Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Grant Aid Project

Evaluator, Affiliation	Junko Noguchi Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development	Duration of Evaluation Study
Project Name	The Project for Equipment of the Public Health Laboratories for Surveillance, Investigation and Control of Infectious Diseases	January 2010 – December 2010

I Project Outline

Country Name	Republic of Honduras	
Project Period	March 2005-November 2005	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Health	
Project Cost	Grant Limit: 146 million yen	Actual Grant Amount: 145 million yen
Main Contractors	Mitsubishi Corporation	
Main Consultants	Fujita Planning Co., Ltd.	
Basic Design	"Basin Design Study on the Project for Equipping the National Network of the Public Health Laboratories for vigilance, Investigation and Control of Infectious Diseases in the Republic of Honduras," Fujita Planning Co., Ltd., March 2005	
Related Projects (if any)	1. JICA, "Project for Control of Chagas' Disease" (Phase 1: 2003-2007, Phase 2: 2008-2011) 2. JICA, JOCV in the area of control of Chagas' disease 3. JICA, Training in Japan on "improvement of screening examination of blood (Central America) 2006-2008" and "control of infectious diseases and other health issues by strengthening the regional health system" and "clinical examination (2008)" 4. JICA, Training in Japan: "Workshop on parasites control for the Latin American region (2004)" 5. JICA, Training in the third country: "Training on HIV/AIDS (Brazil): 2006" and "tests of uterus cancer (Mexico): 2007-2011" 6. JICA, follow-up activities implemented by ex-trainees (2005, 2006, 2008, 2010)	
Project Background	Because the Republic of Honduras has a tropical climate, infectious diseases caused by the microorganisms are more prevalent and thereby of more concern. Cases of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS had increased rapidly, and the recrudescence of these diseases had been widely acknowledged. The Ministry of Health established a department of health surveillance for infectious diseases in 2003 to develop a comprehensive understanding of the health sector. Therefore substantive surveillance has been conducted by the central and 8 regional laboratories. However, the surveillance system was not functioning satisfactorily due to lack of and deterioration of necessary equipment.	
Project Objective	To procure inspection equipment for the central and 8 regional surveillance laboratories and for training at the central laboratory in order to strengthen the infectious disease surveillance system.	
Output[s] (Japanese Side)	1. Procurement of the inspection equipment for the central and 8 regional laboratories 2. Procurement of the training equipment at the central laboratory	

II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation

In Honduras, control of infectious diseases is a major issue in the health sector, and is regarded as politically important. In this situation, the Project was implemented as planned in terms of period and cost. Using the procured equipment, examinations have increased at the 7 Regional Laboratories, but at the Central Laboratory, the examinations have not been conducted as targeted. At both the Central and Regional Laboratories, surveillance data accuracy has improved, and at some laboratories some diseases which were on the increase have now been decreasing. On the other hand, training courses have not been conducted as planned due to budget constraints despite the procurement of related equipment. At present, most of the procured equipment is functioning except at one Regional Laboratory, and there have not been any major problems. The only concerns are that future funding for "technique and budget for repair isn't sufficient" at the Regional Laboratories and that there is no collaboration and coordination for equipment operation and maintenance among the Ministry of Health, Central Laboratories and Regional Laboratories.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

<Recommendations for the Ministry of Health>

1. It is necessary to prepare a plan for equipment maintenance and to ensure adequate budgetary funding based on the surveillance and training needs at the Central Laboratory. In addition, personnel at the Central and Regional Laboratories need to be trained in this matter.
2. It is crucial to share the Regional Laboratory surveillance data. Based on an understanding of the issues and needs of each Regional Laboratory, the Central Laboratory can provide them necessary support.
3. It is necessary to share the data concerning the outbreak of the infectious diseases with the Regional Laboratories. This will help them strengthen surveillance according to the situation.
4. Each regional laboratory needs to carefully compile data including the number of examinations conducted, and share this information with the Central Laboratory and the Ministry of Health. The surveillance record and results are indispensable for

policy formulation for controlling infectious diseases, and this will help the Central Laboratory give necessary assistance to the Regional Laboratories.

<Recommendation to the Regional Health Offices>
1. It is necessary to prepare a plan for equipment maintenance and to ensure adequate budgetary funding based on the surveillance needs at the Regional Laboratories.

<Recommendation for the Regional Laboratory of Gracias a Dios>
1. Repair the two pieces of equipment which were not dealt with after a breakdown, and utilize them for surveillance.

<Constraints in this evaluation study>
In this evaluation study, information was collected by questionnaire survey. However, no information was received from one laboratory (Regional Laboratory of Santa Rosa de Copan). The evaluation analysis was conducted excluding this laboratory.

Note: After this Project completed, the 8 health administration areas have been reorganized to 20 areas: 18 departments, Tegucigalpa City, San Pedro Sula City. The 8 Regional Laboratories, targeted by this Project, became laboratories under the department where they are located, but the facility and equipment have been used in the same way, and the surveillance system has not been changed.

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Honduras
The health sector has made efforts to control diseases including insect-borne infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis, as described in the "National Development Plan 2002-2006" which was implemented at the commencement of this Project and the present government plan. Also, control of the infectious diseases is one of the priority programs in the "Health Sector Government Policies" and the "National Plan for Health 2021."

