

Migration of Health Workers  
Under the Japan-Philippines and  
Japan-Indonesia EPAs :  
Challenges and Implications  
of the Japanese Training  
Framework

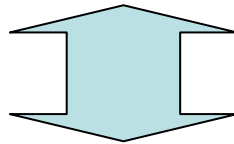
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# Japan's EPAs with Indonesia and the Philippines

- Both EPAs entered into force in 2008
- Indonesian candidates arrived in Japan in August 2008, and Philippine candidates came in May 2009.
- Three years of duration of stay of the Indonesian nurse candidates already expired in March 2011.

# Policy Background

- Japan's restrictive migration policy based on the Immigration Act
  - Supporting the entry of "skilled workers" only
  - The share of foreign nationals in Japan = 2%





- Migration scheme under EPAs
  - The migration issue is treated as a trade matter, rather than an immigration one.
  - Avoiding a difficult and complex discussion under the immigration Act

“Approving potential nurses and caregivers from Indonesia and the Philippines is not a response to the labour shortages in the health service; this training program has been agreed under the EPAs on the basis of strong requests from the two countries.”

(Website from Ministry of Health & Welfare)

# Japan's Training Framework

	Nurses	Caregivers
1. Recruitment	=Matching with the demand of Japanese host institutions=	
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Entry</p> </div>		
2. Language Training	= Six months of Japanese language training =	
3. Training/Practice at host institutions	Training at hospital	Training at caregiving institutions
4. National exam	<div style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px;">                     Once per year:  <u>Maximum three attempts</u> </div>	<div style="border: 2px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px;">                     Three years of training is required before taking the exam: <u>one chance to pass</u> </div>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Passed</p> </div>		
Admitted to work (three-year temporary stay with renewal)	(If fail the exam, immediate return to sending country)	(If fail the exam, immediate return to sending country)

# 1. Recruitment

- “Japan International Corporation of Welfare Services” (JICWELS) coordinates a matching process between applicants in Indonesia and the Philippines and host institutions in Japan
- The number of successful matches has declined.

(Ex.) 138 job offers from Japanese institutions  
289 Indonesian applicants  
→ 105 matches

→ The number of host institutions that want to accept candidates is decreasing.

→ The high costs of accepting and training the candidates borne by the Japanese host institutions.

## 2. Six Months of Language Training

- It turns out that the six months of language training is not sufficient to move on to practical training at hospitals and caregiving institutions and subsequently pass their exams.
- In 2011, the Japanese government began to provide an additional three to six months of language training.

### 3. Training at Hospitals/Caregiving Institutions

- Candidates are guaranteed at least as much payment as Japanese employees engaging in the same activities.
  - In addition, they must prepare for the national exam (+ further language study).
- Japanese host institutions bears the training costs.
  - Given that institutions differ in their available staff and financial resources, it is up to each institution how they spare time and expenses for exam preparation.



## 4. Exam and Afterward

- Nurse candidates took the national exam in 2009, 2010 and 2011, while the first group of caregiver candidates will be able to take their exam in 2012.
- A Cabinet decision in March 2011 --- a special arrangement that the status of candidates who arrived in 2008 and 2009 would be extended for an additional year under certain conditions.

### Nursing Exam Pass Rates:

2009	None out of 82 exam takers
2010	Three out of 254 exam takers
2011	16 out of 398 exam takers.

# Summary

- This is not simply about trade. It is also about education, training and management.
  - importance of education and communication capacity for this type of work
- How to cover the costs borne by host institutions
  - in order not to discourage the institutions to hire foreign candidates
    - ↔ For some candidates, three to four years of work may provide sufficient economic benefits.
- It is important to motivate candidates not to leave Japan, encourage them to prepare for their exams, and improve retention in Japan
  - also serving to build skills of candidates