

The Operations Evaluation System of JICA

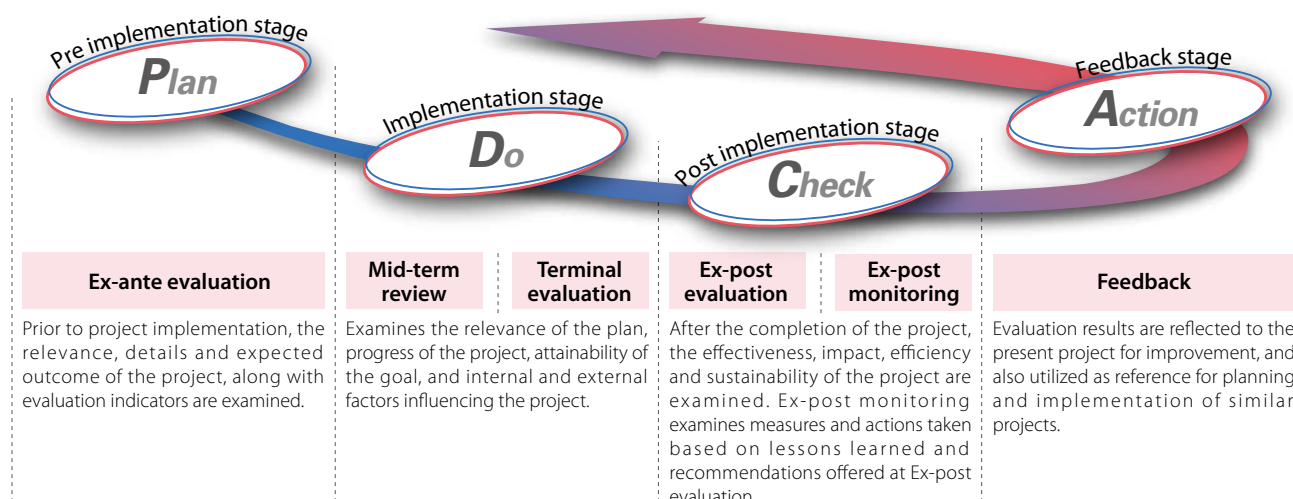
In an effort to improve its projects and ensure accountability to the Japanese taxpayers, JICA implements operations evaluations in accordance with the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, and Action) cycle for all Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans, and Grant Aid projects.

1 Consistent evaluation throughout the project's PDCA cycle

The PDCA cycle is a management tool that promotes the continuous improvement of project activities and JICA's operations. It has four steps: Plan; Do; Check; and Action.

For all projects, JICA's evaluation is conducted based on the PDCA cycle, regardless of the scheme of assistance*. Considering the characteristics of the scheme of assistance, such as the assistance period and timeframe for expected results, JICA conducts

the evaluation within a consistent framework at each stage of the project (planning, implementation, post-implementation and feedback). By conducting the evaluation at each stage of the PDCA cycle, it aims to improve the development results of the project. The details of the evaluation conducted at each stage are introduced on p.6-7 and p.50-51.



* Schemes of assistance, such as Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans, and Grant Aid.

2 Coherent methodologies and criteria for three schemes of assistance

JICA adopts an evaluation system that uses cross-sectoral methodologies and criteria applicable to all schemes of assistance. For Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans, and Grant Aid projects, respectively, JICA aims to conduct the evaluation and to utilize the findings based on a consistent philosophy and a standard evaluation framework, while taking into consideration the differences in characteristics among each assistance scheme.

Specifically, an evaluation framework that reflects: 1) Project level evaluation based on the PDCA cycle; 2) Evaluation applying the Five DAC Criteria for evaluating development assistance that is laid out by the OECD-DAC (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee) and is internationally accepted as an ODA evaluation method (Table 1); and 3) Publication of evaluation results based on a uniform style using a rating system developed by JICA. The ratings system and results are introduced on p.16-17 and p.52.

Table 1 Evaluation Perspectives Using the Five DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance

Relevance	Examines the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor: Does the goal of the aid activity meet the needs of beneficiaries? Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
Effectiveness	Measures the extent to which a program or a project attains its objectives.
Impact	Examines positive and negative changes as a result of the project. This includes direct and indirect effects and expected and unexpected effects.
Efficiency	Measures the outputs in relation to the inputs to determine whether the aid uses the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results.
Sustainability	Sustainability Relates to whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after the closure of the project.

The evaluation system of JICA has the five features shown below.

- 1 Consistent evaluation throughout the project's PDCA cycle
- 2 Coherent methodologies and criteria for three schemes of assistance
- 3 Cross-sectoral and comprehensive evaluation through a thematic evaluation
- 4 Ensuring objectivity and transparency
- 5 Emphasizing use of evaluation results

3 Cross-sectoral and comprehensive evaluation through a thematic evaluation

JICA conducts thematic evaluations to analyze a group of projects comprehensively and cross-sectorally. The aim of this evaluation is to derive recommendations and lessons learned which can be utilized across projects. Thematic evaluation is conducted by selecting projects based on a specified theme and analyzing them from a different angle than in an individual project evaluation.

