

Chapter 2 Improving JICA's Cooperation Using Evaluation Results

The primary objectives of project evaluation conducted by JICA are to ensure accountability to the people, utilize evaluation results as a tool for project management by feeding them back into projects, and enhance learning among the parties concerned. With these objectives, JICA deems it important to share and accumulate good practices within the organization using evaluation results in the course of improving projects through feedback.

As part of its effort, JICA, in fiscal 2004, conducted a questionnaire study on good practices using evaluation results to select excellent cases that utilized evaluation results for project improvement and share and accumulate them within the organization. In fiscal 2005, JICA conducted a case study on thematic task forces consisting of cross-department members engaged in organizational efforts toward utilization of evaluation results. As a result of the studies, the following patterns in the utilization of evaluation results have been identified.

- a. Utilization for planning and operation of individual projects
- b. Utilization for the formulation of cooperation policies by sector and issue
- c. Utilization for improving systems for project implementation
- d. Sharing and systemization of knowledge and experiences for project improvement

In fiscal 2006, as it did in the preceding year, JICA conducted a case study to share and accumulate information within the organization about good practices in using evaluation results. As the analysis in fiscal 2005 reported on many good practices in utilizing lessons, this year placed a particular focus on the utilization of recommendations obtained from evaluation results to analyze how recommendations made in the mid-term and/or terminal

evaluations are utilized subsequently.

The case study targeted project implementation departments responsible for formulating and implementing technical cooperation projects and development studies. Each department conducts mid-term and/or terminal evaluation to improve project operation in the course of operating an individual project. For example, mid-term evaluation is conducted in the middle of a project for the primary purpose of improving the ongoing project. Terminal evaluation is conducted right before the end of cooperation to summarize as recommendations measures to be done by the end of the cooperation and points to address when continuing the project after the cooperation is completed. Utilization of recommendations obtained from the results of evaluation including mid-term evaluation can be divided into two types (Figure 1-4).

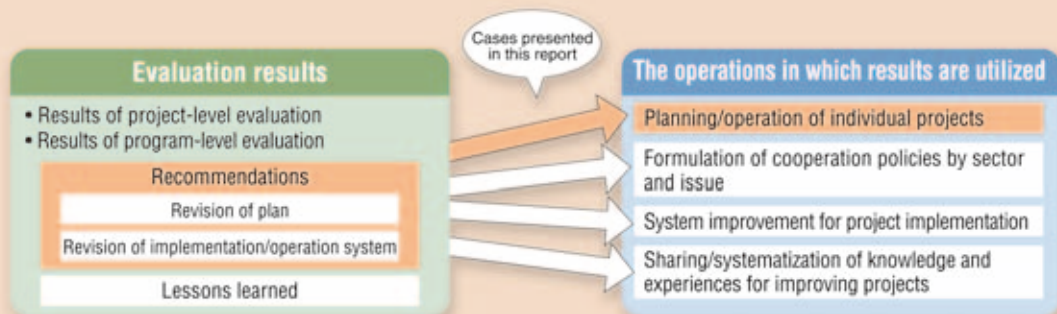
(1) Revision of Project Plan

Necessary revision of a project plan is made based on recommendations from evaluation results; for example, identifying and clarifying unclear parts in the initial plan, which are found in the process of project activities, and reflecting measures found necessary in the plan due to changes surrounding a project.

(2) Revision of Project Implementation/Operation System

Recommendations are utilized as concrete measures in the case where a project doesn't progress as planned due to problems in the project implementation/operation system and/or project implementation/operation system needs to be further strengthened. For example, some projects utilized recommendations induced from the evaluation results to improve situations, such as how the coordination among multiple implementing agencies can be strengthened and what kind of measures can be executed

Figure 1-4 Patterns of Utilization of Evaluation Results



in order to sustain implementation/operation system after the cooperation is completed.

The following sections introduce cases of feedback of recommendations identified in the study.

2-1 Cases of Utilization of Recommendations Obtained from Evaluation Results

(1) Revision of Project Plan

1) Health

The Project for Strengthening Regional Health Network for Santa Cruz Prefecture in Bolivia launched for five years starting in November 2001 with the aim of strengthening the regional health system to provide appropriate health services to people living in the model areas in Santa Cruz Prefecture. After the project started, however, the government and health administrative divisions within Santa Cruz Prefecture, the target area, were reorganized and personnel relocations in administrative organizations and medical facilities repeated because of the change of government. Due to these changes, it was difficult for the project to provide activities to all the 68 health centers in the project areas and the project activities were limited until the middle of the project.

