

# Efforts Aimed at Promoting Impact Evaluations

## Background

Impact Evaluation generally refers to the evaluation that precisely measures change that occurs as the result of an operation or project implementation. For projects conducted in social and economic sector, the various changes that arise during project implementation or after project completion are subject to the impact of macroeconomics, politics, activities of other projects, changes in natural conditions, etc. Impact evaluations try to remove all such external factors as much as possible through devising evaluation methods and data collection techniques, in order to assess the net effects caused by the operation or the project implementation.

In the context of increasing concern on development outcomes, in order to implement more effective and efficient assistances, now donor countries have higher expectations to find more appropriate targets and better approaches based on precisely measured impacts. As a result, Impact Evaluation is beginning to receive more attention. International organizations such as the World Bank are proceeding the application of Impact Evaluation methods.

JICA also is making the following efforts in order to promote the utilization of Impact Evaluation methods.

## Impact Evaluation Study Group

The Impact Evaluation Study Group, consisting of impact evaluation experts and personnel from JICA's Evaluation Department, has been holding meetings with a view to developing a system and guidelines for integrating the Impact Evaluation and its outcomes within the project cycle. The Study Group, based on examples of Impact Evaluations that have been conducted so far, as well as the experiences of the Study Group members, discussed lessons learned, issues, and points to be improved with regards to the administration of Impact

Evaluations by JICA. The Study Group recognized the importance of the selection of conditions for conducting an Impact Evaluation, the need for creating a manual on Impact Evaluation application, etc.

Based on these discussions, JICA, through piloting Impact Evaluations, will confirm the effectiveness of the Impact Evaluation method vis-à-vis project implementation, and study the method of adaptation to the project implementation process. JICA will also create an internal manual on the utilization of Impact Evaluations.

## Continuation of pilot Impact Evaluations

The Impact Evaluations conducted by JICA may be broadly divided into two categories: 1) Evaluations of projects for which data may be collected and analyzed immediately and which yield findings within a short timeframe (short-term measure); and 2) Evaluations that are conducted in parallel with the project over a long timeframe from the project's start to finish (mid- and long-term measure). As regards short-term measure, in view of the recent interests of the international community and JICA's project experience and evaluation needs, the Impact Evaluation method will be applied to projects,

such as an irrigation development project, self-sustaining school management project, maternal and child health handbook promotion project, etc. For projects which apply mid- and long-term measure, JICA will take steps from before the project is established and during its implementation, to collect more detailed findings on effects. Specifically, JICA intends to conduct Impact Evaluations for new projects, such as the school based management project in Burkina Faso and projects related to increasing rice production in Ghana and Uganda.

# Mr. Hideo Kesen, editorial writer for Sankei Shimbun, toured JICA's ODA projects in Thailand, a country soon to join the ranks of newly industrializing economies



**Mr. Hideo Kesen**

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## Will Japanese ODA continue to be necessary? How shall Japan support ODA implemented by Thailand?

To spread the message of JICA's evaluation efforts, the effect of ODA projects, and the importance of international cooperation, JICA has, since FY2004, invited journalists and celebrities on ODA project tours and shared their experiences with the Japanese public. In this fiscal year, JICA invited Mr. Hideo Kesen to tour ODA projects including Japanese ODA Loan projects and Technical Cooperation projects in Thailand between March 9-14, 2009.

Thailand has a developed economy, and is soon to join the ranks of newly industrializing economies. This study focused on whether Japanese ODA to Thailand needs to be continued, and if so, how. Already Thailand is an ODA implementing country. Just how Japan should support Thailand's ODA was also a topic of great interest.

### Improving the environment through development of subway system

The traffic in Bangkok is far worse than what anyone imagines. Improvements are needed, not only in terms of economic efficiency, but also in reducing air pollution and the emission of greenhouse gases, needless to say. The elevated railway Sky Train and Japan's ODA Loan project to develop subway lines ("Mass Transit System Project in Bangkok") are making significant contributions to resolving these issues. From that standpoint, Japan's assistance needs to be continued. Japan's assistance for the subway project introduced Japan's latest technologies to incorporate universal designs in elevators and toilets, e.g., barrier free facilities, which are highly regarded by disabled persons' organizations. These projects are also serving as model projects for Southeast Asia.

