

Issues in Workplace Learning in Asia and the Pacific

Report of ILO/SKILLS-AP/Japan/OVTA
Regional Workshop and Study Programme on Workplace Learning in Japan
Chiba, Japan, 22 – 30 January, 2008

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Preface

This ILO/SKILLS-AP/Japan Regional Technical Workshop and Study Programme provides a good example of an integrated approach to technical meetings. The combination of the workshop and site visits to Japanese industry was clearly of great value to the participants as it allowed the opportunity for interaction between the participants, ILO and OVTA staff, and time for participants to learn from Japanese experience and each other.

Workplace learning has become increasingly important during the last decade as an effective means of developing workforce knowledge and skills. The use of the workplace as a centre of learning has been enhanced due to the growth of the knowledge economy, the impact of new technology on productivity and the growing use of high performance work practices that are transforming the ways in which work is organized. The ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation (2004) stresses that member States should “promote the expansion of workplace learning and training”.

The high priority Japan places on human resources development is reflected in its Eighth Human Development Basic Plan (2006 – 2011) that supports career development within and outside enterprises in order to put sustainable career development into practice. Japan also promotes a variety of efforts for rebuilding the environment to develop workers’ capabilities, including restructuring of educational capacity of workplaces. The Plan promotes collaboration among related sectors by providing substantial workplace learning programmes. Japan’s long experience in implementing workplace learning proved to be extremely useful for the participants.

I wish to thank the Government of Japan for their support of this programme and their on-going support SKILLS-AP and skills development in the region. I also thank Mr Trevor Riordan, the former Manager, SKILLS-AP, and now the ILO Senior Training Policy Adviser in Geneva, for planning and organizing this workshop together with colleagues in the region, Mr Raymond Grannall, the resource person for his contribution to the success of this programme, and Ms Wipusara Rugworakijkul, Programme Officer, SKILLS-AP, who dealt with all the logistics and support to the meeting, together with Ms Alin Sirisaksopit who assisted in the preparation.

Sachiko Yamamoto
ILO Regional Director
Asia and the Pacific

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Introduction

Workplace learning has become increasingly important during the last decade as an effective means of developing workforce knowledge and skills. Over recent years, in particular, the use of the workplace as a centre of learning has been transformed due to the growth of the knowledge economy, the impact of new technology on productivity, and the growing use of high performance work practices that are transforming the ways in which work is organized.

The ILO Human Resources Development HRD Recommendation 195 (2004) stresses that member States should “promote the expansion of workplace learning and training”. Supporting this recommendation, Japan stated in their Eighth Human Development Basic Plan (2006 – 2011) that they would promote a variety of efforts for rebuilding the environment to develop workers’ capabilities, including restructuring of educational capacity of workplaces and the society. The Japanese Plan focuses on the collaboration among related sectors by providing substantial workplace learning programmes. The Japan Government is also interested in supporting and promoting capacity building for countries in the region by presenting the Japanese perspective and experience through training and technical cooperation projects.

Consistent with this policy framework, ILO/SKILLS-AP organised a Regional Workshop and Study Programme over the period 22 – 30 January, 2008. The workshop was held at the Overseas Vocational Training Association, Chiba, Japan with government, employer and worker representatives from Bangladesh (government representative only), India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia and Pakistan. The workshop programme and the list of participants are shown in Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively.

The aim of the workshop was to increase awareness of the importance of workplace learning and to learn for the ways that workplace learning is implemented in Japan and other countries. The workshop consisted of a number of technical sessions, panel discussions, working groups and site visits to two Japanese companies, Denso and Nissan. Participants also developed plans for action in their own countries on completion of the workshop.

Inaugural Session

Mr. Shinichi Hasegawa, Director, ILO Office in Japan welcomed participants on behalf of the ILO Office in Japan and provided a brief outline of SKILLS-AP and its precursor, the Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP). He pointed out the Decent Work Agenda for Asia action plan to 2015, promotes access to education for all, including targeted, relevant education, training and lifelong learning. He described how Japan, as an advanced country in the region had made a commitment to support career development within and outside enterprises in order to put sustainable career development into practice. He indicated that Japanese organizations have traditionally placed great importance on workplace learning, and skills succession and that he hoped participants would learn from this and from each other.

Mr Masuharu Tanaka, Director, Overseas Cooperation Division of the Japan Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, added that workplace learning is an effective strategy to help workers to acquire advanced technologies. He indicated that workplace learning has produced successful results in Japan, and that since Japan is facing a decrease in population, it has become essential to enhance productivity by improving the capabilities of individuals. Based on this, in 2006, the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare revised the Human Resources Development Promotion Law and drew up the “Eighth Basic Plan for Human Resources Development.”

This new plan aims to support a smoother career development throughout one's working life; promotes policies focused on the entire workforce including those who gave up their careers due to childbearing and child-rearing, and developing young workers' abilities. Rebuilding the environment to develop workers' capabilities is one of the policies under these objectives, and now specific measures are being taken to promote workplace training.

Mr Isao Aoki, OVTA President welcomed participants and officially opened the seminar. He stressed the long time association between OVTA and the Ministry of Labour since 1982. He indicated that OVTA was providing a range of training services and that it had already supported 85 workshops and seminars for SKILLS-AP and its predecessor, APSDEP, with 1,143 international participants. He indicated that workplace learning provides an opportunity for people to acquire skills they need at work through sharing, conceptualizing and integrating their own knowledge and that it was important to see workplace learning as constructive activity.