Consequently, the mid-term evaluation conducted in the end of fiscal 2004 recommended that the project should revise its plan according to the conditions of the activities up to that time and prioritize activities that are essential and feasible to achieve the outputs. In response, they discussed with the Bolivian side the details of the activities and target values and it was decided that activities would be intensified to 16 health centers, which are relatively large in each area, as model centers. As a result, this project brought about favorable outputs such as achieving the target values of growth and development checkups at the end of the project. The terminal evaluation judged that provision of health services with local people became more appropriate and this cooperation was completed as initially planned.



The health committee members explaining the importance of maternal feeding at a health center (Bolivia)

The Project for the Development of Human Resources in Health in Senegal, which aimed to enhance the training system of health workers in the primary health system, started in November 2001. In this project, different implementing agencies took charge of various issues such as capacity strengthening of health worker training schools, improvement of the existing in-service training system for nursing staff involved in the primary health system, and establishment of a training system of regional health volunteers. In addition, the target “health workers in the primary health system” stated in the project objective was so abstract that the implementing agencies had some difficulties in sharing a concrete image of the target. Under such situations, by the middle of the project, each implementing agency had been working for a different target according to its own priority without sufficient coordination among the implementing agencies.

In order to improve such situations, the mid-term evaluation presented recommendations that the project should set chiefs of the health posts* (ICPs) that are the common target of all the activities as project target and that the implementing agencies should work intensively on educating ICPs in order to achieve the project objective. It was also recommended that inter-division meetings at the working level of the project should be held for information sharing on a regular basis.

In the latter half of the project, based on these recommendations, outputs made by each division in the former half were effectively utilized mutually to educate ICPs, thus generating synergy effect. Such improvements brought about favorable outputs in each activity in the terminal phase of the project, and the terminal evaluation concluded that the project objective was achieved.

2) Natural Environment Conservation

Due to its unique coastal wetland ecosystems, the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico is globally known as an important site for natural environmental conservation. Coastal Wetland Conservation in the Yucatan Peninsula was launched in March 2003 as technical cooperation with the aim of conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the coastal wetland in Ria Celestun Biosphere Reserve in the northwest of the peninsula.

The initial plan recognized restoration of the natural environment by planting mangrove trees and reducing the various negative effects from people’s lives as one of the project outputs. Thus, as part of its activities, educational activities for local people regarding solid waste treatment had been carried out and draft plans for solid waste treatment were put together by the middle of the project.

The mid-term evaluation conducted in January 2006 highly appreciated the importance of activities related to solid waste treatment. It also set the commitment for appropriate collection and treatment of solid waste as output, which had been regarded as just one of the activities in the initial plan and the project

* Health posts refer to primary health care facilities operated by local health committees. Nurses are usually appointed as the chiefs of health posts (ICPs). Since there are no doctors at health posts, ICPs implement medical examination, treatment, and circulate through the areas they are in charge of by themselves.

decided to further enhance its efforts. On the other hand, although it was noted that waste treatment facilities are necessary, it was also true that the local government of Celestun could not construct the facility solely with its own budget and personnel. Accordingly, the mid-term evaluation study team submitted a request to the Yucatan provincial government for cooperation with the construction of a waste treatment facility.

In response to this request, the Yucatan provincial government made a budgeting decision for the construction of solid waste intermediate treatment facility and built it. This project will provide further assistance so that Celestun city is able to segregate, collect, and treat waste appropriately. Toward the end of the project in 2008, it is expected that appropriate waste treatment will help conserve the precious wetland in the biosphere reserve.

(2) Revision of Project Implementation/Operation System

1) Fishery

In the Project for Promotion of Sustainable Marine Fisheries Resource Utilization in Trinidad and Tobago, the coordination system among stakeholders was revised based on the recommendation presented in the mid-term evaluation.

This project was implemented from 2001 to 2006 as technical cooperation with the aim of implementing extension and training activities for sustainable use of fishery resources. The project worked with three implementing agencies in the partner country, namely, the fishery bureau of Trinidad, the fishery bureau of Tobago, and the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute, and it covers many technical cooperation fields, including fishing equipment development, marine food processing, marine resources management, and fishery promotion. As coordination among those different technical fields were not so actively implemented from the beginning of cooperation, in the middle of the project, insufficient mutual coordination became obvious and caused problems in that they created an obstacle, particularly for fishery promotion activities.

Consequently, the mid-term evaluation recommended the enhancement of coordination among the different technical fields. Based on this recommendation, efforts for inter-division and inter-organization coordination, what they call linkage work, were made in various activities. For example, when they developed fixed fishing nets suited to the local conditions, the division of fishing equipment development implemented experimental operations to technically improve the function of nets, while the division of fishery promotion conducted fixed fishing net promotion activities to fisherman groups. At the same time, the division of marine resources management collected and analyzed biological data of fish species good for fish catches. Furthermore, they prepared a list that clearly states the role and responsibility of each related division for each activity that required such coordination. As a result of these efforts, stakeholders became aware of effectiveness of the inter-division coordination to enhance the



Tryout operation of fixed nets (Trinidad and Tobago)

cooperative relationships among different organizations. These efforts were also successful in raising their cooperation effect for fishermen. Such synergy effects contributed to producing outputs in each technical field to a certain extent by the end of the project. Accordingly, the terminal evaluation concluded that promotion and training activities for sustainable use of marine resources were well implemented toward the project goal, and the cooperation was completed as initially planned.