### International bridge that contributes to the development of the Greater Mekong Sub-region

There are five countries in the Mekong River Basin, i.e., Viet Nam, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia, and together they are called the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). The second Mekong bridge, completed in 2006, is an international bridge that was constructed with ODA Loans over the Mekong River that runs along the Laos-Thailand border, as part of the "East-West Corridor" concept that stretches east to west from Myanmar to Viet Nam.

The bridge has brought vibrant economic activity, and is believed to have made a significant contribution to the development of the GMS. However, the introduction of the "truck passport system" or "single stop system" that would further facilitate the smooth distribution of goods has run up against challenges. The former would allow one truck to transport cargo without transshipping at the border; the latter would allow drivers to clear customs and quarantine at the border at a time. In response, Japan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are urging their introduction more vociferously. In addition, JICA is engaging in soft assistance.

Visited projects	
● ODA Loans	Eastern Seaboard Development Program Mass Transit System Project in Bangkok Second Mekong International Bridge Construction Project
● Technical Cooperation	Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (Phase 2) Project on Technical Strengthening of National Institute of Metrology (Thailand) Phase 2 Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (Rural Community Development) Project on Strengthening Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) for Protection of Trafficked Persons



Thailand, like Japan, is left-hand traffic; Laos is right-hand traffic. Bridge is right-hand traffic.

ASEAN aims to integrate its economies by 2015. The second Mekong bridge is one of the cornerstones for achieving this goal, and is also a useful infrastructure for Japan to stay as a trading nation.

Introduction

Japanese ODA and JICA

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Expost Evaluation of Technical Cooperation and ODA Loans

Part 3. Program-level Evaluation

Program Evaluation

Thematic Evaluation

Reference

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## Base for Support for Persons with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region



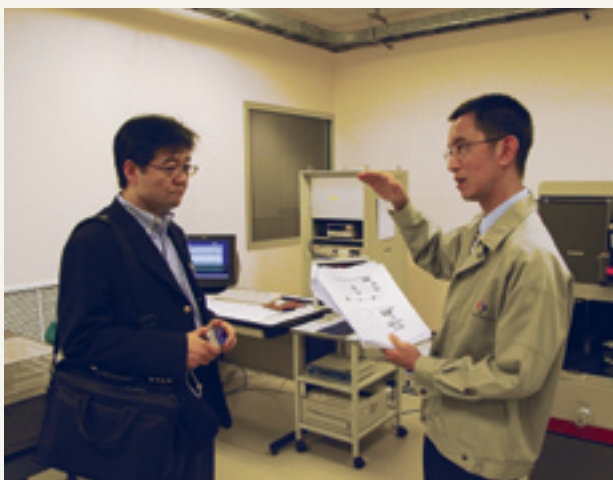
Sign language is translated into languages of respective countries

The objective of “The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (Phase 2)” is for the Center to function self-reliantly as the base of operations for support for disabled persons in the Asia-Pacific region. This requires forming partnerships with respective governments and NGOs. JICA is supporting human resources development to this end. During my visit, a total of 25 people from Thailand and six neighboring countries were taking training on the theme of how to mainstream disabled women.

The issues may be the functions of the Center and its funding capacity. The issue with functions is whether respective governments and NPOs will recognize that there is a merit to participate in the training at the Center, even if it is at their own expense. It seems probable that the Center will have to rely on JICA’s assistance for some time. Moving forward, it will be important to strengthen JICA’s partnership with the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA), and to consider implementing projects jointly. This is also in line with Japan’s ODA priority of extending technical assistance to Thailand.

### Transfer of measurement standardization skills to Asian countries

The development of national measurement standards and the transfer of skills to apply the same standard of measurement at the company level are essential for strengthening Thailand’s export competitiveness. In addition to the dispatch of experts,



Thai engineer giving an explanation in Japanese (Project on Technical Strengthening of National Institute of Metrology Phase 2)

JICA has so far conducted two ODA Loan-financed measurement infrastructure development projects in Thailand (facility construction and equipment maintenance).

Based on the projects in Thailand, JICA is and will be until FY2012, supporting 15 countries in the Asia-Pacific region with the development of measurement standards by way of accepting trainees at the National Institute of Metrology (NIMT) in Thailand.

Bearing in mind Asia’s future development, it is critical that Thailand play a role of transferring standardization-related skills. Furthermore, this is also a project to help maintain the high technical capabilities of Japanese companies that will be operating in the Asian region. As such, it is likely that consideration will be given to whether the project should be continued in the future.

