

Coordination between Technical Cooperation and Training Activities

Part 5 – Compound Program Type

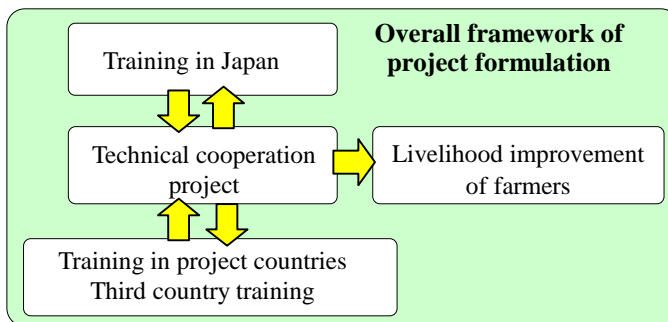
Examples we have introduced so far in this series, such as follow-up type coordination, coordination with technical cooperation project and third country training, are based on the improvement or combination of existing schemes. However, in practice, it is recommendable to promote project development based on local needs. Such project development should not be constrained by existing schemes and should promote a comprehensive approach encompassing various types of technical assistance and training activities. In the past, development studies and counterpart trainings as part of technical cooperation projects were add-on activities with a separate budget. In recent years, these activities are programmed from the on-set as part of planned projects. It proves that the importance of coordination between technical cooperation and training activities are increasingly being recognized.

Here, we would like to propose a form of compound program type cooperation, which is a technical cooperation project which integrates training activities in its plan from the project formulation stage. As a case study, I would like to look at a livelihood improvement program through improved fruit cultivation techniques in Central Asia. According to the report from the Agricultural and Rural Development, Training Needs Assessment for Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, fruit cultivation is suggested as one of the possible appropriate training courses for these areas. Under the climatic conditions in Central Asia, there is indeed good potential for production of high quality fruits. Grapes produced in Tajikistan fetch higher prices than the average grapes, and saplings of deciduous fruit trees are exported to neighbouring countries. Therefore, it is extremely important for the area's agricultural development to increase productivity and stabilize production of fruits by improving cultivation techniques through identifying limiting factors in fruit cultivation.

With this background, implementation of a program in Central Asia is considered to be highly promising, aiming to improve livelihood of fruit producers through improving product quality and stabilizing production. This would be possible by promoting appropriate soil management for fruit production and achieving sound quality management through introduction of pest control, pruning and thinning out of fruits. In this case, during the project formulation stage, a situation analysis would be undertaken and a cooperation field would be confirmed. For implementation, consideration should be given to the possibility of integrating training activities aimed at acquiring basic techniques of fruit cultivation into the technical cooperation project. By promoting various schemes efficiently and holistically, more effective cooperation programs can be implemented. In addition, when promoting this kind of integrated program, the following considerations should be born in mind.

- Efforts should be made to identify training needs during the project formulation stage;
- Position of training and its role should be clarified in project implementation;
- A clear demarcation should be made between training activities in Japan and in the project countries;
- What is expected of training activities in Japan should be clarified and a necessary system should be set up to be able to offer what is needed.

In short, during the project formulation phase, one should not only conduct fruit cultivation situation and needs analysis, but also should explore a concrete development plan, in collaboration with relevant government institutions in project countries, which would play a central role in improving fruit cultivation techniques in the country concerned. Moreover, there is a need to investigate a human resource development plan which would be necessary for implementing a development plan. Then, after a full examination of what types of technical training targeting which fruits can yield desired results, a cooperation program for achieving these results should be suggested and agreed upon. The program design would place a technical cooperation project and training activities in Japan and in third countries as required. In particular, in implementation of training courses in Japan, we would explore the possibility of running a “Fruit cultivation course for the Central Asia Region”. For this, cooperation needs to be consolidated for organic collaboration between various institutions such as the JICA training centers, universities and fruits experimentation center.



Greenhouse fruit cultivation (Tajikistan)