

Advisory Committee on Evaluation

JICA established the Advisory Committee on Evaluation in July 2010 in order to enhance the quality of evaluations, strengthen feedback of the evaluation results, and better ensure evaluation accountability on the basis of advice regarding operations evaluations.

The Committee, chaired by Shinji Asanuma, Visiting Professor at the School of International and Public Policy, Hitotsubashi University, includes experts in international aid and evaluation from international organizations, academia, NGOs, media, and private sector groups.

Below is an outline of the expert advice provided from the Committee members during the 3rd and 4th meetings convened in FY2011 for the second year running. The wide range of advice will help JICA further improve its operations evaluations.

List of Committee Members (as of January 2012)

● Chairperson	
Shinji Asanuma	Visiting Professor, School of International and Public Policy, Hitotsubashi University
● Acting Chairperson	
Akifumi Kuchiki	Professor, College of Bioresource Sciences, Nihon University
● Members (in alphabetical order)	
Kunihiko Hirabayashi	Director, UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) Tokyo Office
Yoshiko Homma	Lawyer (Yoshiko Homma Law Office) / Professor, The Graduate School of Law, Soka University
Toyokazu Nakata	Chairperson, ShaplaNeer=Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support / Director, Institute of Participatory Development
Masaichi Nosaka	Vice Chairman of Editorial Board, The Yomiuri Shimbun
Yasuyuki Sawada	Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, Graduate School of Economics, The University of Tokyo
Hisashi Takanashi	Managing Director, Engineering and Consulting Firms Association, Japan (ECFA)
Kiyoshi Yamaya	Professor, Doshisha University Graduate School of Policy and Management
Kenichiro Yokoo	Director, International Cooperation Bureau, Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)

From the 3rd Meeting

(1) Realigning ex-post evaluations (internal evaluations) and the ex-post monitoring system

- If ex-post evaluations are conducted partially under the lead of JICA's overseas offices, the system design should take into account the burden borne by the offices.
- Budgetary measures that allow for local consultants to be hired should be taken in order to fully utilize expert opinion.
- In light of issues of cost, targets for ex-post evaluations should not be all projects over 200 million yen, but be chosen with greater selectivity.
- The Project Evaluation Search Database on JICA's website should be made more user-friendly.

- If the projects subject to evaluation are to be categorized based on their expenditure, it is necessary to examine whether projects, such as small but long-term Technical Cooperation projects, would be appropriately covered.

(2) Presentation of evaluation results, etc.

- As there are trends in lessons learned for each country or sector, their use for projects will be significantly facilitated if the database allows for easier access to the lessons learned.
- As the evaluation criteria themselves are subject to change over time, evaluations of past projects should take into account the situation and circumstances at the time of the project's implementation when drawing out lessons.

From the 4th Meeting

(1) Overview of FY2010 ex-post evaluation

- Detailed ex-post evaluations are required to further improve their quality. Evaluations on relevance and efficiency, in particular, tend not to go beyond formal confirmations and superficial analysis.
- Evaluation on efficiency should include a comparative analysis, including of outcomes. Evaluation on efficiency of Technical Cooperation projects has room for improvement, such as evaluation of the spillover effects of technical transfers.
- Going forward, the system of internal evaluations is expected to become more definite, internal evaluations to be conducted for more projects, and their quality to be further improved.
- Internal workshops can be considered to draw on the lessons learned and good practices offered by ex-post evaluations for the design of projects.
- More specific analyses should be conducted to utilize the lessons learned.

(2) Overview of thematic evaluation

- The thematic evaluation, "Articulation of Evaluation Perspectives and Evaluation Judgments Based on the Five DAC Criteria," is of interest as the theme directly concerns the discussions of the Committee. It may serve as a guideline on the interpretation of the five criteria.
- The task moving ahead is to clarify the differences between "output," "outcome," and "impact" by presenting specific examples of each in all evaluations and making them easier to understand.
- The thematic evaluation, "Economic Impact Assessment of ODA Loans and Grant Aid," is commended for attempting to demonstrate macroeconomic impacts on a pilot basis. The data prepared for the application of the GTAP model is valuable (The GTAP model is introduced on p.43–45).
- Further analysis of the two impact evaluations are required to understand how the results should be interpreted and linked to the designing of future projects.

