

## MHLW HRD Information (September 2015 / 32<sup>nd</sup> issue)

### **1 Report on “Collaboration Training Course” of ASEAN-Japan HRD Collaboration Programme**

Every year, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) of Japan holds the “Collaboration Training Course” for the enhancement of HRD system in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV countries) in collaboration with a partner country (either Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines or Thailand) in order to support the realization of Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and other regional and sub-regional endeavors to narrow gaps in ASEAN to expedite regional integration. This training course has been implemented as a part of the ASEAN-Japan HRD Collaboration Programme, which is based on an action plan adopted at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in 2003.

This year, MHLW and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) of the Philippines held the training course from July 13 to 22 July with support from Japan Vocational Ability Development Association (JAVADA).

Eight persons in charge of HRD from the CLMV countries -four from private sector and another four from public sector- were invited to participate in the ten-day training course held in Japan and the Philippines.

The theme of the training course was “Management of Vocational Training Institutions for Realizing "Decent Work"” with a special focus on “Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Education, Training and Lifelong Learning”, which had been decided at ASEAN-Japan Planning and Evaluation Working Group held on the sidelines of the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN+3 Senior Labour Officials Meeting in this past May in Manila.

The training course was full of activities such as country report presentations, lectures from experts, site visits and discussions.

Through lectures, the participants obtained knowledge on HRD policies and measures in Japan and the Philippines, particularly on efforts which are associated with gender equality and women empowerment in the field of HRD. There were also opportunities for the participants to see how these policies and measures are practiced through site visits. They visited several public vocational training institutions in Japan and the Philippines as well as a private company called Atlantic Gulf and Pacific Company in Bauan, Batangas, which employs and trains many female welders.

On the final day of the training course, each participant teamed up with another participant from the same country and formulated a plan for a seminar which the two of them are going to organize after returning to their country. The seminar is to share what they learned in the training course and to discuss the enhancement of HRD system of their country. The seminar will be held through December 2015 to January 2016 in the CLMV countries respectively and will be attended by a wide range of people concerned with HRD.

Furthermore, during the training course, the participants had chances to enjoy cultural experiences including a visit to Sojiji Temple (Nishiarai Daishi) in Tokyo, a traditional

Buddhist temple built in the year 826 as well as a visit to Tagaytay near Manila, a mountain ridge offering a panoramic view of a lake and a volcano.

MHLW wishes that the participants of this year's training course learned a lot in Japan and the Philippines, and also wishes that the participants would organize effective seminars.

Finally, MHLW would like to express its sincere appreciation for TESDA's long-standing cooperation, because, in the 12-year history of the training course, this year was the third time for MHLW and TESDA to co-host the training course.

The main venue of this year's training course in the Philippines was the TESDA Women's Center (TWC). Given the fact that the TWC is an institution which pursues the empowerment of women through various vocational training programs, the TWC was the most suitable venue for the training course under this year's theme, "Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Education, Training and Lifelong Learning". MHLW is truly thankful for TESDA's sensible selection of the venue, which led to the successful implementation of the training course.

Before concluding this article, MHLW would like to mention Ms. Maria Ignacio, Center Chief of the TWC. She participated as a lecturer and coordinator for the training course both in Japan and the Philippines. Her lecture on gender-fair TVET in the Philippines enriched the training course, and her coordination between the two host countries was indispensable for the smooth operation. For this article, she contributed some comments as below:

***Comments from Ms. Maria Ignacio (Center Chief of the TESDA Women's Center):***

The TESDA Women's Center (TWC) is very much honored and privileged to be the host institution in the Philippines for this year's ASEAN-Japan HRD Collaboration Programme with the theme, "Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Education, Training and Lifelong Learning". The local training course provided the participants with vast opportunities for learning and sharing through the best practices and experiences shared by the resource speakers both from Japan and the Philippines. It has also provided interactive forum for the participants and the resource speakers to share and discuss concepts and issues related to the theme.

As an observer participant, allow me to express also my profound gratitude and sincere appreciation for having been granted the opportunity to participate in this local training course. As one of the resource speakers in TESDA, it was my pleasure to share and discuss Gender-Fair Technical Vocational Education and Training in the Philippines and to have showcased the TESDA Women's Center, a grant-aid from the Japanese Government, now the center for women empowerment in technical education and skills development (TESD) with international recognition from the Asia Pacific Accreditation and Certification Commission, and national recognition as one of the country's most

gender-responsive government agencies.

My hope for all the CLMV participants is to successfully contribute towards the goal of promoting equal opportunities for women and men in education, training and lifelong learning through the learning gained from the lectures, group workshops, plenary sessions, and observation visits. It was noted that the CLMV participants and the ASEAN-JAVADA organizers were particularly impressed with the site visit at a welding company in Batangas, the Atlantic Gulf & Pacific (AG&P), that promotes women empowerment in the workplace and practices equal opportunities to women and men in terms of training and employment.

