

Summary of the Evaluation Survey

Analysis of Evaluation on the Team Dispatch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

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1. Outline of Evaluation Study

1-1 Prehistory and Objectives of Evaluation Study

JICA has been developing the "team dispatch" program as part of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Dispatch Program since 1984. In the JOCV "individual dispatch" program, one volunteer is dispatched to a site and performs an activity individually. In contrast, the "team dispatch" program dispatches two or more volunteers as a team whose activities are aimed at achieving the common objective such as developing the local economy and society and improving the standard of living of the local people.

This survey was conducted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Team Dispatch Program by evaluating its projects in the past with a cross-sectional method.

1-2 Task Force for Evaluation

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1-3 Period of Survey

9 October 2001 - 28 December 2001

In-country Preparation Work	9 October - 17 November
On-site Survey	18 November - 2 December
In-country Work	3 December - 28 December

2. Evaluation Method

2-1 Projects for Evaluation

(1) Projects for Evaluation

Project				
	Country	Field	Assistance From	Period
(1) Strengthening of National Artificial Insemination Program (Phase-1, -2)				
	the Philippines	Agriculture/Forestry/Fisheries	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	July 1989- July1998
National Artificial Breeding Center (NABC) was the implementing organization in the recipient country. In order to raise productivity of livestock farming and the income of the stock farmers in over 120 municipalities, the project improved the engineers' knowledge and techniques of artificial insemination (AI), and introduced the National Artificial Insemination Program.				
(2) Enhancement of Practical Works in Science and Mathematics Education at Regional Level				
	the Philippines	Education	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	March 1994 - May 2001
A team of JOCVs was dispatched as part of package cooperation including Project-type Technical Cooperation, Dispatch of Experts and Technical Training. Under the program to reeducate mathematics and science teachers in service, the Project carried out activities such as the division training program at the three Regional Science Teaching Centers, in order to improve the teaching quality of the teachers.				
(3) Model Project for the Development of Hill tribes towards Self-Reliant Communities				
	Thailand	Village Development	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	October 1997 - September 2002
The Project aimed at establishing basis for people's self-reliant in four villages in Tak Province and conducted activities to organize villages, collect basic data for future development, improve education and the health/sanitation standard, and manage income generation project.				
(4) Green Promotion Project				
	Senegal	Agriculture/Forestry/Fisheries	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	January 1993 - December 1998
The Project enlightened and educated local people of two districts in Thies through technical guidance and promotion activities, and promoted tree planting.				
(5) Medical Projects at Goudiry				
	Senegal	Medical Care	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	April 1992 - March 1998
The Project supported the improvement of people's knowledge about health through conducting health care, and maternal and child health services by health personnel, improving health service such as immunization and implementation of health and nutrition education.				
(6) The Lobi Horticultural Appropriate Technology Extension Project				
	Malawi	Agriculture/Forestry/Fisheries	Team Dispatch of Cooperation Volunteers	November 1998 - October2003
The project was aimed at increasing the production of horticulture crops by developing horticulture techniques suitable for local environment and introduce them to farmers in Lobi, Dedza.				

(2) Selection of the Cases

JICA had dispatched 13 JOCV teams, at the point JICA conducted this study. Due to the budget and time constraint, this survey focused on six teams and the following three points:

- ✓ Freshness of Data; Putting higher priority on the projects conducted in the 1990s and completed recently (this survey was carried out in October 2001).
- ✓ Regional Balance; Selecting the same number of projects from Asia and Africa, where team dispatch projects had been mainly carried out.
- ✓ Balance of Fields; Selecting projects from different fields.

2-2 Perspectives for Evaluation

This survey assumed that the team dispatch program has the three effects below, and evaluated the projects from the three perspectives which are effects of project, human resources development and mutual understanding.

- (1) The team dispatch of volunteers contributes to social and economic development in the recipient countries more than does the individual dispatch (project effects).
- (2) The team dispatch is more effective to develop JOCV's management capacity and leadership useful in the international cooperation field than is the individual dispatch (human recourse development effects).
- (3) As in the case of the individual dispatch, the team dispatch contributes to strengthening ties between the recipient country and Japan through mutual understanding between local people and the volunteers (mutual understanding effects).

