

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers  
of  
JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations

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	Frequently Asked Questions	Answers
1	Why does JICA take considerations of environmental and social factors?	JICA thinks that development assistance must be sustainable and not a temporary measure. Therefore environmental and social considerations are indispensable to ensure sustainable development. For example, in cases where environmental and social factors are not sufficiently considered, the basis of development itself may not be maintained and therefore, development may not be sustainable. Considerations are necessary to assure sustainable development, taking into account keeping balance between development, natural environment and livelihood of residents.
2	What is the difference from the former JICA Environmental Guidelines?	JICA prepared environmental guidelines for infrastructure projects in 1990, which included a screening and a scoping process to the preparatory study of Development Study. The new JICA guidelines state basic principles of environmental and social considerations and implementation of information disclosure and stakeholder consultations. Also, the new JICA guidelines extended the range to be covered by the guidelines, to cover development studies, preliminary studies of grant aid projects and technical cooperation projects. The new JICA guidelines also ensure compliance.
3	What is the difference from the JBIC guidelines?	JICA is an implementing agency to conduct technical assistance of Japanese ODA, while JBIC is an implementing agency to conduct loans. As part of technical assistance, JICA conducts various studies. The JICA guidelines cover the project preparation stage which is a more initial stage of the project cycle when compared to the operations of JBIC. Moreover JICA guidelines are to support recipient countries to conduct EIA, while JBIC guidelines are to confirm the EIA reports made by recipient countries. Both agencies have different liabilities, but JICA guidelines are consistent with the requirements of the JBIC guidelines, to correspond to cases where projects prepared by JICA's support proceed to JBIC yen loans.
4	JICA guidelines should be integrated with JBIC guidelines.	The guidelines are to guide the conduct of each organization, so both guidelines are independent. However, since JICA and JBIC should have close coordination, the JICA guidelines ensure consistency with JBIC guidelines.
5	Do the guidelines reflect the guidelines of other international organizations?	The JICA guidelines are consistent with the guidelines of the World Bank, ADB and other organizations in terms of numbers of stakeholder consultations to be held, categorization of screening, and items to be included in EIA reports and other issues.
6	Coordination is necessary with laws and regulations of development countries.	Application of EIA laws and regulations of developing countries is the principle. But if the laws and regulations are inferior to the JICA guidelines, JICA will apply the JICA guidelines with consensus from developing countries. JICA respects laws and standards of developing countries.
7	What kind of process was implemented to revise the guidelines?	From December of 2002 to September of 2003, the Committee for Revising JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations was held 19 times, and then the proposal was submitted by the committee to JICA. After JICA drafted the guidelines, which were discussed at the follow-up meetings from October of 2003 to March of 2004. The draft was presented on JICA's homepage to obtain public comments from December of 2003 to February of 2004. Also, public consultations were held at Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya to directly exchange views with people who are interested. The draft was modified according to the comments from above occasions, and the new guidelines were finalized.
8	Are the new guidelines going to be translated to languages other than English?	In order to promote better understanding of the guidelines, JICA has translated the guidelines to Spanish, French and Chinese. But, if there is a difference in interpretation between the original Japanese version and the translated version, the original Japanese version will prevail.
9	What does it mean by "meaningful participation"?	"Meaningful participation" means that there is a two-way communication between stakeholders and government officials, and the comments from stakeholders are reflected appropriately to preparation process of the project.