Key issues in workplace learning – the international experience

This first Technical Session was introduced by Mr Trevor Riordan, Manager, SKILLS-AP. He pointed out that many countries in Asia and the Pacific are finding it difficult to respond to the national demand for workforce skills and that there is an increasing need to develop the skills required for competitiveness, productivity and jobs. He indicated that public training systems are unable to develop national workforce skills by themselves which has led to an increasing focus on the workplace as a centre of learning. Mr Riordan outlined the ILO's work on workplace learning and mentioned that two publications would be presented in this meeting. The first publication was a paper titled *Challenging the Myths about Learning and Training in Small Enterprises*. The second publication, to be presented later in the workshop was a *Guide to Improving Workplace Learning in Asia and the Pacific*.

Myths about Learning and Training in Small Enterprises

The *Challenging the Myths* publication¹ draws on the results of recent research on the learning/training process in SME's and explores policy implications and perceptions about under-investment in training. For example it explores a view that a lack of formal training is regarded as 'market failure' and that because formal training is easier to measure, the lack of it is used in SME's as an argument for lower investment.

It also explores myths on learning and training in SME's – that SME owners systematically under-invest in training and don't appreciate the value of learning/training; that informal learning is less valuable than formal learning and that these failures are best dealt with by government schemes to promote more investment by SME's in formal training. The paper addresses the differences in skills levels for different types of companies and explains why smaller companies tend to use less formal training. It explores skills issue with regard to the size of enterprises, making a clear distinction between micro, small, medium and large.

The report explains differences in the various national cultures (US/UK; Germany and Japan) which also have a strong influence on the ways in which training is organized. The publication does not attempt to deal with all aspects of SME activity, in particular, problems of VET infrastructure in developing countries and self-employment. However, Mr. Riordan indicated that the report contained important information that would be of relevance to all of the participants.

¹ 'Challenging the Myths about learning and training in Small Enterprises: Implications for Public Policy' by David Ashton, Johnny Sung, Arwen Raddon and Trevor Riordan, forthcoming Working Paper, ILO

Following this presentation, Mr. Ray Grannall, ILO Resource Person, also stressed the ways in which the need for workplace learning had been increasing in importance for the last twenty years. He indicated that the nature of work has changed due to technology and that many areas of work are now more complex and jobs are changing rapidly. As a consequence, people have to learn to deal with complexity and to understand the principles that underlie their work.

He indicated that research into successful Learning Organizations had found a number of characteristics. These included:

- An organisational commitment to Training and Workplace Learning;
- Management commitment and understanding of processes and industrial issues;
- Clear identification of training needs;
- An ability to respond flexibly and rapidly to changing industry training needs;
- An integrated approach to learning;
- Good timetabling and access to workers;
- A recognition of the language, literacy and numeracy needs of the workforce;
- Regular monitoring and review of the effectiveness of training;
- Appropriate assessment strategies; and,
- Effective record keeping systems.

Successful Learning Organizations often included a commitment to training in the company's business plan, mission statement, strategic directions document or other major policy document. Some also included a training commitment in their industrial awards or employment contracts. With regard to the implementation of training, it was important to have realistic goals and to fit in with production schedules and the needs of the core business.

Language, literacy and numeracy in the workplace

With regard to the language, literacy and numeracy needs of the workforce, Mr Grannall stressed the need for sensitivity in testing as many workers would have a history of failure with education programs and would be very good at hiding their low levels of literacy and numeracy. Support needs to be provided in the workplace and there should be an understanding that learning will take a longer time and that traditional curriculum models may not always be appropriate for these groups.

Partnerships

A key strategy used by many SME's is through a partnership or relationship with an education provider. This allows the company to focus on its core business and to outsource things such as:

- Identifying the current and required competencies of new and existing staff;
- Providing training in company premises or off-site;
- Designing and developing learning, teaching and assessment materials;
- Providing formal accreditation of training which may be necessary to meet regulatory, quality or licensing requirements;
- Conducting skills assessments and maintaining records.

A short paper with a number of brief examples of partnerships and other workplace learning situations was provided to participants (Annex 3).

HRD in the Japanese Workplace

Human resource development in the Japanese workplace was described by Mr. Matsubara Nobuo, Overseas Cooperation Division, Human Resources Development Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. In a comprehensive presentation, he highlighted key aspects of

the 8th Japanese Government HRD plan which has a main theme of rebuilding the environment to support continual development of vocational careers. In the light of a projected decline in the working population it is designed to address the structural changes and develop policies to support career development. This takes the form of subsidies for employers to pay for employees undertaking training and the actual cost of the training. It provides funding for accredited vocational training and grants for participants of government training programs.

It is difficult for middle aged workers to join the major companies and those who missed getting a job in some of the large multinationals during the 1990's, when recruitment was halted, are now having difficulty finding appropriate employment. He indicated that a system for human resources development is being implemented in which practical training is provided in small and medium sized enterprises which have difficulties conducting training on their own. These companies now receive assistance to enhance industrial competitiveness. Under the program, practical training opportunities are provided, such as sending instructors to workplaces and conducting tailor-made training at available facilities. A second policy measure is to develop strategies for skills transfer due to the retirement of the baby-boom generation beginning in 2007. In this program small business associations are supported to assist skills transfer. The third policy measure to promote skills provides young people with opportunities to acquire skills in manufacturing.

