# Bangladesh – Korea ICT Training Center for Education (BKITCE)

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

**Implementing Organization:** Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) of the Ministry of Education, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)

**Funding Organizations:** The Government of the Republic of Korea

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Republic of Korea has been a significant development partner for Bangladesh, and many Korean contractors have supported in building of the infrastructure in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Government adopted its first ICT policy in 2002 and set a strategy to make up for the current lag and leapfrog into the ranks of top ICT-ready countries within a decade. The Government embraced education sector as the ground root for anchoring ICT as part of the policy for creating knowledge and skill based society. The Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) of the Ministry of Education was authorized to implement a collaborative programme with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). They initiated a project titled as 'Establishment of Bangladesh- Korea ICT Training Center for Education (BKITCE).' Training of secondary and higher secondary teachers within this project was a pioneering opportunity for Both KOICA and BANBEIS to work as a catalyst for quick spread of ICT education in Bangladesh. In promoting regional cooperation, KOICA fostered the programme with financial and technical assistance to BANBEIS with establishment of Bangladesh Korea ICT outreach.

## DESCRIPTION AND AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The BKITCE project was first of its kind to exemplify the south-south cooperation in Bangladesh. The project orchestrated the design of an appropriate IT infrastructure by setting up and operating a state-of-the-art training center in the country. It launched five ICT labs in the renovated and remodeled BANBEIS computer division as the center of excellence. The expected results included anchoring of ICT education as central point of cooperation between the two countries of the Southern region, training of central

and field level officials/staff as well as teachers of the secondary and higher secondary level, promoting GIS application training, and offering post-graduate diploma in ICT. The project also aimed at conducting training on data collection format, database operation, database query, and output generation to the field level officers and staffs in the post primary education sector.

Overall objectives of the BKITCE project were to:

- improve the capacity of Bangladesh ICT human resources through the ICT application training to the citizens.
- improve access to ICT training in Bangladesh through the participation of teachers, officials and individual.
- contribute to narrowing the digital divide and enhance the ICT Diploma, Certificate and Refresher courses and Web mastering Course.
- establish an International Standard Training Center for Human Resource Development in ICT to meet the challenges of 21st Century.

More specific aims consisted of training basic computer applications for mid and high level officials; training basic ICT skills for the officials and staff of field level offices for handling aeration and maintenance on EDMS; conducting Diploma and Post-Graduate Diploma in ICT with focus on Web Mastering; and conducting Standard Certification courses for the development of professional skills in GIS (Geographical Information System) application.

## IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

### Funding

The total budget of the project was US$ 1.78 million. KOICA's contribution was US$ 1.6 million, and the Government contributed 0.18 million. KOICA's direct project aid was provided as a grant.

The Government also provided a Project Director, IT officials & staff of BANBEIS and allocated premises, equipments, salaries, tax credits, materials and supplies necessary for the project. The transaction cost of the project was scaled up through long-term investments and stable partnerships. Transparency and provision of information of the project were accomplished by monitoring the budget and the quality of the work done.

### Participants

Operational training courses on GIS to the teachers of Technical Institutions and Education Database Management System has been provided to the national and field level officials. The project was quite successful in attracting large number of mid-to-senior level government officials from other ministries for ICT training. IT related trainings for the staff of other ministries are now being conducted in BANBEIS. This is contributing to an indirect impact on enhanced ICT knowledge for implementing e- Governance in the country. In 2007, an ICT training program for government officials with the support from SICT ('Support to ICT Task Force Program Project') aimed to train 740 government officials. The participants were selected by sending request letters to ministries to nominate participants of each training module. Concerned ministry filled up the nomination form developed by SICT and BANBEIS for principal and alternate candidates. Based on the designation, experiences and ICT based training already taken; participants were finally be selected by SICT.

