

JICA's Operations Evaluation System

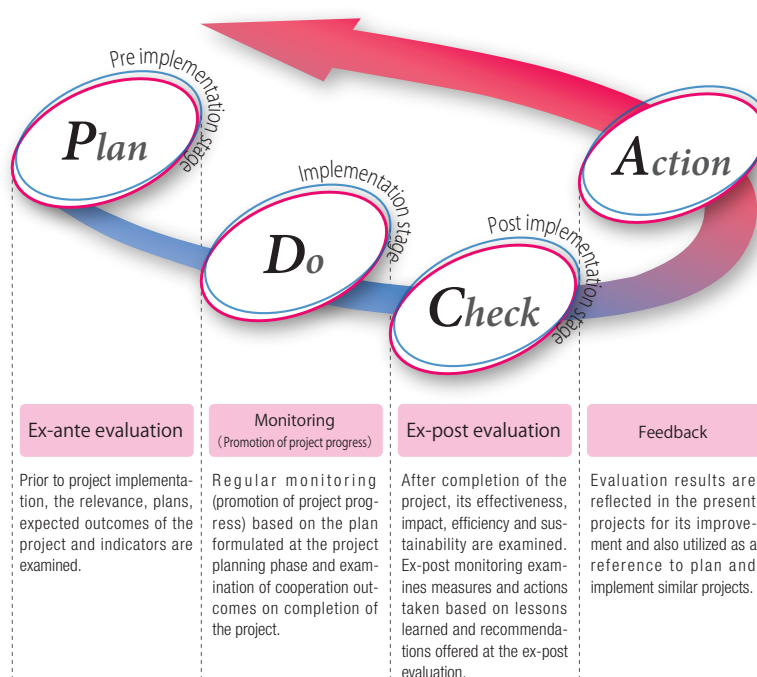
To improve its projects and ensure accountability to stakeholders, JICA implements operations evaluation and comprehensive and cross-sectoral thematic evaluation for Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans and Grant Aid projects.

1

Evaluation throughout the project's PDCA cycle

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

For all projects, JICA's operations evaluation is conducted based on the PDCA cycle, regardless of the scheme of cooperation. Considering characteristics of the scheme of cooperation, such as the assistance period and timeframe to obtain expected results, JICA monitors and evaluates at each project stage (planning, implementation, post-implementation and feedback) within a consistent framework. By evaluating and monitoring projects at each stage of the PDCA cycle, it aims to improve the development effects. Details of the types of evaluation are introduced in p.4-5.



2

Coherent methodologies and criteria among three schemes of cooperation

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

Specifically, the evaluation framework reflects: (1) Monitoring and evaluation based on the PDCA cycle; (2) Evaluation applying the Five DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance laid out by the OECD-DAC (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee) and internationally accepted as an ODA evaluation methodology; and (3) Publication of evaluation results in a uniform style by utilizing a rating system developed by JICA. The rating system and results are introduced in p.8-11.

Evaluation Perspectives Using the Five DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance

Relevance	Examine the extent to which the cooperation objectives are suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor: Does the goal of the projects 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	Measure the extent to which the program or project attains its objectives.
Impact	Examine positive and negative changes as a result of the project. This includes direct and indirect effects and expected and unexpected effects.
Efficiency	Measure the outputs in relation to the inputs to determine whether the project uses resources effectively to achieve the desired results.
Sustainability	Examine whether the benefits of the project are likely to last after the completion of the project.

The JICA operations evaluation system has the following five features:

- 1 Evaluation throughout the project's PDCA cycle
- 2 Coherent methodologies and criteria among three schemes of cooperation
- 3 Comprehensive and cross-sectoral evaluation and analysis
- 4 Ensuring objectivity and transparency
- 5 Emphasizing the utilization of evaluation results

3

Comprehensive and cross-sectoral evaluation and analysis

JICA conducts thematic evaluation to assess a group of projects comprehensively and cross-sectorally or analyze a specific development issue or assistance scheme. The thematic evaluation is conducted by selecting projects based on a specified theme and analyzing them from perspectives that are different from individual operations evaluations to derive common recommendations and lessons learned from those projects.