2-3 Evaluation Method

(1) Evaluation Method

The team dispatch is similar to Project-type Technical Cooperation in the following two aspects: (a) exchange of Minutes of Understanding between JICA and the recipient country before starting, and (b) preparation of Project Design Matrix (PDM). Therefore, this survey evaluated "project effects" of the team dispatch, the one of the three perspectives mentioned above (see 2-2), were evaluated by the same method as that for "Project-type Technical Cooperation". The six projects were evaluated in terms of the DAC's Five Evaluation Criteria ("Relevance", "Effectiveness", "Efficiency", "Impact" and "Sustainability")¹ and "Promoting Factors" and "Impeding Factors" to realize the project effects, which were followed by cross-sectional analyses.

"Human recourse development effects" and "mutual understanding effects" were evaluated and analyzed with both quantitative and qualitative data. Human resources development effects were analyzed using the percentage of ex-volunteers who were working or

¹ They were proposed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD in 1991 to provide viewpoints project evaluation.

intended to work in the international cooperation field and the comments of concerned people on the volunteers' management capacities and leadership. Mutual understanding effects were analyzed with the percentage of ex-volunteers who introduced “Japan” such as Japanese culture during the project period, the cases of contact with people in the recipient countries after returning Japan, and the comments of local people on Japan and volunteers.

(2) Measures for Collecting Data

This survey conducted analysis of existing materials, interviews with concerned people, and via a questionnaire polled Ex-volunteers. The questionnaires were sent to Ex-volunteers of the six projects (119 people) and individual ex-volunteers who were dispatched to the countries where the six projects were taking place around the same time (295 people). 49 and 101 people answered, respectively.

The survey team also conducted field research, such as on-the-spot visits, interviews with government bodies and counterpart organizations, and questionnaires to final beneficiaries and focus group interviews. The survey team, however, did not implement fieldwork for the two projects (“Enhancement of a Practical Approach to Science and Math Education at the Regional Level” Project of the Philippines and “the Lobi Horticultural Appropriate Technology Extension Project” of Malawi), since JICA had already carried out evaluation studies (the terminal evaluation for the Philippines project and the mid-term evaluation for Malawi Project) before this survey (this survey was carried out in October 2001). The team analyzed these two Projects with the existing materials and interviews in Japan.

3. Results of Survey

The table below shows the cross-sectional summary of the evaluation for the projects.

	Relevance of Plan	Degree of Achievement of the Project Purpose	Efficiency of Implementation	Impact	Sustainability	Major Promoting Factors	Major Impeding Factors
the Philippines (1) Strengthening of National Artificial Insemination Program	++	+++	++	+++	+++	Great necessity of the beneficiaries Project design	Development of most adequate techniques
the Philippines (2) Enhancement of Practical Works in Science and Math Education at Regional Level	+	++	+	++	++	Great necessity of the beneficiaries	Project design
Thailand (3) Model Project for the Development of Hilltribes towards Self-Reliant Communities	+++	++	++	++	++	Project design Commitment of recipient country's organization	Change of counterpart
Senegal (4) Green Promotion Project	+	++	+	+++	+++	Great necessity of the beneficiaries	Project design Commitment of recipient country's organization
Senegal (5) Medical Projects at Goudiry	+	++	+	+++	+++	Great necessity of the beneficiaries	Project Design
Malawi (6) The Lobi Horticultural Appropriate Technology Extension Project	+++	+++	+++	+	+++	Project design Consistency of leader Commitment of recipient country's organization Consistency Leader	N/A

Legends: +++:Extremely High ++:Moderately High +:Not So High

4. Results of Evaluation

This chapter shows the results of the evaluation from each of the three view points, (1) project effects, (2) human resources development effects and (3) mutual understanding effects.

4-1 Project Effects

(1) Evaluation Based on Individual Project Evaluation

Examining the six projects using a cross-sectional method, this survey indicated that a project with a clear and simple design mixed with strong sense of ownership on the side of the recipient country, shows a high degree in the achievement of Project purpose (e.g., (6)). A project which specializes in transferring simple, low cost and culture and environment-friendly technologies (e.g., (1) and (6)) also tends to have good achievements.

