

## The Summary of Terminal Evaluation

1. Outline of the Project		
Country : Kingdom of Thailand		Project Title : HIV/AIDS Regional Coordination Center (RCC) Project
Issue/Sector : Health / Infectious Disease Control		Cooperation scheme : Technical Cooperation
Division in charge : JICA Thailand Office		Total cost (at the time of evaluation study) : 249,842,000 Yen
Period of Cooperation	April 2005–March 2008 (3 years)	Partner Country's Implementing Organization : ASEAN Institute for Health Development (AIHD), Mahidol University
		Supporting Organization in Japan : Japanese Foundation for AIDS Prevention
		Related Cooperation : Major Infectious Disease Control Project (Myanmar)
<p><b>1-1 Background of the Project</b></p> <p>Thailand is generally recognized as one of the few countries in the world that has been able to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS transmission. On the other hand, in the neighboring countries of Thailand, the efforts to tackle the problems related to HIV/AIDS have been constrained by the insufficient institutional and human capacity to effectively implement HIV/AIDS programs.</p> <p>With this situation in mind and based on the regional cooperation mechanism agreed upon at the JICA-ASEAN Regional Cooperation Meeting (JARCOM), several of Thailand's neighbors requested Thailand to provide technical assistance in the fields of HIV/AIDS. Accordingly, the Governments of Japan and Thailand have jointly studied the possibility of establishing a regional coordination project to support HIV/AIDS programs in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam. Based on the finding of this study, the Government of Thailand requested a technical cooperation project to the Government of Japan to support human capacity building for HIV/AIDS programs in neighboring countries based in the AIHD, Mahidol University. The Project was launched in April 2005 for the project period of three years.</p> <p><b>1-2 Project Overview</b></p> <p>(1) Overall Goal</p> <p>Human capacity for HIV/AIDS programs in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam is developed based upon each country's specific needs and situation with the proper utilization of resources from the RCC and the result is applied for HIV/AIDS programs.</p> <p>(2) Project Purpose</p> <p>The RCC functions and is recognized by concerned organizations as a coordination center to provide training, information, and the human resources needed to support human capacity building for HIV/AIDS programs in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam.</p> <p>(3) Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Organization and management systems of the RCC are established and strengthened.</li> <li>2) Management system, curricula, and materials used in training programs are developed and improved in response to the specific country needs of Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam.</li> </ol>		

- 3) Information concerning human resources, research, and relevant experiences on HIV/AIDS in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand is collected, properly maintained, and disseminated to counterpart organizations, donor agencies, AIHD alumni, and other stakeholders.
- 4) Human resources, information, and financial resources in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand for HIV/AIDS programs are mobilized for more effective utilization through networking.

(4) Inputs

Japanese side:

- Long-term Japanese experts: 3 persons
- Equipment: Bus, Computer Server, Computer, Video Camera, Digital Camera, LCD, Visualizer, and other equipment
- Local Cost: Expenses for project employees, training expenses for multi-national TOT (partially) and country-specific TOT, other expenses for project activities

Thai side:

- Counterpart personnel: 7 persons (AIHD)
- Facilities: Training facilities, project office space (AIHD)
- Local Cost: Administrative and operational expenses for the RCC (AIHD), Training expenses for multi-national TOT (partially funded by Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency: TICA)

2. Evaluation Team

Members of Evaluation Team	<p>Mr. Ogawa Masazumi (Team leader: Deputy Resident Representative, JICA Thailand Office)</p> <p>Ms. Takeuchi Kiyoka (Assistant Resident Representative, JICA Thailand Office)</p> <p>Mr. Takaaki HIRAKAWA (INTEM Consulting, Inc.)</p> <p>Ms. Suthanone Fungtammasan (Program Officer, TICA)</p> <p>Mr. Pichet Khemthong (Program Officer, TICA)</p> <p>Dr. Boonyong Keiwkarnka (Senior Advisor, AIHD)</p> <p>Dr. Jiraporn Chompikul (Deputy Director, AIHD)</p> <p>Dr. Wirat Kumsrichan (Deputy Director, AIHD)</p> <p>Dr. Jumroon Mikhanorn (Head of the RCC, AIHD)</p>
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Period of Evaluation	September 3rd, 2007 – September 25th, 2007	Type of Evaluation : Terminal Evaluation
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3. Results of Evaluation

**3-1 Project Performance**

**Project Purpose:**

- The RCC has a contact channel with 66 concerned organizations in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand by means of the newsletters published and distributed quarterly.
- In the indicator of the Project Purpose, 75% of the above organizations are to recognize the RCC as an effective coordination center for HIV/AIDS by the end of the Project. According to the questionnaire survey to the relevant organizations by the Project, 66.7% of respondents (14 out of 21 respondents) replied that they recognize the RCC as an effective coordination center for HIV/AIDS although the response rate is not sufficient (31.8%).