In FY 2017, evaluation methodologies applicable to SATREPS*¹ (p. 48), Private Sector Investment Finance (p. 47) and projects in vulnerable

countries (p. 49) were examined and lessons learned for special economic zone development (p. 42) were identified and analyzed.

*1 Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) is a type of technical cooperation, involving international collaborative research between Japanese research institutions and partner countries. Its aims are to obtain new knowledge and to utilize research outcomes for the benefit of the society with a view to resolving global issues such as environment and energy, disaster prevention, and infectious diseases. In conjunction with this, it also aspires to improve the development of human resources and research capabilities in partner countries by conducting joint research.

4

Ensuring objectivity and transparency

JICA has incorporated external evaluation according to its project size to ensure objectivity and transparency in evaluating effects of project implementation. Moreover, JICA tries to make efforts to increase transparency in its operations evaluation by providing findings of the ex-post evaluation results on JICA's official website.

To improve the quality of evaluations, JICA has established mechanisms

allowing the viewpoints of external parties to be reflected in the operations evaluation system. In this context, JICA receives advice on its evaluation policy, as well as the evaluation system and methodologies from the Advisory Committee on Evaluation consisting of third-party experts. Please refer to p.6 regarding the committee.

5

Emphasizing the utilization of evaluation results

JICA's operations evaluation focuses on utilizing the results for improving the quality of "Action" in the PDCA cycle, which is also utilized to feedback recommendations to improve the projects and lessons learned for ongoing and future similar projects. JICA intends to strengthen the feedback function further to reflect the evaluation results in JICA's cooperation strategies.

At the same time, JICA makes efforts to reflect the evaluation results in its development policies, sector programs and the respective projects of recipient governments by feeding back the evaluation findings.

① Reflection in JICA's basic strategies

Improving JICA Thematic Guidelines, cooperation programs, etc.

② Reflection in projects

Improving target projects, similar projects in progress or in preparation

③ Reflection in partner governments' policies

Feeding back to partner governments' projects, programs, development policies, etc.

Action

Evaluation Results

- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Lessons learned

—Results of the operations evaluation are available on JICA's website—

Related link

▶ https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/index.html

Pre Implementation Stage (Ex-ante Evaluation)

To examine aspects such as existing needs for projects, JICA conducts ex-ante evaluations.

◇ What is ex-ante evaluation?

JICA conducts ex-ante evaluations prior to project implementation to confirm needs and priorities of projects, examine project outlines and anticipated outcomes, and establish indicators to measure the outcomes from the perspective of the Five DAC Criteria. During the ex-ante evaluation, JICA also checks whether safeguards based on reviewed environmental and social considerations and lessons learned from the past

projects are reflected appropriately in the projects.

◇ Utilization of results of ex-ante evaluations

The results of the ex-ante evaluation are reflected in subsequent decision-making on project designs and approaches. Once projects commence, monitoring and evaluations are conducted based on the evaluation plans and indicators set at the time of the ex-ante evaluation.

Number of Ex-ante Evaluation Performed in FY2016^{*1}

Technical Cooperation	100 projects
ODA Loans	53 projects
Grant Aid	59 projects

Evaluation at Pre Implementation Stage by Scheme

Scheme	Technical Cooperation	ODA Loans	Grant Aid
Timing	Prior to project implementation		
Preparation of Ex-Ante Evaluation report ^{*2}	All projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more		Projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more implemented by JICA ^{*3}
Principals of evaluation	Operational Departments of JICA, etc. (Internal Evaluation)		
Items evaluated and evaluation method	Confirming existing needs and expected outcomes and verifying the project plans in light of the Five DAC Criteria		

^{*1} Published as the ex-ante evaluations performed in FY2016 (as of February 2018).

^{*2} In principle, ex-ante evaluation report is prepared for all projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more and not prepared for those with less than 200 million yen.

^{*3} Evaluation of projects collaborated with international organizations is conducted by such international organizations.

Post Implementation Stage (Ex-post Evaluation)

JICA conducts ex-post evaluations to evaluate completed projects comprehensively and examine whether the project's effectiveness, impact and sustainability will continue to manifest after project completion.

◇ What is ex-post stage evaluation?