10	JICA supports projects which directly contribute to the improvement of the environment other than projects which need environmental and social considerations. Are projects which contribute to the improvement of the environment included in the scope of the guidelines?	Even if the project directly contributes to the improvement of the environment, the guidelines will be applied to the project if there are any environmental and social impacts to be addressed.
11	Will the recipient countries be able to correspond to the guidelines?	The guidelines include items of which some recipient countries may not have frameworks to implement, such as information disclosure and stakeholder participation. But other donors have been applying their guidelines to their projects, therefore JICA finds it possible for recipient countries to correspond to the guidelines. JICA will support recipient countries as necessary to take appropriate considerations of environmental and social factors.
12	What are JICA's intentions on scope of stakeholders?	The scope of "local stakeholders" is affected individuals or groups including squatters and local NGOs. The scope of "stakeholders" is individuals or groups who have views about cooperation projects including local stakeholders. "Local stakeholders" intend to designate those who should participate in stakeholder consultations held at project sites and sites likely to be affected by the project.
13	Why are squatters included in the stakeholders?	Residents who live in the project sites include squatters even if they are illegal residents who live or make a living in the sites. But so called "professional squatters" should be dealt with due consideration in consultation with recipient governments.
14	In chapter 1.4, it is stated that "The stakeholders are responsible for their comments". May such responsibility oppress their will to make comments?	There are people who comment with intention to cause disorder at public consultations. JICA's view is that people who make comments should be responsible for their own comments. In the other hand, if there is possibility that the speakers may receive any kind of hindrance, special considerations should be paid for social environment and human rights as stated in chapter 2.7.
15	Stakeholders should be involved in screening stages of the project.	Stakeholders are to take part in the scoping process of the projects. Stakeholder consultations are not held on screening stages of projects, but categorization and its explanations are disclosed.
16	What is the basic concept for information disclosure?	In order to ensure transparency and accountability of cooperation projects, information disclosure is very important, and is a prerequisite to take appropriate considerations of environmental and social factors. JICA persuades recipient governments to disclose information and JICA itself discloses important information.
17	Why is the "without project case" included when considering alternatives?	The "without project case" is included to compare the impact of implementing the project and impact of not implementing the project. The justification of the project can be clearly explained by including the "without project case" when considering the alternatives of the project.
18	What is the objective of conducting follow-up?	The objective of follow-up is to confirm that the result of environmental and social considerations studies which were supported by JICA is implemented into decision making process of recipient countries.
19	Who takes initiative in conducting EIA and giving environmental and social considerations?	Recipient countries or the implementing agencies of recipient countries are to take initiative in EIA process and environmental and social considerations.
20	Will JICA support preparation of EIA documents?	The legally required EIA documents will be prepared by recipient countries. JICA conducts studies for environmental and social considerations and prepares reports of studies, which are the basis of EIA documents, in collaboration with recipient countries.
21	The guidelines apply the concept of SEA. How will SEA be applied to cooperation projects?	JICA endeavors to incorporate the concept of Strategic Environmental Assessment when engaging in overall plans and programs, which are at a upper level than implementation stage. JICA conducts IEE level study in collaboration with recipient countries including analysis of alternatives and without project situations. Also, information disclosure and stakeholder consultation are carried out. The results are reflected in the studies.
22	Some countries may not agree on information disclosure including disclosure of EIA reports.	In the early stages of cooperation projects, JICA discusses frameworks to ensure information disclosure with the recipient countries and comes to an agreement with them. If recipient countries need some assistance in

		information disclosure, JICA supports through project cooperation activities. But, if information disclosure cannot be agreed upon, it would be difficult for JICA to support category A and B projects.
23	Are the guidelines applied to schemes other than those mentioned in the guidelines?	The guidelines are applied to cooperation projects of development studies, prior studies of grant aid and Technical Cooperation Projects. But if there are projects of other schemes which need environmental and social considerations, JICA will respect the related clauses of the guidelines, according to the purpose.
24	It is said that JICA is to introduce program approaches. How will JICA give environmental and social considerations in program approaches?	If a program approach is undertaken, the program will be materialized by schemes. Therefore, environmental and social factors are considered according to procedures of the guidelines.
25	How does JICA respond to projects of urgent needs?	In an emergency such as restoration after natural disasters or post conflict, where it is clear that there is no time to follow procedures of environmental and social considerations, JICA consults with the Advisory Council of Environmental and Social Review about categorization, judgment of emergency and procedures to follow at an early stage, then JICA discloses results.
26	How will the new guidelines be disseminated?	JICA will hold seminars to explain the guidelines to JICA staff, JICA experts, consultants and relevant organizations. JICA will also translate the guidelines to other languages other than English. Furthermore, JICA will explain and disseminate the guidelines at international conferences such as OECD and at meetings with recipient countries and donor agencies. Especially JICA will explain them to recipient countries also at meetings of cooperation projects or of training courses.
27	What is the relationship between information disclosure under the guidelines and that of the Japanese law on information disclosure?	In conformity with the information disclosure law, JICA discloses information upon request. On the other hand, in accordance with the guidelines, JICA itself discloses information so that JICA ensures accountability of its process. JICA also prompts relevant agencies, stakeholders and third parties to provide JICA with comments.
28	The duration of information disclosure at scoping and draft environmental and social considerations should be ruled.	The necessary duration of information disclosure to ensure meaningful participation of stakeholders will be agreed upon each cooperation project based on the EIA system of recipient countries and precedents of other donors.
29	Project affected people usually do not have access to the internet. How can they access information about cooperation projects?	JICA will encourage recipient countries to provide documents concerning environmental and social considerations for public reading at local public facilities in project areas.
30	How will JICA ensure participation of affected people?	JICA finds it important to reflect the opinion of people directly affected, especially vulnerable people. Therefore, information is disclosed by recipient countries and JICA in an official or familiar language in the region and in an understandable form for local people. In order to have meaningful stakeholder consultations, JICA, in collaboration with the recipient governments informs through publicity activities well in advance before JICA consults with local stakeholders, with particular attention to directly affected people. Also, we think it is important to hold a set of consultations or to take appropriate measures so that vulnerable people can make comments.
31	Who hosts the local stakeholder consultations?	The recipient governments or the implementing agencies will host the stakeholder consultations. JICA assists them by explaining technical aspects of the cooperation projects when necessary.
32	How does JICA confirm that the stakeholder consultations were held appropriately?	Minutes of stakeholder consultations are recorded. And JICA reviews the results of the consultations by making inquiries to the Advisory Council of Environmental and Social Considerations Review which consists of external experts at major stages of cooperation.
33	What does it mean by "a set of stakeholder consultations"?	In order to ensure that stakeholder consultations are meaningful, understanding and consensus from the stakeholders are necessary. Therefore, individual consultations or overall consultations should be held as necessary rather than holding just one consultation as a matter of formality. The expression, "a set of consultation" is used in that regard.
34	The scope of environmental and	The scope of environmental and social impacts to be considered is broad