There is a national trade skills test system covering 138 occupations at four grades (Superior, First, Second, and Third grade). 220,000 people became 'Certified Skilled Worker' under this program in 2006. The program also certifies trade skills which are specific to a company. Programs are also designed for skills trainers with a system of levels based on competencies and age. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is also addressing HRD policy at enterprises due to the mass retirement of baby-boomers and the potential loss of a considerable amount of expertise

Key issues in workplace learning – experience of countries in the region

Prior to the seminar, all participants were asked to prepare a brief paper which described the national training policy and system and a discussion of the workplace learning situation in their country.

Countries described national policy initiatives and made reference to systems such as the following:

- Apprenticeship systems were often seen as one of the major ways in which workplace training was incorporated into vocational education and training;
- Some countries highlighted the use of partnership arrangements between workplaces and training institutions;
- Increasing pressures on industry through the phasing out of quotas imposed on China by the EU and the need to add value and improve efficiency in production due to the pressures of the global markets;
- Companies also need to carry out workplace training in the area of occupational health and safety as improved working conditions are progressively being enshrined in legislation and regulation by the various governments;
- Many countries described problems associated with an oversupply of unskilled labour with a severe shortage of a skilled workforce for both internal needs and for employment in other countries. It was pointed out that future demand for skill training would be difficult to meet and that it was essential to encourage private sector and NGOs to invest in vocational training and to improve linkages between enterprises and the training sector;

- The need for changes to products due to food and product safety requirements for export has increased pressures on training in all countries;
- New logistical requirements to track goods produced through the whole production process;
- Many countries are introducing new machinery with higher skill requirements to meet these new demands;
- Some employee organizations have shifted from a view that their workers should only do a specific job to a view that training and experience across a range of jobs is good for their members. Some employer organizations are now demanding workplace training and opportunities for employees to gain skills across a range of jobs;
- Multinational companies are providing some inputs as the foreign ventures often involve a mentoring and model role which is helping to change the attitudes of traditional managers;
- National and international skills competitions were also mentioned regularly. These are generally supported by a one-on-one mentoring system for the elite workers who will be representing the company and the country.

Some other specific examples included:

- India described government regulations under which employers are obliged to have training infrastructure and a defined ratio of apprentices to skilled workers;
- India has formal systems for the certification of skills acquired in workplace and the recognition of skills obtained on the job. An example of a regular trade test is the All India Trade Test for trade apprentices (AITT) which is conducted twice a year by the National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT);
- A new Labour Law in Bangladesh has made training mandatory. Any time spent in this training must be counted by the company as time spent on-duty;

Draft Guide to Workplace Learning

The draft Guide to Workplace Learning was introduced by Mr Trevor Riordan. He noted that a barrier to more extensive implementation of workplace training is a lack of knowledge of the approaches and processes for promoting workplace learning, and a lack of evidence of the extent to which it takes place. He indicated that along with other earlier research on workplace learning, SKILLS-AP has prepared a draft Guide to assist in meeting this need. The draft Guide² was provided to all participants. Major sections in the Guide are:

1. The increasing importance of workplace learning;
2. Learning in the workplace – different forms;
3. Different learning and training needs and processes;
4. How employers create effective workplace learning and training;
5. Ways in which governments can support workplace learning;
6. Conclusions: the case for an integrated approach.

Working Group Discussions

Two Working Groups were set up to stimulate discussion on workplace learning. Groups indicated that workplace learning varied between different industries and different size of companies. It was widely used in agriculture and rural industries and its use was increasing in hospitality, information technology, telecommunications and health care. However it appeared to be at a low level in manufacturing and in SME's especially those with low

² A Guide to Improving Workplace Learning in Asia and Pacific' by Frank Pyke, David Ashton and Trevor Riordan, forthcoming, ILO/SKILLS-AP.

profitability and growth potential. Where multinationals had local subsidiaries, formal workplace learning systems were in place.

Pressures to Increase Workplace Learning

Some of the reasons suggested for increasing workplace learning were to:

- Increase productivity and quality while remaining cost effective;
- Secure and preserve trade secrets and competitive edge;
- Not allow their competitors to meet and recruit their employees at a training institution;
- Meet increasing government compliance regulations in areas such as occupational health and safety, labeling, environmental legislation and quality.

In some industries and in some countries workplace learning was increasing while in others it was decreasing. This was due to a range of factors including:

- Level of commitment from employers towards human resource development;
- Supply of Infrastructure including training facilities;
- Shortage of competent trainers;
- Levels of support from the Government to employers;
- Incentives from the public policies toward the workplace learning.

Constraints or major issues included:

- Lack of awareness on the importance of workplace learning;
- Shortage of experienced training managers;
- Availability of abundant labour in the market;
- Lack of financial incentive/rewards for workplace learning for enterprise trainees and employers;
- Lack of budget to obtain external experts;
- Lack of recognition/ certification for workplace learning;
- Lack of enthusiasm / motivation among employees for workplace learning;
- Trainers are encouraged to leave training and to work in the industry;
- Lack of trust between employers and employees.