2) Support for Persons with Disabilities

In the case of the Project for the National Vocational Rehabilitation Center for Disabled People in Indonesia, a recommendation that the terminal evaluation study made toward the Indonesian government was realized after the project was completed.

This project was implemented with the aim of establishing a vocational rehabilitation system at the National Vocational Rehabilitation Center for Disabled People (NVRC) located on the outskirts of Jakarta in order to increase job opportunities for persons with disabilities. As a result of the five-year cooperation starting in 1997, favorable outputs were achieved along with the initial plan; and graduates of NVRC maintained high employment rates and enjoyed positive evaluations from host companies. Such situations led to the terminal evaluation concluding that the vocational rehabilitation system of NVRC had been established, and the cooperation was completed as planned.

Consequently, the terminal evaluation also presented a recommendation that, in order to secure sustainability, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Indonesia, which is the supervisory agency, should make efforts to strengthen the organization of NVRC. Based on this recommendation, the ministry clearly stated the activities of NVRC in the National Action Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs for the period of 2004-2013, which was released after the end of the project. According to the ex-post evaluation conducted in fiscal 2005, the governmental action further strengthened the organizational positioning of NVRC and at the same time the government increased a budget for NVRC.

In summary, as a result of utilizing the recommendation, NVRC is being organizationally and financially supported by the

government, and therefore it is expected that this center continues its activities to further increase job opportunities for persons with disabilities.

2-2 Cases of Utilization of Lessons Learned from Evaluation Results

The case study for this year also reported many cases, as it did in fiscal 2005, where lessons learned from evaluation results of past similar projects were reflected in planning/operation of other individual projects. Some cases utilized program-level evaluation results from thematic evaluation, etc., to improve an individual project in a similar context. This section introduces how lessons learned from evaluation results were utilized, as in the last fiscal year. Utilization of lessons learned also can be divided into two types: reflecting on project plans and project implementation/operation systems.

(1) Reflecting on Project Plans

1) Environmental Management

Thematic evaluation conducted in fiscal 2002, "Environmental Center Approach: Development of Social Capacity for Environmental Management in Developing Countries and Japan's Environmental Cooperation," provided recommendations for more effective and efficient environmental cooperation based on the analysis of the environmental center projects that JICA implemented in China, Thailand, Indonesia, and Mexico. The evaluation results showed that these past projects developed satisfactory technical capacity in terms of environmental monitoring and data analysis of monitoring results; however, the contribution to improving the governments' environmental management capacity was limited because the environmental centers in these countries were not entitled to an organizational status that allows them to link their research outputs to environmental policy-making and implementation. This consideration produced a lesson for future projects that says when formulating a new environmental center it needs to be carefully positioned within the environmental administrative organizations of the counterpart country so that it is able to create sufficient impacts.

This lesson was applied to the Project for Capacity Development for Water Environment Conservation in the Metropolitan Area, a technical cooperation project launched in Guatemala in fiscal 2005. This project, which aims to strengthen the implementing capacity of wastewater control administration in the Guatemalan Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, utilizes this lesson and addresses capacity development, including planning/implementation of policies/strategies and educational activities for citizens as well as elemental technology transfer that are necessary for wastewater control administration. With such a project design, this project is expected to further support the whole environmental administration of

Guatemala.

2) Natural Environment Conservation

In Panama there was a case in which the terminal evaluation results of one project were utilized for planning of a new project.

The government of Panama has been working to conserve its decreasing forests located in the watershed of the Panama Canal by reducing grazing land and increasing afforestation areas. In support of this plan, the Panama Canal Watershed Conservation Project was implemented with the long-term aim of improving land use in the watershed by implementing farmer-participatory afforestation activities, as well as deepening watershed farmers' understanding of the importance of forest conservation. The terminal evaluation conducted in fiscal 2005 concluded that the five-year cooperation brought about sufficient outputs, and the cooperation was completed as planned. At the same time, the evaluation team and the Environmental Agency of Panama, the implementing agency, shared their recognition that it was important to extend and expand activities that can contribute to natural environment conservation in order to sustain these outputs in the future.

