

# Chapter 3

# 1 Achieving Better Results

## —Evaluation—



Interview survey for end beneficiaries in Zimbabwe

## Increasing Importance of Evaluation

### Current Movement in Evaluation

The international community has called for results-oriented aid in recent years, as seen in the adoption of the New Development Strategy at the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC)\* in 1996, and in the proposal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)\* at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000.

In the context of Japan's severe financial difficulties, the public demand for more transparent and effective implementation of ODA has increased domestically. The role and the importance of evaluation are recognized as an effective means to transform ODA from volume-based to quality-based, as well as to ensure more transparency.

A series of recommendations on ODA evaluation following the report of the Council on Reforms for the 21st Century (January 1998), has placed emphasis on ensuring evaluation consistency, more use of external experts, the reinforcement of feedback systems, and the promotion of disclosing evaluation results in order to improve the ODA evaluation system.

The cabinet decision was made to transform JICA into an independent administrative institution by the Reorganization and Rationalization Plan for Special Public Institutions in December 2001. The plan describes systematic implementation from ex-ante to ex-post evaluations, including setting a list of indices for the objective evaluation, the implementation of external evaluations through the establishment of external evaluation advisory committee, and the disclosure of the evaluation results to the public in a simple manner as the Necessary Measures on Cooperation Programs.

### Purpose of Evaluation and Reinforcement Measure

In order to carry out effective and efficient projects with

public understanding and support, JICA has taken proactive steps in evaluating projects with the following objectives:

- 1) To use evaluation as a management tool
- 2) To enhance the learning effects of aid-related personnel
- 3) To disclose information widely in order to ensure accountability\*

Based on the discussions and proposals on project evaluation, JICA will also take the following steps as an effort to improve the evaluations and reinforce the feedback of the evaluation results.

- 1) Expansion of coverage of evaluation (Introduction of evaluation into Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, Disaster Relief, etc.)
- 2) Establishment of a consistent evaluation system from ex-ante to ex-post stage (Introduction of ex-ante and ex-post evaluations into individual projects)
- 3) Reinforcement of evaluation implementation system and its capacity (Introduction of evaluation chief system and evaluation network, and improvement of training systems for evaluators)
- 4) Development and improvement of evaluation methods (Revision of the Project Evaluation Guideline)
- 5) Expansion of evaluations conducted by external experts/organizations
- 6) Upgrading of the disclosure system of evaluation results to the public (Introduction of prompt disclosure system through the JICA homepage, new edition of the Annual Evaluation Report, and holding open seminars)

In addition, JICA established an External Advisory Committee on Evaluation in June 2002 to offer advice to the internal Evaluation Study Committee on the evaluation systems and methods, and to examine the internal evaluation results from the outside to improve the objectivity of the evaluations.

## Types of Evaluation

JICA performs monitoring and evaluation at various stages of the project cycle so that projects are properly managed. In order to execute projects more effectively by responding appropriately and flexibly to the needs of recipient countries and changes in conditions, we are currently working on improving the content of ex-ante and mid-term evaluations.

### Project Level Evaluation

#### 1. Ex-ante Evaluation

In fiscal 2001, ex-ante evaluations were introduced to examine the details of the project, the appropriateness of cooperation, and the results to be expected at the planning formulation stage of projects requested from recipient countries. We have compiled the results of ex-ante evaluations into Ex-

ante Project Evaluation, which we began publishing in fiscal 2001.