Challenges facing governments, employers and employee associations included:

- Lack of conviction/commitment from enterprises;
- Lack of support from the Government;
- Dormant role of media to support workplace learning;
- Absences of technical alliances /support for workplace learning from developed countries/ international agencies;
- Low percentage of skilled workers;
- Need to develop modular courses with a shorter duration to match skill needs;
- Increasing awareness of the employers and workers about the importance of workplace learning;
- Providing sufficient levels of resources.

Study programme site visits

Participants were given an opportunity to visit Denso E & TS Training Center Corporation, the Nissan Learning Center in Yokohama and the Nissan factory in Oppama. Both companies demonstrated characteristics of the Japanese manufacturing model which has developed since the 1950's. Some of the features that were observed in the two companies were;

- Very strong company commitment to training;
- New employees are recruited at a young age and full-time training is provided on entry;

- Employees and employers have an expectation that employment with the company will be for life;
- Little recruitment, if any of skilled workers from other similar companies;
- Emphasis on company spirit and the sharing of common values;
- Good working conditions with superannuation and other worker benefits;
- Strong emphasis on competition – World Skills Competition and national skills competitions were taken very seriously;
- Companies take pride in having a social conscience;
- Government training institutions do not play a major role in training for large companies. This is largely because the large companies such as Nissan and Denso have their own Training Schools or Centres which provide the full range of training services and are similar to many government-funded training institutions;
- Companies have highly detailed formal structures for skills gap training and learning throughout employees' careers within the company;
- Time and resource management is highly valued. Waste in terms of materials and time is removed from the production process. Speed and accuracy are considered to be very important and are developed by constant repetition;
- Tools, machines and supply bins are positioned so that they can be used most efficiently in the production process;
- Workers were trained from the very beginning of their time with the company to keep a very ordered workplace;
- Teaching methods are very formal and students are not encouraged or given opportunities to ask questions during a formal lesson;
- As well as an emphasis on knowledge and skills in training, companies and government policies focus on attitudes or qualities such as cooperation and innovation. Company training also seeks to motivate staff and to develop their personality though focusing on things such as character, conviction and values;
- Job rotation is a key part of the training. Workers change tasks and learn new skills according to individual plans so that they eventually have worked on, or managed the work of, a number of lines. If staff proceed to a management position they will have a broad, hands-on knowledge of all aspects of the factory;
- Workers are highly trained and they are taught the dependency between the various components of the manufacturing process;
- Workers on the assembly lines are encouraged to share ideas about how to solve minor problems on the production lines. This is often formalised as a part of the quality system;
- For both Nissan and Denso, the training is highly structured with skill standards specified for job type and individual career. Detailed 'performance control tables' are also maintained for each employee'
- Following their extensive basic training, workers are given on the job training (OJT) where they must quickly learn new tasks on a functioning production line. Any mistake immediately affects output but support is provided by an individual or a group of experienced co-workers. New workers are aware of the effect of a failure to quickly learn new tasks and this is used to motivate new line members;
- The production line that was observed in the Nissan factory appeared complex with many different models and customer name and exact specifications listed for each car on the projection line.

Participants were very impressed by the quality of the training facilities and the overall structure and organization of the training systems. The actual on-the job learning was difficult to observe but it was certainly taking place with supervisors providing advice and by workers having the opportunity to observe co-workers. The companies visited were similar to other major Japanese multinational companies such as Sony, Toshiba, Sanyo, Toyota and Mitsubishi which have led Japanese business development over many years.

Action Plans

Participants from each country were asked to work together in tripartite groups to develop a plan for future activities within their own country. Detailed plans are available for each country but a few of the major initiatives for the different countries are listed below without any specific date or country references. Each country has also been asked to prepare a three month follow up report on what was done as a result of this meeting and visits which is due in wipusara@ilo.org on 15 April 2008.

Planned initiatives included:

- Presentations and distribution of materials to key officials of government agencies and other employer and employee organisations;
- Developing a short modular training program about on-the-job training and workplace learning and incorporating this into the curriculum of vocational training courses;
- Holding national and regional workshops to discuss ways in which workplace learning can be further developed;
- Development of a concept paper or discussion paper to possibly influence future government regulation or funding support for workplace training initiatives;
- Preparation of a “how to” manual for workplace learning with specific examples from within the various countries;
- Development of promotional materials and a marketing strategy to encourage employers to provide, and employees to seek, more workplace training;
- Establishment of a tri-partite working group to develop strategies to support increased workplace learning;
- Investigate strategies to increase the accreditation of informal workplace learning;
- Conduct pilot projects on workplace learning with selected SME’s, in conjunction with a vocational training institution, government, employers and employee organizations;

Major Issues and Follow-up Action

All countries in the region are facing pressures to increase their skilled workforce and to meet the pressures of global competition and new requirements due to increased regulation and quality standards. To meet these needs, many countries are developing formal competency based training systems. This generally involves new government legislation and regulations, physical infrastructure, quality systems, qualifications frameworks, teacher education systems and the establishment of a single national coordinating body. While these things are vital to developing countries, this seminar has demonstrated the equally important area of workplace learning.

Workplace learning is less well understood because it has many forms – practice on the job, instructions from a supervisor, observing colleagues, a visit from a trainer or expert, reading an instruction manual or watching a DVD or video. Often it is not formalized and there is rarely any form of certification carried out.

