

Summary Sheet

Ex-Post Evaluation conducted by JICA Malaysia Office

1. Outline of the Project				
Country: Malaysia		Project title: “Strengthening of the Food Safety Programme in Malaysia”		
Field: Food safety and hygiene management		Cooperation scheme: Project-type Technical Cooperation		
Section in charge: Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health		Total cost: (note RM1 = JPY 32) Japanese side (Yen ¥169,214,668) Malaysian side (RM 12,626,785)		
Period of Cooperation	1 June 2001 to 31 May 2004 (3 years)	Partner Country’s Related Organization(s): Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health		
	Follow Up 1 June 2005 to 31 May 2006	Supporting Organization in Japan: Ministry of Health and Labor		
Related Cooperation:				
1-1 Background of the Project				
<p>In 1999, the JICA examined the possibility of providing support for a food safety programme in Malaysia. A JICA-assisted project was started in June 2001. The project targeted 5 out of the then operating 14 food laboratories, i.e., 1 National Public Health Laboratory (Sungai Buloh), 1 Public Health Laboratory (Johor Bahru) and 3 Food Quality Control Laboratories (Perlis, Sarawak and Kelantan).</p>				
1-2 Project Overview				
To strengthen the food safety and hygiene programme implemented by the Ministry of Health				
(1) Overall Goal	1) To reduce health hazard caused by eating contaminated food 2) To increase consumer’s confidence in food safety in Malaysia			
(2) Project Purpose	To increase the availability of safe food for Malaysian consumers			
(3) Output	1) Food hygiene management is strengthened 2) Means to prevent food in the market, which is not in compliance with the Food Act and Regulations, are strengthened. 3) Means of providing information on food safety for consumers is improved.			
(4) Input	Japanese side:			
	Long-term Experts	4	Equipment	227.1 million yen
	Short-term Expert	27	Local Cost	31.9 million yen
	Trainees received	20		
	Malaysia’s side:			
	Counterparts	28		
	Equipment	RM 7,038,451		
Local Cost	RM 5,588,344			

2. Evaluation Team		
Members of Evaluation Team	JICA Malaysia Office (commissioned PE Research Sdn Bhd)	
Period of evaluation	February 14 to March 4, 2008	Type of Evaluation: Ex-Post Evaluation
3. Project Performance		
3-1 Performance of Project Purpose		
<p>Number of consignments inspected has increased from 11,683 in 2003 to 143,121 in 2006. This means FSQD achieved strengthen food safety management system. On the other hand, FSQD has developed a total of 127 SOPs for establish standard testing and analysis methodology at each laboratories. FSQD also has conducted public relation activities for industries and strengthen enforcement of laws. As a result, percentage of samples that contravened the Food Act 1983 has reduced from 9.4 per cent in 2003 to 4.8 per cent in 2007. By taking these facts into consideration, the project purpose has been achieved.</p>		
3-2 Achievement related to Overall Goal		
<p>FSQD established a management system of food safety based on appropriate sampling and proper biological research and testing method through the project. This means the risk of eating contaminated foods became lower. It will be necessary for FSQD to catch up with new technology of research and improve management system to tackle with increasing varieties of foods while there is no obvious problem regarding food safety in present situation. This will be a challenge of FSQD in the future.</p>		
3-3 Follow up of the Recommendations by Terminal Evaluation Study		
<p>Technical transfer on securing credibility of research and testing method and evaluation of exposure level of chemical contains were held by Japanese experts and, at the same time, acquisition level of counterparts regarding these topics are evaluated. Their skill and knowledge were satisfactory. The credibility section was established in NPHL and practices of securing credibility have been done regularly. It is concluded FSQD established a system to practice proper checking method at each PHLs.</p>		
4. Result of Evaluation		
4-1 Summary of Evaluation Results		
(1) Impact		
a. Achievement of the Overall Goal:		
<p>FSQD established a management system of food safety based on appropriate sampling and proper biological research and testing method through the project. FSQD has developed a total of 127 SOPs including analytical methods. Percentage of samples that contravened the Food Act 1983 has reduced from 9.4 per cent in 2003 to 4.8 per cent in 2007. Number of consignments inspected has increased from 11,683 in 2003 to 143,121 in 2006. Therefore, it is concluded that the Overall Goal has almost been achieved.</p>		
b. Unintended Effects:		
<p>ISO certification due to the development of SOPs on analytical methods and procedures.</p>		