Even if the project design is slightly unclear or there are impeding factors, the team dispatch projects have been completed with high sustainability. The fact that the program is in line with governmental policy and the needs of local people and its merits is easily recognized e.g., (1), (4) and (5). In order to ensure the sustainability of technology transferred to the staff of the counterpart organization, the capacity of the organizations must be improved first.

The study results imply that grassroots-type projects have good achievements in impacts and sustainability, but the reason is not clear (e.g., (4) and (5)).

(2) Evaluation Results of Interview and Questionnaires

Although the team dispatch needs a larger input than the individual dispatch, its outcome is commensurate with or more significant than the input. The team dispatch projects show a higher level of sustainability and impacts, and they often lead to other cooperation programs. As a result, the team dispatch is perceived more favorably than the individual dispatch by the recipient country.

1) Good Reputation with Governments and Counterparts in Recipient Countries

Compared with individual dispatch, some of the interviewees pointed out that the team dispatch was a better approach as it was well-organized. They also commented that it was more appealing because its impacts were more readily observed.

2) Significant Sustainability

In the projects that are highly consistent with governmental policy and needs of the local people, the benefits of the beneficiaries are very visible. The sustainability of the project, therefore, effect tends to be significant.

3) Huge Impact

The team dispatch projects, in which volunteers approach the local people directly, have more significant impacts than individual dispatch or projects in which set certain facility as a base for technical transfer to counterparts at a site.

4) Cooperation with Other Programs or triggers for New Projects

Team dispatch projects are often linked to other ODA programs conducted in the same country or in some cases they become a trigger for a new project, as its grassroots activities are helpful in grasping the needs of the local people. “Cooperation for Promoting Tree-planting” in Senegal, for example, was a clue for “Green Promotion Project”, led to Project-type Technical Cooperation, “the Integrated Community Forestry Development Project”. JICA is also considering a new project on the basis of “Strengthening of National Artificial Insemination Program” in the Philippines.

5) Reliable System for Implementation and Operation

Compared with the individual dispatch, the implementation and operation system of the team dispatch has been established in the way to realize its goal more efficiently. The annual report is useful since it gives an opportunity for volunteers to review their activities and it enables them to share the progress with the recipient countries' organizations.

6) Consistency with the Expectations from Current Volunteer

Compared with volunteers in the past, recent volunteers (i) tend to expect to be given specific tasks; (ii) are able to produce more significant outputs when they have specific tasks; and (iii) are willing to be evaluated and interested in the results of results, according to the coordinators of overseas offices of JICA. Hence, it could be assumed that the team dispatch matches the character of current young volunteers. In order to take advantage of this, it is necessary to prepare a clear and adequate project design, work contents and indicators for easy evaluation of effects.

7) Smooth Coordination with Other Donor Countries

The ex-volunteer of the Goudiry Medical Care Project pointed out that the staff of other donor countries tends to be more interested in team dispatch volunteers than in individual volunteers. This implies that team dispatch projects have potential to cooperate with other donor countries and consequently function more efficiently.

4-2 Human Resource Development Effects

Compared with individual dispatch, more ex-volunteers of team dispatch programs are interested in work in the international cooperation field, and acquire management skills and leadership. As the following results of this survey show, the team dispatch program is more effective in human resource development of volunteers.

(1) Significant Interest in International Cooperation Field

According to the questionnaire to the ex-volunteers, the percentage of team dispatch ex-volunteers working in the international cooperation field is more than twice that of the individual dispatch ex-volunteers (the team dispatch: 29%, the individual dispatch: 13%). Especially, in French-speaking West Africa, including Senegal where a field study was conducted, some of the team dispatch ex-volunteers have become local JICA staff, or JICA experts in Project-type Technical Cooperation and others have been working as private consultants. As this case shows team dispatch program can foster human resources for JICA.

(2) High level Management Capacity/Leadership

Compared with the ex-volunteers of individual dispatch, team dispatch ex-volunteers tend to acquire management skills and leadership. Some ex-volunteers have established organizations and are engaged in activities in the international cooperation field (according to interviewed ex-volunteers of the Goudiry Medical Care Project and members of the supporting committee in Japan).