While the Japanese model with its formal training followed by on-the-job training cannot easily be duplicated in developing countries, there are many lessons to be learnt. Country action plans have identified some initial things that can be implemented which include:

- Encouraging companies to increase their commitment to training;
- Formally recording competencies within companies and developing a long term plan for each employee;
- Seeking and supporting partnerships between companies from training organizations;
- Unions, employers and government working together to develop strategies to improve each country’s skilled workforce.

Many countries expressed the wish to conduct follow up activities in their countries and/or organizations and requested ILO assistance. Mr Riordan explained the correct process for doing this is to contact the local ILO Office. He also suggested that proposals which reflect a genuine partnership between the agency/organization and the ILO always have a much better chance of support.

A short evaluation form was distributed to participants at the end of the program. Results were very positive and it was clear that all participants felt they had obtained many insights from the visits. Participants indicated they received most benefit from the site visits, especially the Nissan factory visit where the on-job-training could be observed in a real situation. Participants also praised the organization of the seminar and the way that the learning programs had been arranged.

From feedback from the participants it is clear that the seminar and study tour introduced new concepts and provided new perspectives and a basis for further discussion and development within the participating countries.

Closing session

During a brief closing session chaired by Mr Trevor Riordan, ILO, representatives of the governments, workers' and employers' organizations made brief closing comments. Ms Gina Suhargini (Government, Indonesia) speaking on behalf of the government group expressed her appreciation to the ILO and Government of Japan for organizing this very valuable workshop and study programme. Mr Apraj Sudharkar (Workers, India), said that the workers group had found the workshop and study programme extremely useful. He congratulated the ILO and OVTA team for their stimulating presentations and enthusiasm throughout the programme. Mr Iftikar Mahmood Randhawa (Employers, Pakistan) also thanked the ILO, OVTA and Government of Japan for supporting this important workshop and asked why workplace learning is not a higher priority in the ILO.

Mr Riordan noted that this combination of a workshop and study programme was a new initiative aimed at providing a more balanced programme with greater opportunities to learn from Japanese experience. He also observed that there had been excellent interaction between the participants during the entire programme. Mr Riordan made special mention of the OVTA team and thanked them on behalf of the ILO for the excellent arrangements during the meeting. In closing the meeting, Mr Riordan wished all the participants a safe trip home and said that he looked forward to hearing of their follow-up activities upon returning to their workplaces.

Annex 1 - Programme

ILO/SKILLS-AP/Japan/ Regional Workshop and Study Programme on Workplace Learning in Japan

Overseas Vocational Training Association, Chiba, Japan
22 – 30 January, 2008

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 22 January 2008

0800 – 0830	Registration
0830 – 0900	Individual meetings of Government, Employer and Worker participants
0900 – 1000	<i>Inaugural session</i> Addresses: Mr Shinichi Hasegawa Director, ILO Japan Mr Masuharu Tanaka, Director, Overseas Cooperation Division, Human Resources Development Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan Mr Isao Aoki, President, OVTA Mr Trevor Riordan, Manager, SKILLS-AP Introduction of participants Programme and arrangements for the meeting Group photograph
1000 – 1030	Tea/coffee break
1030 – 1130	<i>Technical session 1: Key issues in workplace learning - the international experience</i> Panel Chairperson: Worker participant Presentations: Resource Person MHLW Japan speaker Panel members: Government and employer perspectives
1130 – 1230	<i>Technical session 2a: Key issues in workplace learning - experience of countries in the region</i> Panel Chairperson: Employer participant Panel members: Three country presentations: (Bangladesh, India and Indonesia - 10 minutes each) and worker and employer views (5 minutes each). Questions and comments
1230 – 1400	Welcome lunch hosted by OVTA

1400 – 1500 ***Technical session 2b: Key issues in workplace learning - experience of countries in the region***

Panel Chairperson: Employer participant
Panel members: Three country presentations (Lao PDR Mongolia and Pakistan - 10 minutes each) and worker and employer views (5 minutes each).

Questions and comments

1500 – 1530 Tea/coffee break

1530 – 1730 ***1st Working Group session: Priority issues for workplace learning in the region (three mixed working groups)***

Panel Chairperson: Government participant
Introduced by: Mr Trevor Riordan

Wednesday, 23 January, 2008

0900 – 0930 ***Presentations from the Working Group discussions***

Panel Chairperson: Government participant
Panel: Chairs/rapporteurs of the Working

Discussion

0930 – 1000 Tea/coffee break

1000 – 1100 ***Introduction to the Guide to improving workplace learning in Asia and the Pacific***

Panel Chairperson: Worker participant
Presentation by: Mr Trevor Riordan, Manager ILO/SKILLS-AP
Panel members: Government and employer perspectives

Questions and discussion

1100 – 1230 ***2nd Working Group Session: Discussion of draft Guide to improving workplace learning (three mixed working groups)***

Chair: Government participant
Introduced by: Mr Trevor Riordan

1230 – 1400 Lunch

1400 – 1500 ***Presentations of the Working Groups and discussion***

Panel Chairperson: Government participant

Panel: Chairs/rapporteurs of the Working Groups

Open discussion

1500 – 1530

Tea/Coffee break

1530 – 1700

Introduction to the Field Visit Programme and Reporting

- Presentation on the Japanese approach to learning and training in the workplace – Industry perspective
- Overview of the visit programme – OVTA
- Introduction to the report and National Action Plan – ILO