- The newly-established RCC website was opened to the public since 1st April, 2007. Thus far, the number of the access to the RCC Website attains to 1,202 as of 19th September, 2007. Thus, the target value (1,500 hits per year) will be achieved in a short time.
- The number of the subscribers has already attained at 185 subscribers as of 19th September, 2007 (Target value: 150 subscribers).
- 83.3% of respondents (15 of 18 respondents) replied that the content of the RCC newsletter was “4: Excellent” or “3: Good” in the four-grade evaluation.

**Overall Goal:**

- 52.3% of respondents (34 of 65 respondents) participating in the country-specific TOT courses replied that they had conducted the trainings after returning to their countries. Also, 69.2% of respondents (18 of 26 respondents) participating in the multi-national TOT courses answered in a same manner.
- 83.1% of respondents (54 of 65 respondents) participating in the country-specific TOT courses replied that they had transferred the knowledge and skills to HIV/AIDS-related people besides the trainings after returning to their countries. Likewise, 92.3% of respondents (24 of 26 respondents) participating in the multi-national TOT courses replied in the same way.

**Output 1:**

- As a result of the overall evaluation of the management system in the RCC by the counterparts, the average of ratings was “3.80” on a scale from “1” to “5” with “5” representing the highest possible rating.

**Output 2:**

- The assessments of the “overall training management” and “teaching materials (handouts)” by the RCC ex-trainees attending at country-specific or multi-national TOT courses were generally greater than 3.00 grading points on average.

**Output 3:**

- The database and RCC website have already been developed and updated. The database is to be updated as needed. Also, newly-established website was released to the public on April 1, 2007.
- 450-500 copies of newsletters were distributed to the visitors having the contact with the RCC, the related organizations and groups to which the RCC team visited.

**Output 4:**

- RCC ex-trainees were selected as focal points in CLMV countries: Cambodia (4); Lao PDR (4); Myanmar (3); and Vietnam (5).
- In terms of the satisfaction levels of the workshops and lectures conducted by the RCC resource persons during the monitoring and follow-up visits in CLMV countries, the RCC ex-trainees highly appreciate the visits. They commented that the workshops and lectures during the visits reminded them of what they have learned through the TOT courses.
- Five RCC resource persons were dispatched to CLMV countries: Cambodia (2); Lao PDR (1); Myanmar (1); and Vietnam (1).

## **3-2 Summary of Evaluation Results**

### **(1) Relevance**

For the following reasons, the Project is judged to be of high relevance.

#### Consistency with the National Plans/Strategies on HIV/AIDS in CLMV countries and Thailand

The HIV/AIDS transmission prevention and the monitoring for HIV/AIDS control are described in the current national plans/strategies on HIV/AIDS in CLMV countries and Thailand. Thus, it could be said that those national plans/strategies are in line with the direction of the Project.

#### Consistency with Japan's foreign aid policies

According to Japan's Economic Cooperation Program for Thailand (May 2006), it is described that Thailand is expected to become a partner of Japan when implementing assistance to a third country. Also, region-wide cooperation in collaboration with Thailand is encouraged so as to promote Japan's knowledge and experience accumulated over the years to other developing countries. Therefore, the project concept of region-wide technical cooperation in collaboration with Thailand is in line with the government policy.

Regarding JICA's plan for country-specific program implementation in Thailand (October 2006), JICA has three priority areas of assistance. Third priority area of assistance explains that Thailand is the "partner for assistance to third countries" in which programs for regional cooperation are encouraged to be conducted in neighboring countries. In Specific, HIV/AIDS as an infectious diseases control is raised for promoting the cooperation in the field of the human security. In this way, the priority area of assistance is consistent with the framework of the Project.

#### Merits of the region-wide cooperation project

It is important for Thailand to work together with CLMV countries in order to control and prevent HIV/AIDS in the region. The issues of HIV/AIDS should be solved not only in Thailand but also in the whole region together. The issues of HIV/AIDS will not be able to be solved because the migrating population moves around and cross the national borders. In this way, HIV/AIDS issues appear not in a specific area but in much wider region. Moreover, if people in the region are educated well, it will be anticipated that the number of newly infected cases might be reduced in this region. That is why it could be justifiable to conduct the Project with the scheme of the region-wide cooperation.