### Learning and Training

A result based activity plan was designed on the basis of joint recommendations by the Korean implementation survey team and BANBEIS. As the implementation progressed, project activities and expected results were fine-tuned and eventually materialized with continuing lessons learned at the ground. The implementation of physical activities, including all procurements, construction, renovation of BANBEIS building and installation of equipments were done by experts from Korea. The IT Professionals were trained in Korea in the field of IT related master training course, EMIS and GIS. In an effort to transfer knowledge and technology, specialized services from Korean experts acquired to develop demand driven standard course modules, materials and improvement of GIS and EMIS system. The Project Management Consultant played a very significant role in ensuring the skills of the Korea-trained personnel working as full-time staff in connection with ICT training and its application. BANBEIS provided ICT instructors, experts, administrative and auxiliary personnel for curriculum and course material development.

Preparation of training module for trainers and government staff was greatly facilitated by the pre-existing understanding of the country specific context and needs. Tailor- made curriculum and culture specific implementation model helped the trainee to adapt quickly and quite easily. The course outline of the ICT training program for government officials

in 2007 consisted of six modules: e-Governance Project Management, Basic skills in using computers for official work based on Linux, e-Government awareness and vision, Maintenance of e-Governance system, Maintenance of websites and software, and Maintenance and troubleshooting of hardware and network. Training was planned be provided through lectures, presentations, discussions, hands on practices, and class tests.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The project was evaluated by a joint committee appointed by the governments (Republic of Korea & Bangladesh). Apart from this joint committee, the Bangladesh Government formed an Inter-Ministerial Steering committee for the monitoring of the project. KOICA has standard policy to evaluate their projects under three different time lines, – Midterm, Completion Evaluation and Post Evaluation. This SSC project had to undergo each of the procedures mentioned above. KOICA also appointed a Project Management Consultant (PMC) for monitoring of the project.

Project achieved remarkable outputs that contributed to commendable outcomes at the national level in the spread of ICT knowledge-base. The success of the project created options for both vertical and horizontal expansion. The approach also set examples of many good practices for accruing tangible benefits. However, its impact in the wider national context was not as significance. The initiative could be made more effective, had it been formulated as part of national ICT policy to undertake some of the major components identified in the policy. Yet, it has opened up opportunity for replication of similar initiatives in other sectors to have a knowledge-based citizenry.

A well-planned TPP (Technical Project Plan) was the driving force of the smooth sailing implementation of the project. Mutual Accountability was ensured from all angles including curriculum design and instructor selection. BANBEIS and the Ministry of Education took active interest in every phase of the programme. Also the project document and management arrangement exhibited strong ownership of the Government of Bangladesh for the implementation of national vision on ICT. The project activities and their target outputs were also well befitting with national ICT development strategy but the initiative could be made more effective if it had been formulated as part of national ICT policy to undertake some of the major components identified in the policy. Moreover, a follow-up of this successful initiative would be needed in order to take it to next level.

## IMPACT

BANBEIS was strengthened as the center of excellence in ICT training with 5 (five) computer labs, modernize EMIS and Training Division with interior and exterior refurbishment and necessary equipments. After being fully equipped with courseware and lab-ware, quality training on ICT applications has been provided to the teachers of secondary and higher secondary level with existing need based curriculum and modern techniques of ICT. More than 10000 teachers, officials and staff have already received training. It was followed by refresher courses for the ICT subject based teachers at the secondary and higher secondary level. The project strengthened spreading the ICT education in the grass-root level through refresher training to the teachers of Secondary and Higher Secondary Level Institutions. IT related trainings for the staff of ministries are now being conducted in BANBEIS, which is contributing to an indirect impact on enhanced ICT knowledge for implementing e-Governance in the country.

The success of this project ensured complementarities in this sector and encouraged both the host government/institution and Donor Agency to expand their ICT horizon and to undertake another project for the establishment of ICT Training and Resource Centres for Education (UITRCE) in 128 Upazilas (Sub-regional administrative divisions in Bangladesh) of 64 rural districts. The vision of the project is to train all teachers of the country at the secondary and higher secondary level in ICT in a short span of time. Other listed results include enhancement of ICT knowledge for implementing e-governance in the country to establish "Digital Bangladesh", demand driven training on e-application in daily official works, and involvement of women in ICT management through training and participation. It ensured the sustainability of the development of appreciable information based policy formulation and improved management of the education sector and for spreading IT literacy program of the government. The sustainability of the programme is ensured by including the activities to the GoB□s revenue budget for training and maintenance.

## REFERENCES

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