
REPORT OF THE COURSE

The 176th International Training Course (Online)
“Achieving Inclusive Societies through Effective Criminal Justice Policies and Practices”

1. Duration and Participants

- From 15 November to 9 December 2021
- 17 overseas participants from 11 jurisdictions

2. Programme Overview

Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) seeks to achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, and this training course aimed to promote the role of criminal justice in achieving such societies. This programme offers participants an opportunity to share experiences and knowledge on (i) Effective measures to support crime victims and (ii) Effective measures in the pre-trial, trial and sentencing stages to prevent reoffending and facilitate offenders’ social reintegration. This programme was exclusively conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. The Content of the Programme

(1) Lectures

In order to maximize the effectiveness of the programme, all lectures delivered by external lecturers in English, including their respective Q&A sessions, were conducted in a live online format. However, since the participants needed to continue their professional and family duties during the programme, other lectures were recorded in advance and broadcast on-demand. Specifically, participants were asked to watch on-demand video lectures and to submit their questions for the lectures via an online learning management system. The lecturers then answered the questions during recorded Q&A sessions that were broadcast on-demand. This way, we tried to provide both convenience and interactivity while delivering the training on demand.

In this programme, participants also watched on-demand video lectures by UNAFEI professors on the criminal justice system in Japan as a preliminary assignment and submitted their questions online.

In addition, the following two visiting experts from overseas and three ad hoc lecturers from Japan were invited to share their knowledge on the theme of this training course:

● Visiting Experts

- Ms. Vera Tkachenko
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
“Rethinking incarceration: Promoting partnerships to reduce reoffending”
- His Honour Judge Jonathan Cooper
Deputy Resident Judge for Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom
“Community Sentences in England and Wales”

● Ad hoc lecturer

- Mr. MUTO Issei
Assistant Director, Crime Victim Support Office
Education, Training and Welfare Division,
Commissioner-General's Secretariat, National Police Agency
“Crime Victim Support Provided by the Police”
- Mr. HONDA Yuichiro
Public Prosecutor
Chief, Social Reintegration Support Office
General Affairs Department, Tokyo District Public Prosecutors’ Office
“Efforts of the Social Reintegration Support Office”
- Ms. TOMITA Satoko
Attorney at Law

Chief, International Affairs Office, Japan Legal Support Center
“Japan Legal Support Center”

(2) Group Work

Participants were divided into two groups based on time zones and the themes of their choice for the Individual Presentations sessions and discussions.

➤ Individual Presentations

Participants shared the practices and the challenges in their respective jurisdictions regarding the theme of the Programme through their individual presentations. All the presentations were recorded and uploaded online for reference by participants in other groups or those who could not attend the sessions.

➤ Discussions

Participants had fruitful discussions on the themes of the Programme: (i) Effective measures to support crime victims and (ii) Effective measures in the pre-trial, trial and sentencing stages to prevent reoffending and facilitate offenders' social reintegration.

• Effective measures to support crime victims

The participants discussed and shared their perceptions of the differences in victim and witness protection systems in different countries. This served as the basis for the following discussion. In addition to the above, we shared knowledge about the system and its operation in each country, including measures to prevent secondary victimization, including witness protection, the use of victim impact statements to appropriately consider the impact of the incident on the victim in sentencing, legal aid for victims who are particularly vulnerable and need special consideration, such as underage victims and female victims of sexual crimes, and damage recovery through restorative justice in each jurisdiction. The usefulness, challenges and operation of these systems were the subject of discussion. Although the systems adopted to support victims differ in each jurisdiction, prevention of secondary victimization by criminal justice actors is the first priority, and practical efforts to enable investigators and judicial officers to treat victims in an appropriate manner, as well as the enhancement of training to realize such efforts, are necessary to reduce the barriers for victims to report their victimization. It was also shared that these efforts enable victims to report the damage, facilitate the investigation of cases and enhance the cooperation of victims in conducting trials.

• Effective measures in the pre-trial, trial and sentencing stages to prevent reoffending and facilitate offenders' social reintegration

As measures to reintegrate offenders into society, the legal frameworks and practices of various jurisdictions were introduced, including alcohol and drug courts, and various educational programmes to promote the reintegration of offenders into society. In addition, in many countries, prisons are suffering from overcrowding, which hinders appropriate correctional education for offenders. As the causes of overcrowding, participants shared the different problematic situations in each jurisdiction, such as the overuse of arrest and pre-trial detention, strict bail criteria and insufficient use of non-custodial sentencing. Then the need to improve the situation was shared. Based on this, measures to improve practice were discussed.

(3) Action Plans

Each participant concluded the programme by presenting their own action plans based on the challenges they identified and what they learned in the lectures, presentations by the colleagues and discussions.

4. Feedback from the Participants

Most of the participants said that they would have preferred to have the training in Japan because they would have liked to visit the relevant facilities to deepen their understanding of the actual practices, and they would have liked more time to interact with each other, including in informal situations. On the other hand, they also commented that they were able to cultivate knowledge online.

REPORT OF THE COURSE

5. Comments from the Programming Officer

Although we see words and concepts such as the SDGs and inclusive society more and more, criminal justice practitioners are not often aware of them in their daily practice. However, it is important for them to think about the nature and history of criminal justice and the direction they should aim toward in the future by cultivating their consideration of topics that are closely related to practice. It can also serve as a milestone when dealing with difficult cases for which there are no fixed answers or when considering the framework and operation of a new system. In this sense, this training course included a long-term perspective toward 2030, the target year of the SDGs. I believe that this training course provided many useful hints for our long-term vision for the next 10 years. As the programming officer of this training course, I was exposed to a variety of ideas relating to inclusive societies, and I feel that I was able to update my own mindset. I hope the participants are able to utilize the knowledge gained from this training course for the future development of criminal justice procedures in their jurisdictions.