### **(2) Effectiveness**

For the following reasons, the effectiveness of the Project is judged to be high to a certain degree if the Project continues its efforts to achieve a target value set up in the Project Purpose.

#### Achievement of the Project Purpose

The evaluation study team considered that the RCC is a functional coordinating body as a regional center. Specifically, the RCC prepares and distributes the newsletters which contain some experiences in other countries, current events on HIV/AIDS, etc. In this way, the RCC tries to share the information and current events to the implementing agencies, RCC ex-trainees, HIV/AIDS related donors, JICA offices, etc. in CLMV countries by means of the RCC newsletters because of limitation of the internet access.

On the other hand, the communication with relevant agencies is not sufficient enough to keep the appropriate relationship with relevant organizations. The RCC mainly gets in touch with JICA office in order to conduct TOT courses, monitoring and follow-up visits, and ICC meetings. However, if the Project is classified as region-wide cooperation, then the Japanese experts with the RCC staff should frequently have visited JICA offices, implementing agencies, donors, and other concerned organizations (in total 66 relevant organizations) in CLMV countries and Thailand other than the monitoring and follow-up visits without relying on email, telephone, and letters excessively.

#### Utilization of teaching materials prepared by the Project

According to the interview survey to the RCC ex-trainees and the assessment of the TOT courses by the trainees in CLMV countries, they highly appreciated teaching materials (handouts). They expressed that the teaching materials were very useful for disseminating skills and knowledge to the persons working for HIV/AIDS programs.

#### Dissemination of the information to the relevant organizations

In terms of the RCC newsletter, as it contains updated technical information, it is very beneficial for the RCC ex-trainees. Also, the newsletter contains the pictures of the RCC ex-trainees and persons concerned with the Project, so that the relationship among the RCC ex-trainees might have been more enhanced through the newsletter. In this way, a sense of fellowship has been created among RCC ex-trainees in CLMV countries.

The newsletter is sent to the representatives of each implementing agency, but the Director General of the VAAC in Vietnam has not read the newsletter before. Thus, it is necessary for the RCC to request the implementing agencies in each country to circulate RCC newsletters within their agencies.

### **(3) Efficiency**

The Inputs of the Project were efficiently transferred to the Activities and the Outputs.

#### Information on Japanese experts and counterparts

Overall, Japanese experts and the counterparts are appropriately assigned in the Project according to the time schedule on the Progress of the HIV/AIDS RCC Project. Although the technical officer and the program officer hired by the Project resigned on the way, the newly hired staffs work more efficiently and effectively. Therefore, the TOT courses and RCC website are continuously promoted and improved by their assistance and efforts.

Importantly, the technical staff will be transferred to the AIHD staff from the temporary technical staff of the Project. The technical staff might be a key person to continue and improve the TOT courses as well as revise the TOT curriculum because the staff is assigned to work with the training section of the AIHD right now.

#### Scales of the project budget coming from TICA (Thai side)

TICA shares the training expenses for the multi-national TOT courses with the Project. It could be understood that TICA has increased the percentage of the budget from 31.43% in the 1st multi-national TOT to 36.16% in the 2nd multi-national TOT course.

#### Utilization and maintenance of provided equipment

In general, the equipment is appropriately maintained and utilized by the Project. Although some equipment is not utilized frequently, they are employed during the training courses, such as LCD projector, video camera, digital camera, visualizer, etc. It is expected to increase the frequency of usage in the progress of the TOT courses in future.

#### **(4) Impact**

The following impact is recognizable from the implementation of the Project.

#### Prospects for the achievement of the Overall Goal

There are many challenges before attaining the Overall Goal from the Project Purpose. It is quite difficult to improve individual capacity through the training component only. In order to enhance the individual capacity, it is necessary to prepare the environment where the individuals are able to put the knowledge and skills obtained through the training courses into practice. Therefore, it is necessary to show the design and procedure so as to achieve the Overall Goal before the termination of the Project.

#### Verification of the effect of the Overall Goal

Regarding the indicator (2)<sup>1</sup> of the Overall Goal, it is very difficult to measure the effects of the TOT courses in CLMV countries. Even if the RCC ex-trainees conduct training courses in their countries, the impacts of their activities will not be able to measure without conducting baseline survey or operational research by local consultants or research institutes.