Toward Improving Project Evaluation

JICA attempts to better its operations evaluation system and method in order to improve project management and increase development impact.

Its initiatives also include efforts for improving accountability through operations evaluations, and support to increase the evaluation capacity of developing countries.

Approach 1 Improving the quality of evaluation and strengthening feedback

Promotion of results based management

The OECD-DAC (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee) identifies that more effective project implementation requires: 1) Identifying clear objectives and selecting indicators for measuring progress toward each project objective (strategic planning); 2) Appropriate monitoring of the project's performance by using indicators (performance measurement); and 3) Using lessons learned from monitoring and evaluating the project for planning and implementing similar projects (results based management).

1. Formulating a strategic plan

In order to formulate the strategic plan indicated in 1), not only the desired outputs (changes in inputs through project activities) but also the desired outcomes (changes for improving the development issue) should be clarified, and verifiable indicators should be selected for measuring progress.

At JICA, both the project implementation and evaluation departments hold discussions from the planning stage of a project to select not only "output indicators" but also "outcome indicators." While output indicators include the number of trainings implemented or facilities constructed by the project, outcome indicators include improvements in the service provided by technical training participants or improvements in the situation of the project's final beneficiaries (e.g., improved detection rate of tuberculosis patients or reduced mortality rate of tuberculosis patients in the project area). JICA also implements baseline surveys as necessary to understand the situation prior to the project's intervention to identify the changes generated.

2. Performance measurement

With regard to 2) performance measurement, in the implementation and post-implementation stage, both the project implementation and evaluation departments jointly monitor the achievement of targets by using the indicators set at the planning stage, and reflect the results in the ongoing project as necessary. While monitoring results may not always explain the reasons for achieving the project performance, JICA ascertains them through a terminal evaluation or ex-post evaluation.

3. Analyzing and drawing on the lessons learned

With regard to 3) results based management, JICA analyzes factors that promote or hinder achieving outputs and outcomes through terminal and ex-post evaluations, and cites in the evaluation reports the lessons that may be drawn for similar projects. These evaluation reports, available on the JICA website, may be searched by sector or region and are used for improving projects and accelerating achievement of results. During project planning, relevant departments, including the Evaluation Department, share

project information with each other and endeavor to reflect the lessons learned in the project plan.

These initiatives are among the ways that JICA is promoting results based management.

Initiatives for improving the quality of ex-post evaluation

As part of the promotion of results based management, efforts are made to obtain and further draw on more appropriate recommendations and lessons learned from the results of ex-post evaluations. In detailed ex-post evaluations, for example, a feedback seminar for executing agencies in counterpart countries is conducted in principle for all projects. By sharing the results, JICA strives to leverage them for the improvement of future projects in developing countries.

Furthermore, a new initiative was started in FY2010, under which specific evaluation themes are identified for projects that are expected to derive particularly useful lessons learned. Those results are fed back to be utilized more effectively. The specific themes that were studied include "impact of projects in the transport sector in northern Viet Nam on the regional development," "the synergistic effects of the coordination between an ODA Loan project and a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) program for a water supply project in Sri Lanka" (→see p.17), and "assessing the project's outcomes by comparing areas targeted and not targeted by a water supply project in Mali" (→see p.36–37). For each theme, evaluation results useful for future projects were obtained.



A feedback seminar on evaluation findings in Viet Nam

Examples of Uses of Evaluation Findings Listed in Ex-ante Evaluation

1 Tanzania, Strengthening Development of Human Resource for Health (Technical Cooperation)

The terminal evaluation of the Project for Institutional Capacity Strengthening for HIV Prevention Focusing on Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Services in Tanzania offered the following lesson learned: "If cross-sectoral components are included in the activities, such as health information management system or monitoring evaluation, a study which examines the entire health system should be necessary at the planning and design stage in order to avoid duplication of activities and the establishment of unnecessary systems." Based on this lesson, in the preliminary survey of the project JICA consulted and coordinated activities with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare's Monitoring Evaluation Unit and relevant development partners to avoid duplication.

In addition, the Development Study for Improvement of Current Health Management Information System in Pakistan (Technical Cooperation for Development Planning) offered the lesson that, "The challenge with enhancing health information systems is not only promoting utilization of the system but also ensuring the system's maintenance and management." In Tanzania's project, it was agreed in the preliminary survey that the Tanzanian government will be responsible for the continuous maintenance and management of the system, using funds from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund)*.

