

JICA's Project Evaluation System

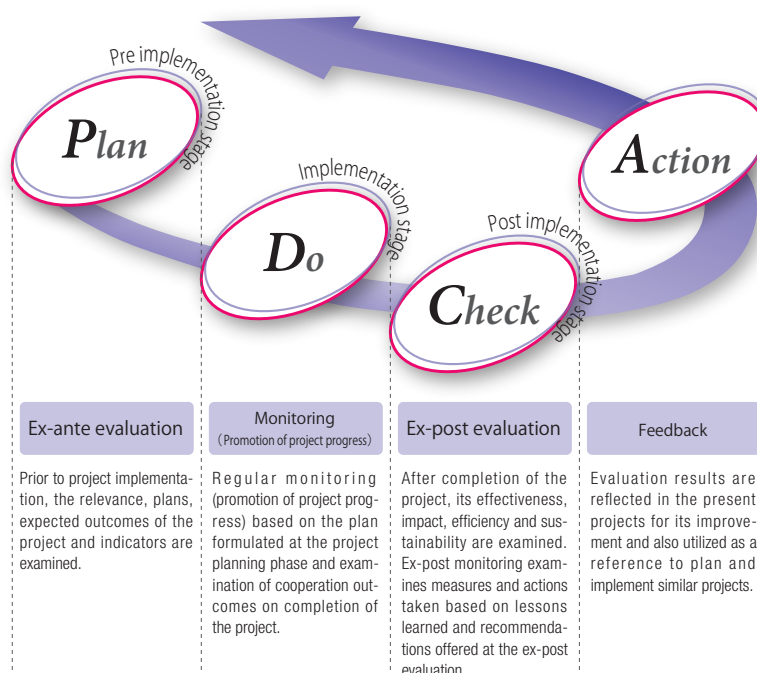
To improve its projects and ensure accountability to stakeholders, JICA implements project evaluation and comprehensive and cross-sectoral thematic evaluation for Technical Cooperation, ODA Loans and Grant Aid projects.

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 project 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 project 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 sets specific themes, such as region, sector and assistance methodology, and conducts comprehensive and cross-sectoral analysis in order to extract trends and problems that are common to particular issues and derive features and good practices by comparing and categorizing projects. With such a different approach of evaluation/analysis, it aims to extract recommendations and lessons, that are not available from ex-post evaluation of a single project. Furthermore,

JICA also endeavors to develop new evaluation methodologies.

In FY 2018, JICA examined the evaluation methodologies applicable to Technical Cooperation for Development Planning (p. 45), visualization of project beneficiaries (p. 46) and application of satellite data (p. 48). JICA also identified the lessons learned for project management in conflict-affected countries and areas (p. 42). Please refer to each page for their details.

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 project evaluation by providing findings of the ex-post evaluation results on JICA's official website.

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 project 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.

Evaluation Results

- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Lessons learned

Action

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

Related link

▶ <https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/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 in FY2017*1

Technical Cooperation	76 projects
ODA Loans	54 projects
Grant Aid	77 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)		
Evaluation perspective and 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 in FY2017 (as of February 2019).

*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 conducts ex-post evaluation after completion of projects of which JICA's contribution is over 200 million yen, and disclose their results immediately to the public in an understandable form. *4

While projects of which JICA's contribution is less than one billion yen are conducted by JICA overseas offices, those with more than one billion yen *5 are evaluated by third-party evaluators (external ex-post evaluation)

to ensure the evaluation more objective. For external evaluation, overall rating system*6 has been adopted to present the results in an easily understandable manner.

◇ Utilization of results of ex-post evaluations

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

Number of Ex-post Evaluation Performed in FY2017*7

Technical Cooperation	(External Evaluation) 11 projects (Internal Evaluation) 75 projects
ODA Loans	(External Evaluation) 38 projects (Internal Evaluation) 0 project
Grant Aid	(External Evaluation) 37 projects (Internal Evaluation) 20 projects

Evaluation at Post implementation Stage by Scheme*8

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*9	Third party (External Evaluation), JICA Overseas Office, etc. (Internal evaluation)		
Evaluation perspective and method	Based on the Five DAC Criteria		

*4 For projects with contributions of less than 200 million yen, their outcomes are confirmed at the project completion.