Moving forward, evaluations will also be conducted for JICA's cooperation programs (a strategic framework designed to support the achievement of developing countries' mid- to long-term development goals) in line with the progress being made in this endeavor.

The details of thematic evaluation are introduced on p.7. An outline of the implementation of thematic evaluation for the current financial year is introduced on p.44-49.

4 Ensuring objectivity and transparency

JICA has incorporated external evaluations according to project size in the ex-post evaluations which require an objective verification of project implementation results for all three schemes of assistance, and the findings are made available on the JICA website. JICA will continue its efforts for increasing objectivity and transparency in its operations evaluations.

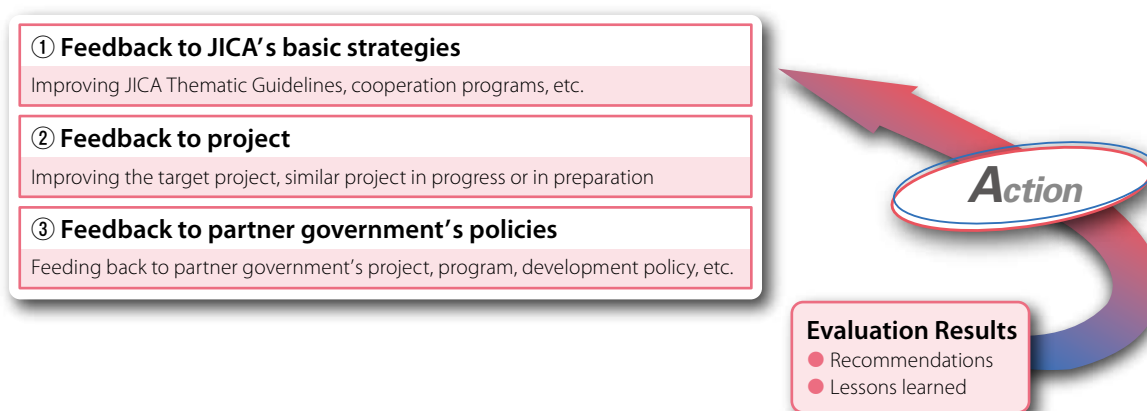
In order to improve the quality of evaluations, JICA has set up mechanisms by which the viewpoints of external parties are reflected in the operations evaluation system. In this context, JICA receives advice on evaluation policy, as well as on the evaluation system and methodology from the Advisory Committee on Evaluation consisting of third-party experts (→ see p.12).

5 Emphasizing use of evaluation results

JICA's operations evaluations are not merely evaluations. Evaluation results also serve as a feedback function for improving the quality of the "Action" phase of the PDCA cycle. This feedback is utilized as recommendations for improving the project and lessons learned for ongoing and future similar projects. JICA intends to further strengthen the feedback function for reflecting the evaluation results into JICA's fundamental strategies for

cooperation and the JICA Thematic Guidelines.

At the same time, JICA makes efforts to reflect the evaluation results into development policies, sector programs, and respective projects of the recipient governments by feeding back the evaluation findings. Conducting joint evaluations with the recipient government is also a way of feeding back the evaluation findings.



Results of ex-post evaluation are available on JICA's website

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

Pre Implementation Stage Evaluation (Ex-ante Evaluation)

In order to determine the necessity of the project as well as to set targets for outcomes, JICA conducts ex-ante evaluation and publishes the results in the "Ex-ante Evaluation Report."

JICA conducts the ex-ante evaluation prior to project implementation to confirm the needs and priorities of the project as well as verify the outline of the project and anticipated outcomes. At the ex-ante evaluation stage, JICA also confirms implementations of appropriate safeguard procedures based on the review of environmental and social considerations, as well as

reflections of lessons learned from past projects.

The results from the ex-ante evaluation conducted from this perspective are reflected in the subsequent decision-making regarding project design and project approach. Once the project commences, evaluations are conducted based on the evaluation plan and indicators set at the time of the ex-ante evaluation.

Number of Ex-ante Evaluations Performed in FY2011

Technical Cooperation	137 projects	ODA Loans	64 projects	Grant Aid	72 projects
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Implementation Stage Evaluation (Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation)

Mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations are conducted at the project implementation stage in order to assess the relevance of the project plan, the status of progress and the attainability of the goals, and internal and external factors affecting the project.

JICA conducts the mid-term review and terminal evaluation for ongoing projects. These are intended to study the attainability of the project purpose, contributing or impending factors of the project's implementation, as well as their respective trends in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. The evaluation results will be utilized in revising the project plan and project management system, and decision-making on the termination or continuation of the project. Lessons learned from the evaluation will be used for improving similar projects in the future.

The purpose of the mid-term review of Technical Cooperation projects and ODA Loan projects which have a comparatively long period of implementation, is to verify the relevance of the project for a fixed term from the beginning. It also verifies and analyzes the attainability of the project goal in terms of effectiveness and

efficiency as well as the project's promoting factors and obstacles and their respective trends. The results of the mid-term review are utilized to review project framework and design and they are also used to improve project management.