(3) Intense to achieve the Results

Team dispatch volunteers have a stronger awareness of achievement of results than individual dispatch volunteers (the team dispatch: 94%, the individual dispatch: 85%). On the other hand, the latter tends to place much importance on “international exchange with the local people” than the former (the team dispatch: 65%, the individual dispatch: 74%).

4-3 Mutual Understanding Effects

Compared with individual dispatch volunteers, team dispatch volunteers are slightly less willing to introduce “Japan” to the people of the recipient countries. Due to the great impact of the cooperation itself, however, many local people understand and become friendly toward Japan. As the following results show that in the case of team dispatch projects, mutual understanding spreads much wider than in the case of individual dispatch programs.

(1) Activities to Introduce Japan

According to the questionnaire polling to what extent the volunteers had carried out the activity of introducing “Japan” to the local people, 57 percent of team dispatch ex-volunteers answered that they did “very actively” or “to some degree”, while 68 percent of individual dispatch ex-volunteers responded “very actively” or “to some degree. This result shows that team dispatch volunteers have a slightly negative tendency in introducing “Japan”. Team dispatch volunteers have more opportunities to come in contact with Japanese but fewer occasions to be in contact with the local people (according to the questionnaire for ex-volunteers) and fewer opportunities to introduce “Japan” than individual dispatch volunteers.

(2) Effect of Improving Impression of Japan

As team dispatch projects have far more significant impacts on the region than the individual dispatch, many people, including both counterparts and local people, become friendly toward Japan (According to the interview with organizations concerned in the recipient countries).

(3) Exchange with the Recipient Countries after Homecoming

There is no difference between volunteers of the individual dispatch and the team dispatch in the aspect of exchange with people in the recipient countries including local people. When it comes to interaction with counterparts, however, team dispatch ex-volunteers are slightly more involved. This is possibly because the team dispatch volunteers have many opportunities to contact counterparts and are able to establish a close relationship.

5. Supporting System

Since not a small number of problems in domestic and overseas supporting systems for team dispatch program have been presented in the process of the evaluation survey, they are summarized in a separate section.

Though some team dispatch projects organize supporting committees in Japan, team dispatch projects usually do not have a special supporting system. According to the answers to questionnaires, many team dispatch ex-volunteers requested improvement in the response of JICA headquarters, recruiting and language training.

5-1 Supporting System in Japan

(1) Improvement in JICA Headquarters

Some ex-volunteers requested JICA headquarters to enhance the quality of preparatory studies, and make clear the responsibilities relative to the project.

(2) Improvement in Technical Advisors system

JICA employs technical advisors to provide technical advice with volunteers. It has been pointed out that multiple technical advisors are needed if activities cover broad areas and advisors should be given more opportunities to visit local sites in order to provide effective advice (according to interviewed technical advisors).

(3) Requests concerning Domestic Supporting Committee

In the “Green Promotion Project” and “Medical Projects at Goudiry” (both were conducted in Senegal), a supporting committee was established in Japan. However, effective support and advice were not provided due to a change of staff in charge of the committee and members of the committee, and a lack of local information (according to interviewed ex-members of the committee).

(4) Improvement in Recruitment of Volunteers

Many team dispatch ex-volunteers have indicated that it had not been fully explained to them the system of “team dispatch” and the tasks they would be in charge of.

(5) Improvement in Training before Dispatch

Many requests are presented for more substantial contents of training related to project management skills and the projects in which they would participate.

(6) Timing and Period of Dispatch

Generally, it takes about one year from the time of the request for volunteer to be dispatched. In the case of team dispatch, volunteers with the skills required for projects cannot always be recruited on time, because the timing of recruitment, which is conducted twice a year, does not necessarily coincide with the timing of the request for a team dispatch of volunteers by the recipient country.

5-2 Supporting System in Recipient Countries

(1) Supporting System in Overseas Offices of JICA

The overseas offices of JICA do not have a specific supporting system for team dispatch projects, for example, instruction about team dispatch a project is given to volunteer coordinators by headquarter of JICA. JICA needs to organize a series of basic operations and points to keep in mind.