Thursday and Friday 24 – 25 January, 2008

Field Visits to Japanese enterprises in Nagoya

Saturday and Sunday 26 -27 January, 2008

Individual programmes

Monday, 28 January, 2008

**Visit to Nissan Learning Center in Yokohama
Visit to Nissan factory in Oppama**

Tuesday, 29 January, 2008

0900 – 1030

Initial de-briefing from the Field Visits

1030 - 1100

Tea/coffee break

1100 – 1230

Country Working Group session: Discussion of Lessons learnt from Field Visits and Report Writing – including National Action Plans

1230 – 1400

Lunch

1400 – 1530

Country Working Group session: Discussion of Lessons learnt from Field Visits and Report Writing – including National Action Plans

1530 – 1600

Tea/coffee break

1600 – 1700

Country Working Group session: Discussion of Lessons learnt from Field Visits and Report Writing – including National Action Plans

17:30

Farewell Party hosted by OVTA

Wednesday, 30 January, 2008

0900 – 1030 *Presentations of the National Reports and Action Plans and discussion*

Panel Chairperson: Government participant
Panel: Representatives of the Country Working Groups (Bangladesh, India and Indonesia)

Open discussion

1030 - 1100 Tea/coffee break

1100 – 1230 *Presentations of the National Reports and Action Plans and discussion*

Panel Chairperson: Government participant
Panel: Representatives of the Country Working Groups (Lao PDR, Mongolia and Pakistan)

Open discussion

1230 – 1400 Lunch

1400 – 1500 *Synthesis of major issues arising out of the meeting and discussion of follow up action*

Panel Chairperson: Mr T. Riordan, ILO SKILLS–AP
Introduced by: Resource Person

1500 - 1530 Tea/coffee break

1530 - 1600 *Closing session*

Chairperson: ILO and OVTA
Statements by: Representatives of Governments, Employers' and Workers' organizations

Annex 2 - List of Participants

ILO/SKILLS-AP/Japan

Regional Workshop and Study Programme on Workplace Learning in Japan (OVTA, Chiba, Japan, 22-30 January 2008)

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Annex 3: Background Paper

ILO/SKILLS-AP/Japan/ Regional Workshop and Study Programme on Workplace Learning in Japan Overseas Vocational Training Association, Chiba, Japan 22 – 30 January, 2008

Background Paper Different Approaches to Training and Learning

Background

Workplace Learning has continued to increase in importance over the past twenty years due to an increasing recognition that no amount of initial training can equip people with all the skills and knowledge required to carry them through their working lives. Most training occurs in the workplace simply because people spend more time there compared to the time in formal training situations.

Over the same period, technology has changed the nature of work and this has given rise to changing demands for learning. In many areas, work is now more complex and often non-recurrent. Therefore, people have to learn to deal with complexity and to understand the principles that underlie their work, rather than learning standardised procedures and routines.

In the literature, new concepts have been developed such as 'learning organization' or 'learning company' in which learning is seen as a pivotal concern of the modern organization. Research recognises the different training needs of small and large enterprises and the different needs associated with skill levels/

While there are differences between organizations, the research has identified a number of characteristics of organizations that have had success due to a strong focus on training. Some of these characteristics have been included in the template to be used for the visits to the various Japanese organizations.

Company focus

Successful learning organizations often include training as part of the company's business plan, mission statement, strategic directions document or other major policy document. This gives a priority to training and helps to ensure that resources are allocated to training throughout the organization. Some organizations include the provision of training to workers in their industrial awards or employment. This contractual arrangement encourages the employees to formally request training on a regular basis. Formal training programs, especially those that lead to nationally recognised qualifications has also been show to be a key element in attracting new staff and retaining staff in the organization.

Management of Learning

To be effective, systems and structures need to be in place to manage the learning processes within an organization. This will include systems to:

- identify the competencies needed by staff;
- assess the competencies of existing and new staff;
- review existing courses and those offered by other organizations to determine their suitability for staff learning needs;
- design and develop learning activities and new training programs;
- design and develop learning and teaching resources (including on-line resources);

- organise training and learning activities in the workplace or with other agencies specialising in training;
- organise partnerships with specialist training organizations;
- design assessment strategies;
- conduct assessments (including recognition of prior learning - RPL or recognition of current competencies- RCC);
- monitor the quality of training and assessment;
- record training;
- plan for additional learning activities.

Managers and supervisors need to understand the systems and to be a part of the planning and learning process. Consequently there are special learning needs for managers and supervisors relating to their own and for others' learning.

Partnerships

Many organizations make a decision that while they recognise that training is important, they consider that it is more important to focus on the core business and they use specialist organizations to organise the training, learning and assessment activities. There can be many benefits from using the formal government VET system or private training providers as a partner in facilitating workplace learning, thus allowing the company to focus on its core business and outsourcing the training to a specialist organization. As well as the activities listed above, these specialist organizations can also provide benefits through:

- Conducting off site recognition of current competency assessments;
- Servicing individuals who are in non-standard working arrangements such as casual or part-time employees and contractors who are not tied to a particular place of employment;
- Providing group training services in which a person will gain experience in a number of different workplaces in a structured learning environment.
- Providing accreditation of training which may be necessary to meet regulatory or licensing requirements;
- Formally recognising a company's training and assessment under a National Training Framework (for example in Australia through 'auspicing' arrangements between companies and registered training providers);

Workplace Training Partnerships (TAFE NSW)

