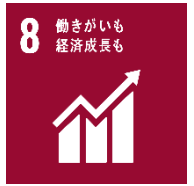




Japan Platform for Migrant Workers
towards Responsible and Inclusive Society



“Fair and Ethical Recruitment Initiative”

April 8, 2025



Introduction ~Challenges in recruiting migrant workers

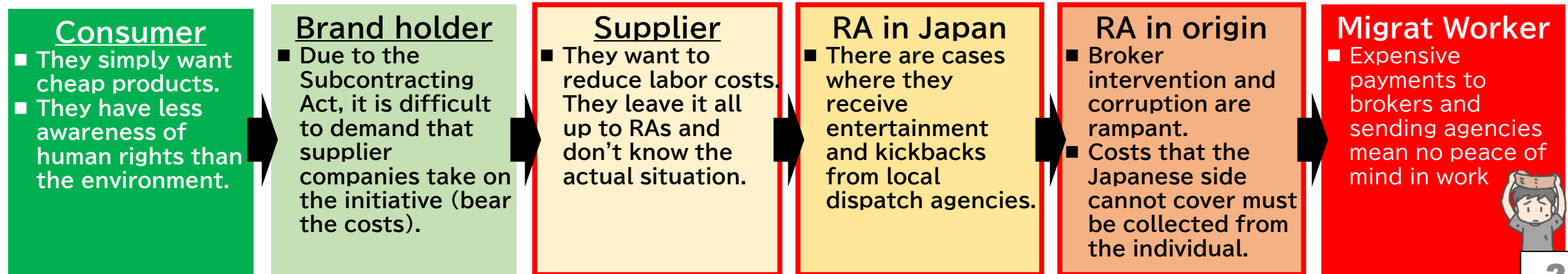


<Background>

- It is said that technical intern trainees coming to Japan pay an average of 540,000 yen in fees and related expenses before arriving in Japan, but recent interviews in JP-MIRAI sending countries have reported cases where trainees have paid more than 1 million yen(nearly 7, 000 USD).
- These costs are so high that they are unthinkable given local income levels, and there are reports that if they are unable to work securely in Japan or earn the income they expect, this is likely to lead to them disappearing.

<Challenges>

- The issue of expensive pre-departure expenses for migrant workers is a structural problem that involves parties on both the Japanese and sending countries, with the costs being borne by those in a weaker position, and it is difficult to see how it can be resolved.
- Japan's migrant worker's system has no clear rules, and the matter is left to the systems of the sending countries, such as the MOC. However, even if there are laws and regulations with high standards, many countries have insufficient management and supervision systems.





Many members understand the need for ethical recruitment

As the international community advances its efforts on "business and human rights," particularly in Europe, it is inevitable for companies to take action as their supply chains include Europe. In addition, companies are required to take action in transactions with RBA member companies.

Forcing young people in developing countries to shoulder such a high financial burden that is unthinkable given their local income levels is problematic from a humanitarian perspective. (Japanese people are protected by domestic law, but migrant workers are not.)



Too many challenges

The recruitment process is complicated and difficult to come up with a solution. Each company does not know which recruitment agency to use.

The definition of "zero fee" is vague, making it unclear what costs must be incurred to meet international standards.

It is difficult to obtain understanding and cooperation from suppliers.

It is not easy to ensure enough resources to fully and timely conduct social audits and respond to the detected expenses and the required refunds to achieve international standards. There is also a possibility of risk of unfair expenses being borne, so emphasis should be also on prevention.

There is also a need for a remedy mechanism during the recruitment process.

General Background



- January 2023 JICA signed MOC with International Labor Organization (ILO) to strengthen partnership, particularly Business and Human Rights.
- April 2023 Secretary General of ILO visited JICA HQ to have a dialogue with the President of JICA. *(photo right)*
- April 2023 “Vietnam-Japan Human Resource Development Forum in Hanoi 2023 ~Improvement of Recruitment Process –Complying with global standards –” organized by JICA/ILO etc.
- The consensus was that “the high pre-departure fees lie on both the Japanese and Vietnamese sides, and cooperation among all parties involved is essential to achieve international standard recruitment.”



- November 2023 JP-MIRAI signed MOC with Responsible Business Alliance (RBA)
- July 2023 VJ-FERI (Fair and Ethical Recruitment Initiative btw/ Vietnam & Japan) was agreed to proceed to the design stage in five-parties consultation meeting (The Vietnamese government, VAMAS, ILO, JICA, JP-MIRAI)
- June 2024 **General Guideline of “Fair and Ethical Recruitment” (FERI)** was formulated by JP-MIRAI with support of JICA/ILO/RBA, and JP-MIRAI announced FERI would be expanded to other Asian countries.