(2) Training in Recipient Country

Some of the people concerned in recipient countries and volunteer coordinators pointed out that the quality of the training in the recipient county should be improved and the period of it should be extended in order to improve the volunteers' language ability and to enhance understanding of the local culture and customs.

(3) Publication of JOCV Program

The staff of JICA overseas offices indicated that the local people often confuse JOCV with other aid programs. This misunderstanding, when it is not corrected, may be an obstacle to volunteers' activities.

6. Lessons

The following lessons can be derived from the points in the previous section in order to make the team dispatch program more effectively and efficiently.

6-1 Lessons for Planning Stage

- (1) In order to formulate a better plan, it is recommended to dispatch an individual dispatch volunteer first to gather information about feasibility of team dispatch projects.
- (2) JOCV is to work with local people, assess the needs, flexibility revise a plan and disseminate the techniques which are consistent with the local needs. Therefore, at the stage of planning, it is essential to select areas where support is most needed.
- (3) Establishing project ownership on the side of the recipient country is a vital factor for success. Therefore, it is effective to dispatch senior volunteers or individual volunteers to establish a good relationship between JOCV and counterpart bodies at the planning stage.
- (4) It is essential to design projects with logical coherence.
- (5) As volunteers conduct activities with local people, it is important for them to understand economic conditions and the technical level of the beneficiaries and select the appropriate techniques.
- (6) Since counterparts play the key roles in the projects, it is necessary to ensure that the appropriate number of qualified counterparts be assigned at the stage of planning.
- (7) The public recruitments of JOCVs are often not suitable to recruit volunteers with the proper professional and required skills for team dispatch projects. To cope with this issue, JICA should consider “pool system of the human resources” and a system to transfer individual volunteers in service to team volunteers.
- (8) In team dispatch project, the quality of leader is a key factor for success. Therefore, JICA should review the procedure for selecting leaders and the training contents of the candidates.
- (9) JICA should consider a cooperation of team dispatch project with other ODA projects at the planning stage. This can create a greater effect by taking advantage of the comparative superiority of JOCVs in grassroots activities.

6-2 Lessons for Implementation Stage

- (1) It is desired that JICA have a specially appointed full-time secretary or “Team Dispatch Management Division (a tentative name)” to grasp and control team dispatch projects consistently.
- (2) An effective supporting committee in Japan, technical advisors and senior volunteers should be assigned as necessary and utilized.
- (3) It is necessary to establish a project implementing body consisting of people concerned

including government bodies in recipient countries, counterpart organizations, JICA overseas offices and cooperation volunteers, which is responsible for all aspects of supervising and implementation of the project. That will enhance continuity of the project and enable effective/efficient operation.

(4) It is essential to establish a documentation management system. At first, JICA must be punctual in submission of annual reports of all projects.

(5) In terms of checking and revising the project plan, it is desirable to involve counterparts and beneficiaries in the monitoring. It should be carried out at least once a year during the project period.

(6) JICA should clarify the work content and develop manuals for volunteer coordinators in overseas offices, because they are the ones to play key roles in supporting the team dispatch projects.

(7) As volunteers in service need various information, such as the latest information in the recipient countries and other volunteers' activities, a system to provide such information is required.

(8) Volunteers, who cooperate mainly with the local people, may need training in the local language other than the official language in the recipient countries. Understanding of local culture and customs is also required. JICA should consider shortening the period of training in Japan and extending the period of on-site training instead.

(9) Enhancement of publicity about the JOCV program to be the governmental and local level is needed.

6-3 Lessons for Project Evaluation Stage

(1) Since the JOCV program has the characteristic of direct contact with the local people, it is important that the evaluation include a viewpoint of participatory evaluation.

(2) In order to ensure the accountability as an ODA program and enhance the volunteers' motivation, it is necessary to consider a system to monitor and evaluate each volunteer's activity.

(3) Establishment of the feedback system and sharing of information are required to utilize lessons and recommendations obtained from the evaluation survey.

(4) Individual volunteers are often dispatched to follow up team dispatch projects after their completion. In order to make the follow-up team more fruitful, institutionalization of the follow-up system including a formal procedure should be considered.