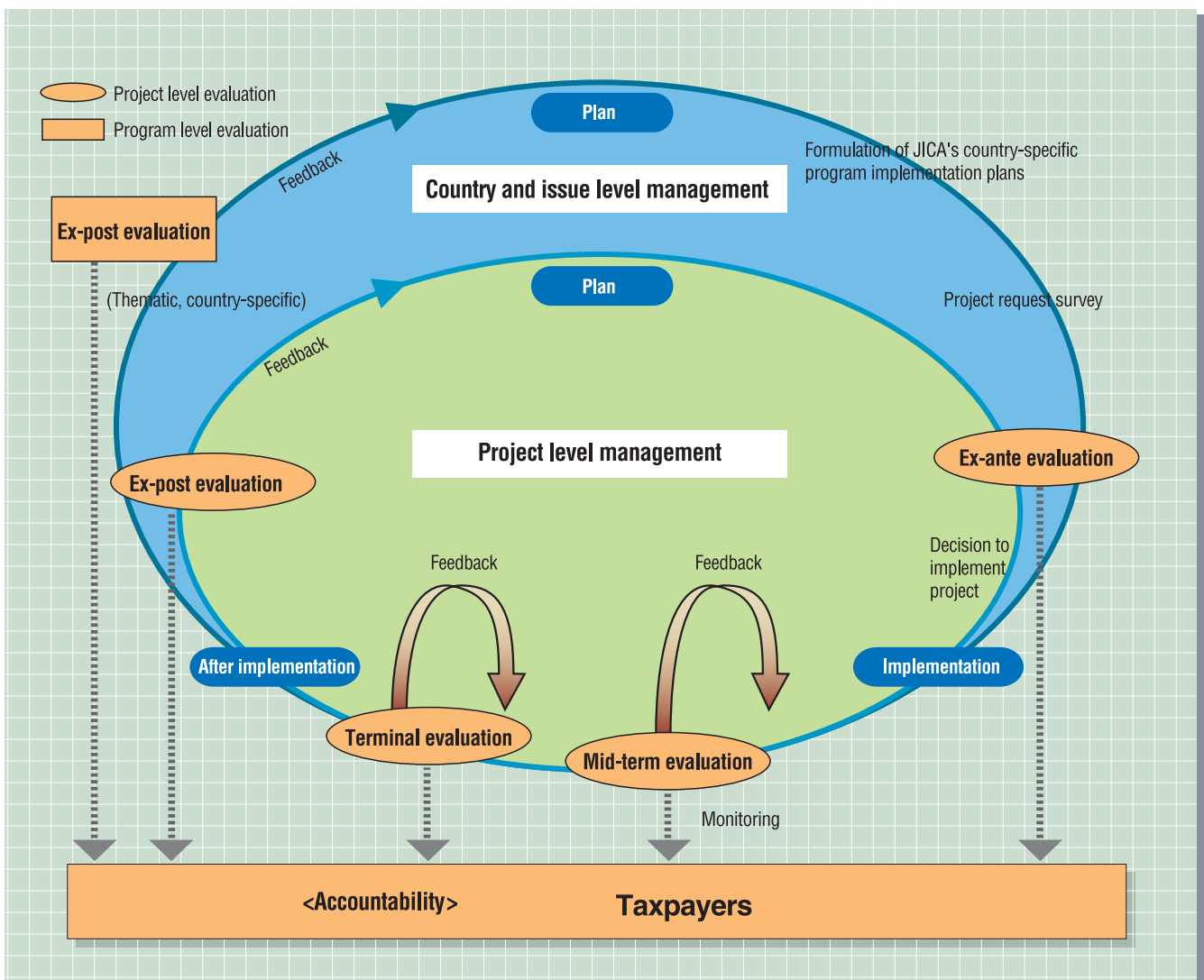
#### 2. Mid-term Evaluation

Mid-term evaluations are performed while a project is under way. The aim of such evaluations is to confirm and check project results and the implementation process, as well as review the original plan and strengthen project management if necessary. Mid-term evaluations are performed by the department in charge of a particular project. The results are used to manage projects more effectively and efficiently.

#### 3. Terminal Evaluation

Terminal evaluations are carried out in collaboration with related organizations in the recipient country. They involve study and analysis of the accomplishment of the project purpose, efficiency, and prospect on sustainability. Their principal aim is to assess whether it is possible to finish the project or

Figure 3-14 Position of Evaluation Within JICA's Project Cycle



whether follow-up, including the extension of the project, needs to be provided.

Terminal evaluations are performed either by the department in charge or by the overseas office in the country where the project was executed. The timing of an evaluation depends on the type of project. The evaluation is performed about six months prior to the termination of cooperation and is mainly carried out for technical cooperation projects. In fiscal 2002, evaluations of this type were performed for 87 projects in 46 countries.

#### 4. Ex-post Evaluation

An ex-post evaluation by project was introduced mainly to verify impact and sustainability a few years after completion of the projects, with the purpose of reflecting results in the

planning stages of new similar projects. As a result, a consistent project evaluation system from ex-ante to ex-post is close to being established. In fiscal 2002, ex-post evaluations were performed for 64 projects in 14 countries.

#### ■ Program Level Ex-post Evaluation

The main objective in performing ex-post evaluations is to learn lessons that will contribute to the effective and efficient execution of projects.

The results of ex-post evaluations are reflected in revisions of JICA's country-specific program implementation plans, and are used in the identification and formulation of new projects. In fiscal 2002, 11 program level ex-post evaluations were performed and evaluation seminars were held in

## Close Up

### External Advisory Committee on Evaluation

#### Achieving Better Results through Improvements in the Objectivity of Evaluation

##### Establishment of an External Advisory Committee on Evaluation

JICA established an External Advisory Committee on Evaluation made up of nine external experts with expertise on development aid and the evaluation (scholars, representatives of NGOs, journalists, etc). Objectives of the establishment of the committee are to receive advice from experts on how to improve evaluation implementation systems and methods and to increase the objectivity of evaluations through the external examinations of the evaluation results.