Outline of IJ-FERI (Role of Stalk holder)



Objectives

“**International-standard Recruitment** of migrant workers such as **Technical Intern Trainees** and **Specific Skilled Workers** sent from the countries of to Japan is promoted.

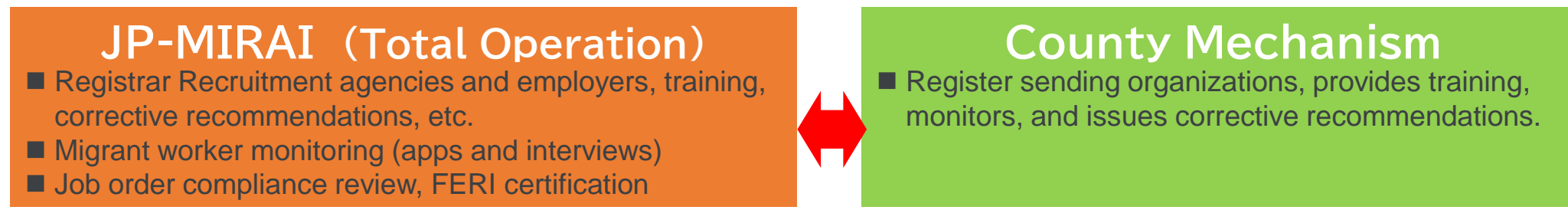
Voluntary Mechanism

Recruitment is carried out among the registered Parties which commit to comply with laws and regulations and **FERI guidelines**.



Operation

JP-MIRAI will cooperate in operating the system. Operating costs will be collected by them.



Support

JICA, ILO and the other important stalk holders will work together to support the establishment and operation of the system.

Basic Framework of FERI

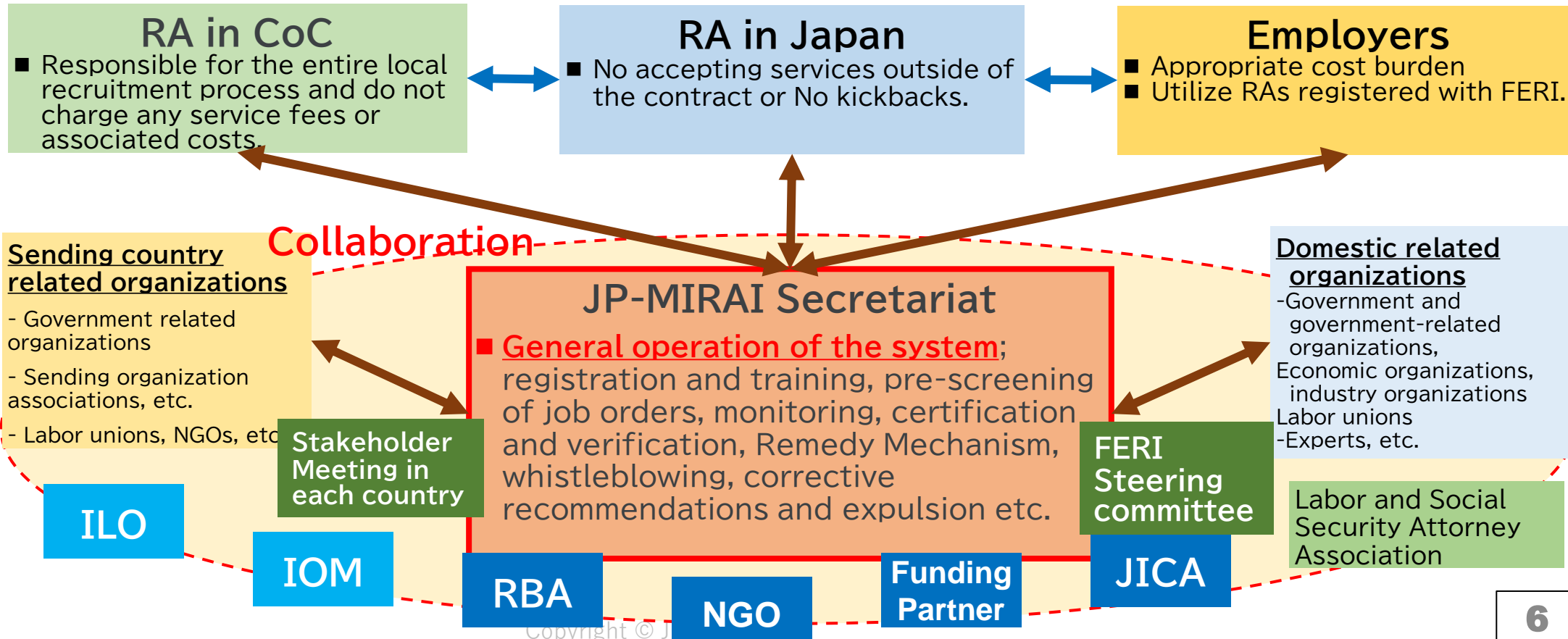


Objective

- A private sector-led framework (not a government-to-government framework) to promote "recruitment of international-standard migrant workers" without charging recruitment, placement, or related fees to technical intern trainees and specified skilled workers coming to Japan.

