Introduction of Distant Learning Materials into Teacher Training in Rural Mongolia

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The speakers have involved in the project entitled “Rehabilitation of Boarding Schools and Provision of Refresher Training Course for School principals and Teachers in the Dzud affected Gobi Desert Provinces in Mongolia (Bayankhongor, Dundgobi and Zavkhan)” which has been conducted during 2004 to 2006 under the support of United Nations Human Security Fund. The speakers have contributed to the technical assistance and the evaluation of the refresher training courses, in cooperation with Mongolian State University of Education (MSUoE) and UNESCO. The teacher training provided by the professors of MSUoE and the researchers of Institute of Education is called “mobile training,” as these lecturers visit the regional central schools by automobiles to gather the teachers in the project schools within the region. The importance of the teacher training in the regional and school levels are being more and more important due to the scarcity of the central level training and the decentralization of the government. For the sustainability of the teacher training at regional and school levels after the project, considering the low population density of Mongolia, insufficient transportation infrastructure, and cost of mobile training etc., the speakers have studied the possibility and feasibility of the introduction of distant learning materials into the teacher training programs. Conducting the survey of the available infrastructure and equipment, and the assessment of the needs of the schools and teachers, feasible media are chosen and the distant training materials are developed for the test trials. Evaluation results of the trials and the future issues are reported.