(2) Sustainability

a. Institutional Aspect:

The FSQD has 3 departments i.e., Standard and Quality Control Department (formed in 2004), Food Chemical Department and Food Microbiology Department. 40 staff was trained during the project period. Out of this, three have since resigned. Current technical staff at the three core laboratories (NPHL Sungai Buloh, PHL Johor and PHL Perlis) has increased to 81 persons from 71 persons at the time of project completion.

b. Financial Aspect:

In terms of financial aspects FSQD management indicated that they have both financial and economic capacity for implementing and developing project activities smoothly. The annual budget for the programme has been increasing yearly as evidenced by the current budget of the organization at RM22.9 million compared to RM12.2 million at the time of project completion.

c. Technical Aspects

In terms of technological aspects FSQD management indicated that they have been using the equipment, their staff have used the SOPs and performed the activities as envisaged since completion of the project. Echo training especially in laboratory analysis has been an ongoing activity. Currently they are in the process of expanding and redeveloping the FOSIM application.

4-2 Factors that have promoted Project

(1) Impact

The impact of the project has been very beneficial to the Ministry of Health's programme on food safety. The project's resources have been expanded with the Government of Malaysia increasing manpower, budget and resources to the food safety programme. The activities of the project have been rolled out to more PHLs, with concomitant training provided since project completion.

(2) Sustainability

New methods and SOPs have been developed since project completion as a result of knowledge transferred from the project. Counterparts have shown their commitment in utilizing the skills and knowledge acquired from the project. Ongoing improvements in the application of FOSIM with an expansion of the system to more entry points have strengthened the inspection of imported food to Malaysia. Continuous echo training undertaken to train new personnel in laboratory analysis has yielded good results.

4-3 Factors that have inhibited Project

(1) Impact

None was found in the evaluation.

(2) Sustainability

PHL Johor indicated the lack of trained personnel due to a high turnover of staff, particularly those who are transferred elsewhere. This situation has reduced the effectiveness of the PHL Johor's role as the reference laboratory for Food Packaging.

Some of the equipments (particularly from Japan) installed during the project period did not have any service contracts, and no local agency was able to provide service maintenance. Thus, the cost of repair and maintenance, parts replacement, has been high and time consuming.

4-4 Conclusion

The overall goal of the JICA Project is to reduce health hazard caused by eating unsafe food and to increase consumer's confidence in food safety in Malaysia. This is the intended overall impact of the Project. The indicators are: (1) Contamination by food borne pathogens and other hazards is reduced; and (2) Customers' satisfaction with food safety.

The project purpose was to increase the availability of safe food for Malaysian consumers. The indicator for the project purpose was that the Ministry of Health improves the system of food safety.

FSQD has already developed and completed a total of 127 SOPs including analytical methods. Percentage of samples that contravened the Food Act 1983 has reduced from 9.4 per cent in 2003 to 4.8 per cent in 2007. Number of consignments inspected has increased from 11,683 in 2003 to 143,121 in 2006.

The JICA Project has also made significant contribution towards improving FSQD's institutional capacity in terms of trained counterparts being able to undertake more complex analysis, as well as in development of new methods directly from Project imparted skills. In short, the overall goal of the Project has been achieved.

In terms of the unintended impacts, the positive impact has been the ISO certification and the appointment of the NPHL Sungai Buloh as the National Reference Lab for Mycotoxin in 2005.

4-5 Recommendations

(1) Recommendations for Malaysian Government

Institutional commitment with regards to human resource and budget allocations are necessary for the Project outcomes to be sustained. The commitment of the top management of the Ministry of Health to the project is necessary for the sustainability of the programme.

(2) Recommendations for JICA

The main issues are the lack of local service agents for the equipments donated by JICA for the project. Maintenance, repairs and parts replacement was an issue as the equipments donated by JICA could not be replaced by the FSQD.

4-6 Lessons Learned

In future projects, donor agencies should be encouraged to review with their partner agencies the issue of financial implications of maintenance and replacements.

Focus should also be given to administration and management functions besides the technical content.

4-7 Follow-up Situation

During the follow up cooperation period, the project conducted technical transfer on method of securing credibility and evaluation method of chemical contains' exposure level. As a result, credibility section was established and evaluations of testing result are practiced regularly.