### Keeping pace with the needs of the times

Plenty of ODA has already been provided to Thailand for infrastructure development. Looking ahead, it will most likely be important to continue providing assistance, mainly for the social sectors such as the ongoing assistance for human resources, education, and health, as well as environmental sectors. In particular, JICA should strengthen its partnership with TICA, and implement multi-tiered Japanese ODA assistance in Asia. In doing above, attention will need to be given so that Japan’s direct assistance to neighboring countries, e.g., Cambodia and Laos, will complement the assistance provided by TICA and the Neighboring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA).

While economic development in China and India is outstanding, Thailand will likely continue to be central to Japan as the Asian production and export base for Japanese companies. Enhanced interdependent relations with Thailand through the movement of people and goods will also contribute greatly to the peace and stability of Asia. Those with advanced industrial knowledge and skills, such as senior volunteers and experts, will be counted on to play a central role in human resources development and technical assistance. Meanwhile, one idea with regards to the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program is to actively promote it as an opportunity to develop Japanese youths into distinguished internationally-minded people.

It goes without saying that ODA is a vital diplomatic mean, which indicates ODA should be consistent with national interests. While JICA must tread carefully so that it is not viewed as interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, perhaps it is apt to use more methods to openly engage in the policymaking decisions of local governments. An effective way of doing this is through supporting legal systems improvement. In that regard, JICA’s experience with Thailand’s institutional design and improvement based on its anti-trafficking law from the planning phase is important. It is also important from the perspective of Japan’s security to extend lawmaking and institutional design assistance that helps establish governance systems which are appropriate for a democratic state with a free economic system.

Also, as a trading nation and a country with few natural resources, there is an aspect that it is Japan’s responsibility to provide ODA to survive in the international community. At the same time, it is also important to have a viewpoint that ODA is necessary for the Japanese people to change themselves. Coupled with Japan’s declining birthrate and aging society, more foreigners have been working in Japan for low wages. Undoubtedly, Japan will have to become a country that is more open to the foreign world. Bearing in mind the domestic situation, international contribution will need to be conducted flexibly.

# Transfer of Evaluation Techniques to Developing Countries

To effectively and efficiently implement development projects, developing countries need to proactively participate in and conduct Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E). JICA actively provides support aimed at improving the evaluation capacity of developing country governments.

## 1 Efforts for Joint Evaluation and Evaluation Capacity Development

JICA has concentrated its efforts on assisting governments of developing countries to develop their evaluation capacity. One of the measures JICA has undertaken is Joint Evaluations. Through conducting evaluation jointly with the recipient government, JICA aims to transfer evaluation techniques and share evaluation results. So far, these joint evaluations have been

conducted in many countries, and have produced definite outcomes in terms of transferring evaluation techniques, and have resulted in the implementation of more effective and efficient projects.

JICA's cooperation aimed at improving evaluation capacity in Philippines, Viet Nam, and Peru are introduced.

### Philippines

#### Future support for developing the blueprint of evaluation system

In May 2006, former JBIC signed a three-year Minutes of Understanding (MOU) on evaluation with the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) of Philippines, an aid coordinating agency, and initiated a comprehensive cooperation program aimed at evaluation capacity development.

In Philippines, ex-post evaluations of development projects had not been conducted except for those supported by aid organizations, because of constraints imposed by budget and evaluation techniques. To create a more evaluation-friendly environment, the MOU established cooperation objectives on three levels:

- i) **Project level:** To effectively and efficiently implement Japanese ODA Loan projects through improving the quality of evaluations and the mechanism for providing feedback on evaluation findings to the Philippines government;
- ii) **Institutional level:** To improve the evaluation system by harmonizing the evaluation of the Philippines government and former JBIC; and

iii) **Overall evaluation environment:** To establish the cycle where the Philippines government itself will aim to derive greater effects from its development projects, by not only implementing ex-post evaluation, but also mainstreaming all kinds of evaluations of development projects.

Specifically, former JBIC conducted joint ex-post evaluations of development projects, policy dialogue on joint evaluations (feedback seminar), and discussions on the development of evaluation method. In 2007, at NEDA's request, evaluation trainings in Manila and Tokyo were held for staff in charge of evaluations. In Manila, seminars and field training were conducted on data collection and beneficiary survey. In Tokyo, exercises on the definition of DAC's five evaluation criteria and their application to evaluation were given.