Terminal evaluation is conducted for Technical Cooperation projects about six months prior to project termination. The purpose is to verify mainly the attainability of the project goal, efficiency, and sustainability, so that JICA can draw up the project plan for the remaining period of the project with the recipient government and decide on the appropriateness of terminating the project and/or necessary follow-ups for the future, among other matters. The terminal evaluation is an evaluation and monitoring scheme that is unique to Technical Cooperation projects. This verifies the effectiveness during the project's implementation phase.

Number of Mid-term Reviews and Terminal Evaluations Performed in FY2010 *

Technical Cooperation (Mid-term Review)	88 projects	Technical Cooperation (Terminal Evaluation)	95 projects
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Post Implementation Stage Evaluation (Ex-post Evaluation and Ex-post Monitoring)

JICA conducts ex-post evaluation and ex-post monitoring in order to evaluate completed projects comprehensively and monitor if the project's effectiveness, impact, and sustainability will continue to materialize after project completion.

JICA performs the ex-post evaluation and ex-post monitoring after project completion. Compared with other evaluation

schemes, evaluations conducted at the post implementation stage place more importance on the aspect of accountability. Therefore,

Note: See Reference 1 (p.50-51) regarding the evaluations conducted at each stage of Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans, and Grant Aid projects.

* There are no results for mid-term reviews of ODA Loans in FY2011.

external evaluations, whereby an external third-party makes evaluation judgments, are conducted for projects over a certain size. All three assistance schemes are subject to ex-post evaluation, of which there are two types: detailed ex-post evaluation (in principle, projects over 1 billion yen*¹; external evaluation) and internal ex-post evaluation*² (projects over 200 million yen and under 1 billion yen; implemented by JICA's overseas offices). At the stage after the completion of each project, JICA conducts a comprehensive evaluation using the Five DAC Criteria. One distinctive feature of the detailed ex-post evaluation is the application of a rating system*³ in order to present the evaluation results in a way that is easy to understand.

The recommendations and lessons learned gathered from

these ex-post evaluations will be applied toward improving the project, as well as to the planning and implementation of similar projects in the future. In FY2011, ex-post monitoring was conducted for 180 projects.

Ex-post monitoring is usually conducted seven years after the completion of ODA Loan projects if there were concerns in project effectiveness and sustainability based on the results of the ex-post evaluation. It re-verifies the project's effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, as well as monitors the extent to which recommendations drawn from the ex-post evaluation are being applied. It aims to extract recommendations and lessons learned necessary for the project impact to be sustained and improved as a whole.

Number of Evaluations Performed in FY2011

Technical Cooperation	(detailed) 20 projects (internal) 30 projects	ODA Loans	(detailed) 51 projects	Grant Aid	(detailed) 36 projects (internal) 43 projects
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Thematic Evaluation

JICA conducts a comprehensive evaluation and analysis of JICA's cooperation in relation to a specific theme or development goal, and the evaluation results are utilized for future cooperation planning and implementation to be more effective.

JICA conducts the thematic evaluation based on a specific theme, such as region, sector, and assistance methodology, for projects that are relevant to the theme, using an evaluation criteria established for each theme. This includes comprehensive analysis, which extracts trends and problems common to a particular issue or compares projects and categorizes them to extract common features and good practices. Comprehensive analysis and examination of the evaluation results provide recommendations and lessons learned relating to the specific theme. Furthermore, JICA endeavors to develop a new evaluation methodology.

Moving forward, JICA will also conduct evaluations of JICA's cooperation programs, which are strategic frameworks designed to support the achievement of developing countries' mid- to long-term development goals. Taking into account that cooperation programs will be subject to future evaluations, JICA will need to verify from the ex-ante evaluation stage: Whether the goal and indicators for the cooperation program are clearly set; and whether there is a consistent cause and effect relationship between the overall goal of the projects that comprise the cooperation program and the goal of the cooperation program.

Thematic Evaluations Performed

- Base-line study analysis for Technical Cooperation projects
- Analysis of indicators of societal and economic impact of regional power supply projects
- Ex-post evaluation of financial support loans

Impact Evaluation

JICA conducts "Impact evaluation" which, targeting certain projects, rigorously measures the changes wrought in the target society by policies and projects. Using statistics and analyzing the gathered data, impact evaluation makes it possible to more accurately grasp the changes brought about by projects and to make more detailed comparisons of outcomes with and without

project or between pre and post project implementation. With Impact evaluations of projects, more precise measurements of project outcomes are possible than with a conventional, general evaluation, and evaluation results are expected to be applicable when deciding on policy and implementing projects.

*1 Even projects of less than 1 billion yen are targeted when there is a high likelihood of gaining valuable lessons.

*2 See p.22 for an overview of the internal evaluation.

*3 See Reference 2 (p.52) for an overview of the rating system.