#### The position of the RCC ex-trainees after the TOT courses

According to the questionnaire survey to RCC ex-trainees in CLMV countries by JICA Thailand office and the Project, 76.9% of respondents (50 of 65 respondents) participating in the country-specific TOT courses replied that their current position was relevant to conduct trainings for the persons working for HIV/AIDS programs. Furthermore, 96.2% of respondents (25 of 26 respondents) participating in the multi-national TOT courses replied in the same manner. Thus, it could be said that most of them remain in a position to provide trainings on HIV/AIDS.

#### Other positive or negative impacts beside the Overall Goal

##### <Positive impacts>

- It is considered that demands of the RCC ex-trainees with the experiences, skills, and knowledge on HIV/AIDS might be enhanced in order to respond to newly-arisen infectious diseases, such as SARS and avian flu.

##### <Negative impacts>

- It is necessary to pay attention to the potential negative impact in the target countries, particularly in Cambodia, due to the long absence of the medical services to the patients by participating in the TOT courses in Thailand.

<sup>1</sup> Satisfaction, understanding, and application level of trainees of the training conducted by RCC ex-trainees is enhanced.

## **(5) Sustainability**

The prospects of the project sustainability will be possible if the RCC make further efforts to continue in some ways with human resources secured by the AIHD.

### Policy aid from Thailand and CLMV countries

According to the national plans/strategies on HIV/AIDS in Thailand and CLMV countries (at least every national plans/strategies secured by 2010) as mentioned in the "Relevance," the HIV/AIDS-related activities would be sustained by the support of the national plans/strategies in Thailand and CLMV countries even after the termination of the Project.

### Organizational capacity

The number of the AIHD staff who can manage the training courses has been increased through the Project. Further, the RCC became able to enhance the network of the resource persons for HIV/AIDS programs in Thailand. However, the program officer, technical staff, and project secretary hired by the Project busily work on the implementation and arrangement of the TOT courses as well as the development of the RCC website and database in reality. It is considered that the RCC staff (counterparts) highly relies on them. Since the RCC has been established within the AIHD, it would be possible to continue training courses on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with the training section of the AIHD in order to work on the arrangement and implementation of the TOT courses after the termination of the Project.

### Budgetary performance of the RCC

As shown in the below table, it is recognized that the AIHD makes efforts to secure the budget for the Project around 10% of the total budget of the AIHD. The AIHD increases the amounts of the budget for the Project year by year. Therefore, there are prospects that parts of project activities will be sustained from the perspective of the budget allocation by the AIHD.

## **3-3 Factors promoting project progress**

### **(1) Factors concerning to the Implementation Process**

- Although the RCC Project independently promoted the project activities within the AIHD at the beginning of the Project, the RCC has gradually collaborated with the training section of the AIHD after the mid-term evaluation. For instance, the head of the training section was to check the contents of the curriculums on TOT courses and join the monitoring and follow-up visits with the RCC project team. Also, a project staff is placed not at the project office but the training section of the AIHD.
- In Myanmar, the MIDC Project is able to support the RCC ex-trainees technically and financially during the cooperation period in order to disseminate knowledge and skills obtained by the RCC ex-trainees to the people working for HIV/AIDS programs.
- The RCC and its counterpart agencies have struggled with the HIV/AIDS issues, so they have the sense of unity based on the common objectives, i.e., "reduction of new HIV infection rate" and "improvement of quality of life of PLWHAs", through the capacity development for the people working for HIV/AIDS programs.

- Even if some trainees were not able to conduct training courses because of the budgetary constraints and working circumstances, they try to transfer the knowledge, skills, and experiences obtained through the Project to their colleagues and subordinates in the morning meetings and OJT-based methods.

### **3-4 Factors inhibiting project progress**

#### **(1) Factors concerning to Planning**

- The expression of the Project Purpose gives an impression as it is a bilateral project in Thailand. Thus, the Project Purpose should have been established so as to share with CLMV countries.
- The concept of the region-wide cooperation is not shared within JICA, which might become an inhibiting factor for the achievement of the Overall Goal.

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

- The immediate effects of the TOT courses cannot be expected although the transaction cost for coordinating various relevant organizations is quite high.
- English is utilized as a common language in the region-wide cooperation, whereas many RCC ex-trainees feel the language barriers, which might inhibit the understandings of the TOT courses.
- The gaps of knowledge and skills among CLMV countries might inhibit their learning process because what some do not know has already been in common knowledge for others.