This three-year cooperation has yielded outcomes, such as increased willingness on the part of the Philippines side to participate in evaluation efforts, enhanced common understanding of evaluations among JICA and the Philippines side, and increased awareness of the challenges in the evaluation system. Building on these outcomes, the Philippines government is expected to steadily implement the Action Plan for the development of a future monitoring and evaluation system, and JICA plans to provide support through joint evaluations.

#### Assistance based on MOU with Philippines

● 2006	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluation</b> · Philippines-Japan Friendship Highway Rehabilitation Project (I)(II) · Nationwide Air Navigation Facilities Modernization Project (III)
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> · Co-host evaluation workshop
● 2007	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluation</b> · Metro Manila Interchange Construction Project (4) · Pinatubo Hazard Urgent Mitigation Project · Special Economic Zones Environment Management Project
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> · Conduct evaluation training for NEDA project monitoring staff
● 2008	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluations</b> · Metro Manila Strategic Mass Rail Transit Development Project (1)-(3) · Fisheries Resource Management Project
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> · Support NEDA's formulation of Action Plan for Evaluation Capacity Development



Discussion of the results from joint evaluation conducted with NEDA and executing agency

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## Viet Nam

### For the expansion and enhancement of evaluation implementation system

JICA is providing evaluation cooperation based on the three-year Minutes of Understanding (MOU) for evaluation capacity development signed between the former JBIC and the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) of Viet Nam in July 2007.

The aim is to establish management methods of a project cycle in which the lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluations would be utilized in future development projects, by transferring the evaluation techniques to the Vietnamese government and improving their evaluation capacity.

The MOU essentially comprises two pillars: 1) Perform Joint Evaluation, and 2) Assist in enhancing evaluation system and capacities. Finer details of the cooperation are drawn up by JICA and MPI in the annual implementation plan.

In the fiscal year of 2008, the middle year of the three-year framework, JICA, following on from FY2007, supported the establishment of the Vietnam Investment Evaluation Association (VIEA), and held ODA evaluation seminars for the Vietnamese Government officials in three cities: Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi. The seminars on evaluation management were attended by many ODA evaluation and monitoring practitio-



ODA Evaluation Seminar held in Ho Chi Minh City. Participants actively shared their opinions on the evaluation mechanism and project identification.

ners. As for the joint ex-post evaluation conducted in FY2008, the Vietnamese evaluation team was involved in a series of tasks up to the preparation of the evaluation report, and had a larger role than in FY2007. These initiatives contributed to the partial achievement of the action plan (until 2010) approved by the Vietnamese Government for the establishment of an ODA evaluation and monitoring system.

#### Assistance based on MOU with Viet Nam

● 2007	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Highway No.1 Bridge Rehabilitation Project (1)(2)</li> <li>• National Highway No.5 Improvement Project (1)-(3)</li> <li>• Hanoi – Ho Chi Minh City Railway Bridge Rehabilitation Project (1)-(3)</li> </ul>
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study on evaluation systems of Viet Nam government and major donors</li> <li>• Development of formats to collect and arrange information of ex-post evaluations</li> </ul>
● 2008	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ham Thuan – Da Mi Hydropower Project (I)-(IV)</li> <li>• Coastal Communication System Project in Southern Part of Vietnam</li> <li>• Phu My – Ho Chi Minh City 500kV Transmission Line Project</li> </ul>
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with establishment of VIEA</li> <li>• Conduct ODA Evaluation training for stakeholders in the Vietnamese government</li> <li>• Participate in the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of The Japan Evaluation Society, and promote exchanges with Evaluation Associations of other countries</li> </ul>
● 2009 (ongoing)	<b>Joint Ex-Post Evaluations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hai Van Tunnel Construction Project (1)-(3)</li> <li>• Da Nang Port Improvement Project</li> <li>• Hanoi Drainage Project for Environment Improvement</li> </ul>
	<b>Assistance in enhancing evaluation capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist establishment of VIEA</li> <li>• Conduct seminars and trainings for Vietnamese government officials, academics, researchers, consultants, NGOs, etc.</li> <li>• Provide advice on ODA evaluation implemented by the Vietnamese government</li> </ul>

## Peru

### Highly enthusiastic about project evaluation

In response to the enthusiastic request of the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MTC) of Peru, JICA, following on from FY2008, supported evaluation capacity development through ex-post evaluation of ODA Loan-financed road sector project (El Niño-Affected Highway Rehabilitation Project).

MTC measured the traffic volume at the project sites together with the evaluator, participated in the residents workshop, and presented the project's provisional evaluation findings at a Ministry workshops. In addition, a joint feedback seminar was held based on the findings, and the evaluation findings and recommendations were shared with relevant persons.



