2005 at 14:00hrs (JICA Vietnam Office)**

The 1<sup>st</sup> National Staff Meeting kicked off on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2005 at 1400hrs, Vietnam time. The meeting venue was at JICA Vietnam Office, Hanoi, Vietnam.

The facilitators for the first meeting:  
Ms. Somsri of JICA Thailand Office  
Ms. Shaliza of JICA Malaysia Office

The members of the meeting were 12 from 9 respective offices.  
Please refer to *attachment 1* for list of members of 1<sup>st</sup> National Staff Meeting.  
JICA Vietnam Office has extended assistance in taking the meeting minutes.  
Members noted their appreciation to JICA HDQ, the Secretariat of JARCOM and management in JICA offices for allowing the establishment of National Staff Network and National Staff Meeting.

1).Members self introduction and general information

The meeting started off with self introduction, general information on respective JICA offices and briefing, mainly on the job descriptions and roles, with regards to TCTP, TCE and JARCOM activities.

Information shared:

1. Most of the members were first timers to Hanoi.
2. 7 of the 12 members have attended JARCOM meeting before.
3. Members working experience with JICA varies from 4 months to 13 years.
4. Most of the members are working together with another NS at their offices on regional cooperation activities.
5. Among the members, there were members who were previously working with their government focal points before joining JICA.
6. All members are working for the regional cooperation activities/section in their respective offices
7. 10 of the members have experience in handling TCTP/ TCE courses
8. There were offices that practice work rotation for NS, created a new section for NS and provide various chances for NS for their capacity building.
9. Members are hoping to share information, learn from other countries/members and assist each other through this network.

## 2) Introduction of NS Virtual Network Terms of Reference(TOR) and Members List

The facilitators officially announced the draft of Terms of Reference (see *Attachment 2*) and List of Initial Members of National Staff Network (see *Attachment 3*).

Members were requested to update the list.

They were informed that currently, 2 Japanese staff are registered as observers in this network. This network also welcomes other JICA staff (Japanese or NS) who would like to register. (Please refer to the TOR for registration process).

Members were invited to give their comments.

- Comment on Focus Areas Number 9 was raised.

*Focus Areas #9: "Consider the possibility of network extension to the government focal points at the operational level"*

1. By extending the network to focal points, the network will become another formal venue.
2. Some countries have too many focal points and due to frequent personnel changes, it is difficult to monitor
3. Linkage to focal points would mean a greater input of information on procedures in other ASEAN countries
4. 'National Staff Virtual Network' name may have to be changed/ rename.
5. Focal point must be able to understand clearly the purpose of having this network.
6. Being a network through e-mail base, there will be a sudden increase in the e-mail numbers. This may cause interruption or inconvenience at one point.
7. Some information may not be relevant to them and should be kept within JICA.

From the discussion, members proposed that this network should not be extended to the government focal points.

- Comments on the NS network/ NS meeting establishment

Comments:

1. The timing of network establishment (before 4<sup>th</sup> JARCOM) was perfect.
2. Through this meeting which is at the beginning of JARCOM, members were able to know other participants of JARCOM.
3. There are some problems raised in accessing to the network. For example,

due to office regulation (approval is needed for e-mails transaction), system problem (unable to open e mails), change of addresses, e-mails rejected due to inbox full etc.

4. Generally, feedback from other Japanese staff was good as there were much information that could be shared through this network.

From the discussion, members were quite satisfied with the network at this stage and agreed to contribute to its success as members are confident that this network would benefit many parties.

### 3) Introduction to the Third Country Training Program and Country's Procedure

The highlight of the meeting was the powerpoint presentations of TCTP and country's procedures.

There were 10 presentations from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Timor Leste, Vietnam

Please see *attachment* for their country presentations

#### General summary of country procedures:

1. Generally, the current dispatch route of General Information (GI)/ Invitation Letter and current situation can be summarized as follows:

1-1 Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore are mainly distributing their General Information(GI) through diplomatic channel( MoFA)

1-2 Some implementing agencies (IA) send GI directly to the related ministries in the invited countries.

1-3 Some IA send their GI to the focal points of invited countries.

1-4 Some countries use JICA channel for distribution

At the other end, the focal points for ODA related technical cooperation programmes at Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam are CDC, DIC, FERD and MPI/FERD respectively.

As dispatch routes vary, in most of the cases, JICA CLMV offices and focal points were not aware of the TCTP courses offered to their countries.

- Focal point gets the information through GI sent to their organization.
- JICA CLMV offices will only get information if there is a request for follow up/ assistance from other JICA Offices on the nominations etc.

In the case where communication between implementing agency and invited countries was smooth and no problems occurred, JICA CLMV offices are usually not aware of such TCTP courses.

#### Exchange of Information on TCTP courses offered to CLMV

One significant point raised by CLMV countries was *insufficient information*.

Mainly, this meeting discussed towards improving the coordination on TCTP information with CLMV.

Members from CLMV offices requested resource countries to provide them/beneficiary countries the information on the courses offered for them to monitor the status.

This information is equally important in cases where they need to understand the difference of TCTP courses and ad hoc based courses and how to deal with the matters.

Members from CLMV countries stressed that GI should reach the government focal points (CDC, DIC, FERD, MPI) of CLMV for coordination. List of the focal points were also distributed.

In addition to GI distribution, information on the selected participants should also be informed clearly and timely to the invited countries. This is important as participants need to go through some internal procedures to attend the training.

Some members (resource country offices) clarified that information on the invitation/GI /acceptance were being sent by kouden to all beneficiary countries.

They were requested to refer to their Japanese staff in charge of training later.

