

The 182nd UNAFEI International Training Course
“Effective Support for Reintegration of Released Inmates
– Toward Seamless Support for Employment, Housing and Medical Care”

1. Duration and Participants

- From 8 September to 3 October 2023
- 17 overseas participants from 15 jurisdictions
- 7 participants from Japan

2. Programme Overview

This training course focused on effective social reintegration support for offenders, including those released from prison, especially efforts to achieve seamless support for employment, housing, and medical care. In this course, the participants shared and deepened their understanding of the legal systems and operational conditions in each participating country, and intensively discussed good practices, challenges, and solutions at all stages of criminal justice in each country.

The participants stayed for about a month at UNAFEI, where they spent their time together and learned from each other about efforts to support offender reintegration into society in their respective countries. The participants were able to build a network of international cooperation that will last a lifetime.

3. Contents of the Programme

(1) Lecturers

The following visiting experts from overseas and Japanese experts, as well as UNAFEI faculty members, gave lectures as follows:

- Visiting Experts
 - Mr. Ou Sabun
Executive Director, Prison Fellowship Cambodia
“Support for Reintegration of Prisoners in Cambodia through Public-Private Partnership”
 - Ms. Heidi Maria Lind
Project manager, Development and Quality Unit, Development and Guidance Department, Prison and Probation Service of Finland
“Criminal Justice System and Reintegration Assistance in Finland”
- Japanese Experts
 - Mr. NAKAI Masatsugu
Chairman, Chibo Corporation
“The Activities of Cooperative Employers Employing Offenders”
 - Mr. TAKASAKA Asato
President, NPO Re-Delinquency Prevention Support Center Aichi
“The Private Activities to Support Prisoners Released from Prison”

(2) Individual Presentations

Participants shared the practices and the challenges in their respective jurisdictions regarding the theme of the programme through their individual presentations. Materials of all presentations were uploaded online for later reference by participants.

(3) Group Workshops

The participants were divided into three groups by job category and exchanged their views and knowledge through discussions on the following topics: In group 1, mainly judges and prosecutors, “Imposition of penalties and case dispositions with due regard to rehabilitative perspectives” ; In group 2, which consisted mainly of correctional officers in the facility, “Imposition of penalties and case dispositions with due regard to rehabilitative perspectives” ; In group 3, which consisted mainly of officers in charge of community corrections, “Promotion of community-based treatment and multi-stakeholder partnerships in the social reintegration of offenders”.

Each group concluded the programme by presenting their recommendations based on the challenges they identified and what they learned in the lectures, presentations by the fellow participants and discussions.

4. Comments from the Programming Officer

In this training, practitioners from diverse professions working at various stages of criminal justice in countries around the world learned and discussed together. Treatment and reintegration of offenders, the main theme of this training, are essential to prevent recidivism and protect the safety of society, but the reality is that the necessity and importance of these efforts are not fully understood in all countries. Practitioners involved in offender treatment often face the lack of public support, misunderstanding, prejudice and criticism, and they struggle with limited budgets and personnel. They are always looking for ways to provide the best possible treatment and support and to make the government and the public understand the importance of multi-stakeholder partnership in offender reintegration.

The participants were keenly aware of the common challenges they face, even though they are from different countries. It was also an opportunity to re-evaluate the excellent policies and systems in their own countries and share them as suggestions for other countries. I believe that all participants were able to gain a common understanding during this training that, in the great proposition of rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders, multi-agency collaboration that does not stop at the framework of ministries and agencies, and cooperation from the private sector are indispensable.

The training was a valuable opportunity for participants to share a sense of empathy and solidarity, to increase pride in their work, and to share their hopes for the future. I sincerely hope that the knowledge and experience you gain from this training will help you to improve and enhance the systems in your respective countries, and that the friendships and cooperative relationships you build during this training will last for a long time.