JICA performs ex-post evaluation after completion of projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more, the results of which are immediately presented to the public in an understandable form.

While projects of which contributions are from 200 million to one billion yen^{*4} are subject to internal ex-post evaluation by JICA overseas offices, those with one billion yen or more are evaluated by third-party evaluators

(external ex-post evaluation) to ensure more objective evaluation. For external evaluation, a rating system^{*5} has been adopted to present the results in an easily understandable manner.

◇ Utilization of results of ex-post evaluations

The recommendations and lessons learned gathered from these ex-post evaluations will be applied to improving the projects, as well as planning and implementing similar projects in future.

Number of Ex-post Evaluation Performed in FY2016^{*6}

Technical Cooperation	(External Evaluation) 29 projects (Internal Evaluation) 65 projects
ODA Loans	(External Evaluation) 34 projects (Internal Evaluation) 0 project
Grant Aid	(External Evaluation) 36 projects (Internal Evaluation) 28 projects

Evaluation at Post Implementation Stage by Scheme^{*7}

Scheme	Technical Cooperation	ODA Loans	Grant Aid
Timing	In principle, until 3 years after project completion		
Targets	All projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more		Projects with contributions of 200 million yen or more implemented by JICA
Principals of evaluation ^{*8}	Third party (External Evaluation), JICA Overseas Office, etc. (Internal evaluation)		
Items evaluated and evaluation method	Based on the Five DAC Criteria		

^{*4} For projects with contributions of less than 1 billion yen but those that are likely to gain valuable lessons, ex-post evaluations are conducted.

^{*5} Please refer to p.8 for the rating system.

^{*6} Evaluation results were confirmed in FY 2017 (as of February 2018). Such results were published as "Evaluation Results in FY 2016" on JICA's website.

^{*7} Matters to be noted

- For projects which are implemented in several phases and those related to ODA Loans, relevant projects are integrally evaluated in principle.
- For projects of which outcome-based evaluations are not rational in terms of their implications and cost effectiveness, such projects are evaluated through output-based monitoring. This applies to Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship, for example.
- For projects which provide financial assistance or collaborate with international organizations under the scheme of ODA Loans and Grant Aid, JICA's ex-post evaluation is not conducted, in principle, from the perspective of development partnerships.

^{*8} For projects with contributions of 1 billion yen or more and those that are considered to be likely to gain valuable lessons, external evaluations are conducted. Internal evaluations are conducted by JICA's overseas offices for projects of which contributions are from 200 million yen to 1 billion yen.

Comprehensive and Cross-Sectoral Evaluation and Analysis

JICA conducts comprehensive evaluation and analysis of JICA's cooperation with specific themes or development goals, the results of which are utilized for future cooperation planning and implementation to make them more effective.

JICA sets specific themes, such as region, sector and assistance methodology, and conducts comprehensive and cross-sectoral analysis, which extracts tendencies and problems which are common to particular issues or compares and categorizes projects to extract common features and good practices. Furthermore, JICA also endeavors to develop new evaluation methodologies.

In FY 2017, evaluation methodologies applicable to SATREPS (p. 48), Private Sector Investment Finance (p. 47) and projects in vulnerable zone development (p. 42) were examined and lessons learned for special economic zone development (p. 42) were identified and analyzed. Please refer to each page for their details.

Impact Evaluation^{*1}

To further enhance project effectiveness and quality, JICA has been promoting evidence-based practice (EBP) and emphasizing the application of impact evaluation as its major tool.

Many donor agencies have recently been promoting EBP and emphasizing the application of impact evaluation as its major tool to further enhance their project effectiveness and quality. JICA also emphasizes the application of impact evaluation throughout the organization; the operational department conducts impact evaluation in the health, education and irrigation sectors collaborating with the Evaluation Department while the JICA Research Institute promotes academic researches on impact evaluation aiming at disseminating the result to academia.

Impact evaluation precisely assesses the changes caused in target societies by specific measures, projects, or development models to improve and solve development issues. To grasp project effects in a precise manner, it requires comparison between situations which are actually observed (Factual) and counterfactual situations which would have appeared in the absence of the project. Analyzing these two situations allows to grasp changes brought by project precisely and obtain more outstanding and reliable evidence compared with applying those methodologies that simply analyze before and after projects.