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

*6 Please refer to p.8 for the rating system.

*7 Evaluation results were confirmed in FY 2018 (as of February 2019). Such results were published as "Evaluation Results in FY 2017 on JICA's website.

*8 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.

*9 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.

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

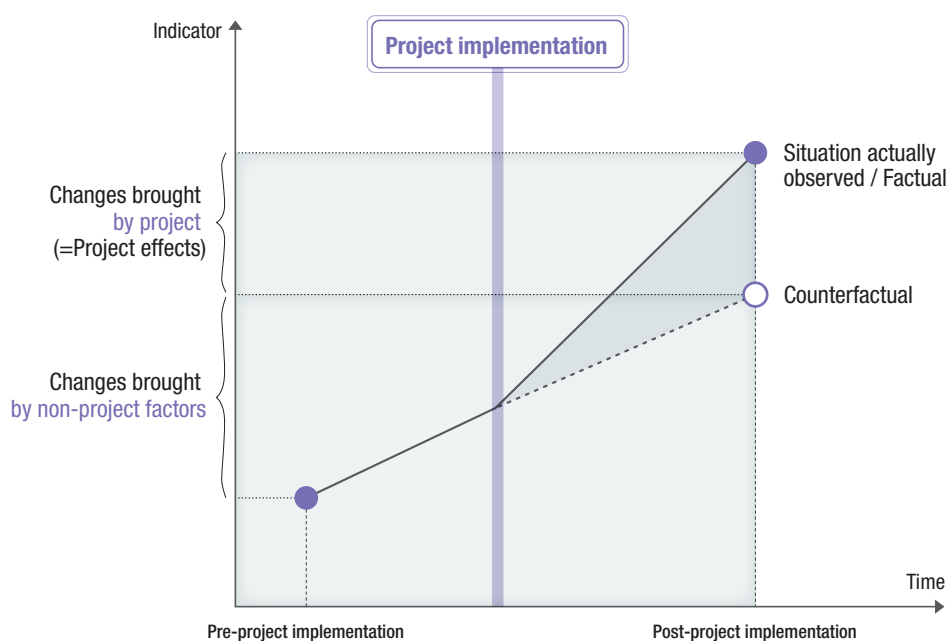
those methodologies that simply analyze before and after projects.

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 2018, impact evaluations were conducted on several projects, including the Picture Books through Reading-Aloud Activities aiming to improve environmental and hygiene educations in India (refer to pp. 54 for their evaluation result). Moreover, JICA conducted a capacity enhancement training course, "Impact Evaluation: Toward Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)", for development consultants and those who were 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 2018, various activities related to JICA's project evaluation and JICA's responses to advice and recommendations by the Committee provided in the past were discussed. Below are the main points discussed in the meetings in FY 2018.

List of Committee Members

(as of January 2019)

Chairperson	
Motoki Takahashi	Professor, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University
Acting Chairperson	
Akifumi Kuchiki	Professor, College of Bioresource Sciences, Nihon University
Members	
Jun Ishimoto	Vice-Chairman, Engineering and Consulting Firms Association, Japan (ECFA)
Katsuji Imata	Board Chair, CSO Network Japan
Takashi Kurosaki	Professor, Institute of Economic Research, Hitotsubashi University
Satoko Kono	President, ARUN LLC
Tetsuo Kondo	Director, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Representation Office in Tokyo
Masaichi Nosaka	Researcher, Yomiuri Research Institute, The Yomiuri Shimbun
Yasukiyo Horiuchi	Deputy Director, International Cooperation Bureau, Keidanren (Japanese Business Federation)
Kiyoshi Yamaya	Professor, Doshisha University Graduate School of Policy and Management