Members agreed that information could be disseminated through this network to alert all members on the latest situation.

#### 4) Discussion on Related Issues/ Q & A session

Information shared:

1. In principle, most of the preparation for TCTP is done by the implementing agency and JICA office will play a supporting role.

Note 1: JICA Indonesia Office reserves flight tickets and purchasing of health insurance for the participants.

Note 2: JICA Singapore Office will contribute its budgetary part later to Govt. of Singapore. In their case, focal point advance payment of course fees in full.

Note 3: JICA Thailand Office will hold annual consultations with focal points about the cost-sharing portion under the Japan-Thailand Partnership

Programme (JTPII), which averages 70% share by JICA, and this will increase annually.

Note 4: JICA Malaysia Office is sharing 50% course fees with the focal point where JICA will be responsible of the invitation expenses (flight fare, accommodation fare, per diem).

2. Screening results on the applications should be informed earlier. On behalf of JICA Office, members agreed to receive this information and disseminate to all the participants with assistance of focal points.

This information will be sent through kouden for members' information.

The meeting adjourned at 1800hrs , Vietnam time.

### **25 April, 2005 at 09:00hrs (JICA Vietnam Office)**

#### **5).Linkage to JARCOM activities**

Most of the members were involved in the early stage of discussions with focal points, where discussions were based on their priority areas to formulate TCTP in general.

Except for Malaysia who mainly targets CLMV as its beneficiary countries for TCTP, other countries do not take JARCOM as a base or top priority when formulating a TCTP.

We have discussed on how to improve the JARCOM Mechanism and Summary Format at the operational level under the following topics:

- a) Follow up of action plan for JARCOM meeting

Generally, the instructions given to fill in each JARCOM format are vague and unclear. This makes the data ineffective and difficult to utilize.

To improve on follow up of each action plan, each member has to first understand the follow up process. Thus, it is necessary to provide clear explanation of data sources collection, how to process the data and clarify the importance of meeting the deadlines.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> JARCOM, there were plans to revive and improve the mechanism and summary format of action plans for NS network members to be able to assist the Secretariat in order to make a good data base for the next

JARCOM.

b) Results of TCTP and TCE for JARCOM

Normally, NS will prepare the country's progress reports of TCTP and TCE for submission to JARCOM. In addition to that, NS will also prepare data of TCTP and TCE when required.

While compilation of data is important to measure a result, this method has increased the workload as similar data are requested but in different format and criteria

For example, a data on number of participants were requested by different users, separately and individually, to be provided by target countries, budget allocation, implementing agency, duration and etc.

The job becomes redundant and is an inefficient method of data collection.

It was recommended in the meeting to create a comprehensive format for host country that can be used on more than one occasion. Another format should then be created for JICA Offices of beneficiary countries to result their result effectively.

c) Formulate TCTP for JARCOM

In accordance to the earlier mechanism on formulation of JARCOM projects based on the elaborated needs for CLMV, Malaysia and Thailand sent a joint fact finding mission respectively to beneficiary countries in 20001-2002. It was during the trial stage of the mechanism and the purpose was for training needs analysis and confirmation of elaborated needs.

In 2004, Indonesia sent a fact-finding mission to beneficiary countries but has not yet finalized any action plan from that mission.

Other than fact-finding missions, there are simpler and faster ways to confirm the needs, course curriculum, etc. For example, questionnaires can be sent to JICA target countries through "kouden" correspondence.

d) Co-operation with JARCOM activities

All members agreed to cooperate with JARCOM activities. Some members were very new to JARCOM, and recommended that JARCOM activities should be extended to all members in the virtual network and who are

working for TCTP or South South Cooperation.

e) Review/improvement of various forms

The revision of the JARCOM format has not been finalized yet, and there are some recommendations to abolish some formats and add new formats that are easier to understand by both resource and beneficiary countries.

Comments:

1. To accelerate JARCOM activities, each NS should cooperate with JS in formulation processes according to the JARCOM mechanism, to follow-up each action plan for secretariat, and other related activities.
2. JICA and focal point in each country should introduce and explain JARCOM activities to line ministries for better mutual understanding, promote cooperation in recruitment/nomination process and also data gathering of each action plan, especially in beneficiary countries.
3. The secretariat should review all format with clear guidelines of each format and make clear deadline.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00hrs Vietnam time, in preparation for departure to Halong.

**List of 1<sup>st</sup> National Staff Meeting Members**

**Venue: JICA Vietnam Office**

4. Mr. Thola NHEAN ( Thola)	JICA Cambodia Office
5. Ms. Theresia Angelino Renwarin ( Angel)	JICA Indonesia Office
6. Mr. Kayasith SADETTAN ( Kayasith)	JICA Laos Office
7. Ms. Shaliza Hamzah ( Shaliza)	JICA Malaysia Office
8. Mr. Maung Maung Than ( Than)	JICA Myanmar Office
9. Ms. Salima MACAHILIG ( Mima)	JICA Philippines Office
10. Ms. Michiyo MOROHASHI ( Michiyo)	JICA Singapore Office
11. Ms. Somsri Sukumpantanasan ( Somsri)	JICA Thailand Office
12. Mr. Joaquim Martins ( Joaquim )	JICA Timor Leste Office
13. Mr. Jose Pereira ( Jose)	JICA Timor Leste Office
14. Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Hai ( Hai )	JICA Vietnam Office
15. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Dong ( Dong )	JICA Vietnam Office

Supporting members & observers ( JICA Vietnam Office )

1. Ms Nguyen My Hang
2. Ms. Tran Thi Hai Dung
3. Ms. Bui Thu Trang
4. Ms. Nguyen Tuan Sang