**Participants of the training course from CLMV countries:**

- Ms. Sochanthy Ieng, Chief, Institution Management Office, Department of Institute Management, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia
- Ms. Vannak Khun, Assistant Director, PSE Institute, Pour un Sourire d'Enfant, Cambodia
- Mr. Sourisack Souphanthong, Deputy Director, Division of Skills Development, Department of Skills Development and Employment, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao PDR
- Mr. Chanthavong Srivilay, Assistant Manager, Lao Automotive Industry Association
- Ms. Mya Mya Thet, Deputy Director, Skills Development Division, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Myanmar
- Ms. Nan Theingi, Trainer, UMFCCI Training Institute, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)
- Mr. Do Van Giang, Deputy Director, Formal Vocational Training Department, General Directorate of Vocational Training, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Vietnam
- Mr. Nguyen Tien Hung, Lecturer, Electrical-Electronics Faculty, Nam Dinh University of Technology Education, Vietnam

Opening ceremony in Chiba, Japan



Site visit to a vocational skills development center in Tokyo



Opening ceremony at the TWC in Maila



Site visit to the AG&P in Batangas



## **2 HRD measures in “Japan Revitalization Strategy”**

In Japan, a growth strategy called “Japan Revitalization Strategy” was formulated under the Abe Administration in June 2013. This Strategy is the highest policy document in Japan endorsed by the Cabinet. The Strategy has been revised twice in the past. The latest revision took place in June 2015.

Facing challenges such as accelerated technological innovation, aggravated global competitions and aging population, the Japanese society has been experiencing dramatic changes in the environment surrounding companies and individuals. In this context, in order to enable the people to enjoy quality employment and stable income as well as to realize the improvement of companies’ productivity, it is the most important to create an environment where each person has more opportunities to fulfil his/her potential, develops expertise according to his/her abilities and personality, and chooses a workplace best suited to bring out his/her values. Based on this idea, various HRD measures are described in the revised Strategy.

In this issue of MHLW HRD Information, out of these HRD measures, we would like to introduce the measures for which the HRD Bureau of MHLW is responsible.

### **(1) Promotion of introduction of “Self Career Dock (tentative name)”**

It is important to develop an environment where workers acquire a habit of voluntarily thinking about their career, which functions as a labour market infrastructure to take countermeasures against changes in socio-economic surroundings. From this viewpoint, a new mechanism called “Self Career Dock (tentative name)” is planned to be introduced, periodically offering workers career consultations at important stages of their careers according to the individual qualities such as age, number of years with the company and posts. To this end, it is under consideration that conducting “Self Career Dock (tentative name)” could be used as conditionality or incentives could be given to companies in relation to “Self Career Dock (tentative name)” when they apply for an existing government-run subsidy\*.

\*A subsidy paid to employers who conduct training for the employees.

**(2) Promotion of introduction of “leave system for educational training” and “shorter working hour system for educational training”**

It is companies’ responsibility to secure opportunities for their employees to achieve necessary knowledge, abilities and skills in their vocational life. Based on this idea, the introduction by companies of “leave system for educational training” and “shorter working hour system for educational training” is planned to be promoted by giving an incentive to companies when they apply for an existing government-run subsidy, thereby securing sufficient time for workers to develop their career.

**(3) Promotion of companies’ efforts concerning vocational ability evaluation**

In order to enable each worker to choose a workplace best suited to bring out his/her values, have opportunities to fulfil his/her potential and raise his/her abilities in efficient manners, it is important to create an environment where workers’ vocational abilities are appropriately evaluated. Then, in order to develop a system to evaluate workers’ vocational abilities, it is imperative that business associations and companies, who understand the needs for human resources, should play the main role to design and operate such system.

From this perspective, the national trade skills testing system is planned to be promoted to cover growing sectors including face-to-face service sector. Furthermore, in terms of promoting practical in-house tests which are conducted by individual companies and linked to sector-wide tests, it is also under consideration to give positive support to the business associations and companies engaged in such tests.

**(4) Enhancement of support to companies helping career upgrade of employees**

It is important for the government to directly support workers who are trying to upgrade their career, but it is also important that companies, in collaboration with educational institutions, secure opportunities for their employees to receive Off-JT while continuing their work. Therefore, companies’ efforts to train their employees by combining OJT and Off-JT are planned to be promoted by giving an incentive to companies when they apply for an existing government-run subsidy, thereby popularizing such mixed type training.

**(5) Improvement of Professional Practical Educational Training Benefit**

A review of courses covered by “Professional Practical Educational Training Benefit\*” is planned from a viewpoint whether these courses are truly effective for the development of practical vocational abilities as well as if they are diverse and flexible programs which reconcile with work.

\*A system to provide money for the cost of educational training at a uniform rate in the case where a employed person or a person who has lost his/her job within one year takes a professional and practical educational training course designated by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare.