BHN Association

Telecom for Basic Human Needs

Annual Report FY 2024

Commemorative photo taken after the handover ceremony of the APT Sri Lanka Smart Village Project in February 2025

About BHN Association

Headed by top leaders in the ICT industry in Japan, the BHN Association (BHN) was established in 1992 as a non-governmental organization specializing in ICT*. BHN commenced its first support activity for people afflicted by the catastrophic disaster at Chernobyl (1992-94) constructing a 120km microwave link between Obninsk and Moscow and implementing a medical information system and TV conference system for hospitals. Since then, we have continued our efforts to realize our vision of everyone in the world, regardless of their environment or situation, having access to necessary information and creating a society that provides safety and security for all people.

BHN stands for basic human needs, that is, fundamental requirements to be satisfied for a person to live a decent life. Securing food, clothing, and shelter have traditionally been thought of as the three essential components required to meet the requirements of basic human needs. However, at the present time, we could say that gaining access to ICT also constitutes a part of these requirements.

The activities of BHN are performed mostly by volunteer experts – experienced, skillful ICT engineers and specialists. BHN mobilizes its human capital such as knowledge, experience, skill and human networks to carry out a variety of projects. In order to deliver the best result to local communities, we collaborate with local actors such as people, communities, partner organizations and governmental agencies. BHN deploys activities in three major areas – (1) Social Development, (2) Emergency Relief, and (3) Human Resource Development.

*ICT=Information and Communication Technology

The fundamental importance of ICT infrastructures as an essential element in economic and social development was recognized at United Nations Assembly in 1981.

Profile of BHN

Name	BHN Association
What is BHN?	"BHN" stands for "Basic Human Needs" which are indispensable for human life such as clothing, food and shelter. We believe that "information" could be an important part of "BHN".
Address	NTT Ueno Bldg., 5-24-11 Ueno, Taito-ku, Tokyo, Japan 110-0005
Establishment	September 1992 (Voluntary Organization) September 1999 (Non-profit Organization)
Members	Corporations: 42, Individuals: 150 (As of March 2025)
Organization	Chairperson: Makoto YAMASHITA President: Hideo INOU Secretary General: Takeshi TOMINO Board Members: 37 （Executive Directors:35, Auditors:2） Full-time Staff: 4 Part-time Staff/Volunteers: about 80 (including overseas staff)
Operating Expenses	347M JPY (about 2.39M USD)　(FY2024)

BHN's Aims and Activities by Region

BHN's Aims are illustrated below.

What BHN is aiming for

<Vision>
We aim **for everyone** in the world regardless of their environment or situation, to have **access to necessary information** and want to create a society that provides safety and security for all people.

<Mission>
By **utilizing ICT**, we aim to provide safety, security, and relief for people in developing countries and disaster areas, improve their living environment, and help solve social issues.

<3 Core Pillars>

| (1) Social Development | (2) Emergency Relief | (3) Human Resource Development |

Over the past eight years, a total of 36 projects have been implemented to support local residents, disaster victims, trainees and students in 40 countries and regions as shown in the following map.

Areas of BHN Activities (2017 to 2024)

- ● Social Development
- ■ Emegency Relief
- ▲ Human Resouce Development
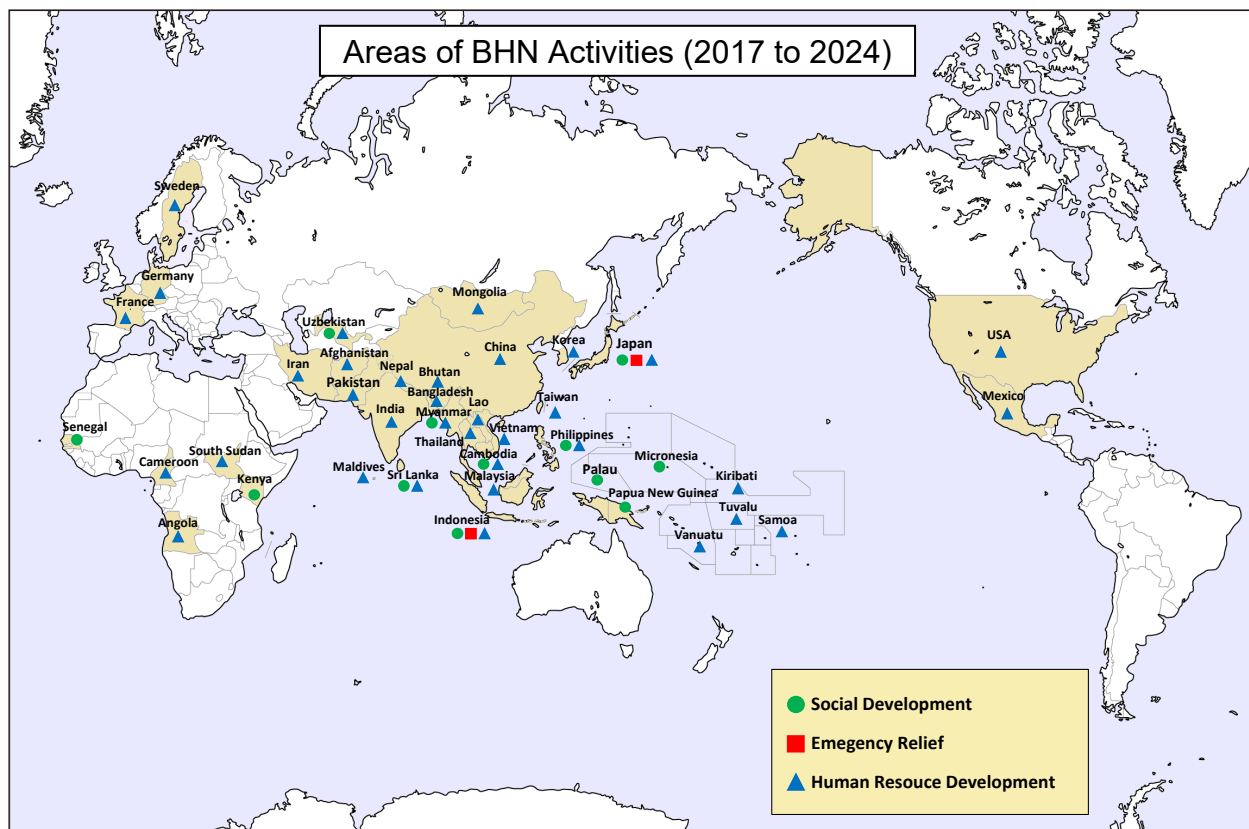
Review of BHN's Operations for FY 2023

Social Situation

Since the Noto Peninsula Earthquake that struck on New Year's Day 2024, Japan has experienced a series of natural disasters, including frequent earthquakes and torrential rains across the country. Looking at the international situation, humanitarian crises continue to unfold, with many civilians suffering as a result of ongoing conflicts such as the turmoil following the military coup in Myanmar, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the armed clashes between Israel and Hamas. The need for humanitarian assistance is growing by the day. Furthermore, with the return of President Trump to office, the world is facing an increasingly uncertain and unstable political and economic environment.

Under these challenging circumstances, BHN has remained committed to achieving its vision and mission, prioritizing the safety of its staff, volunteers, and stakeholders while continuing to implement various support initiatives and manage its operations effectively.

Summary of Activities

In fiscal year 2024, under our medium- to long-term activity goal of "contributing to the achievement of SDGs through the use of ICT from the standpoint of an NGO," we developed our activities around three main pillars: (1) support for improving livelihoods, (2) humanitarian assistance in emergencies, and (3) support for human development.

We made every effort to align all of our projects with SDGs and approached our work with two core elements driving our mission forward; improving the quality of our programs and expanding our fundraising efforts. Through this approach, we aimed to further strengthen our operational framework and increase our own financial resources. In addition, securing new talent was addressed as one of our highest priorities.

Activities for Social Development

In the area of social development support, the completion of the project in the Ayeyarwady region of Myanmar was delayed until the next fiscal year due to the worsening situation in the country. While the project continued to be rolled out appropriately, BHN maintained close communication with local counterparts and relevant organizations to stay informed of the latest developments and to conduct appropriate risk assessments, ensuring that the safety of BHN staff and stakeholders remained the top priority. Regarding APT projects, both the Micronesia Medical ICT Project and the Sri Lanka Smart Village Project were finally completed after delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, no new APT projects were secured during the fiscal year.

As for domestic activities, BHN's regional offices collaborated to promote the Domestic Disaster ICT Support Base Network Project, and the joint project with Taito City was successfully completed within the fiscal year as planned.

The River Water Level Sensor Station and the construction team
after its completion in the APT Sri Lanka Smart Village Project

Emergency Relief

In the field of emergency humanitarian assistance, the BHN Hokuriku Office took the lead in implementing support activities for the victims of the Noto Peninsula Earthquake. In addition to receiving point-based donations, we successfully secured grants from the Red Feather - Central Community Chest of Japan and the Japan Platform (JPF).

To prepare for future natural disasters and other emergencies, we also regularly engaged in information gathering and exchange with JPF and other relevant organizations and agencies.

On site at the Noto disaster area: BHN Project Area Manager, September 2025

Human Resource Development

In the area of human resource development support, the BHN Human Development Program held its second semester of the 25th program in person in Japan, while its first semester program was conducted online with the cooperation of Multimedia University (MMU) in Malaysia. The APT training program was also held in person in Japan.

BHN Dr. Kuwabara's Fund Donation-Supported Courses were successfully completed for both the spring and fall semesters at the University of Electro-Communications. Regarding the Kuwabara Foundation Scholarship Program, the sole scholar of the third cohort completed the entire program and returned to his home country in September, while the scholar of the fourth cohort began his studies in Japan in October and is progressing smoothly. Unfortunately, the candidate for the fifth cohort was not accepted into the Hitotsubashi University Business School (HUB).

Participants awarded certificates at the closing ceremony
of the 25th BHN Human Development Program (October 2024)

Organizational Management

Regarding organizational operations, BHN placed a strong focus on promoting digital transformation (DX) within the organization and enhancing information security measures.

As for the renewal of our status as a Certified Non-Profit Organization (NPO), we were unfortunately unable to meet certain certification criteria and therefore had no choice but to forgo the renewal. As a result, BHN has operated as a regular NPO since February 27 and is no longer eligible for tax-deductible donations. Additionally, as part of efforts to improve our financial balance and reform working styles, we began the process of downsizing and relocating the BHN headquarters, starting with a reduction of the current office space by half from May 2025.

Public Relations

As part of our ongoing activities, we regularly published activity reports and announcements through our website, email newsletters, and social media platforms. We also issued our newsletter CROSSROAD in May and December, contributed monthly "BHN Member Reports" to the Telecommunications Industry Newspaper, "*Tsushin Kogyo Shinbun*", and participated in various public events and outreach efforts.

These included our exhibition booth at Global Festa JAPAN 2024 (September 28–29), participation in the Mainichi Shimbun's special donation month advertisements (November 29 and January 3, 2025), exhibiting as part of at the Taito City Community Group Panel Display (February 6–17), and taking part in PR TIMES' promotional campaign April Dream (April 1–15).

The Kansai Office held the "16th Public Lecture and Photo Exhibition" online from November 1 to 15 and also set up a booth at the 32nd One World Festival in February 2025.

BHN booth at Global Festa JAPAN 2024 (September 2024)

Financials

The financial results for fiscal year 2024 were extremely challenging, affected by the postponement of the Myanmar projects to the next fiscal year and a decline in general donations.

Ordinary revenue was 347,078 thousand yen (65% of the budget), and ordinary expenses were 366,389 thousand yen (70% of the budget), resulting in an ordinary deficit of 19,311 thousand yen (30,085 thousand yen below the budget). The net change in assets after tax was a decrease of 19,481 thousand yen (compared to a budgeted figure of -30,185 thousand yen).

As this marks the second consecutive fiscal year with a significant deficit, BHN has committed to strengthening its efforts to improve its financial balance, beginning with measures such as the downsizing and relocation of our headquarters mentioned above, as well as the suspension of executive compensation.

Income（FY2024）
total 347 million Yen

MD
57
17%

CS
50
14%

GS
239
69%

in millions JPY

- Grants and Subsidies (GS)
- Revenue from Contracted Services (CS)
- Membership Fee/Donation (MD)

Expenditures(FY2024)
total 366 million Yen

Other
1
0%

HRD
27
7%

AD
50
14%

ER
4
1%

SD
284
78%

in millions JPY

- Social Development (SD)
- Emergency Relief (ER)
- Human Resource Development (HRD)
- Administration (AD)
- Other
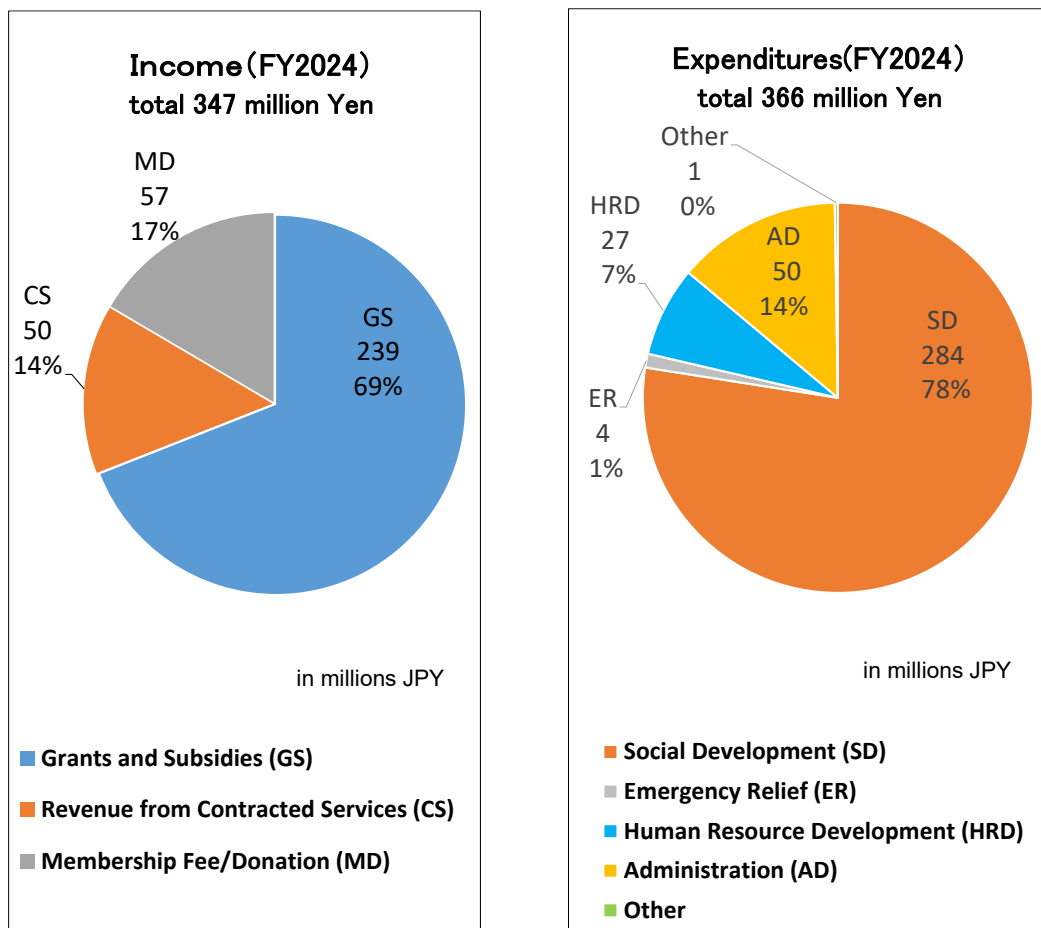
Appendix

Activities

I   Social Development

There are a number of underprivileged people whose basic human needs are not being sufficiently met. BHN supports such people and communities to improve their standard of living and to develop their capabilities utilizing ICT.

Projects Conducted by BHN

- Establishment and management of community radio stations for disaster risk reduction and betterment of rural communities
- Electrification of rural habitation with solar power generation
- Training for the use and maintenance of ICT systems following installation
- Telemedicine networks over the internet for prenatal and postnatal care (perinatal period care)
- Telemetering system to monitor river water levels for disaster prevention
- Distance learning systems at isolated schools utilizing multimedia technology
- Sensor-based Smart villages with disaster resilient distributed area communication network
- Telemedicine to improve healthcare services

Photo A-1   Activities of APT-C2 Telemedicine Project in Micronesia

Table A-1　Major Social Development Support Activities

No.	Project description	County / Area	Period
1	Support for victims of the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant accident (Microwave circuit construction for telemedicine via satellite)	Russia, Republic of Belarus, Kazakhstan	1992 - 1994
2	Support for wireless network construction for medical care centers in rural areas	Laos, Afghanistan	1998 - 2007
3	Donation of PBX equipment to hospitals	Myanmar, Ukraine, Afghanistan	1997 - 2003
4	Support for telemedicine systems	Malaysia, Thailand	1999 - 2008 2010 - 2013
5	Training in IT skills and wireless technology	Afghanistan	2004 - 2006
6	Area Information Transmission System (disaster management, improving living environment) (an application of Japan's Disaster Management Administration Radio System")	Myanmar	2013 - 2019
7	Installation of and training on how to use equipment related to solar power generation systems (Support for ethnic minority returnees, and victims of conflict)	Myanmar	2013 -
8	Construction of and training on how to use community FM broadcasting station	Bangladesh	2013 - 2017
9	Support for victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake - Emergency Support - Broadcasting stations - ICT support	Japan Iwate pref. Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima pref. Ishinomaki, Miyagi pref. Iitate, Fukushima pref.	 2011 2011 - 2014 2011 - 2019 2011 - 2020
10	ICT support in disaster-stricken areas - Earthquake in Kumamoto, Kyushu - Torrential rains in western Japan - Torrential rains in northern Kyushu - Smooth running of community activities and revitalization of local communities through ICT - Typhoon 15 & 19, in 2019 - Torrential rains in 2020 - Earthquake in Noto Peninsula	Japan Kumamoto pref. Hiroshima pref. Asakura, Fukuoka pref. Hiroshima, Miyagi, and Kumamoto pref. Marumori, Miyagi pref. Kure, Saka and Mihara, Hiroshima pref. Ishikawa pref.	 2016 - 2023 2018 - 2023 2018 - 2020 2019 - 2020 - 2022 2020 - 2024 2024 -
11	Disaster risk reduction support and health and hygiene awareness improvement projects in schools and villages in Gwa Township, Rakhine State	Myanmar	2020 -
12	Electric Installation Training and Facility Improvement Project for Myanmar Displaced Persons in Tak Province	Thailand	2024 -
13	Sensor-based Smart village with disaster resilient distributed area communication network (APT Project *)	Sri Lanka	2020 -
14	Improving healthcare services using telemedicine (APT Project *)	Micronesia	2022 -

*: Asia Pacific Telecommunity

II   Emergency Relief

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis disrupt communities and threaten people's lives. As emergency relief, BHN provides those affected in the devastated areas with ICT support to access lifeline information and communication networks for quick recovery after disasters.

Projects Conducted by BHN

- Community address system to furnish timely indispensable information

- Restoration of community radio stations and provision of broadcasting equipment

- ICT support – PC, printer and internet access – for local government and residents

- Safety confirmation system using satellite phones

- Wireless and satellite communication systems as an emergency measure

Photo A-2   Temporary housing complex for victims of the Noto Peninsula Earthquake (April 2024)

Table A-2   Major Emergency Relief Activities

Event	No.	County / Area	Description of Supports	Period
1. Earth-quake	(1)	Taiwan, Turkey	Providing radio equipment, free telephone services via satellite	1999
	(2)	India	Communication support for medical teams	2000
	(3)	Iran	FM broadcasting station equipment, distribution of radios	2004
	(4)	Pakistan	Free telephone services via satellite, Community Addressing (CA) Systems	2005
	(5)	Indonesia	Well pump, distribution of radios	2006, 2009
	(6)	Haiti	Community FM broadcasting station restoration, CA system	2010 - 2014
	(7)	Japan (3 Prefectures in Tohoku)	Installation of internet connections t for evacuation shelters, construction and restoration of temporary disaster broadcasting stations	2011
	(8)	Nepal	Construction and restoration of community FM broadcasting stations	2015 - 2016
	(9)	Japan (Kumamoto Pref)	Community support such as PCs, ICT environments, etc. for temporary housing estates	2016
	(10)	Japan (Hokkaido)	Community support such as PCs, ICT environments, etc. for temporary housing estates	2018
	(11)	Indonesia (Sulawesi)	Community FM broadcasting station, distribution of radios	2018 - 2019
	(12)	Japan (Noto Peninsula)	Community support such as PCs, ICT environments, etc. for temporary housing	2024 -
2. Typhoon Cyclone Hurricane	(1)	Honduras	Providing communication equipment	1998
	(2)	Myanmar	Community Addressing (CA) Systems	2008, 2010
	(3)	the Philippines	CA System, ICT stations	2013 - 2014
	(4)	Japan (Hiroshima Pref)	Community support such as PCs, ICT environments, etc. for temporary housing estates	2018
3. Tsunami	(1)	Indonesia, Sri Lanka	Community FM broadcasting station, distribution of radios	2005
	(2)	Japan (3 Prefectures in Tohoku)	-Installation of internet connections in temporary housing, operation support, etc. (Coastal cities in Iwate Prefecture, Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, etc.)	2011 - 2012
			- Construction of an Information Network for Victims (Iidate Village, Fukushima Prefecture)	2011 - 2012
			- Construction and restoration of broadcasting stations, distributing radios (Tohoku 3 prefectures)	2011 - 2012
4. Refugees	(1)	Afghanistan	Free telephone service via satellite	2002
	(2)	Iraq	Medical team communications support	2003

III Human Resource Development

Human Resource Development is a core activity of BHN. We are giving ICT engineers and governmental officers of ICT departments in developing countries opportunities to learn cutting-edge technologies and their applications.

BHN Human Development Program

BHN Human Development Program (the 'Program') was established in 1998 as BHN's own human resource development program aiming to foster future leaders in the ICT field in Asian countries. The Program has been inviting promising persons every year, currently from 9 Asian countries, and providing them with a comprehensive training program lasting two semesters, that is, the first semester in Malaysia and the second semester in Japan. A total of 195 people from 13 different countries have participated since its inception through to the 25th program (Table A-3).

Photo A-3   Reunion of BHN Human Development Program alumni in Sri Lanka, joined by both former and current project managers (February 2025)

Table A-3   Number of Participants in the BHN Human Development Program by Country

No.	Country		1st 1998-99	2nd 1999-00	3rd 2000-02	4th 2001-02	5th 2002-03	6th 2003-04	7th 2004-05	8th 2005-06	9th 2006-07	10th 2007-08	11th 2008-09	12th 2009-10	13th 2010-11	14th 2011-12	15th 2012-13	16th 2013-14	17th 2014-15	18th 2015-16	19th 2016-17	20th 2017-18	21st 2018-19	22nd 2019-21	23rd 2022	24th 2023	25th 2024	Total
1	Afghanistan	Male+Female						1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1													8
		(Female)																										
2	Bangladesh	Male+Female				2	1	1	2					1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
		(Female)					(1)		(1)															(1)	(1)			(4)
3	Cambodia	Male+Female							2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	21
		(Female)																						(1)				(1)
4	Indonesia	Male+Female								1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1 *	2 *	16
		(Female)										(1)						(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)				(1) *	(1) *	(7)
5	Kazakhstan	Male+Female													1	1												2
		(Female)													(1)													(1)
6	Lao	Male+Female		1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	26
		(Female)											(1)			(1)	(1)		(1)				(1)				(1)	(6)
7	Malaysia	Male+Female				1																						1
		(Female)																										
8	Mongolia	Male+Female				1	1																					2
		(Female)																										
9	Myanmar	Male+Female	1	1	2		3	1										1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	17
		(Female)			(1)													(1)		(1)			(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(8)
10	Philippines	Male+Female								2	1		1		1		1	1		1		1		1	1	1	1	13
		(Female)								(1)							(1)			(1)								(3)
11	Sri Lanka	Male+Female			1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	29
		(Female)					(1)					(1)						(1)					(1)	(1)		(1)		(7)
12	Uzbekistan	Male+Female	2	1	1	2	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		2	1	24
		(Female)		(1)										(1)												(1)	(1)	(4)
13	Vietnam	Male+Female						1	2		1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	18
		(Female)							(1)		(1)		(1)	(1)														(5)
	Total	Male+Female	3	3	5	10	9	9	10	9	8	8	8	8	7	8	8	9	8	9	8	8	6	8	7	10 *	10 *	195
		(Female)		(1)	(1)		(2)		(2)	(1)		(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(3)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(2)	(5) *	(4) *	(46)

* One of the two participants in the 25th program is the same as a participant in the 24th.
  She participated in the first semester of the 24th program and the second semester of the 25th.

Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) Training Course

APT, founded as a joint initiative between the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 1979, has been providing human capacity building activities programs to its member countries and territories.

BHN has been entrusted with providing APT/EBC-J* human resource development programs and APT has sponsored the programs since FY2011. Participants in the course program take lectures from ICT experts and researchers in Tokyo and visit the companies and projects to see the ICT application with their own eyes. However, the program in 2019 was suspended due to the sweeping COVID-19 pandemic. The program resumed in the form of online training in 2020 and 2021, many participants taking the course in their home countries. Since this program began, the numbers of participants and countries/regions have reached 160 and 28 respectively (Table A-4).

*EBC-J: Extra-Budgetary Contribution from the Government of Japan

Photo A-4   APT Training Course participants and BHN staff
gathered after the closing ceremony in Tokyo (February 2025)

Table A-4　　　Number of Participants in the APT Training Course by Country

#	Country	1st 2011-12	2nd 2012-13	3rd 2013-14	4th 2013-15	5th 2015-16	6th 2016-17	7th 2017-18	8th 2018-19	(Note) 2019-20	9th 2020-21	10th 2021-22	11th 2022-23	12th 2023-24	Total
1	Afghanistan			2	2	2		1			3		2		12
2	Bangladesh		1	1		1		2							5
3	Bhutan	1		1	1		1	1	1			1	2	1	10
4	Cambodia		1		1	1		1					3	1	8
5	China	1		2				1	1			1			6
6	India	1		1	1	1	1	1	1				1		8
7	Indonesia							1			1		1		3
8	Iran			1	1						2		3		7
9	Kiribati											2	2	1	5
10	Lao							1	1					1	3
11	Malaysia				1	1			1				1	1	5
12	Maldives	1	1	1		1	1						3		8
13	Marshall Islands	1													1
14	Mongolia	1	1	1	1		1	2	1		1	1	4		14
15	Myanmar	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		2	2			11
16	Nauru	1													1
17	Nepal		1				1	1	1					1	5
18	Niue						1								1
19	Pakistan	1		1	1	1	1								5
20	Palau				1	1								1	3
21	Philippines					2		1							3
22	Samoa					1					2	2			5
23	Sri Lanka		1			1		1			3	2	1	2	11
24	Thailand		1	1	1	1	1	2			1		1	1	10
25	Tonga	1				1	1								3
26	Tuvalu								1						1
27	Vanuatu					1							1		2
28	Vietnam	1	1		1		1								4
	Total	11	9	13	13	17	10	17	9	0	15	11	25	10	160

Note: Not implemented due to the Corona pandemic

BHN Dr. Kuwabara Donation-Supported Course

BHN Association, in collaboration with the University of Electro-Communications（UEC）, Tokyo, established a course - "BHN Kuwabara Donation Supported Course" - in 2019. This graduate course is funded with an endowment from Dr. M. Kuwabara, advisor to BHN and ex-vice president of NTT, and is being held annually at UEC for eight years, from 2019 to 2026.

This course is designed mainly for students from developing countries to deepen their understanding of SDGs and ICTs which facilitate them their attaining the goals. This donation-supported course of study includes two courses titled "Information and Communications Technologies for SDGs" and "International Communication for Science and Technology" for a full year - two semesters. So far, 242 students from 19 countries/regions, including international students, have taken the course.

Students from UEC attend the class on campus, and students from other universities, under the "Super Partnership Program for Graduate Schools", e.g., Muroran Institute of Technology, Muroran, and Akita Prefectural University, Akita, also attend the class online.

Photo A-5   Lecture at the University of Electro-Communications (April 2024)

BHN Dr. Kuwabara's Fund Scholarship Program

BHN Dr. Kuwabara's Fund Scholarship Program (the 'Kuwabara Scholarship') was established in March 2020 and funded by a considerable donation from Dr. Moriji Kuwabara, former Chairman of BHN Association.

Based on the vision of Dr. Kuwabara, the Kuwabara Scholarship has been offering the opportunity to former participants of the BHN Human Development Program to enroll in a one-year master's degree at top Japanese Universities: National Graduate Institute for Policy Study (GRIPS) and Hitotsubashi University Business School (HUB), to increase their skills and knowledge. The Kuwabara Scholarship basically accepts two scholarship students every year. To date, four students have taken advantage of the scholarship program.

Photo A-6   GRIPS Graduation in Tokyo (September 2024)

Photo A-7   A BHN third cohort scholar smiling after the graduation ceremony (September 2024)

Table A-5   BHN Dr. Kuwabara's Fund Scholars

Period of study	Number of scholars	Country	Graduate school	Course
Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2023	2	Bangladesh	GRIPS	One-Year Master's Program of Public Policy
Oct. 2023 – Sep. 2024	1	Bangladesh	GRIPS	One-Year Master's Program of Public Policy
Oct. 2024 – Sep. 2025 (expected)	1	Cambodia	GRIPS	One-Year Master's Program of Public Policy

GRIPS: National Graduate Institute for Policy Study