More Effective and Efficient Cooperation

In order to implement more effective and efficient cooperation, it is important to implement projects that meet the needs of developing countries. It is also important to evaluate what has been achieved by the projects, and then reflect the lessons and recommendations on improvements in the implementation of new projects. The purpose of JICA’s project evaluations is to assess the relevance of a project and cooperation effectiveness as objectively as possible at the ex-ante, mid-term, terminal, and ex-post stages. JICA strives to implement more effective and efficient cooperation with the support and understanding of Japanese citizens by utilizing the results of evaluation in planning and improvement of projects and in securing accountability*.

Three Perspectives in Evaluation

JICA’s project evaluation can be classified into the following three perspectives.

1. Evaluation Focus

ODA evaluation can be classified into three levels—policy, program and project levels—among which JICA conducts project and program levels of evaluation (See Figure 3-7).

Project evaluation is evaluation for individual projects and conducted by the operating department and JICA overseas offices. It is for deciding on whether to continue or adjust cooperation activities, reflecting lessons on similar projects, and securing accountability.

On the other hand, JICA’s program evaluation evaluates several projects which share overall goals (end outcomes) and/or development issues or programs of specified cooperation schemes such as volunteer programs or disaster relief programs comprehensively. These evaluations are carried out as country program evaluations or thematic evaluations under the supervision of the Office of Evaluation of the Planning and Coordination Department of JICA. These evaluation results are used for improving JICA country programs and sector-specified guidelines, as well as for identifying and planning new projects.

2. Evaluation within Operating Cycle

Project level evaluations are classified into four types within operating cycles: ex-ante, mid-term, terminal, and ex-post. All program level evaluations are categorized as ex-post evaluations.

1) Ex-ante evaluation

The ex-ante evaluation is carried out prior to the implementation of a project to examine needs and priorities of the recipient country, consistencies with the aid policy of Japan, and JICA country programs. Also it is conducted to clarify the predicted effect of cooperation through detailed examinations of projects and to examine and evaluate the appropriateness of a project comprehensively. Indicators of a project made at the ex-ante stage will be used to measure the effects of cooperation from mid-term to ex-post evaluations.

2) Mid-term evaluation

The mid-term evaluation is conducted during implementation of a project for understanding achievement of the project and the implementation process. It is conducted for evaluating the project from the perspective of relevance and efficiency, reviewing the original plan, and strengthening project management if necessary to achieve the goals.

3) Terminal evaluation

The terminal evaluation is conducted to evaluate the achievement of the project purpose and efficiency of the project comprehensively. Based on the result, it is decided whether to finish, extend, or follow-up the project.

4) Ex-post evaluation

The ex-post evaluation is conducted a few years after completion of the project to verify impact primarily (effectiveness) and sustainability as well as obtain lessons and recommendations that could primarily improve JICA country programs and planning and implementing of similar projects in the future.
3. Evaluation by Types of Evaluators

JICA’s evaluations can be classified by the evaluator as follows.

1) Evaluation by JICA (internal evaluation)

JICA conducts evaluation in cooperation with external experts and consultants, under the initiative of JICA’s related personnel who are engaged in project management, in order to understand the situations and needs for project management and review.

JICA promotes secondary evaluations which are evaluated by third parties to maintain transparency and objectivity by entrusting evaluation to external experts (scholars, journalists, NGOs, etc.) who possess knowledge and experience in development aid and JICA projects.

2) Evaluation by third parties (external evaluation)

External experts and organizations that are not involved in the planning and implementation of the evaluated project (universities, research institutes, academics and consultants, etc.) conduct evaluations. This evaluation is conducted for the purpose of maintaining the quality and objectivity of the evaluation.

3) Joint evaluation

This evaluation is conducted in collaboration with related agencies in partner countries or with other donors*. Since JICA conducts evaluations with partner countries jointly, JICA can share the effects and problems of cooperation with partner countries. Through joint evaluation, a counterpart* can learn the methods of evaluation. Since all cooperation activities implemented by JICA are implemented jointly, project level evaluations are conducted in joint evaluations, from ex-ante to terminal evaluation. Program level evaluations are also conducted with the participation of the partner county.
and evaluation results are fed back to those involved in the partner country.

A joint evaluation carried out with other donors is effective for leaning about each other and strengthening aid coordination.

Methods of Evaluation

Project evaluation conducted by JICA is structured with three frameworks: (1) assessing performance; (2) making a value judgment based on the five evaluation criteria; and (3) making recommendations, drawing lessons learned, and feeding back to the next stage. (Details of the method of evaluation of JICA’s projects are described in “The Practical Method of Project Evaluation—the Revised Version of the JICA’s Evaluation Guidelines” (March 2004, Japan International Cooperation Publishing Co., Ltd.). The guidelines are also available on JICA’s homepage.)

1. Assessing Performance of a Project

The evaluation study first examines achievement with regards to what has been achieved in the project and whether the achievements are favorable. It then checks and analyzes the implementation process with regards to what is happening in the process toward its achievement and how it affects the achievements. Furthermore, it examines the causal relationships between the project and the outcome to determine whether or not what is achieved is the result of the implementation of the project.

2. Value Judgment Based on Five Evaluation Criteria

Next, a value judgment is made based on the results of checking the circumstances and examining the project. JICA adopted five evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability) for conducting an evaluation, which was proposed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC*) of the Organization for Economic Co-

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Figure 3-7 Position of Evaluation within JICA’s Project Cycle

![Diagram of Evaluation within JICA’s Project Cycle](image-url)
operation and Development (OECD) in 1991 (Figure 3-8). These five criteria are meant to be used for evaluating development assistance activities from a comprehensive range of criteria.

