Introduction of Private-Sector Evaluations Proceeding in China, with Private-Sector Evaluation Training on a Nationwide Level

This three-year project worked to foster impartial evaluation standards for private organizations in order to build an environment conducive to the development of NPOs. It was designed to provide training in evaluation techniques to government departments, 25 NGO representatives, and seven researchers. Consulting was also provided in Yunnan Province, where private organizations have developed rapidly in the wake of disaster recovery efforts in that area; in Guangdong Province, where supervisory controls over business associations have been relaxed; and other areas with special or advanced circumstances conducive to case studies. An overview of these efforts is summarized by region in the NPO Evaluation Consulting and Guidance Report.

In Guangdong Province, which has participated in the project since the first year, the supervisory control over business associations has been replaced by evaluations, and the first privately operated private-organization evaluation center in China will be opened there in December 2010. Awareness in governments and private organizations is changing year-by-year in all areas that have participated in this project.

At the training session in Hefei City, Anhui Province.
Young MPs from Mongolia and Cambodia Invited to Japan

This new project brings to Japan young Asian MPs who would otherwise have few opportunities to visit. The aims of this program are: to strengthen Japan’s bilateral relationships with the home countries of the MPs through exchanges with prominent Japanese individuals in the political and business sectors; to enhance the visitors’ understanding of Japan; and to improve the quality of parliamentary activities in the visitors’ home countries. The program started with the selection of two countries that became young parliamentary democracies after undergoing political reforms in the 1990s.

Mongolian MPs Visit to Study Underground Resource Development and Financial Management

Five young Mongolian MPs were invited to visit Japan February 19–26, 2010. The theme for their visit was “underground resource development and financial management.” They attended lectures by specialists in those fields and visited the Ashio Copper Mine. They also made a courtesy call on prime minister Yukio Hatoyama and participated in a trilateral study session with Diet members and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, significantly contributing to the formation of a network of next-generation leaders in Japan and Mongolia.

Cambodian MPs Interested in the Development of Local Agricultural Products

Five young Cambodian MPs visited Japan March 6–13, 2010, during which they had a chance to engage in a spirited exchange of opinions with members of both the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP) and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), including the speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Takahiro Yokomichi.

To see some of the actual local agricultural product processing plants that were of such great interest to the Cambodian MPs, the delegation visited a handmade ham factory and an agricultural research center in Tsukuba City, Ibaraki Prefecture. The normally very quiet delegation of MPs became very active when it came to asking questions about the “One Village One Product” (OVOP) movement, and clearly communicated their passion for improving agricultural products in their home country.

Enhancing Indo-Japan Relations: Visit to Japan by Indian Parliamentarians—Phase II

The multi-party delegation was led by an MP from the Biju Janata Dal party, and included one MP from the Indian People’s Party and three MPs from the Indian National Congress. Courtesy calls were made on Hon. Tetsuro Fukuyama, senior vice minister for foreign affairs; Hon. Kan Suzuki, senior vice minister of education, culture, sports, science and technology; Hon. Yoshiro Mori, former prime minister and long-time India watcher; and Hon. Shizuo Abe, former prime minister. The delegation also visited the political party headquarters of the current and previous ruling parties, where they confirmed the continuation of cooperative relations and exchanged opinions with their counterparts.

Locations visited outside of Tokyo included Nagayama City in Chiba Prefecture, where efforts are underway to address the aging population issue; Nagoya City in Aichi Prefecture, where the delegation had an opportunity to visit the Toyota headquarters to see a genuine Japanese industrial city in action and to learn about plant management practices; and Kamakura City in Kanagawa Prefecture, home to Mitsubishi Electric Corporation’s Information Technology R&D Center. During these visits, many questions were asked regarding the movement of Japanese companies into India, sparking spirited discussions on this topic.

A reception hosted by SPF was well attended not only by MPs but also by local Indian residents of Japan, thus making it a useful venue for networking.
The purpose of this project is to provide opportunities for further learning to three study groups to work in industrial sectors to promote the economic development of Myanmar.

This project aims to enhance the capabilities of civil servants who play an important role in national development.

In the first year, instructors from Japan and Myanmar selected six researchers for participation based on their English skills and specific fields of interest. The selected researchers were divided into three study groups based on these fields: (1) macroeconomic analysis; (2) primary and service industries; and (3) manufacturing. They began their research under the guidance of a team of instructors (from Japan and Myanmar) in Yangon. In the first year of the project, activities included finalization of research themes, refinement of research methods, and collection of information. The researchers made an interim report in Yangon in December 2009 and a final report on the research progress in March 2010.

Myanmar Marketing Research and Development has been contracted to provide supports for the activities of these six researchers.
Support for Practical Skills Training for Young Religious Leaders

This project provides training in practical skills, such as facilitating and non-violent communication, to young religious leaders in four main religions who will play a leadership role in Sri Lanka in the future. It also aims to help improve these leaders’ ability to use what they learn in everyday situations.

Young religious leaders were selected by a committee of senior religious leaders in each region, and workshops were held for the thirty who were selected in February and March 2010. Eighteen young religious leaders conducted activities at the Manic Farm IOP camp aimed at promoting religious and ethnic reconciliation.

Thirty young religious leaders visited southern Thailand November 8–19, 2009 and exchanged ideas with Buddhists and Muslims in conflict zones regarding policies for rebuilding divided communities.

Providing a Wealth of Information on Cross-Border Economic Activities

Chulalongkorn University, as well as four cooperating institutions in China, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar, participated in this project. They have conducted surveys of the relevant literature as well as on-site surveys, including interviews with households, governments, and private corporations in 24 locations where cross-border traffic is most active.

The study analyzed the flow of people, goods, and money in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region, as well as the economic and social impacts of efforts to promote regional cooperation, such as tariff and infrastructure investment policies and the East-West and North-South Economic Corridors. While the economic growth of the border regions has been confirmed, other factors that can promote or impede economic exchange have also been identified, such as high land prices and social instability associated with the transformation of farmers into immigrant workers in some areas.

At an international conference held in Bangkok in February 2010, as many as 60 representatives of industrial, government, and private institutions, as well as NGOs, gathered to hear about the results of this study. A report was compiled, serving as a useful resource and providing a wealth of information on cross-border economic activities in the Mekong region.

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Making the Mekong a Better-Connected Region

The project aims to build the intellectual foundations for contemporary Japanese studies in India by establishing research programs covering such topics as contemporary Japanese politics, economics, and society at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), a well known research institution. Within the scope of three years, the project held 10 seminars, workshops, and conferences; published the outcomes through a web site and newsletters; and presented six research papers.

In the final year of this project, an international conference was held on the theme of “India-Japan-China Dialogue on the East Asia Summit Process: The Leadership Conundrum.” In the three years of activities, ICRIER has become established as a center for the dissemination of research on Japan and has contributed to efforts to promote a better understanding of Japan within India. The dedicated website (http://www.icrier.org/indojapan/index.html) has become an important portal site for information on research and exchange activities between Japan and India.

A Center for Intellectual Exchange Between Japan and India

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