

The 185th International Training Course
“Preventing Inmate Abuse and Corruption in Correctional Facilities:
Fostering a Rehabilitative Prison Environment”

1. Duration and Participants

- From 12th September to 8th October 2024
- 14 overseas participants from 12 countries
- 5 participants from Japan

2. The purpose of the course

The purpose of the training course was for participants to learn about the current situation, background, and prevention efforts regarding inmate abuse and corruption in correctional facilities around the world, as well as to explore good practices. Additionally, it aimed to deepen mutual understanding among participants and to build a human network that can be utilized even after the training course ends. This network is intended to support the efforts of various countries in addressing the global challenge of inmate abuse and corruption, facilitating information sharing and cooperation.

3. Contents of the course

(1) Lectures

- Overseas Experts
 - A) “Creating Rehabilitative Prison Environments: Anti-corruption Policies in Argentina”
“Effective measures in Anti-corruption Policies Argentina”
Dr. Emiliano Blanco
(Board Member, Board of Directors, International Corrections and Prisons Association)

 - B) “Organizational Management for Building Correctional Facilities That Are Resistant to Inmate Abuse and Corruption”
“Capacity Building and Empowerment for Correctional Officers with High Integrity”
Mr. Mikko Sarvela
(Regional Prison Systems Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross)

- Lectures by Japanese Experts
 - A) “Status of Inappropriate Treatment and Corruption, and the Prevention at Correction Institutions in Japan”
Mr. SHINIKETANI Ryo
(Director, Inspection Office, General Affairs Division, Correction Bureau, Ministry of Justice of Japan)

 - B) “Response to Violent or Unjust Incidents, and Efforts for Recurrence Prevention and Organizational Reform”
Ms. NATORI Masako
(Managing Director, Japan Legal Support Centre (Former Director-General of Correction Bureau, MOJ))

- C) “Prevention of Inappropriate Treatment in Police Detention Facilities”
Mr. AOYAMA Hitoshi
(Deputy Chief, Detention Management Office, General Affairs Division,
Commissioner General’s Secretariat, National Police Agency)

(2) Individual Presentations

Each participant made an “Individual Presentation” describing the current situation and challenges in the participant’s country. Participants asked many questions to the presenters and an active discussion was held.

(3) Study Visit

The participants visited the following facilities to learn about efforts to prevent inmate abuse and corruption in Japan.

- Fuchu Prison
- Aiko Juvenile Training School for Girls
- Training Institute for Correctional Personnel
- Police Detention Facility, Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department

(4) Group Discussion

The participants were divided into three groups, each focusing on specific themes. They engaged in discussions based on the knowledge gained from individual presentations, lectures and observation visits throughout the training. The results of these discussions were then presented in front of all participants and UNAFEI faculty members, followed by a question-and-answer session.

- Group 1: “Effective measures for the prevention of corruption in correctional facilities”
- Group 2: “Measures for promoting human rights protection in correctional facilities, including effective prevention and early detection of inmate abuse”
- Group 3: “Capacity-building and good governance of administration for fostering rehabilitative prison management”

4. Feedback from the Participants

Most participants highly evaluated the well-structured nature of the program, noting that they were able to learn valuable information and practical approaches through the many lectures with expertise and experiences on key issues, as well as the study visits. Particularly, many participants noted that the lecture by Ms. Natori, Managing Director, Japan Legal Support Centre (Former Director-General of the Correction Bureau), was memorable. In her lecture, she shared her experiences regarding organizational reforms triggered by incidents of abuse and corruption in correctional facilities. Many participants commented that her lecture was encouraging and inspiring especially for those who are currently struggling with issues of corruption and abuse in their respective countries.

Moreover, through individual presentations and group discussions, participants actively shared their experiences and insights, facilitating a learning process among peers. This mutual exchange led to a deeper understanding, with many participants feeling that they were able to find specific ideas and solutions applicable to their actual work. This collaborative learning environment was a key element in enhancing the quality and value

of this training course.

5. Comments from the Programming Officer

Correctional institutions have two main responsibilities: to protect society from crime and reduce reoffending. To fulfill these responsibilities, criminal justice authorities are obliged to take necessary measures to ensure that inmates are safely held in custody, ensure that each offender's human rights are respected, and support their reintegration into society as law-abiding citizens.

However, inmate abuse and corruption within correctional facilities undermine both of these fundamental responsibilities. The closed nature of these institutions, the asymmetry of power, issues related to organizational culture, and a lack of personnel and resources make them particularly vulnerable to such abuses and corruption. In fact, many reports of inmate abuse and corruption have emerged from correctional facilities worldwide, including in Japan.

To explore effective measures for addressing the difficult issue of preventing abuse and corruption in correctional facilities, I decided to structure this training course around two approaches: "Strengthening governance of prison administration" and "Capacity building."

The first approach focuses on organizational structure, including the establishment of clear organizational norms, an inspection system by third-party organizations, complaint system, legal aid, and protections for whistleblowers. However, as various social psychology experiments conducted in prison-settings by Dr. Philip Zimbardo and others demonstrate, even individuals who believe they possess strong ethical principles can fall into corrupt or abusive behaviors under specific situations or group pressures. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a structure within the organization that does not permit abuse or corruption.

On the other hand, no matter how excellent the organizational structure is, if the staff working within it lack respect and compassion for the human rights of inmates, abuse and corruption will inevitably resurface. Thus, the second approach, "Capacity building" focuses on correctional staff and their relationships, emphasizing the importance of recruitment, personnel development, empowerment, and a transparent workplace environment. Additionally, the lectures also touched on the fact that building trust and good interpersonal relationships between correctional officers and inmates is also effective in ensuring security in correctional facilities (Dynamic Security).

Having completed this training course, I have come to realize that in the context of correctional facilities—where the aim is to change people's habits, values, and ways of life—the environment's potential for true rehabilitation largely depends on the attitudes of the correctional staff. This is precisely why capacity building is essential, and I believe that this training course itself is a crucial part of that process.

I sincerely hope that the knowledge and perspectives gained from this training course will contribute to the development of systems and operations in their respective countries, forming a foundation for building better correctional environments while respecting the human rights of inmates.