

# Terminal Evaluation

## Asia

### 1. Outline of the Project

**Country:**

Singapore

**Issue/Sector:**

Trade

**Division in charge:**

Southeast Asia Division, Regional Department I

**Period of Cooperation**

Fiscal Year 2000 - 2001

**Project title:**

International Trade Promotion

**Cooperation scheme:**

Third-Country Training Program

**Total cost:**

7 Million Yen

**Partner Country's Implementing Organization:**

Technical Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Nanyang Technological University (NTU)

**Supporting Organization in Japan:**

Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

**Related Cooperation:****1-1 Background of the Project**

The countries of Indochina that have promoted transition to a market economy have promoted international trade as one of policy priorities. The ASEAN countries, which have been the markets of exported goods from Indochina, have been making gains in export competitiveness in accordance with currency devaluation and have reduced their consumption as a result of economic stagnation. With ASEAN markets shrinking, Indochina needed to expand its export markets much farther.

Having enjoyed sustained economic growth since the 1960s as a result of export orientation and foreign-direct-investment, Singapore is readily acknowledged as a potential model for ASEAN countries as they seek to emulate its success.

Under these circumstances, a preliminary survey mission was dispatched in September 1998 and, as a result, Japan decided to implement the Third-country Training Program International Trade Promotion (hereafter called "the Training"). The Training aims to enhance the understanding of the history and current status of the measures for international trade promotion and the policy to foster export industries, human resources and institutions in Japan and Singapore as well as to improve the knowledge of the trading business and export marketing.

**1-2 Project Overview**

The Training in international trade promotion is provided to mid- to senior-level officials of Indochina countries who work for the governmental agencies engaged in the promotion of international trade promotion at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

**(1) Overall Goal**

The participants play a major role in promoting international trade in each country.

**(2) Project Purpose**

Participants' knowledge and skills in international trade promotion are improved.

**(3) Outputs**

1) Participants understand the basic concept of international trade promotion, applying the understanding to respective country's level of economic development.

2) Participants understand the current status of international marketing and its countermeasures to aid their development of export strategy.

#### (4) Inputs

Japanese side:

Short-term Expert 1

Local Cost 114,000 Singapore dollars (7 Million Yen)

Singaporean Side:

Counterparts 9

Local Cost 114,000 Singapore dollars (7 Million Yen)

#### (5) Participant Countries

Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam and Myanmar.

## 2. Evaluation Team

**Members of Evaluation Team** JICA Singapore office  
(Commissioned to International Trade Institute of Singapore)

**Period of Evaluation** 18 January 2002 - 28 March 2002  
**Type of Evaluation:** Terminal Evaluation By Overseas Offices

## 3. Results of Evaluation

### 3-1 Summary of Evaluation Results

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#### (1) Relevance

The objective of the Program was to improve the practical knowledge of international trade promotion which has made Singapore the successful example of international trade promotion. Indochina needed to learn the new concepts and technology of trade with foreign countries, to understand the new cases and to disseminate the knowledge they acquired to those concerned in their respective countries. In the light of the facts mentioned above, the Program was relevant to the four participating countries: Cambodia Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, each of which had the prime task of expanding its exporting markets. Also, selecting Singapore as the country of Program implementation was relevant given Singapore's well-organized training environment, its success as an example of technology transfer from Japan and its positive role in implementing third-country training programs.

#### (2) Effectiveness

Based on the results of a questionnaire surveying participants, respondents mentioned that they had actively utilized the attained knowledge and skills for the development of products and proposals of policies. The same questionnaire results revealed that Eleven participants out of 13 respondents rated four or five on a scale of five the textbook, case studies, group works and practice sessions of the Training. Judging from these results, the Training for the most part achieved its goals and was practically effective.

#### (3) Efficiency

Based on the answers to the questionnaire, participants evaluated the quality of the lectures, management, as well as the specialized knowledge and experience introduced in the lectures as high. The participating countries were focused on four Indochina countries which had an urgent need in the field of international trade promotion, and which led to the efficient implementation of the Training. On the other hand, almost 70 percent of the respondents mentioned that the level of the lectures was adequate or rather high, and the remaining 30 percent indicated that the level was too high. The level of what was delivered at the Training might have prevented materialization of the effects of the Training.

#### (4) Impact

Most participants compiled reports on the attained knowledge and skills after returning home and submitted these to the organizations they worked for. Some of the reports resulted in a contribution to policy at the level of Central Government, such as organizing a regional master plan and formulating a policy proposal on foreign capital promotion. Other achievements of the participants include: the generation of a master plan for international trade development at the local government level, creation of a website for promotion of international trade, and implementation of research for international trade promotion. The facts also demonstrate that there were on-site positive impacts.

#### (5) Sustainability

As described in the previous section, the participants have taken an active role in the promotion of international trade at their respective organizations, which is one of the evidences of technical sustainability. All of the respondents mentioned that they would like to recommend the Training to their coworkers for the course provides the knowledge necessary for international trade promotion. Therefore, continuing the Training and implementing follow-up cooperation were expected in the future, given the continuing trend of economic liberalization in Southeast Asian countries.

### **3-2 Factors that promoted realization of effects**

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#### (1) Factors concerning Planning

The training curriculum and its management met the practical needs of participating countries' in the field of international trade promotion. It promoted the realization of effects that the participating countries, Cambodia Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, countries which had a common framework of experience and a common need in the field of trade.

#### (2) Factors concerning the Implementation Process

The Program provided many workshops as well as discussions and case studies, which the participants responded to favorably. The participants were offered the opportunity to make presentations, which contributed to the realization of effects. Moreover, the participating countries selected the appropriate officials as participants, which also promoted realization of effects.

### **3-3 Factors that impeded realization of effects**

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#### (1) Factors concerning Planning

N/A

#### (2) Factors concerning the Implementation Process

Thirty percent of the respondents to the questionnaire said that the level of the lectures were too high, which implies that the implementing Organization might not have figured out the appropriate level for the lecture. Some presentations and discussions might have prevented materialization of sufficient effects because of limited English proficiency and insufficient preparation, i.e., the gathering of home-country statistical and other necessary information.

### **3-4 Conclusion**

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(1) Most of the participants had shown positive effects of the Training by applying the acquired knowledge and skills in their daily work and establishing a program for international trade promotion. However, some participants had an English insufficiency, making it clear that language ability is also important in the selection of participants.

(2) The Training was meaningful for the participating countries since it was in line with the changing needs arising from their being on the developing stage of international trade.

### **3-5 Recommendations**

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(1) The participating countries have been promoting international trade by various methods: establishing an international center, simplifying paperwork and announcing their international trade policy are examples. In continuing the Training or implementing a similar program in the future, it would be effective to determine the content of lectures in accordance with the needs of the participating countries. Such topics as cooperation between public and private organizations, strengthening the organization of trading agencies and enhancing the competitive power of emerging exporting companies might be welcomed.

(2) The selection of participants will remain crucial in terms of management. For future selection, it should be necessary to clearly define the relationship between training content and the participants' duties and responsibilities, the necessity for evaluating English ability utilizing objective indicators, and the importance of giving notice of the need for preparation in advance.

### **3-6 Lessons Learned**

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(1) The response rate to the questionnaires was low because almost two years had passed since the termination of the first training course and it was possible to interview only around half of the lecturers. Therefore, the implementing organization should collect relevant data soon after termination of the Training to gauge the effects of the training for feedback during the next training.

(2) To make the questionnaires easier to understand, the Five Evaluation criteria, "relevance" and "impact" are examples, should not be used in the questionnaires.

### **3-7 Follow-up Situation**

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The same course was implemented in FY2002.