



Japanese ODA in Agriculture: Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid

One of the most visible impacts of Japanese ODA in Bhutan has been in the field of agriculture through the supply of power tillers and the enhancement of farmer's incomes by introducing modern farming techniques.

A large-scale agriculture project, "**Agricultural Research and Extension Support Project in Lhuentse and Mongar (AREP)**" was launched on 15 June 2004 in Eastern Bhutan. The main goals of the project are to identify potential techniques for increasing agricultural productivity in the region and to strengthen the research and extension system for the improvement of farmers' technical capacity.

The project mainly focuses on horticulture, rice cultivation and agricultural infrastructure. Various activities have already been conducted in collaboration with the Renewable Natural Resource Research Center-East (RNR-RC East) at Wengkhari, Mongar. Lhuentse and Mongar Dzongkhag and Gweog officials have also participated in these activities.

Seeds and fruit saplings have been distributed to farmers in selected target areas, with the products sold at local markets. Japanese pears from RNR-RC East were successfully introduced in Thimphu markets for promotion sales in August 2005. Rice cultivation focused on improvement of nursery and transplant management techniques. The full-scale introduction, breeding and purification of local varieties were started in this season. Also, on-farm cultivation for the producer has been successfully demonstrated in Tangmachu and Lhuentse this year. JICA has been supporting these through long and short-term experts, training programmes, distribution of equipment and infrastructure improvements.

Two JOCVs are also working as vegetable researchers in Eastern Bhutan. Ms. Chano in Ligmethang actively promotes organic techniques. She notes, "Soil improvement by weeding is the most effective way to prevent agricultural products from diseases and harmful insects. Though cutting grass is the most tedious and time-consuming work, I have been encouraging the farmers to keep up with organic agricultural techniques instead of using chemicals." As well as Technical Assistance, the Government of Japan has provided Grant Assistance for the Underprivileged Farmers (KR-II) in support of the farm mechanization programme since 1984.

JICA schemes

- Technical cooperation project
- Grant aid
- Training programme
- Development studies
- Emergency disaster relief
- Citizen participation
- Follow-up cooperation
- Volunteer programme

JICA target areas in Bhutan

- Agriculture and rural development
- Infrastructure development
- Local governance
- Social services development (Health, Education and IT)

JICA members in Bhutan (as of October)

- Office staff: 16 (7Internationals, 9 Nationals)
- Experts: 10 (2 short-time)
- Senior Volunteers: 27 (1 short-time)
- Senior JOCVs: 3
- JOCVs: 20 (1short-time)

Access to markets for the farmers

There is a high demand for farm roads to link to the main road network in order to serve the growing socio-economic needs in rural communities. The Government of Japan has agreed to extend grant assistance of 521 million yen (Nu. 215 million) to procure a range of machinery and equipment for rural road construction.

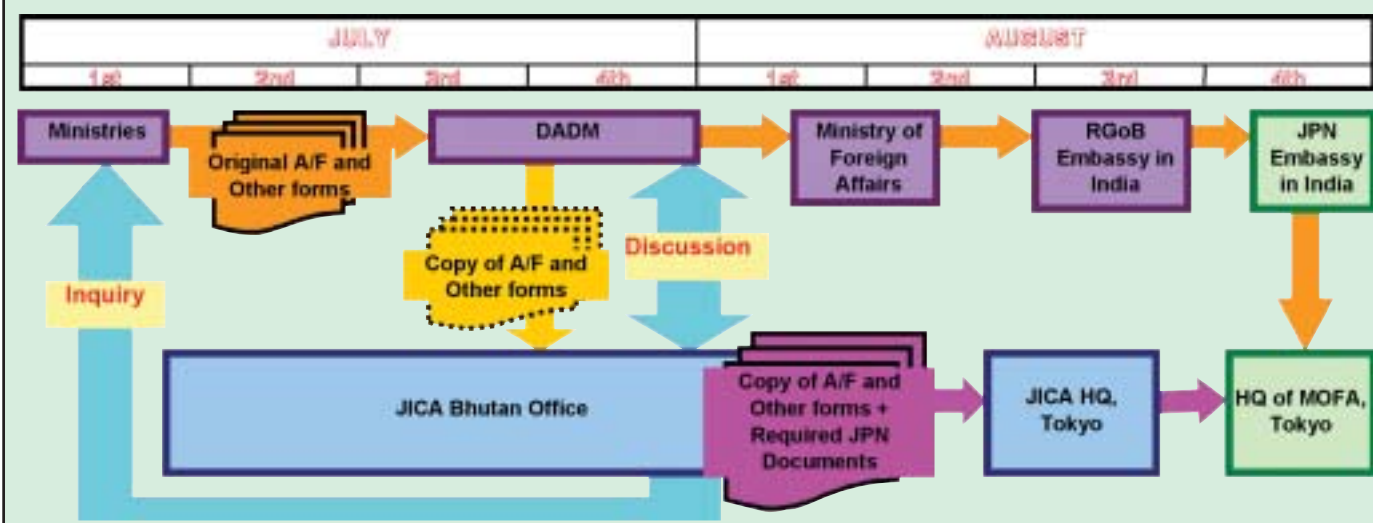
Senior Volunteers support this program. While Mr. Ono works in the machinery center in Bumthang, another volunteer, Mr. Terashima, supports farmers in road surveying in various districts in preparation for construction.

Proposals for the next Japanese Fiscal Year: Grant Aid, Technical Cooperation and Development Study

The RGoB Embassy in Delhi submitted various ODA proposals to the Embassy of Japan in September 2005. All the proposals will be studied in Japan by the end of the fiscal year in March, 2006. The implementation for Approved Technical Cooperation and Development Study Projects will begin in financial year 2006, while basic study teams will be dispatched for the approved Grant Aid Projects to be implemented in financial year 2007.

A JICA seminar was held on 2 July, 2005 to explain the Japanese ODA scheme, distribute application formats (A/F) and other required forms and explain the target sectors in Bhutan. Unfortunately, this information did not reach all government officers throughout RGoB ministries. JICA is planning to organize a similar seminar next year. Please feel free to attend if you are interested in learning more about the Japan's ODA and project proposal process.

The following diagram represents the Japanese ODA proposal submission process. **The volunteer programmes (Senior and JOCV) and training programmes procedures are NOT the same.** Please contact the JICA office for further details.



JICA Bhutan News in Brief

- **Next month's focus will be on the Dzongkhag-wise electrification.**
- **Mr. Ogata**, a short-term expert for BBS, will be supporting the production of educational and social programs from 23rd September until 20th October 2005 under the Enhancement of BBS project.
- **Mr. Yokoo**, a short-term expert, arrived 6th September as part of the RGoB/JICA Agricultural Research and Extension Support Project in Lhuentse and Mongar to investigate current rice diseases and lecture on how to identify and promote rice pathology.
- **Mr. Kimura**, a short-term Senior Volunteer has been assigned as a seismic engineer to SQCA to survey buildings for earthquake resistance. He supports the Thimphu Valley Earthquake Risk Management Project (TVERMP) funded by UNDP.
- **Five new Senior Volunteers** will be dispatched on 19th October.

For more information

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