	social impacts to be confirmed is too wide.	according to the guidelines, but important impacts are selected by scoping process.
35	What is the role of the Advisory Council for Environmental and Social Considerations Review?	The Advisory Council takes part in Category A and B projects from a request review stage until a final stage and gives advice on each cooperation project.
36	Are there any criteria or illustrations of categorization?	JICA works with many countries, and situations of projects and sites are diverse. So it is difficult to set a threshold of categorization. JICA primarily makes categorization in accordance with the EIA laws and guidelines in recipient countries. JICA also refers to precedents of other donors and the Japanese EIA law.
37	Do the guidelines refer to international standards in addition to laws and standards of recipient countries?	JICA refers to international standards, treaties, declarations and good practices which Japan, international organizations and developed countries have.
38	International Environment Conservation NGO's have a "shadow list" which shows candidates of areas to be designated by international conventions. Will they be taken into consideration?	JICA understands that NGOs including WWF, IUCN, Conservation International, Birdlife International and Wetlands International may have shadow lists. JICA makes efforts to collect information about them as well as refers to them dealing with environmental and social considerations.
39	How do the guidelines deal with human rights of women and children?	In order to give considerations to human rights, JICA collects related information such as country reports. JICA also discloses information and collects comments from stakeholders.
40	What are the examples of cases where environmental and social considerations cannot be ensured?	Cases where JICA considers that environmental and social considerations cannot be ensured are as below. 1) development needs are inappropriately understood, 2) projects are expected to have significant impacts even if mitigation measures are taken into consideration during implementation stage, 3) affected people or social organizations concerned hardly participate in projects and are not expected to do so in the future though serious impacts are to be predicted, 4) it is expected difficult to implement mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts in consideration of social and institutional conditions of the project site. 5) information disclosure, stakeholder consultations and implementation of environmental and social considerations study cannot be ensured.
41	Are there any chances to review the categorization after the review stage of proposed projects?	JICA classifies projects under three categories at review stage. But JICA reviews a categorization even after screening as results of projects' progress.
42	According to the guidelines, JICA conducts only detailed studies in the engineering field in coordinated D/D with JBIC. Why doesn't JICA conduct environmental and social considerations in coordinated D/D with JBIC?	JICA conducts coordinated D/D with JBIC for projects that JBIC concludes as adequate as a yen loan project according to JBIC guidelines. JICA examines results of judgments by JBIC and if there is a problem on environmental and social factors, JICA conveys related information to JBIC and requires JBIC to undertake adequate measures.
43	The scope of environmental and social considerations is very wide. There should be more than 1 expert assigned to the study team to be in charge of environmental and social considerations.	The members of the study teams are to conduct their studies with local consultants and experts. JICA decides the rational number of persons or man months needed for appropriate environmental and social studies.