Myanmar Karen: Educational Course for State Employees and Installation of Solar Systems to KNU Villages

In the past year BHN has been conducting two programs in the State of Kayin(=Karen).

1. Educational Training on Solar Electricity Systems (SES) to the State Employees

The coverage ratio of national grid in the State of Kayin still remains around 10% of the population. Under such a situation, the State government has been distributing SESs to individual households in the rural areas.

As BHN is going to end the three-year project of installing SESs in the public premises, the sustainability of the SESs built by BHN, as well as of the SESs built by the government, is quite an important issue and we are now in the last stage of ToT (Training of Trainers) project.

As many as 12 to 15 State employees are expected to pass the examination to be qualified as SES Trainers. They are expected to play the role of teachers training others to become "Solar Advisers," who will guide and educate villagers.

ToT participants helping solar advisor cadidates with assignments

The workshop for Solar Electricity Systems in KNU village

2. Electrification in the KNU villages

After the rainy season in November last year, BHN started installation works of 1,370 SESs in the houses of the 15 villages in the KNU area. As almost all of the 1,370 systems originally planned were installed as scheduled by the end of February, we are expecting to install another 200 systems before the next rainy season starts.

Even after the completion of the 1st stage project, a large number of people will be still left without electricity. BHN is now coordinating with KNU, Government and other organizations for the next project to install SESs for houses and public facilities in the KNU area.

The Nippon Foundation (TNF), another Japanese organization working in the same area, is building houses and local clinics in the area. TNF and BHN had concluded agreements in advance, and based on this, we have been running the project cooperatively.

Both KNU and Myanmar Government are appreciative of the projects undertaken by TNF and BHN that they are becoming good examples to enable people feel the "Value of Peace," and that they shall encourage other Ethnical Armed Groups to seriously consider making further steps for peace agreement.

Classroom in the KNU village

Coordination Meeting with KNU, Government, BHN and others

By Hirofumi Aizawa, Project Manager

ASEAN-Japan Healthcare ICT Workshop

The Japanese Telemedicine and Telecare Association (JITA) together with the Asia eHealth Information Network (AeHIN) and BHN (NGO) has organized the ASEAN-Japan Health ICT Forum 2017 for the period of 19 – 23 February in Japan. The forum was held in the framework of ASEAN-Japan Health Initiative. The objective of this forum is to share and exchange knowledge and experience on healthcare ICT, or eHealth, among ASEAN countries and Japan.

The participants consisted of 27 representatives from eight ASEAN countries, two special guests, two from ASEAN secretariat and many from Japan as hosts. In addition, 170 participants attended the conference from Japan as observers.

They had meetings in Tokyo and study tours in Tochigi, Gunma and Kagawa prefectures. The participants learned about common needs and issues in the following subjects:
> development of healthcare among ASEAN countries
> the role of ICT as enabler
> force multiplier and key driver in achieving excellence in healthcare services
> challenges and concerns related to good governance
> relevance and retention of skilled manpower
> the need for telemedicine and telehealth to improve the healthcare delivery especially for countries wherein the population is spread across a large geographical location

Study visit to Dokkyo Medical Univ. for obserbing nursing care robots

Visiting rare sugar factory in Takamatsu

The key message out of this forum that emerged from the exercise conducted by AeHIN could be summarized by the term "Mind the GAPS and Fill the GAPS." The abbreviation "GAPS" means the following:

Governance: ICT applications in healthcare need to be governed by the highest accountable officials. This means they define the expected benefits, the risks to watch out for and allocate resources.

Architecture: ICTs in healthcare need a clear blueprint so that all stakeholders in a given country will know how they can contribute to the structure as a whole rather than silos.

People and program management: ICTs in healthcare requires capacity-building of key sectors (clinical, IT and administration) working together to make it work seamlessly.

Standards and interoperability: ICT healthcare works best if standards are adopted and observed by all stakeholders.

Through the forum, the participants shared awareness that is categorized in:
> Capacity building
> Collaboration (Annual Forum)
> Implementation of eHealth Projects
> International policies (Regulatory Framework)

As the first step to implement Key Messages and shared Awareness, AeHIN in consultation with JTTA and BHN, called for action for regional capacity building on Healthcare ICT technology in support of universal health coverage (UHC), non-communicable diseases (NCD) and disaster management in the ASEAN.

Participants of ASEAN-Japan Healthcare ICT Forum in Tokyo

Hachihei Kurematsu, Project Manager

Training Course (APT-J4) on Utilization of ICT Services and E-Application for Overcoming Digital Divide

BHN conducted the training course "Utilization of ICT Services and E-Applications" focusing on E-Applications supporting the Smart Society such as Medical ICT, Sensor Networks and Agriculture/Fisheries ICT, between March 7 and 17, 2017.

In the training course there were lectures and site visits for the purpose of helping the countries and areas still having more room for improvement in the areas mentioned above, specifically by spreading the use of ICT which would help solving the regional problems.

Ms. Minako Saito from GM3 com. explaining the portable electrocardiography monitor

Background

Japan is a country which is currently tackling major issues such as declining birth rate, aging population, shortage of doctors, managing disasters and the declining regional economies. One of the methods for tackling such problems is to make maximum use of local ICT applications. Toward this end, there are applications already introduced or under feasibility test in Japan and it is expected that they would provide good showcases for other Asian countries. In many Asian countries, while the infrastructures for broadband communications through mobile communications and optical fiber communications are being built, there are still many issues that should be addressed, for example, regional disparities in medical services and education, and seemingly low awareness of the importance of information security.

Participants

One participant each from Bhutan, India, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Niue, Pakistan, Thailand, Tonga and Vietnam attended the training course and they were awarded the training certificates from BHN president upon completion of the training course.

The participants attentively listening to the lecture

Lectures and Study Visits

The participants have learned actual examples of ICT utilization. Based on the knowledge acquired in the training course, they can now investigate implementing similar systems meeting the requirements of their countries. ICT applications are expected to contribute to overcoming the digital divide if they are introduced into rural areas, in such fields as; disaster management; tourism and transportation; environmental monitoring; medicine and welfare; agriculture forestry and fisheries.

Specific themes and model systems dealt with in the training were as follows:
1) Telemedicine, Remote Medical Care and Watching System
2) Machine (M2M) and Sensor Network Technology
3) Disaster Management System by utilizing ICT
4) Environment and Agriculture/Fisheries Monitoring using ICT

Study visit on e-Agriculture at Kurokawa Farm, Meiji Univ.

Result

The program was received by the participants as well-organized and eye-opening. The lectures below were especially highly praised by the participants:

> ICT Utilization and Information Security Policies

> Telemedicine and Disaster Risk Reduction

> Study visit for observing telemedicine being actually practiced, where a pregnant woman was remotely monitored by a doctor

We hope the participants will bring back what they learned about ICT utilization in this program and make good use of it to improve social systems by better utilizing ICT.

Hachihei Kurematsu, Project Manager

Myanmar Karen: Progress with the solar electric system project

Training of Trainers

State government staffs have had training course on Solar Electric System (SESs) since last October. By the middle of May this year, twelve state government staffs finished the course.

Certified as "Trainer" or coach by Kayin (Karen) state government and BHN, they are expected to train Solar Advisors, other government staffs, who will be in charge of maintaining the solar system. The Solar Advisors, coached by the trainers, would play a decisive role in maintaining and operating the solar systems, that are provided by BHN and the state government, in good condition.

Twelve state government staffs qualified as "Trainer of Solar Advisor"

Electrification in the KNU villages

The first stage of installing 1,570 SESs into the homes of villagers in the KNU areas has been completed. Following the installment, BHN had conducted monitoring work to evaluate the achievements of the project by listening to the voices of the villargers. Though the work was delayed due to the rainy season which gave us difficulty in reaching some villages under heavy rains.

As had been referred to in our last project report, most of the areas under KNU are still left without electricity. Enduring patiently during the civil war, villagers in the area are keenly longing for safety and electricity. BHN is now deliberating on another project, installing as many as 6,000 SESs to homes in the area in need of electricity, along with furnishing computer systems to a local high school in the region.

Installation work in a village

A solar panel installed into a home of a KNU village

Clearly defined room of the house lightened by solar electricity after dark

By Hirofumi Aizawa, Project Manager