



2026 International Course on Leadership for Community Health and Development

COURSE OUTLINE and APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Theme: People Empowerment through Participatory Approach for Sustainable Community

Course dates: August 25th (Tue) to October 4th (Sun), 2026 [approximately six weeks]

** Participants to arrive in Japan on August 24th and depart on October 5th.*

Venue: Asian Health Institute (AHI), Nisshin city, Aichi prefecture, Japan

Participants: Community health and development workers affiliated with civil society organizations in the Asian region

Course Capacity: Up to 10 people

Language to be used in this course: English

Application Deadline: April 1st (Wed), 2026

Course Organizer: Asian Health Institute (AHI), *Kyoko Shimizu*, General Secretary

Coordinators: *Saori Yamashita, Yayoi Takada, Yuko Okuma* (AHI)
Kshamata Khadka (KOPIA-Nepal)

About Asian Health Institute (AHI)

Since its establishment in 1980, AHI has focused on human resource development as a means to advance equity in health and social justice, working consistently through a participatory approach.

AHI offers various learning opportunities for individuals and groups involved in health and community development, while also cultivating a network among its program alumni, their colleagues, and working partners. This network fosters mutual learning and provides support for the practical application of shared knowledge and skills, empowering its members to become:

- **Change agents**, addressing health and development challenges in their communities,
- **Facilitators**, creating environments where community members empower themselves, and
- **Peace-builders**, collaborating with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Background of the Theme

Current international development approaches emphasize the importance of inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnerships, local ownership and participation to achieve sustainable and equitable development. In this context, NGOs serve as facilitators, empowering Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and People's Organizations (POs) with the capacity and leadership development, particularly in decision-making, initiative-taking, and ownership. This enables these organizations to become driving forces for positive change in their respective communities.

2. Course Objectives and Outputs

This course aims to enhance participants' perspectives, practical knowledge, and skills, and to strengthen their leadership capacities through a reflective process. In turn, this will enable participants to support their partner CBOs and POs in developing the capacities needed to lead community-driven initiatives.

At the start of the course, participants will collectively define the specific course objectives that align with the learning needs of all participants.

By the end of the course, participants will have collaboratively developed strategies tailored to their community contexts, enabling their partner CBOs and POs to effectively address key community issues in partnership with government agencies and other stakeholders.

3. Course Principles

- There are no theoretical lectures by external resource persons; the focus is on participants as valuable learning resources. Sharing their experience-based knowledge, skills, attitudes, and insights is central to the learning process.
- Participants are responsible for their own learning and for supporting the learning of their peers.
- Effective learning involves the integration of thoughts, feelings, and actions at both individual and group levels.
- The learning process itself becomes the content of learning—where insights emerge not only from the topics discussed but also from experience practicing the three training methods introduced in Section 4.

4. Training Methods

i. Participatory Approach

- Participants collaboratively define the course objectives, focus topics, and schedule. They identify the resource persons within the group and decide how to manage both the learning and living environments, including addressing any challenges that may arise.
- Participants co-design sessions and activities, deciding on the content and methods such as case studies, small group discussions, debates, games, and role plays.
- Participants take roles in facilitating, monitoring, documenting, and evaluating sessions and activities throughout the course.

ii. Live-in Style in an Intercultural Setting

Participants stay in shared rooms at the AHI dormitory and manage daily chores together. Time outside of sessions is an integral part of the course because it:

- Provides participants with opportunities to interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, promoting informal sharing and strengthening interpersonal connections.
- Fosters teamwork through daily activities such as cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning.
- Offers opportunities for participants to help each other review past sessions and activities, as well as prepare for upcoming ones.

iii. Leadership Lab Through Group Process

- Participants regularly reflect on their emotions, mindsets, attitudes, behaviors, and skills, and they exchange feedback with others on these observable elements to enhance their leadership and facilitation abilities.
- Participants engage in various group activities with different people, both inside and outside of sessions. These collaborative experiences foster supportive and productive learning and living environments, promoting both positive group dynamics and individual growth.

APPLICATION GUIDELINE

5. Qualification of the Applicant

An NGO meeting the qualifications outlined in Section 5-i can nominate one staff member or one CBO/PO member who fulfills the qualifications specified in Section 5-ii. It is also possible to nominate both an NGO staff member and a CBO/PO member as a team if they have collaborated closely for the past three years. However, nominating more than one staff member or more than one CBO/PO member is not permitted.