Voluntary Mechanism

- ① Employers, ② Recruiting Agencies in Japan, and ③ Recruiting Agencies in Country of Origin, who are pre-registered with JP-MIRAI, will perform their migration intermediation functions properly based on the FERI Guidelines, thereby preventing the payment of pre-arrival expenses.



Structure

Important Feature of FERI



■Pre-screening/certification for each migrant worker (job order)

Job orders are pre-screened by the JP-MIRAI secretariat and experts for compliance with relevant laws and regulations and the FERI guidelines. Job postings that pass the screening are affixed with the logo. After monitoring (identity verification) after entry into the country, a FERI certificate and quasi-FERI confirmation certificate are issued for each job order.

■Two standards (Phased Approach)

Based on international standards, establishing standards for "FERI," in which employers pay 100% of the total costs, and "semi-FERI," in which employers pay more than 50% of the costs.

■Transparency for Migrant Worker

Job seekers can easily obtain information from accurate job orders and learn about the FERI system by clicking on the FERI logo (resolving information asymmetry).

■Real-time monitoring/Remedy mechanism, Whistleblower

Throughout the entire process, JP-MIRAI distributes an app to migrant workers, asks them to fill out questionnaires regularly, conducts interviews, provides them with a free consultation service (available in their native language), and provides them with access to redress mechanisms.

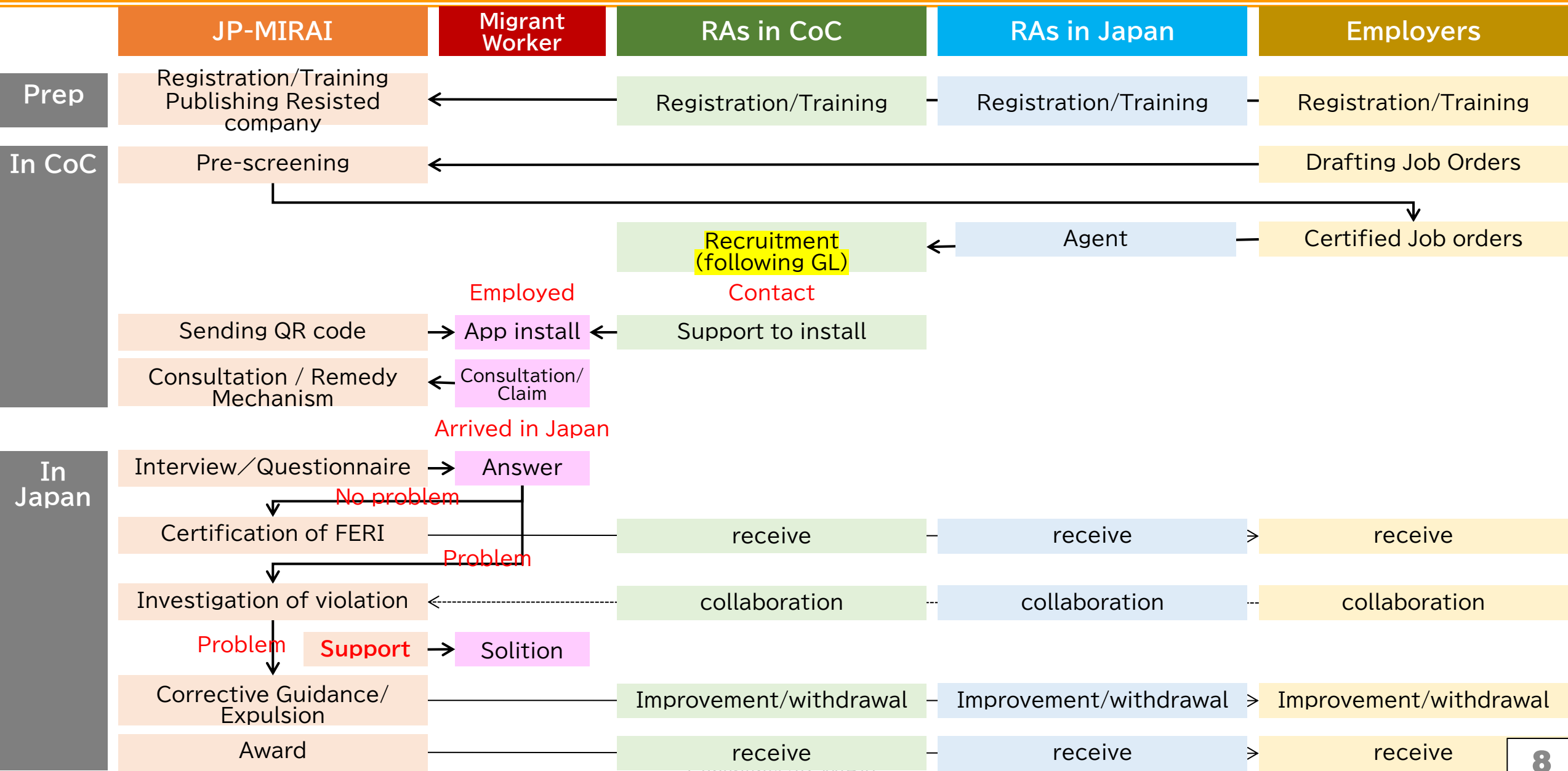
If any violations of the guidelines are found, they will be investigated and measures such as recommendations for correction or expulsion will be taken. In cases of serious violations of laws and regulations, a public interest report may be filed with the relevant authorities in the sending country or Japan.