Suggestions and Recommendations from the Committee	Actions Taken by JICA
Evaluation method improvement and analysis, learning and feedback of evaluation results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •With the recognition that emerging issues are not measurable using the conventional Five DAC Criteria alone, efforts should be made to evaluate challenging operations by considering different evaluation methods from other perspectives. •To evaluate a set of outcomes like a cooperation program, as well as evaluating each project, unified evaluation methods applicable for multiple projects should be considered. •Useful results cannot be obtained from quantitative evaluations unless they are quantified with proper methodology. Quantifying indicators is important but quantitative evaluation alone may not suffice. Accordingly, effective evaluation should be achieved by maintaining a balance with qualitative evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Given diversified development issues and assistance schemes, JICA has been considering evaluation methods commensurate with their characteristics. While the Five DAC Criteria constitute the standard perspective for unified and reliable project evaluation, JICA keep challenging from perspective of operation evaluation such as gender perspective (p. 47), consideration of evaluation method together with improving the project management method (p. 42) and other aspects. •Many existing JICA cooperation programs cover relatively broad areas with a longer implementation period. The question of how such programs are evaluated has become relevant and JICA is striving to conduct ex-post evaluation of multiple projects with the same purpose in a unified manner. We attempt to conduct unified ex-ante/-post evaluations for multiple projects under different schemes, such as ODA Loan and Technical Cooperation projects, or Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation projects. •As well as conventional ex-post evaluations of individual projects; assessing both quantitative and qualitative indicators, JICA will keep striving to deepen both quantitative and qualitative analyses by applying an impact evaluation (p. 54) for the former and process analysis (p. 52) focusing on project formulation and implementation process for the latter.
Accountability to citizens and sharing of project evaluation results beyond organizational boundaries	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Not only to leverage past evaluation results and lessons learned for future projects within JICA but also to receive external understanding, JICA should actively share how ex-post evaluation and lessons learned are specifically leveraged for subsequent project formulation and implementation to explain that JICA follows its PDCA cycle in a clearer way. 	<p>JICA has published ex-post evaluation reports which set out the individual project results and lessons learned. We also identify/analyze cross-sectoral lessons with specific themes, which have also been shared through this report (p.42). Moreover, through statistical analysis based on past ex-post evaluations (p.56), JICA will keep striving not only to leverage individual project results and lesson learned but also to gain feedback to project implementation policy for realizing project formulation in line with the overall thrust of cooperation. JICA will strive to share project evaluation results that transcend organizational boundaries.</p>
Review of the decade after the organizational integration in 2008 and future challenges	
<p>During the 2018 milestone for the decade elapsed since the merger between JICA and overseas economic cooperation operations of the then Japan Bank for International Cooperation in 2008, external advisors shared their review of JICA's operational evaluation over the decade and their insight into future issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evaluating development effects by faithfully following the Five DAC Criteria over the last decade is a precious organizational asset. Given that JICA's assistance is to develop recipient countries, the mission of the project evaluation is to confirm and analyze their development effect. •Summarizing and reviewing the background and history of improvement of previous project evaluations will help consolidate and improve the project evaluation. As well as selecting and focusing on evaluations with the limited resources in mind, there is also a need to clarify the evaluation policy as an organization and avoid excessively sticking to international trends. •We request that JICA retain an evaluation for operations, not as an end to itself. Despite attempting various evaluation methods, the true purpose of evaluation involves contributing to operational improvement, rather than devising any new evaluation method. We expect evaluations and proposals that are useful in the field. 	

Related links:

The past suggestions and recommendations from the Committee are available on the JICA website.
 ▶ <https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/evaluation/iinkai/index.html>



Efforts to Improve Project Evaluation

Project evaluation values assessing project effects to improve future projects and make development assistance more effective as well as ensuring accountability. This section describes the efforts made by JICA in FY2018 to improve its project evaluation for these purposes.

Promoting the use of evaluation results and lessons

1. Using evaluation results and lessons at the project planning stage

To promote the use of evaluation results and lessons learned from past projects, there is a need to incorporate the results and the latest lessons at the project planning stage. JICA strives to leverage them at the project planning stage, and considered leveraging measures are described in the ex-ante evaluation sheet.