3. Recommendations, Lessons Learned and Feedback

Recommendations obtained and lessons learned from the results of an evaluation need to be fed back to those involved in the projects and have to be used for planning of similar projects or adjusting implementation. In order to make lessons and recommendations that are easily fed back, it is important to clarify the contributing and inhibiting factors that have affected the projects. It is also important to specify the recipient of the feedback and the timeframe.

Evaluation System

The current components of JICA’s evaluation system are the Evaluation Study Committee, the Advisory Committee on Evaluation, the Planning and Coordination Department (Office of Evaluation), and the project implementation division (headquarters and overseas offices). Major roles and activities of each group are shown in Figure 3-9.

Expansion of the Evaluation Implementation System

In order to further strengthen the evaluation system, JICA undertakes the following steps.

1) Establishing a consistent evaluation system from ex-ante to ex-post stage

JICA has made an effort to establish a consistent evaluation system from ex-ante to ex-post. The ex-ante evaluation system was introduced in fiscal 2001 and the ex-post evaluation system which is conducted by each project in fiscal 2002. Overseas offices are in charge of ex-post evaluations to feedback to formulate new projects with the participation of the counterparts.

2) Expanding the coverage of evaluation

JICA implements a wide range of programs other than technical cooperation, and thus promotes developing and introducing evaluation methods that suit the characteristics of project and implementation. In fiscal 2003, JICA worked on the development and introduction of evaluation methods in Disaster Relief Program, volunteer programs, JICA Partnership Program, and group training programs.

3) Reinforcing evaluation implementation system and its capacity

In order to improve the quality of evaluation and strengthen the feedback of evaluation results into projects, evaluation chiefs have been allocated to each implementing department since fiscal 2003. They are the members of the evaluation network. Evaluation chiefs are attending training for the purpose of improving the evaluation capacity of overseas offices. In addition, JICA has developed and delivered the distance learning evaluation course with the World Bank Institute (WBI) starting in fiscal 2003.

4) Developing and improving evaluation methods

With the enhancement of the evaluation system, JICA has been compiling guidelines and developing and improving evaluation methods that are the tools of evaluation for expanding evaluations in terms of quantity and quality. In fiscal 2003, based on reinforcing feedback of implementation and results of evaluations, JICA revised the guidelines and published “Practical Methods of Project Evaluation.” Ex-post evaluation guidelines for overseas office were prepared for conducting ex-post evaluation smoothly.

5) Promoting evaluation by third parties

The participation of external experts in evaluation is effective not only for securing objectivity in evaluations but also for improving the quality of evaluations through the use of special knowledge of experts. Thus, JICA strives to expand external

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspectives of Five Evaluation Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions validity and necessity of aid project with regard to whether the objectives of a project meets the needs of the beneficiary, whether they are suitable for the solution to problems or issues of the target area and sector, or whether they are consistent with the policies of the donor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions whether or not the beneficiary or the society really benefits from the implementation of a project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efficiency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions whether or not resources are effectively utilized, focusing on the relationship between the cost and output of a project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirms long-term and indirect impact and synergy effects brought on by the implementation of a project, including unexpected positive and negative impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions whether or not the effects generated in the project are sustained even after completion of a project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
evaluations by entrusting them to external organizations such as academic societies. At the same time, the Advisory Committee on Evaluation conducts secondary evaluations to examine internal evaluations conducted by JICA.

6) Enhancing disclosure of evaluation results

In order to disclose evaluation results promptly and accurately, a disclosure system of evaluation results on the website has been introduced, and *the Annual Evaluation Report* has been renewed. Specifically, summaries of results of all evaluations from ex-ante to ex-post have been disclosed on the website immediately after the completion of evaluations starting in fiscal 2003. Though *the Annual Evaluation Report* in the past included the result of each evaluation, it now includes the results of in-depth analysis comprehensively. Under the theme “Toward a Learning Organization,” *the Annual Evaluation Report 2003* includes comprehensive analysis concerning situations and issues of projects, the results of secondary evaluation conducted by the Advisory Committee, and the feedback of evaluation results (*The Annual Evaluation Report 2003* is available on the JICA homepage).

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[Figure 3-9 Evaluation Implementation System of JICA]

**Advisory Committee on Evaluation**
External experts (scholars, representatives of NGOs, journalists, etc.) with expertise in development aid and evaluation offer advice to the Evaluation Study Committee on the implementation systems and methods and examine the internal evaluation results, thus contributing to improvements in the objectivity of the evaluation.

**Evaluation Study Committee**
The committee, which consists of the vice-president in charge of the Planning and Coordination Department as the chair and directors of relevant departments as members, examines and deliberates on the basic policies of JICA’s project evaluation and the feedback methods of evaluation results.

**Office of Evaluation in the Planning and Coordination Department**
- Improvement of evaluation methods
- Promotion of feedback of evaluation
- Implementation of program level evaluation
- Quality control evaluation

Consultation, advice, information

**Project Implementation division at the headquarters**
- Evaluation chief
- Implementation of evaluation, utilization of results

Consultation, advice, information

**Overseas office**
- Evaluation chief
- Implementation of evaluation, utilization of results

Information sharing and exchange