Since impact evaluation requires additional costs and high expertise for its analysis, JICA examines the priority based on evaluation purposes and needs and conducts impact evaluation on selected projects. Impact evaluation will be actively incorporated into those projects to apply a new approach or expand its scale in future so that reliable evidence obtained from the impact evaluation is expected to be utilized for project management and policy-making in partner countries.

In FY 2017, impact evaluations were conducted on several projects, including the Technical Cooperation project in financial services and Public-Private Partnership project in Tanzania (refer to pp. 54-55 for their evaluation results).

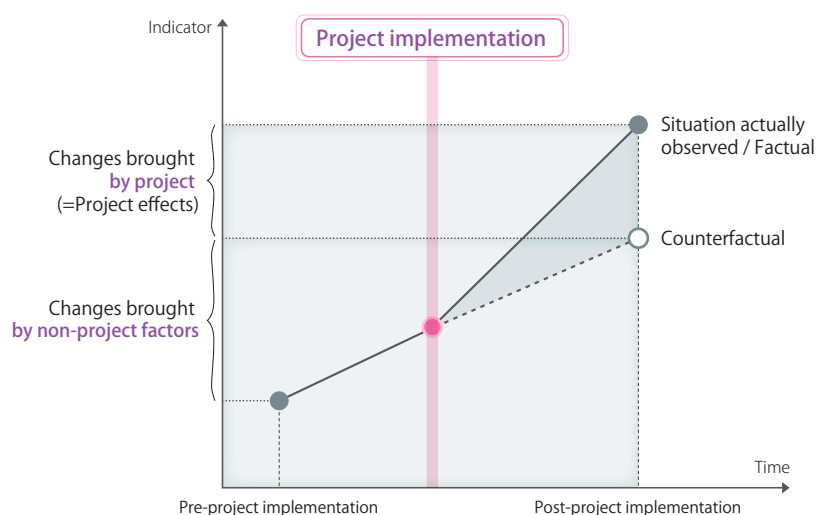
Moreover, JICA conducted a capacity enhancement training course, "Impact Evaluation: Toward

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)", for development consultants and those who involved in international cooperation projects to develop human resources toward promoting the implementation of impact evaluation, as described in p.55.

^{*1} The definition of the term "impact" in impact evaluations differs from "impact" used in the Five OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria. The latter is defined as "positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended" (overall concept of "outcomes") while the former refers to effects produced by a project more directly including the "outcomes" described in the Criteria.

Conceptual Diagram of the Impact Evaluation:

Comparison of situation actually observed and counterfactual situation



Advisory Committee on Evaluation

JICA established the Advisory Committee on Evaluation to enhance the evaluation quality, strengthen feedback of evaluation results and ensure accountability.

The Committee includes experts in international cooperation and those with expertise in evaluation from international organizations, academia, NGOs, media and private sector groups.

In two meetings held in FY 2017, various activities related to JICA's operations evaluation, JICA's responses to advice and recommendations provided by the Committee in the past meetings were discussed. Major activities which JICA had in response to the main points discussed in the meetings in FY 2017 were outlined below.

Chairperson	
Motoki Takahashi	Professor, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University
Acting Chairperson	
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Toyokazu Nakata	Chairperson, Muranomirai (NPO)
Masaichi Nosaka	Senior Deputy Chief Officer, Yomiuri Research Institute, The Yomiuri Shimbun
Yasukiyo Horiuchi	Deputy Director, International Cooperation Bureau, Keidanren (Japanese Business Federation)
Yoshiko Homma	Lawyer (Yoshiko Homma Law Office) / Professor, The Graduate School of Law, Soka University
Kiyoshi Yamaya	Professor, Doshisha University Graduate School of Policy and Management

(as of January 2018)