2. Feedback of evaluation results to applying statistical analysis of projects

Based on around 1,600 (internal and external) accumulated ex-post evaluations, JICA has conducted statistical analysis to provide feedback to improve project planning and implementation since FY 2014. The statistical analysis intend to improve project implementation by identifying successful/unsuccessful factors. Refer to p. 56 for the analytical results in FY 2018.

3. Efforts for EBPM

Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM) has recently become a worldwide trend and involves verifying a causal relationship (evidence) between past measures taken and their results for more effective policy making. To promote the further use of results and lesson learned in past projects, JICA has also striven to closely analyze a causal relationship (grounds = evidence) between development projects implemented and methodologies applied and their results through the impact evaluation to formulate a more

effective development plan and project implementation. Refer to p. 54-55 or specific details of the impact evaluation.

4. Collaboration/cooperation with international organizations

To promote the use of project evaluation results and lessons learned, JICA has boosted international sharing of knowledge and experience by participating in the Global Delivery Initiative (GDI)*¹ led by the World Bank and incorporating the results from JICA's process analysis results into its online database for case study examples. This database involves deploying the evaluation results of international development institutions as case studies, categorizing various delivery challenges in project implementation under common criteria and visualizing in a user-friendly manner, to share knowledge and experience globally.

5. Sharing of evaluation results, lessons learned and analytical results

JICA to distributes the latest analytical results and studies related to project evaluation at the Japan Evaluation Society, the Japan Society for International Development, international conference and on other occasions to expand sharing and leverage the knowledge and experience obtained. JICA engaged actively in coordination with emerging aid donors by participating in the Asian Evaluation Week and the North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum, in particular, held in China and South Korea, respectively. Refer to p. 52 for the activities in FY 2018.

*1: Referring to the platform led by the World Bank to promote international knowledge management and sharing. (<http://globaldeliveryinitiative.org/>)

Improvement of the evaluation, method and system

6. Integrated ex-ante/-post evaluations of Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation projects

Evaluation of existing cooperation programs is challenging, given the relatively broad scope of development purpose and longer implementation period. With more practical perspectives, JICA has striven to conduct ex-ante and ex-post evaluations of multiple projects with the same purpose and in an integrated manner.

As well as conducting ex-post evaluations integrating the ODA loan and Technical Cooperation projects to date, from this year JICA will attempt to conduct integrated ex-ante and -post evaluations of Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation projects that share the same purpose.

7. Analysis from perspectives other than the Five DAC Criteria

While JICA's project evaluation is based on the Five DAC Criteria, analyses from other perspectives are also expected to identify useful

lessons to further improve project formulation and implementation in future.

Focusing on the process of achieving project outcomes, JICA has recently promoted process analysis for this purpose. Refer to p. 52 for details.

8. Securing the quality of internal ex-post evaluation

In principle, JICA overseas offices initiate internal ex-post evaluations for projects involving contributions of less than 1 billion yen. To ensure its quality, staff assigned to overseas offices has training in internal ex-post evaluations before being stationed abroad. Where necessary, officers of the Evaluation Department are dispatched to an overseas office to provide training and supervision on internal evaluations. JICA also implements third-party quality checks to verify the objectivity and impartiality of evaluation judgements. Refer to p. 39 for details.

Others

9. Training programs and seminars to develop human resources for evaluations

JICA continues to organize training programs and seminars on external ex-post evaluation references and on evaluation methods for external evaluators conducting ex-post evaluations. JICA has also continued providing impact evaluation training sessions (p. 55) to strengthen the capacity of development consultants and other practitioners involved in JICA operations.

The capacity of internal human resources for project evaluations has also been developed. As well as various staff training sessions, JICA organizes feedback seminars to share updated insights and lessons learned from the completed evaluation results in the previous year to

encourage the staff to utilize evaluation results and lessons learned.

10. Efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The need to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to measure outcomes is stated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which set out the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of our project evaluation, JICA has been supporting efforts to improve the project evaluation capacity in each country through joint evaluations with the Thai and Philippine governments (p. 34).

JICA has also been striving to list SDGs Global Indicators (provisionally) on JICA Indicator References to help set indicators of individual projects; taking SDGs into consideration.