In 2006, JICA launched a technical cooperation project for the Environmental Agency of Panama, the Project for Participatory Community Development and Integrated Management of the Alhajuela Lake Sub Watershed. Part of the Chagres River basin, including the Alhajuela Lake located in the east of the Panama Canal, was certified as a national park, and the Environmental Agency has been making efforts to conserve the natural environment. However, conservation was not so successful because people who live in this area carry out production activities such as slash-and-burn agriculture. With such a background situation, the government of Panama made a request to Japan for technical cooperation with the aim of establishing a mechanism that can harmonize the watershed conservation of the target area with the agricultural and forestry production activities of the local people.

When launching the project, establishment of a system for promoting project output, which was not included in the initial request, was set out as one of the core parts of the cooperation as the Environmental Agency of Panama itself understood the importance of the lesson obtained from the above mentioned Panama Canal Watershed Conservation Project. The Environmental Agency of Panama is going to take the initiative in considering and developing a promotion system in view of the situations of human resources and the budgets of the Environmental Agency and other related organizations. By utilizing the terminal evaluation results of other projects, this project foresaw the post-project future and successfully incorporated the exit strategy into the project scheme from the start in order to secure sustainability.

(2) Reflecting on Project Implementation/ Operation System

1) Electric Power

An ongoing development study in Viet Nam, the Study on Technical and Safety Standards for the Electric Power Industry, utilized a lesson obtained from the past technical cooperation project in Laos, the Project on Electric Power Technical Standard Establishment.

The Lao project was cooperation conducted for three years starting in 2000 with the aim of developing human resources capable of developing electric power technical standards. Technical transfer to counterparts went successfully and in the second half of the project, counterparts who were trained in the project drafted electric power technical standards by themselves. Along with this achievement, central and local workshops were held so that stakeholders in the power sector could recognize the technical standards for smooth implementation of the standards. These efforts produced a lesson that indicated the establishment of technical standards need to gather and reflect opinions from a broad range of stakeholders in order to make the standard-making processes beneficial to the whole power sector, including power-related businesses, as well as electric power suppliers and the supervisory agency.

This lesson was utilized at the ex-ante study of the Vietnamese development study. The ex-ante study, which was conducted in December 2005, involved discussion with the Vietnamese government on the scope and contents of the main study, which was scheduled subsequently. In this discussion, the Vietnamese government understood the important lesson from the Lao case and decided to hold workshops throughout the country in the main study. Specifically, upon completion of draft standards, first workshops are planned to gather opinions and comments from a broad range of stakeholders; and then around the time the revision of the draft standards is finalized, the second workshops are held to disseminate the contents of the revised standards to stakeholders.

With these efforts, technical and safety standards on which opinions of stakeholders in the electric power industry are reflected are expected to spread throughout Viet Nam in the future.

2) Agricultural Development

The Project for the Establishment of Mechanism for Agricultural Technology Diffusion and Application to Improve Living Condition of Indigenous and Non-indigenous Small-scale Farmers, launched in Guatemala, aims to establish agricultural technique dissemination systems in three districts in the highland region where many small-scale farmers live. In the project, the dissemination of appropriate agricultural techniques to small-scale farmers is expected to lead to improvements in their livelihood in the future. The following lessons obtained from past projects in Indonesia and Ghana were utilized in this project.

A technical cooperation project, the Project on Strengthening Sulawesi Rural Community Development to Support Poverty

Alleviation Programme in Indonesia, which was completed in February 2002, aimed to introduce the concept of participatory rural community development and activate rural economies with development projects using existing resources. This project also aimed to develop an institutional framework of regional administrations in support of those activities. Among these activities, collaboration with the local university in South Sulawesi province resulted in the establishment of a training mechanism for administrators engaged in rural community development and facilitators working in villages. Thanks to this mechanism, favorable outputs from the project were confirmed in the terminal evaluation. This successful experience of cooperation provided helpful ideas for the Guatemalan project, in which the training contents for stakeholders and implementation methods are considered through collaboration with the local agricultural school, etc.

Another lesson utilized in the Guatemalan project is from the Small-scale Irrigated Agriculture Promotion Project, a technical cooperation project conducted in Ghana and completed in July 2004. The project in Ghana aimed to improve the farming system in the irrigation project site under the jurisdiction of the Ghana Irrigation Development Authority (GIDA). Problems with ongoing irrigated agriculture were identified and solutions to these problems and an action plan were formulated in the target irrigated site. The terminal evaluation found that, in these processes, farmers were encouraged to formulate strong motivations for irrigated agriculture by conducting these activities under their own initiative together with support from the GIDA. This case produced a lesson that indicated farmers' initiative is important in order to achieve a successful project: it is important to have farmers as the main actors of development undertake a major role so that they can make action based on their own will and thus become further motivated. Feeding this lesson back, the project in Guatemala incorporates the development of farmer groups in the model villages for their self-sustaining activities.



Workshop for indigenous people (Guatemala)