Suggestions and Recommendations from the Committee	Actions Taken by JICA
Analysis, learning, and feedback of ex-post evaluations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evaluation should not be an end in itself. It is essential to feed back the evaluation results outside JICA to improve project operations. •Evaluation should be aimed not only at fulfilling accountability but also at making improvements for the project implementation in the future in the PDCA cycle. •The evaluation results should be shared with development consultants and other private-sector professionals through seminars. 	<p>In order to use the "Practical Lessons for Development of New Seaports" (see JICA Annual Evaluation Report 2016, p. 15) to make improvements for the project implementation in the future in the PDCA cycle, JICA held a seminar for private companies such as development consulting firms to discuss demand prediction, locations, lessons learned for port development, and other matters that should be considered in for the project formulation (May 2017). JICA also organized a similar seminar to discuss the results of process analyses (December 2017). Going forward, JICA will continue to perform meta-analyses on different themes and share the results inside and outside JICA.</p>
Process analysis and international knowledge management initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Process analysis is a good way to complement operations evaluation because the analysis can reveal how the project went and why it went so as well as bring additional perspectives which cannot be seen in the Five DAC Criteria into ex-post evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JICA held a feedback seminar on "A Case Study of Delhi Metro in India", which was the first case study in the series of process analyses started in FY2016. Currently, JICA is conducting several other case studies. (Refer to p. 50-52) • JICA performs process analyses in collaboration with the international knowledge management initiative led by the World Bank. The above mentioned case study on Delhi Metro has been featured as a good practice on the website of the initiative. (Refer to p. 52)
Accountability to citizens and sharing of project evaluation results beyond the organizational boundaries	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We can see some improvements regarding information dissemination to the public. For example, the annual evaluation reports have been made easier for the general public to understand by replacing technical terms with simpler words. •Meanwhile, there remains a need to promote disseminating technical information at more professional levels in terms of sharing lessons learned and utilizing them to improve projects. It is essential to distinguish dissemination to professional development practitioners from one to public and to make efforts to encourage development experts to utilize evaluation results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In order to promote information dissemination to the public, JICA updated the new online brochure published last year, separately from the JICA Annual Evaluation Report. https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/c8h0vm000001rdg1-att/evaluations_01.pdf •Meanwhile, JICA is promoting discussions to further enhance learning and improvement. More specifically, JICA will continue to perform cross-sectoral analyses on the above-mentioned evaluation results and lessons learned, as well as process analyses, statistical analyses, and impact evaluation while seeking advice from experts inside and outside JICA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We can see JICA has made efforts to disseminate information (through conferences, university lectures, and seminars), as previously advised by the Advisory Committee. JICA is expected to intensify its efforts further to disseminate information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •JICA made presentations at the national conference of the Japan Evaluation Society as well as other international conferences and symposiums. (Refer to p. 54)

Related links:

The past suggestions and recommendations from the Committee are available on the JICA website.
[▶ https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/advisory/index.html](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/advisory/index.html)



Efforts to Improve Operations Evaluation

Operations evaluation values assessing project effects to improve future projects and make development assistance more effective as well as to ensure the accountability. This chapter describes the efforts made by JICA in FY2017 to improve its operations evaluation for these purposes.

Enhancing efforts to share, utilize, and feed back*¹ evaluation results

▶ 1. Promoting the use and sharing of operations evaluation results

JICA held a seminar for private enterprises on the in-depth analysis of "Practical Lessons for Development of New Seaports" (refer to JICA Annual Evaluation Report 2016) to share the lessons learned from the evaluation results and discuss how to improve future operations (May 2017). JICA also printed an English report on the process analysis of the Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project (also known as the Delhi Metro Project) in India and distributed the copies to Indian organizations involved in the project as well as relevant agencies engaged in railway projects in other countries to share the knowledge and experience more widely. Moreover, JICA held a seminar for private companies such as development consulting firms (December 2017). (Refer to p. 50-52)

In addition, JICA made presentations on the latest analysis results and interpretations on operations evaluation at conferences held by the Japan Evaluation Society and the Japan Society for International Development to share knowledge and lessons learned from operations evaluation.

▶ 2. Collaboration and cooperation with international organizations

Following the global trend of emphasizing outcome-driven operations, both multilateral and bilateral donors have been conducting a growing number of operations evaluations. JICA is exchanging information on operations evaluation with these development partners.