2 Thailand, Mass Transit System Project in Bangkok (Purple Line)(II) (ODA Loans)

Past ex-post evaluations of similar projects in the transport sector recommended that for cities that have severe road traffic and a high potential need for elevated railway systems that reduce travel time and are punctual, means to stimulate this potential need and increase project effectiveness should be examined. This

project will consider the possibility of the introduction of a Technical Cooperation project, based on discussions with Thailand's Mass Rapid Transit Authority. The project fields include: 1) Development of areas surrounding new train stations; 2) Development of railroad areas; 3) Coordination with competitor bus service (including review of routes and fares); 4) Development of new bus routes to and from new train stations; and 5) Introduction of tickets that can be used between different modes of transport, such as subway, elevated railway, and bus systems.

3 Senegal, Dakar and Thies School Construction Project in Senegal (Grant Aid)

In a similar school construction project implemented in FY2006 in Senegal, 286 classrooms were constructed in 60 sites in 5 provinces. However, the sites covered too broad an area, and supervision of the construction work was extremely difficult. Furthermore, construction progress depended heavily on the technical and financial capacities of local contractors. The lessons were that when designing projects it is necessary to: 1) Have a more targeted project site; and 2) Design the project approach considering the criteria for selecting local contractors.

Based on the lessons learned, this project prioritized target sites by region. In addition, a model site was established, at which construction started two months in advance. The project plan also made sufficient considerations to allow for the supervision of the construction work. For example, technical guidance was provided to contractors at the model site, and efforts were made to ensure that they have a common understanding on the desired quality of their deliverables.

*A foundation that was established to procure funds from the international community to support the fight against the three major infectious diseases facing developing countries. It provides grants to cover the costs of prevention, treatment, and care offered by developing countries themselves. The Global Fund was proposed by Japan at the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit (2000) and established in Switzerland in 2002.

Approach 2 Ensuring accountability

Initiatives for ensuring accountability in ex-post evaluation

In order to maintain the accountability of evaluations, JICA has been commissioning external evaluators to conduct ex-post evaluations of projects over a certain size. However, external evaluations cannot be conducted for too many projects both in terms of efficiency and quality assurance.

In this light, in addition to external ex-post evaluations of projects over 1 billion yen, JICA's overseas offices conduct internal ex-post evaluations of all other projects exceeding 200 million yen since FY2010. Under this revised system, the Evaluation Department manages the quality of the evaluations (→see p.21 for an overview of internal evaluation). To ensure the quality of evaluations and appropriate accountability through the internal evaluation system, JICA will work to verify and improve the system while obtaining advice from external experts.

Publication of evaluation information

To improve information accessibility and strengthen its accountability to the people, JICA has set up the "Project Evaluation Search Database" on its website. The creation of the database has made evaluation information more accessible to people interested

in JICA's projects and evaluation results. In addition, this search function has enabled the smooth feedback of evaluation information to those who are engaged in project design and planning, project implementation and management, and project evaluation and monitoring.

In FY2011, a search function for ex-post evaluation reports in English was also introduced on JICA's website. This search function has made evaluation information more accessible for executing agencies not only in countries in which the projects were implemented but also in other countries.

Search (Ex-Post Evaluation Reports after 2008)

Project Name

Region/Country

Select a Region Select a Country

Select a Region Select a Country

Select a Region Select a Country

Sector/Theme

Select a Sector / Theme

Select a Sector / Theme

Select a Sector / Theme

Type of Assistance

Technical Cooperation

ODA Loan

Grant Aid

Projects Started from (year)

