Overview of Research Projects

JICA conducts research activities on development assistance in order to realize efficient and high quality assistance. The Institute for International Cooperation (IFIC) plays a central role in JICA’s research activities. In the stream of JICA reforms, one of the pillars of which is field based management, IFIC, identifying itself as JICA’s practical think tank, enhanced the relationship with the field in its research activities of fiscal 2005.

Clues to effective aid activities can be derived from practical experiences knowledge, and awareness of the issues obtained from field experiences. In order to combine knowledge with how to address development issues, IFIC absorbs and systematizes knowledge, skills, and awareness of the issues, all of which have been gained through field experiences. Then, IFIC disseminates and shares the outcome both within and outside of JICA through workshops and various forms of training so that more related personnel can utilize the study results.

IFIC also analyzes and gives recommendations to address new development issues, systematizes and disseminates information on aid trends and the deployment of development theories within and outside of JICA. It also gives recommendations to improve aid management.

Overview of Research Projects

Results for Fiscal 2005

JICA’s research activities rest on three pillars: systematization of project experience, analysis of and recommendation for new development issues, and improvement of aid management.

In terms of systematization of project experience, IFIC published a report that summarized the whole concept of capacity development (CD: improvement of comprehensive problem-solving ability based on the initiative of developing countries) in fiscal 2005. The report presents individual case studies (on energy saving, science and mathematics education, etc.) and recommendations for improvement in the quality of JICA projects.

With respect to analysis of and recommendation for new development issues, IFIC conducted research on how to integrate the concept of human security into poverty reduction strategies and sorted out the tasks of JICA. IFIC also conducted research on clean development mechanism (CDM: see p.62) projects and on modes of assistance of JICA as well as discussions of and recommendations for new strategic development issues in the ASEAN region.

As for the improvement of aid management, IFIC conducted research into social surveys and project management and compiled reports on effective approaches to development issues such as transport/traffic, urban/rural development, water contamination, and air pollution.

In fiscal 2005, 28 research projects were implemented and the feedback of the results to the field in the form of training and seminars is being promoted.

Expansion of the Network within and outside of JICA

Research activities involve study committees, which consist of senior advisors and staff members of JICA, with occasional participation of external academics affiliated with universities and research institutes. In addition, a guest researcher program that entrust research on specific issues to knowledgeable experts has been established. These activities contribute significantly to the formation of networks between JICA and related institutions while also fulfilling their primary objective of assisting in the preparation of country, regional, and thematic guidelines.

IFIC publishes a journal entitled “Technology and Development” annually whose articles are selected and translated from the Japanese edition “Kokusai Kyoryoku Kenkyu” and solicits articles widely from field workers and researchers engaged in international cooperation. In addition to regular research papers, the journal contains a section called “Field Note” that actively incorporates field experiences, thus providing opportunities to share information thoroughly within and outside of JICA.