Since the first meeting in June 2002, various opinions have been offered by members as to how to improve JICA's evaluation methods and projects through evaluations. The outlines of the proceedings from past committee meetings are available on JICA's homepage.

##### Secondary evaluation on internal evaluation

Evaluations from ex-ante to terminal on an individual project, which aim mainly to manage the project, are performed as an internal evaluation mostly initiated by those involved with the project.

In order to improve the transparency and improve the quality of those internal evaluations, JICA has the External Advisory Committee on Evaluation carry out secondary



External Advisory Committee on Evaluation

evaluations (the evaluation of evaluations). In fiscal 2002, secondary evaluations were conducted on all the terminal evaluations of 40 technical cooperation projects that were completed in fiscal 2001.

Utilizing the expertise and knowledge of the external committee members, the secondary evaluation rates each item on a scale from one to five in terms of the following two points.

- 1) The outcome of the evaluation (evaluation framework, implementation status of the evaluation, and information analysis/evaluation) in view of the standard for "good evaluation" (usefulness, fairness, neutrality, reliability, etc.)
- 2) Evaluation of projects that can be perceived in the evaluation reports (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, etc)

Moreover, recommendations were made on the problems of implementation methods of JICA's terminal evaluations and the items to be improved.

The result of the secondary evaluation of the External Advisory Committee will be included in the Annual Evaluation Report 2003.

two countries.

The Office of Evaluation and Post-Project Monitoring supervises the following types of ex-post evaluations, which are classified by evaluation objects and subjects.

### **1) Classification by evaluation object**

#### **a. Country-specific evaluation**

Effectiveness of JICA's cooperation in the country in question is evaluated comprehensively. The effects and the problems involved in JICA's cooperation activities as a whole are collated and analyzed, and lessons are learned as to how best to cooperate with that country in the future.

#### **b. Thematic evaluation**

This type of evaluation is concerned with specific sectors and important issues (the environment, poverty, gender\*, peacebuilding etc.) and with specific program types (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, etc). The effects and problems of JICA programs are comprehensively analyzed. Lessons are then drawn as to how best to provide cooperation on these topics in the future. The most effective means of cooperation for specific topics are also examined.

### **2) Classification by evaluation subject**

#### **a. Evaluations by third parties (external evaluation)**

To maintain quality and objectivity, this evaluation is entrusted to external experts and organizations (universities, research institutes, academics, consultants, etc) with expertise in the evaluation object field. They have to be third parties who are not involved in the planning and implementation of projects under evaluation.

#### **b. Evaluation by JICA (internal evaluation)**

This evaluation is performed under the initiative of JICA personnel who are familiar with systems to learn lessons in line with actual situations and needs. JICA commissions verification on results of internal evaluation from the viewpoint of a third person to external experts (scholars, journalists, representatives of NGOs, etc) with knowledge of development aid and JICA to ensure transparency and objectivity.

#### **c. Joint evaluation**

This evaluation is performed in collaboration with related agencies in developing countries or with other donors\*. A Joint evaluation conducted together with developing countries makes it possible for JICA and the developing country to share perceptions of the effects and problems of cooperation, and it is also effective in enabling a developing country to learn methods of evaluation and to improve its evaluation capacity. A joint evaluation carried out with other donors is effective in enabling both sides to learn each other's evaluation methods and to strengthen collaboration.

## **Use and Disclosure of Evaluation Results**

### **More Efficient, Effective, and Transparent Projects**

JICA makes use of evaluation results as an important source of information when planning country-specific programs and issue-specific guidelines, formulating new projects, and managing projects subject to evaluation.

In fiscal 2003, JICA introduced an evaluation chief system to develop a database of indices and lessons learned for the purpose of sharing and accumulating evaluation result data within an entire organization.

In addition, evaluation seminars are also held in the target countries and in Japan to feed back the results to those involved in the project in the recipient country and Japan.

JICA makes all evaluation reports open to the public. In order to increase public understanding of JICA cooperation programs, the results of terminal evaluations and ex-post evaluations have been annually published as an Evaluation Report since fiscal 1995 and as an Annual Evaluation Report since fiscal 2001. A wide range of reports, including the Annual Evaluation Report, are made open to the public on the JICA homepage. In fiscal 2003, JICA introduced a system for disclosing the results of terminal evaluations and ex-post evaluations more promptly on the JICA homepage.