Search Reset

URL <http://www2.jica.go.jp/en/evaluation/index.php>

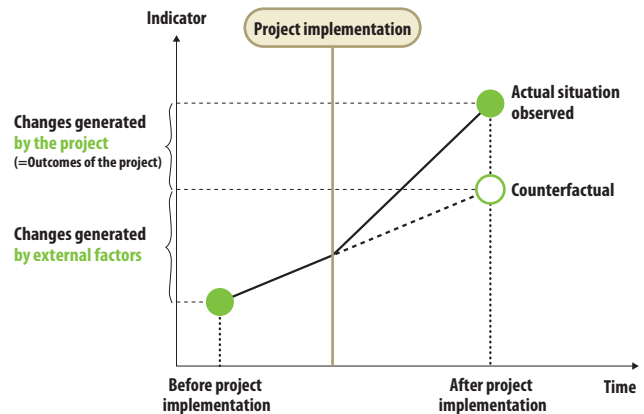
Approach 3 Impact evaluation efforts

Impact evaluation rigorously measures the changes that a policy or project generated in the beneficiary community. It ideally does this by comparing the situations in which a project has and has not been implemented (counterfactual). However, unlike in a laboratory, such comparisons are not easy to do for development projects that target actual communities in which people live. As an alternative and a simpler method, the outcomes before and after project implementation or outcomes in the beneficiary and non-beneficiary areas are often compared. However, in many cases, these are not accurate comparisons.

Through devising methods for determining project beneficiaries, data collection, and analysis techniques, an impact evaluation makes possible more rigorous comparisons and more accurate assessments of the changes generated by a project. With greater priority being placed on results, donor agencies such as the World Bank, or other bilateral aid agencies, have also promoted impact evaluations. At JICA, too, the Evaluation Department and the Research Institute were the main departments to lead the implementation of impact evaluations on themes such as irrigation facility construction, primary education support, improvement of independent school

administration, and improvement of community health. JICA is also examining ways to make effective use of the impact evaluation method for project management (→see p.46–47).

Basic Concept of Impact Evaluation: Comparison with Counterfactual



Approach 4 Support to increase evaluation capacity

Joint evaluation with developing countries

Improving the evaluation capacity of project executing agencies and supervising agencies in developing countries further increases their ownership, and contributes to more efficient and effective implementation of JICA projects. To achieve this aim, JICA conducts joint ex-post evaluations with developing countries.

In Viet Nam, based on an MOU for evaluation capacity-building concluded with the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) of Viet Nam in 2007, JICA has: 1) Conducted joint ex-post evaluations; and 2) Provided support to establish an evaluation system and for capacity-building. Through these initiatives, Viet Nam has made progress in developing an evaluation system, and evaluation officials have increased their capacities, leading to Viet Nam's graduation from assistance provided through ex-post evaluation. Moving forward, Viet Nam is expected to implement evaluations more proactively and JICA will consider assistance as necessary.

In the Philippines, since concluding an evaluation-related MOU with the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) of the Philippines in 2006, JICA provides comprehensive support to increase its evaluation capacity. Assistance is being provided to enable NEDA to independently conduct ex-post evaluations in the future. In FY2011, NEDA fulfilled a larger role in ex-post evaluation-related activities.

Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Projects

Starting in FY2011, the Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Loan Projects, previously held by former JBIC and former JICA since FY2001, has been held under its new name, the Seminar on Evaluation of Japanese ODA Projects. This seminar is targeted at executing agency staff in developing countries in charge of development projects. The program aimed to give them an overview of JICA's evaluation system through lectures, workshops, project tours, and other means, as well as an opportunity to learn about

Japan's experience with infrastructure development projects.

In FY2011, the seminar was held over 12 days from November 28 to December 9 and was participated by 16 personnel from 13 countries. After returning to their countries, the participants are expected to put into practice the knowledge they acquired in the seminar and spread their knowledge within their organizations. JICA plans to hold seminars not only related to ODA Loans but also those that focus on the evaluation of Technical Cooperation projects and other schemes.

Cooperation with emerging donors

As developing countries' economies grow, aid recipients are emerging as new donors. They include the Republic of Korea (ROK), which has graduated from foreign aid, as well as Thailand and China, which are now making this transition. In order for these emerging donors as well as Japan to be able to implement more effective aid, JICA shares its experiences by implementing various evaluation partnerships and assistance.

In December 2010, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and JICA held their first regular meeting, and discussions were also conducted on inter-agency partnerships in the field of operations evaluation. As a result, in March 2011, a KOICA officer participated in the field survey for the ex-post evaluation of JICA's health project in Morocco as an observer. In June, an officer from JICA presented a lecture on its evaluation system at a seminar held by KOICA. The two organizations held discussions on further partnership at the second regular meeting in November 2011 and are currently working on this initiative.