

## Activity report: Kickoff meetings

The Phase II of the EBM promotion project was launched in December 2013. Dr. Chihaya Koriyama from Kagoshima University and a project manager visited Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City from March 6 to 8 for kickoff meetings. We confirmed continuous collaboration with organizations that have been involved and expanded networks with new organizations. We also discussed about publishing course text books and organizing the Epidemiological Training Course VI.

Our very first meeting on March 5 in Hanoi was with the Ministry of Health. Deputy Director General of the Administration of Science, Technology and Training, Dr. Nguyen Ngo Quang, supported our application of obtaining the ministry's accreditation, and suggested our future expansion to the northern regions.

The second meeting was with the Hanoi School of Public Health. School Dean, Dr. Bui Thi Thu Ha, and Chair of the Department of International Cooperation, Dr. Le Cu Linh, provided useful suggestions on publishing the textbook and managing the next training course. They kindly agree to continue providing technical supports in both teaching and course management.



The third meeting was with the Research and Training Centre for Community Development. Director, Dr. Tran Tuan, warmly welcomed our visit. We exchanged our views and confirmed to have a shared goal in promoting Evidence Based Medicine. He will be the hub of three guest lecturers in the Course VI.



Our last meeting in Hanoi was at Japan International Cooperation Agency's Vietnam Office. Senior Representative, Mr. Chikahiro Masuda, after carefully listening to our past achievements and future plans, recommended us to expand professional exchange among different regions within Vietnam and cultural exchange between two countries.



On March 6, we moved to Ho Chi Minh City and met with our counterparts from University of Medicine and Pharmacy and Medical Association in Ho Chi Minh City. We confirmed our continuous and expanding collaboration in the Phase II with Vice Dean of the University, Dr. Tran Diep Tuan, and Vice Chairman and Secretary General of the Medical Association, Dr. Huynh Anh Lan. The meeting was effectively arranged by Vice Chairman of the Medical Association and Vietnamese Project Manager, Dr. Nguyen Thy Khue.

The second meeting on the same day was at JICA Office Liaison Office. We explained our past project achievements and future plans, and received suggestion to network with Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers from Director, Mr. Sakai Toshifumi.



On March 7, Director of Au Co Hospital in Dong Nai Province, Dr. Nguyen Quang Vinh, and the hospital's Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Nguyen Thanh Binh, kindly hosted our project's round table discussion with Vietnamese instructors and the hospital staff. We discussed details of textbook publication and management of the Course VI.



Despite our short stay in Vietnam, we were extremely glad and thankful that partnerships and networks among counterparts and collaborating organizations expanded and were firmly built through above kickoff meetings.



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## Suggestions from kickoff meetings for the future activities

### Overview

Based on the evaluation on the Phase I project (Course V: 2010-2012), we need to revise the goal and contents of the Phase II project (Course VI) to be more feasible and practical for clinicians. We will apply the course textbook and the course itself for accreditation by Ministry of Health, and expect more Vietnamese experienced instructors and teaching assistants with advanced knowledge and research experiences to join if this course is to expand to other areas. It will be better to start planning how the course management can be handed over from Japanese team to Vietnamese team.

### Specific comments

1. Goal of the Course VI: For most participants, research presentations at scientific meetings or grant proposal writing may be a feasible goal. According to previous course evaluation, writing an abstract (of academic paper) seems applicable only for a limited number of participants.
2. Contents of biostatistics lectures: According to previous course evaluation, the course was too short to teach advanced statistical analyses and these were impractical for many. We should focus on teaching analysis techniques more applicable to clinicians and on data interpretation.
3. Topics for group project: Earlier submission of project proposals before starting the course is recommended for more effective group works.
4. Textbook: A chapter of ethical issues should be added to the current version.
5. Participant selection: It is recommended to tighten the requirements for completion rather than screening of participants. Reasonable requirements to receive official certificates should be discussed and announced to the participants in advance.
6. Expanding the target areas: There are strong potential needs of similar training for physicians in other areas including northern Vietnam. Collaboration with appropriate counterparts in these areas should be formed. This is related to the next item, human resource development.
7. Strengthening of human resource development: To extend the course to other areas especially in local areas, other Vietnamese instructors and teaching assistants should be invited to this project in the future.
8. Networking with other JICA activities: For example, inviting Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to the course could be considered in future courses.

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