In FY2017, JICA made a report on the joint case study conducted with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank on the water and sanitation sector in Sri Lanka and presented and discussed the results of the study at an international

seminar (October 2017). (Refer to p. 49)

JICA exchanged views with other donors at an international meeting held by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet), made a presentation at an international symposium (April 2017), and held a seminar inviting evaluation experts from the World Bank.

▶ 3. Using statistical analysis to strengthen feedback mechanisms

JICA has been conducting statistical analysis based on the results of 1020 external evaluations accumulated over time to feed it back for project planning and implementation. In FY2017, the Evaluation Department, in cooperation with operational departments, identified factors affecting overall ratings, such as country/region, sector/issue, and project start year variables, and delved deeper into the analysis. (Refer to p. 56-59)

JICA also worked to enhance the PDCA cycle, for example, by holding a workshop for internal and external practitioners including those at private companies, and relevant ministries to facilitate the efforts of operational department to improve project planning and implementation based on the results of ex-post evaluations and statistical analysis.

▶ 4. Updating JICA Standard Indicator References

In FY2017, JICA continued to develop and update the JICA Standard Indicator References to provide means to properly assess project effects. The revision of these References included adding the Global Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a reference. (Refer to p. 53)

*1 The feedback here means the effort to use evaluation results to improve the evaluated projects themselves as well as to facilitate the planning and implementation of similar projects in the future.

Enhancing the quality of evaluation

▶ 1. Process analysis

In 2016, JICA started process analyses focused on the process through which project outcomes are produced to complement the perspectives of the Five DAC Criteria. JICA continuously performed them on multiple projects in FY2017. (Refer to p. 50-52)

JICA contributed to the international sharing of knowledge and experience by participating in the Global Delivery Initiative (GDI)*² led by the World Bank and incorporating the results from JICA's process analysis results into its online database to provide case study examples. (Refer to p. 55)

▶ 2. Efforts to improve evaluation methods

JICA has been examining how to improve its operations evaluation methods in

order to assess each project in a way that matches the project scheme, ensuring the consistency of evaluations based on the Five DAC Criteria. In FY2017, the evaluation methods for SATREPS and Private Sector Investment Finance projects were reviewed. (Refer to p. 46-49)

▶ 3. Collaboration with experts for external evaluations

JICA has collaborated with experts (academics and experienced practitioners from domestic and overseas universities and NGOs) in ex-post evaluations since FY2015 to bring more specialized and diverse perspectives into the evaluations conducted by external evaluators based on the Five DAC Criteria. Please refer to p. 35-37 for the evaluation results in FY2017.

*2 Referring to the platform led by the World Bank to promote international knowledge management and sharing.

Enhanced safety measures for evaluators

For the safety of evaluators, JICA institutionalized the exclusion of projects located in countries/areas where JICA's travel ban has been imposed for five years and there are difficulties in collecting information and data from the list of ex-post evaluation (Projects in Syria and Yemen are excluded as of June 2017). JICA will consider conducting a country- or sector-wide evaluation in the future when public security is improved enough to perform assessment.

External ex-post evaluations in countries/areas with high security risks were conventionally conducted through desktop analysis (remote-controlled evaluation using local resources to collect information) to ensure the safety of evaluators. In response to the recent deterioration in the global security situation, this type of evaluation was applied to an increasing number of countries/areas in FY2017.

Human resource development

▶ 1. Training programs and seminars for external evaluators

JICA continued to organize training programs on operations evaluation for private enterprises, seminars on external ex-post evaluation references and those on evaluation methods for external evaluators. JICA also continued to provide impact evaluation trainings to strengthen the capacity of development consultants and other practitioners.

▶ 2. Training programs and seminars for JICA staff

JICA provided the staff with trainings such as "How to Set Clear Objectives and

Appropriate Indicators" and "A Guide to Impact Evaluation" to strengthen their evaluation capacity. Those assigned to overseas offices also received trainings on internal ex-post evaluations before they were stationed abroad. Moreover staff at overseas offices received trainings and guidance via video-conference or in person with dispatched Evaluation Department staff.

In order to encourage the staff to utilize evaluation results and lessons learned, JICA held feedback seminars to share insights and lessons learned from the completed evaluation results.