- Deliver Workplace Language and Literacy (WELL) training was provided for Health Department employees in the catering, linen services and housekeeping areas. In three years over 700 employees received training and for many employees it was their first formal qualification. WELL teachers work closely with the industry experts to ensure that workplace needs are met. Training is always on the job and flexible. Delivery modes are designed to fit in with workplace production pressures.
- Training was arranged with ConvaTech, a Conveyor technology firm in which employees achieved the Certificate I in Process Manufacturing (rubber) and Certificate II in 2003. ConvaTech has also established formal standard operating procedures, training and assessment materials to assist on the job training. As part of management's commitment to lifelong learning the training was supported by a WELL program.
- A partnership was established with Eraring Power Station to Identify, develop and deliver competency-based training packages for the environmental management system to contribute towards Eraring the achievement of ISO: 14000 certification.
- The new **Crowne Plaza** Hotel in Newcastle engaged TAFE NSW to develop and deliver training to all staff before opening. This relationship has developed and has

been formalised by a Memorandum of Understanding that will enhance the profile and quality of tourism and hospitality training in the Hunter region. Under the agreement Crowne Plaza Newcastle will support local students to develop successful careers in the Tourism and Hospitality industry by funding scholarships and work placements for students studying the Diploma of Hospitality Management.

- **Discerning Gourmet** developed a partnership with TAFE NSW to deliver a food-processing program to its employees. Discerning Gourmet's employees completed the Certificate II and III in Food Processing on the job which enabled the company to keep up with production demands. The training program covered food safety, food quality, OH&S, communication, cleaning and sanitation. Hunter Institute provided a training consultant on-site and delivered the training at a time which best suited the company.
- **On the job training is provided for employees of PRIMO Australia Scone Abattoirs** in Certificates II & III in Abattoir, Boning and Slaughtering continuing. Delivery is on-the-job with close alliance with the employer to support existing and new workers in the plant. Consultancy services are also provided to assist PRIMO in their expansion into the export market.
- A tailored training program was developed for **Gough & Gilmour Holdings**. This program is specifically designed to equip mechanics with the necessary competencies to maintain the Caterpillar equipment used in the local mining industry. Training modules from the trade course were customised modules to meet the specific needs of the company. The course consisted of 200 hours of accredited modules from the plan mechanic trade course. The course was designed to ensure participants gained the specific skills required on the job.
- Frontline Management Training at Certificate Level IV was provided on the job to 60 managers and supervisors at the **Hydro Aluminium plant** at Kurri Kurri. The service will include on and off-job training and assessment and learning activities that are linked to business improvements for the company.

The frontline management course had been specifically developed to focus on the importance of creating managerial climates, valuing innovation and diversity and the need for managers to understand and participate in training.

- Existing worker traineeships are provided for local industries with opportunities for staff to receive formal recognition for their existing skills and skills gap education and training. The Institute, in partnership with **Fysons Nursing Home**, conducts the Community Services (Aged Care) Certificate III and Hospitality Operations Certificate III on site for existing worker trainees. Existing Worker Traineeship program in Frontline Management have also been offered for over 150 **Country Energy** staff around the state.
- Institutes have partnerships with various **Group Training companies** to promote apprenticeships and traineeships and provide work experience and training for people entering the industry.
- **In conjunction with Northern Rivers Area Health Service** workplace learning is organised for nursing assistants and staff working with older people. The Institute is also delivering a series of TAFE modules on medical terminology and computer literacy to office staff of the health service. This is being delivered in a flexible mode to suit individual staff members and the requirements of the health service.
- TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute is providing employees of **Berri Ltd and SunRice (formerly known as Rice-growers Cooperative Mills)** with national industry training

modules related to food processing. Many of the participants are working towards the nationally accredited Certificate in Food Processing which will significantly benefit local industry and the community in the MIA.

- A partnership with the **Wine Grapes Marketing Board** that has resulted in the design and development of a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system for vineyard operators and managers. The Wine Grapes Marketing Board represents over five hundred grape growers. The program is designed for delivery in the workplace and aims to provide participants with the knowledge of the principles of HACCP and supports the implementation of a management system required to comply with a HACCP food safety system for wine grape production.
- An innovative program has been developed with **Maintrain**, the **State Rail Authority (SRA)**, the Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction and Transport Curriculum Centre and South Western Sydney Institute. This partnership has been developed to provide the necessary on and off-the-job training required by Maintrain's apprentices. This strategic partnership in apprenticeship training has achieved unprecedented levels of workplace and classroom integration; total consistency of supervision and assessment across different areas of training, and a new approach to practical workplace experience in the context of the formal apprenticeship. A process of workplace projects, mapped to the competencies of the Vehicle Building Training Package has been implemented.
- TAFE NSW was contracted by the world's largest pharmaceutical manufacturer, **Pfizer Global Manufacturing**, to conduct workplace assessment throughout its Sydney factory.
- A workplace training partnership with the ice-cream maker **Unilever (Streets)** is designed to help employees to help them meet their training goals. Institute trainers will oversee and Quality Assure Unilever's existing training program, assess staff competencies and provide skills gap training. They also help develop future training and assessment strategies. These include the delivery of a Food Processing qualification to packers, updating the skills of coordinators and Total Product management (TPM) leaders in Workplace Assessment and Training, up-skilling maintenance staff and training for new entrant trainees.