Evaluator and MTC official conducting a residents workshop

## 2 Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects

The Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects targeted at developing countries' executing agency staff in charge of development projects, has been held since FY2001 with the cooperation of former JBIC and JICA. After the merger of the two organizations, JICA has continued to hold the seminar.

The objective of the seminar is to enhance the trainees' under-

standing of the evaluation method of ODA Loan projects and the importance of evaluations, and develop the trainees' evaluation capability, as well as for trainees to actually utilize the knowledge they obtained at the seminar in their country and spread it within their organization.

### ■ Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects 2008

- **Date :** March 29-April 11, 2009
- **Venue :** Tokyo (JICA Tokyo International Center)
- **Participants :** 20 people in total participated from the following 18 countries

India	Indonesia	Cambodia	Thailand	Sri Lanka
China	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Philippines	Viet Nam
Egypt	Tunisia	Turkey	Morocco	Kenya
Swaziland	Mauritius	Peru		

### Final challenge: formulation of Action Plan

The main items on the seminar's agenda were introduction of JICA's evaluation system and a four-day workshop on the evaluation method of ODA Loan projects. The seminar also included a lecture on international organizations' evaluation theory and policy evaluations, a tour of Japan's large-scale infrastructure (Honshu-Shikoku Bridge Expressway) including a lecture on this project's effects, an introduction of a joint evaluation conducted by JICA (Viet Nam joint evaluation), etc.

As an outcome of this seminar, trainees created Action Plan

after brainstorming about how they can utilize what they learned through the seminar for evaluation capacity development in their countries. The trainees examined their plans with each other and had a lively discussion on their feasibility. After returning to their countries, trainees will be working to develop the necessary evaluation capability at their organizations based on their Action Plan (e.g., hold evaluation training for staff, consider implementation of joint evaluation).



Closing ceremony of Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects 2008

## More specific and specialized

Many participants commented on the appropriateness of the seminar's curriculum.

At the evaluation method workshop, through ex-post evaluation case studies, participants learned about the basic principles of evaluation, evaluation method / rating, and feedback. They worked together in groups, as well as compiled evaluation findings independently.

At the lecture at Hiroshima University which the trainees visited during their local tour, a lecturer with experience in ODA Loan ex-post evaluations as an external evaluator presented several evaluation case studies. The lecturer also talked about points to be kept in mind when conducting project evaluations. There was also lively discussion between the lecturer and trainees.

For the presentation on a joint evaluation case study, JICA invited a

staff member from an executing agency of a developing country who has experience conducting joint evaluations with JICA, as well as a local consultant who served as a joint evaluation coordinator. Thus, the content of the lecture was on a more practical level, better matched with the needs of the trainees. Q&A on specific tasks was conducted.

All trainees were personnel from executing agencies and aid coordination organizations planning to conduct ex-post evaluations of ODA Loan projects in the near future. A trainee also had experience receiving JICA's ex-post evaluation study groups. Therefore, specific and specialized questions and views were raised/given based on the case examples. It was evident that the seminar promoted information sharing among the trainees, as well as intellectual contributions.

### Developing countries' challenges made apparent by the Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects

As a follow-on of the FY2008 seminar, the FY2009 seminar was held through November 9-20, 2009. The trainees who participated in the seminars noted that, while the seminars focused on ex-post evaluations, they would also like to learn more in-depth about various other evaluation themes. Specifically, they would like to receive lectures more generally on evaluations conducted by JICA and other donors, e.g., evaluations of cooperation programs that integrate different cooperation schemes such as technical cooperation projects and grant aid projects, thematic evaluations that focus on a particular issue or particular assistance method, ex-ante evaluations, and mid-term reviews. Many people also said they would like to learn in more detail about the evaluation

method of ex-post evaluations of ODA Loan projects, including IRR\* exercises.

The requests made by the trainees show that developing countries have a growing interest in evaluations. They also reflect the issues confronting developing countries vis-à-vis evaluation capacity development. In addition to giving focus on ex-post evaluations, future seminars will be brought closer to the needs of developing countries. JICA will enhance understanding about a series of evaluations that follows the PDCA cycle, beginning with ex-ante evaluations. It also plans to promote knowhow on program level evaluations, and aims to contribute to the further improvement of evaluation techniques.

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\* Internal Rate of Return: One of the indicators for measuring cost effectiveness of ODA Loan projects, etc.