Note: *Officially registered CBOs/POs, government agencies and corporate social responsibility divisions of private companies are also encouraged to nominate their members. For detailed qualifications related to them, please contact AHI.*

i. Applicant Organization

- Must be engaged in health and community development within the Asian Region.
- Must collaborate with CBOs/POs, recognizing them not just as project beneficiaries but as key actors in leading community development.
- Must shoulder financial responsibilities outlined in Section 6.
- Must engage in thoughtful discussions with the nominees to analyze their activities and complete the application form accurately.
- Must provide necessary resources to support nominees' course preparation from June to August 2026, including:
 - An environment that enables focused participation in the online preparatory meetings (a stable internet connection is required).
 - Support for travel arrangements and other learning-related preparations.
- Must create an environment for nominees to concentrate on learning during the course period by minimizing their work commitments to the greatest extent possible. Assignments and group tasks will be given to them after the sessions.
- Must provide nominees with opportunities for practical application of the knowledge, skills, and ideas acquired from the course both within the organization and in the communities, and actively support their implementation after the course is completed.

Note: *If the representative of the applicant organization is unable to fulfill these responsibilities, please designate an appropriate person who can supervise the nominee and effectively carry out these duties.*

ii. Nominees

- **NGO staff:** Minimum of five years of experience in organizing and developing CBOs/POs.
- **CBO member:** Minimum of five years of active experience in CBOs/POs.
- **Both NGO staff and CBO member** must meet the following criteria:
 - Commit to applying the knowledge, skills, and ideas acquired from the course in the applicant NGO for a minimum of two years after completing the course.
 - Have clear ideas about what they want to learn and contribute to other participants'

learning during the course.

- Have an open mind, a positive attitude, and a spirit of challenge for engaging in critical feedback, effective teamwork, and mutual learning.
- Attend all four online preparation meetings scheduled for June 27th, July 11th, July 25th, and August 8th, 2026.
- Attend all sessions (Monday to Saturday) during the course period.
- Articulate ideas clearly in English.
- Be 45 years of age or younger.
- Be in adequate physical and psychological condition to participate fully in a long-term residential training course.
- Have no experience in former AHI training courses held in Japan.

6. Financial Requirements

i. The applicant NGO will be responsible for the following costs:

- Share of the domestic and international airfare (50% for NGO staff, 25% for CBO/PO members) to and from Chubu Centrair International Airport, Japan.
- Land transportation expenses within your country.
- Other travel-related costs, including obtaining a passport, visa, and medical certificate.

ii. AHI will be responsible for the following costs:

- Share of the domestic and international airfare (50% for NGO staff, 75% for CBO/PO members); this will be refunded after the completion of the course.
- Land transportation expenses within Japan.
- Training expenses.
- Food and accommodation during the course period.
- Health insurance fees, excluding chronic diseases, dental care, and maternal care.

Note: Different financial requirements apply to the following applicant organizations. Please contact AHI for further details.

- Japanese NGOs and their counterparts
- International NGOs with significant budgets
- NGOs in economically advanced countries such as China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Brunei, and Singapore
- Government agencies
- Private companies

7. Documents Required for the Application

The representative or person responsible for this application within the applicant NGO must submit all the following documents via email to AHI **by April 1st, 2026**.

- **Both NGO staff and CBO/PO member:**

- Application form

Note: The three types of application forms—used when an NGO nominates its staff member (Type A), its partner CBO/PO member (Type B), or both its staff member and a partner CBO/PO member as a team (Type C)—can be downloaded from the website at: [\[https://ahi.sub.jp/eng/archives/8670\]](https://ahi.sub.jp/eng/archives/8670).

In cases where an officially registered CBO/PO, government agency, or private company intends to nominate a candidate, please contact AHI to confirm the appropriate type of application form.

- NGO's brochure, annual activity report, and annual financial report (English)

- **CBO/PO member:**

- CBO's/PO's brochure and annual activity report (English or English summaries)

Note: No applications will be accepted after the deadline.

If you do not receive acknowledgment within three days of submitting your application, please contact AHI.

8. Selection

- The coordination team will review applications to assess nominees' skills, ability, and experience, considering factors to create a diverse and dynamic learning group.
- Online interviews with nominees and the representative of the applicant NGO (or the person responsible for this application on behalf of the representative) will be conducted as necessary.
- The selection result will be communicated via email **no later than June 10th, 2026**

9. Contact

Asian Health Institute (AHI)

E-mail: ildc2026@ahi-japan.jp Tel: 81-561-73-1950

*If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact us by email at any time, or join **the online application guidance session** to be held on **February 14th, 2026**, at 2:00 PM (UTC +9:00). To join the session, please register at [\[https://forms.gle/rQg2peXFxP7LEJVe6\]](https://forms.gle/rQg2peXFxP7LEJVe6) or by scanning the QR code.*



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Limitations on Use and Provision: AHI shall never intentionally provide information that can be used to identify individuals to any third party.

Security Notice: AHI takes necessary measures to prevent leakage, loss, or destruction of acquired information and to properly manage such information.