Case Studies

Group Training Companies – Australia

The Australian labour market for vocational occupations is dependent on employer recognition and acceptance of vocational qualifications which in turn underpin a high level of inter-firm labour mobility. In addition, many employer associations run Group Training Schemes, especially important in construction and manufacturing, which account for 30 percent and 20 percent respectively of total apprenticeship intake. Under the Australian Group Training Scheme, a Group Training Company employs trainees and apprentices and this means that small companies, which would not normally be able to employ their own trainees, can have access to a number of different trainees. Trainees also gain experience with a range of companies and the risk and costs of training apprentices and trainees are shared among a large number of firms. It is also argued that this type of multi-employer trainee co-ordination helps to redress, at least in part, the tendency of employers to 'free ride' on other firms' training by poaching trained workers.

Curriculum Development - Brunei

In **Brunei Darussalam**, there is major industry involvement in training in the petroleum and gas sector. The role of major multinational oil companies with their own requirements for workers, from professionals down to operators, means that a separate system for training and accreditation has emerged over time. This is quite separate from the government system and is in tune with international rather than national standards. Mobility from the oil sector to other parts of the economy is limited.

The DACUM process has been put in place to incorporate industry into the development of training programs. Technical and vocational education and training programmes are developed using the DACUM (Develop a Curriculum) process whereby employers from the industry are represented. Through brainstorming of the tasks involved for a particular occupation, an Occupational Profile Chart (OPC) is developed. The Competency Profile Chart (CPC) is derived from the OPC. The CPCs are then used to develop the Programme Guides for the programme of study.

CPCs are already being used by government and industry but there is still some way to go. There is regular discussion with peak industry bodies but there is still limited understanding within industry of CPCs.

Malaysian HRDF

Malaysia supports workplace training through its Human Resource Development Fund. Employers participating in the National Apprenticeship Scheme are eligible to claim financial assistance for apprentices' monthly allowances, insurance and training materials. Other incentives are also offered to industry and enterprise training centres have played a major role in developing skills according to the needs of enterprises. The Fund covers all manufacturing and selected service industries. There is a mandatory 1% levy on the payroll of firms with 10 or more staff which have high capital assets (50 or more staff in manufacturing). In addition, there is an optional 0.5% levy on manufacturing firms with 10-50 staff which have low capital assets. Grants defray partial costs. Firms can reclaim the levy they paid in each year, up to 75% or 80% of the costs of training. The training mode must be approved by the HRDC, although there is some 'pre-approval' of training providers, training courses and, importantly, firms' own annual training plans. Eligible skill areas are defined, but quite broad. The overriding criterion is that training must be of direct benefit to the business.

Assessors in Philippines

The Philippine government through TESDA accredits Industry Working Groups (IWGs) to manage the assessment program for middle level occupations. Accredited IWGs establish their own pool of competency assessors, assessment techniques and they accredit assessment centres at both the provincial and regional levels. First ones set up were in the areas of health, agriculture and fisheries, tourism and ICT. The issuance of certificates to qualified workers, as endorsed by the accredited IWG, is the sole responsibility of TESDA. TESDA maintains databases of certified workers classified according to various trade areas/occupations. The issued certificates can be checked through an online verification system of TESDA. The TESDA Act also requires local government units to promote trade-testing activities in their respective areas.

Looking after Older Workers – Singapore

Singapore established the Manpower Development Assistance Scheme (MDAS) in 2000 to provide funding support for industry initiatives. The MDAS was used to develop programmes to help older workers and those who are at risk of structural unemployment — through the Skills Redevelopment Program (SRP), the Strategic Manpower Conversion Programme (SMCP) and the National Skills Recognition System (NSRS).

The SRP actually commenced in 1996 and is designed to encourage employers to undertake development training for their employees. The aim is to equip the less educated and less skilled workers with a set of certifiable skills to enable them to remain employed. The Government provides funding support for absentee payroll and course fees throughout the training duration.

The SMCP started in 2000 with the aim of assisting Singaporeans to acquire skills and knowledge so that they can take on jobs in strategic growth industries. It commenced in the IT info-communication sector and now includes logistics and other sectors.

In April 2001, the Government established the Lifelong Learning Endowment Fund (LLF). The long term target of the LLF is \$5 billion 'which will yield an annual income of about \$200 million. This fund is used to support training incentives including absentee payroll, purchase or development of hard and soft infrastructure, research and development, the promotion of lifelong learning, and the administrative costs incurred by key partners in the management of various programmes'

FORDSTAR – United States

FORDSTAR is 'an instructor led satellite based system for training staff employed by Ford dealers'. The training provided to dealerships is designed to link production, sales and service. One of the major benefits of this is that essential feedback loops are created between the links in the chain from design, through to production, and then through to sales and service.

Toyota T3 – Australia

The T3 program (Toyota/TAFE Training) was originally launched in 2000 and it was so successful that it was expanded to include all four Australian-based motor vehicle manufacturers. It now includes Ford, Holden and Mitsubishi and T3 now represents *Automotive Technology and Training for Tomorrow*

It allows students to start working and learning in your career while still at school. During Years 11 and 12, instead of five days a week at school, they do 3 1/2 days at school, half a day at TAFE, and one day of paid work. (There may be school holiday work involved as well.) When they leave school, students get a Year 12 Certificate, a nationally recognised TAFE qualification (about one year's credit) and a career pathway in the automotive industry.