### **3-5 Conclusion**

The evaluation study team considered that the Project is on the right track and will be able to achieve the Project Purpose by the end of the Project. Specifically, the RCC prepares and distributes the newsletters which contain some experiences in other countries, current events on HIV/AIDS, etc. In addition, the RCC arranges and conducts TOT courses smoothly as planned. Moreover, monitoring and follow-up visits are carried out to observe how RCC ex-trainees transfer skills and knowledge as well as to promote the communication with the relevant organizations. In this way, the project activities were conducted for the Project Purpose.

### **3-6 Recommendations**

#### **(1) Enhancement of the CLMV institutional partnerships**

The RCC relationship with RCC ex-trainees in CLMV countries needs to be strengthened through institutional partnerships (RCC counterpart agencies, hospitals, etc.) as new focal points.

#### **(2) Achievement of the indicator (2) of the Project Purpose**

Although the indicator (2) of the Project Purpose is that 75% of 66 relevant organizations are to recognize the RCC as an effective coordination center for HIV/AIDS by the end of the Project, the percentage of the indicator (2) is 66.7% at this moment. Therefore, it is necessary for the Project to give more publicity to those relevant organizations before the termination of the Project in order to achieve the Project Purpose.

#### **(3) The modification of the indicator (2) of the Overall Goal**

The indicator (2) of the Overall Goal implies that it is necessary to collect the evaluation results from the trainees who attend the trainings conducted by the RCC ex-trainees in the future. The indicator (2) needs to be reconsidered in terms of realistic and practical measurements, such as who makes and collects the evaluation sheets, and who organizes and manages the assessment of the RCC ex-trainees by their trainees with the sufficient budget for doing it. In this sense, the Project should make the design of collecting data of the indicator (2). Otherwise, another indicator should be set up before the termination of the Project.



**(4) Proper network with donor agencies**

It is very difficult to maintain the relations with donor agencies by remote communications only, such as RCC newsletter, facsimile, and email. Thus, the Project should frequently visit and discuss with donor agencies face to face and let them know of the RCC.

**(5) Sharing of project information with the JICA offices in CLMV countries**

The Project is well aware of the importance of the communication and information sharing with the JICA offices in CLMV countries to implement project activities effectively and efficiently. Therefore, the efforts to share the project information with the JICA offices should be maintained.

**(6) Enhancement of coordination and management skills of the RCC**

Thus far, the arrangements of the monitoring and follow-up visits are mainly prepared by the Japanese experts. At this moment, it could not be said that the RCC staff works on the administrative operations on their own initiatives. Therefore, it is necessary for the RCC staff to make more efforts for improving the coordination and management skills in future.

**(7) Effective utilization of newsletters**

According to the interview survey of the evaluation study team, many persons related to the Project highly appreciated the RCC newsletter. Thus, it might be better to make more hard copies of the newsletter and distribute them to the stakeholders in each country, and it will contribute to the public awareness of the HIV/AIDS as well as the recognition of the RCC.

**3-7 Lessons Learned**

**(1) Advantages of the country-specific TOT courses**

The country-specific TOT courses were basically prepared according to the needs of each country. Further, with reference to the language barrier, it is better for the participants coming from the same country to attend the same training courses because they are easily able to communicate with each other. Thus, when new similar projects are formulated in future, the component of country-specific TOT courses should be included in those projects. It will support the effective implementation of the projects.

**(2) Collaboration between the region-wide technical cooperation project and the bilateral technical cooperation projects**

When a new region-wide technical cooperation project is formulated in future, the possibility of the collaboration with bilateral technical cooperation projects in the target countries should be scrutinized in order to complement and foster the implementation of the region-wide technical cooperation project.

**(3) Project design for region-wide technical cooperation projects**

In case of region-wide technical cooperation projects, it is difficult to justify the implementation of the region-wide technical cooperation projects if the contents of the projects, such as Project Purpose, Overall Goal, etc., are not shared within target countries. Thus, the Project Purpose and the Overall Goal should formally be determined after getting the consensus among target countries.

**(4) Cost-effectiveness of region-wide technical cooperation projects**

In this region-wide technical cooperation project, the immediate effects of the Project cannot be expected at this moment although the transaction cost spent by JICA offices in CLMV countries for the purpose of the coordination with various relevant organizations was quite high. Therefore, a region-wide technical cooperation project should be designed so as to promote communication and coordination with relevant organizations in target countries efficiently and smoothly.