■Maintaining Motivation of Employer and RAs (Awards)

Awarding employers and RAs with excellent monitoring results (by publishing the award results, we aim to become "companies of choice").

Support for matching between excellent companies and organizations.

Workflow of FERI





■Other Activities

- ①**Case Studies and Sharing of Experiences:** Participating employers, placement agencies, and sending organizations will be provided with information on best practices and the circumstances of sending workers in each country via LMS (learning management software).
- ②**Interaction between participating companies and organizations:** Registered organization information will be shared via the LMS, and a community will be formed.
- ③**Data analysis:** Pre-departure expenses data collected through FERI will be analyzed, and published.
- ④**Social awareness raising:** the FERI Conference (September, Bangkok), conferences of international organizations, domestic events, etc.

■Target countries

Country	開始時期	準備状況
Vietnam	April, 2025	Registration is currently underway. Sending organization training will be held in late April.
Indonesia	May, 2025	Preparing for registration. Sending agency training in mid-May.
Nepal	June, 2025	Preparing for registration. Sending agency training in early-June.
other		To be discussed reflecting the Employers' need.



■Membership

All companies and RAs who want to participate in FERI are required to join JP-MIRAI (paid membership). Participating companies and organizations are requested to confirm that they agree to the JP-MIRAI membership regulations and "the Code of Conduct", and then submit the "Application Form." to the secretarial

■Fees and Services (In 2025, No per-PAX fee will be charged for promotion)

Category	Annual Fee	Per-Pax fee	Available Services
Employer	JPY 60,000 (≒USD 400)	JPY 20,000 (≒USD 130) per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- FERI participation fee (including training, feedback, certification, and awards)- Access to corporate LMS site (① Basic information on business and human rights & Japanese system reforms, ② Corporate best practices, ③ Video learning materials for small and medium-sized enterprises, certificates of completion, help desk access, etc.)
RA in Japan	JPY 60,000 (≒USD 400)	No	
RA in CoC	Determined by country	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- FERI participation fee (including training, feedback, certification, and awards)- Access to corporate LMS site (① Basic information on business and human rights and Japanese system reforms, ② Corporate best practices, etc., ③ Matching information provided)

The Last Message from JP-MIRAI



Challenges: Lack of motivation to realize “Ethical Recruitment”

<Traditional explanation: **Extrinsic motivation**>

[International Community]
Progress of BHR

[International Community]
Reputation Risk

Not easy to get
understanding of Supplier



<Challenges: Additional Costs>

①Coverage of agency fees and related costs (expenses estimated to be between 500,000 and 1,000,000 yen cannot be covered)

②Allocation of enough personnel and budgets for audits, investigations, refunding procedures, etc. required to achieve international standards



If you choose a reputable agency, the additional cost will be around 100,000 to 300,000 yen per person.

Working together through FERI eliminates problematic intermediation agencies and has low overhead costs.



<Goal>

Realizing decent work for migrant workers through FERI and “improving working and living conditions” (“**human capital management**” that values people)

<**Intrinsic motivation** is also important>

[in CoC] Difficulty of
Securing qualified
Workers

[in Japan] Risk of losing
human resources due to
relaxation of job-changing
requirements

Solving problems for Employers



<Direct Benefits>

①Securing Qualified
Workers

②High Retention
Rate

RA in Coc pointed out that “we will clearly receive a large number of applicants and be able to secure excellent human resources.”

Good practice such as zero turnover (in Japan) and a dramatic reduction in turnover (from 30% to 1%, in Thailand).

JP-MIRAI will accumulate case studies and evidence.





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