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Honduras
Honduras is located in the tropical zone and so there were many infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. In addition, according to the Ex-ante Evaluation, tuberculosis, leishmaniasis, HIV/AIDS, Chagas' disease were increasing. There are still some regions where dengue fever, leishmaniasis and HIV/AIDS are increasing. The Basic Design Study found that effective diseases control was hindered by degraded equipment in the laboratories, inaccurate data, inadequate transfer of samples, etc.

(3) Relevance with Japan's ODA Policy
In the 1999 political discussions with the Honduran government, one of the priority areas in Japan's assistance was the health sector. After a series of the discussions with the ODA Task Force, "health and water" has continued to be a priority area, and one of the important issues in this area is "control of the infectious diseases," according to the ODA Data Book 2005.

This project has been highly relevant to the country's development plan, development needs, as well as Japan's ODA policy; therefore its relevance is high.

2 Efficiency

(1) Project Outputs
All the equipment was procured for the central and 8 regional laboratories as planned—the inspection equipment and of training of personnel at the central laboratory, and the inspection equipment at 8 regional laboratories.

(2) Project Period (Project Inputs)
The planned period was 11 months. In fact, it took 8 months to complete the Project, shorter than planned (72%). The equipment was installed efficiently by dividing the work into 3 groups.

(3) Project Cost (Project Inputs)
The planned cost was 146 million yen. The actual cost was 145 million yen, slightly lower than planned (99%).

Both the project period and project cost were within the plan, therefore efficiency of the project is high.

3 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Quantitative Effects
The objective of the Project was to increase the number of examinations at the Central Laboratory and 8 Regional Laboratories from the pre-project number (102,279 examinations at the Central Laboratory and 81,312 at the Regional Laboratories). A quantitative target had not been established. In 2009, the number was 88,822 and 571,646 examinations, respectively. The Regional Laboratories achieved the objective by a large amount. The reasons why the examinations decreased at the Central Laboratory were not available. Most Regional Laboratories do not have an examination record of their own, and so the relevant data was provided by the Ministry of Health. In case the data provided by a regional laboratory and that by the Ministry of Health was not in agreement, the latter was adapted in this evaluation study. This shows that the data is not shared in an accurate way among the Central and Regional Laboratories.
Another objective was to implement 11 training courses (77 weeks) for the Regional Laboratory technicians and 13 courses (545 trainees) for the Central Laboratory personnel. The results in 2009 were, respectively, 1 year-round course (about 30 trainees) and 9 courses (458 trainees) and these did not reach the target. There was no identifiable reason why the training courses for the Regional Laboratory technicians were modified to a year-round course as a "course for laboratory technicians." However all the 7 Regional Laboratories who answered the questionnaire reported that the "training was useful." In addition, the reason that the training courses for the Central Laboratory personnel decreased was that the budget constraint for the purchase of test reagents.

(2) Impacts (Impacts on the natural environment, Land Acquisition and Resettlement, Unintended Positive/Negative Impact)

It was estimated that the Central Laboratory's role would be strengthened in the surveillance system in the country. Basically the Central Laboratory provides training, standardization of the surveillance, quality control of the surveillance, technical support, as well as supplying test reagents and other equipment, etc. (However, this actually varies by the Regional Laboratory). In addition, communication frequency with the Central Laboratory depends on each Regional Laboratory and 3 laboratories did not regularly communicate with the Central Laboratory. Among 7 Regional Laboratories, 4 laboratories answered that they were satisfied with the Central Laboratory's role.

As other impacts, the Central Laboratory and all the Regional Laboratories reported that by using the procured equipment "surveillance data accuracy has improved". In addition, 4 laboratories answered that malaria, tuberculosis and Chagas' disease have been decreasing, even though quantitative data on the number of the diseases has not been compiled at the laboratory level.

This project has somewhat achieved its objectives, therefore its effectiveness is fair.

4 Sustainability

(1) Structural Aspects of Operation Maintenance

Before the Project, it was supposed that Department of Services Network would be in charge of equipment maintenance at the Central Laboratory, but at present it has not received any support from that department. At the Central and Regional Laboratories, equipment users just manage the temperature of the refrigerator and clean the equipment. At most laboratories the technician in microbiology is usually in charge of the regular inspection. There is no direction and support from the Central Laboratory to the Regional Laboratories regarding operation and maintenance of the equipment.

(2) Technical Aspects of Operation Maintenance

There are not enough personnel who can maintain or repair the equipment at the Central Laboratory and 4 Regional Laboratories. Therefore, equipment maintenance is in reality just cleaning. The Central Laboratory and the Regional Laboratory of Cortes No. 5 reported that there are no agents nearby who sell spare parts. At all the laboratories, the operation manuals are accessible to all personnel except at the Regional Laboratory of Gracias a Dios.

(3) Financial Aspects of Operation Maintenance

Regarding the maintenance budget, since 2006 only the maintenance cost of the office equipment has been included at the Central Laboratory, but the costs for repair and spare parts are not assured even though these were included before the Project. As described earlier, the budget for training is insufficient. At the regional level, most laboratories do not need repairs, but only the budget for equipment purchase has been included, but no specific budget has been allocated for maintenance and operation of the equipment, which was the situation before the Project.

(4) Current Status of Operation Maintenance

No problems have been reported from the Central Laboratory and most Regional Laboratories. At the Central Laboratory, all are functioning without recorded breakdowns, except one piece of equipment out of 58 principal ones. At the Regional Laboratory of Gracias a Dios, 2 of 7 equipments broke down but have not been repaired, and are not functioning.

Some problems have been observed in terms of both structural and technical aspects of equipment operation and maintenance, therefore sustainability of the project effect is fair.