

Part 1 ■ Overview



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As a consequence of recent domestic and overseas trends in ODA as well as moves toward administrative reform in Japan, there are growing calls for greater effectiveness and efficiency in the execution of JICA cooperation and transparency and accountability in its operations and management. Amid these changes, more importance than ever is now attached to the roles of evaluations as a means of ensuring results-based management and improving quality of JICA cooperation as well as securing more transparency and accountability.

In response to these movements, JICA has taken steps to expand and enhance its evaluation and improve its system for making evaluation results public. The steps include the introduction of a constant evaluation system from the ex-ante to ex-post stage, expanding the coverage of evaluation, promoting evaluation from third parties' perspectives and enhancing the disclosure of evaluation results. With its reorganization into an Independent Administrative Institution on October 1, 2003, JICA has stepped up all these efforts further.

This chapter describes the recent trends in ODA evaluation both at home and abroad and the implications of JICA's reorganization. Subsequently, it outlines JICA's evaluation activities, such as efforts on evaluation, and evaluation framework and methods.

Chapter 1 ● Recent Trends in ODA Evaluation and JICA's Efforts on Evaluation

1-1 Recent Trends in ODA Evaluation

(1) Trends in the International Community

In the 1990's, many aid agencies in industrial countries introduced "Results-Based Management"¹ in response to movements toward higher aid effectiveness and growing public calls for accountability. The orientation for results has also been reflected in the international sharing of development goals and joint efforts to achieve them. The trend has led to the introduction of a monitoring and evaluation system in a series of development initiatives, including "The DAC New Development Strategy"² in 1996, the World Bank's proposals of a "Comprehensive Development Framework" (CDF)³ and "Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers" (PRSP)⁴, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)⁵ adopted at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000.

Under "Results-based Management," monitoring and evaluation are recognized as indispensable management tools for accomplishments of goals and effective implementation of projects. The countries that have compiled PRSPs,

for instance, have set up an administrative section in charge of monitoring and evaluation and are conducting regular monitoring of performance with participation of major aid agencies and international organizations. Efforts are also under way for joint evaluation by partner countries and donor countries concerning the effectiveness of both national-level and sector-level cooperation. Progress in the effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals is also being

- 1) A management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts (OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management).
- 2) A development strategy adopted in DAC's 34th high-level meeting in 1996. The strategy sets seven international development goals based on discussions at various international conferences and called for greater emphasis on developing countries' ownership, partnership and consistency of the policies for the achievement of the goals.
- 3) The CDF is based on the notion that sustainable growth and poverty reduction require a comprehensive strategy encompassing structural, human, economic and other elements as well as macroeconomic policies.
- 4) PRSP, introduced to flesh out the CDF, is a three-year comprehensive economic and social development plan for poverty reduction to be drawn up by the governments of developing countries with broad participation of aid community and the private sector, NGOs and other parties concerned. Heavily indebted poor countries and countries eligible for the International Development Association (IDA) programs are required to compile PRSPs in order to receive debt relief or IDA loans.
- 5) A set of eight goals and 18 targets concerning poverty reduction, basic education, gender equality, health and medical care, environmental protection and other objectives to be achieved by 2015.

monitored at both the international and country levels. Global progress on MDGs is described in the UN Secretary-General's global reports, while country-level progress is monitored in MDGs reports for individual partner countries.

(2) Movements in Japan concerning ODA Evaluation

The international trends toward a results-based management and the harsh economic and fiscal situations at home have generated strong calls in Japan for more effective and efficient implementation of development assistance. The government has accelerated ODA reform in an attempt to obtain understanding and support from taxpayers and secure a strategic focus, flexibility, transparency and efficiency in operation and management.

Enhancement of evaluation is one of the main pillars of the government's ODA reform. The proposals of various advisory councils and the government's policy measures concerning ODA reform contain steps for improving the implementation of evaluation, feedback of evaluation findings for better planning and implementation of ODA and the disclosure of evaluation results.

The "Final Report" by the Second Consultative Committee on ODA Reform submitted in March 2002 proposed a set of concrete steps for ODA reform with special emphasis on public participation in ODA, transparency and efficiency. Concerning the issue of evaluation, the report called for expansion of information disclosure, promotion of evaluation by third parties toward greater transparency as well as further improvement in evaluations for constant review of the implementation system. The "Fifteen Specific Mea-

asures for ODA Reform" announced in July 2002, which were developed based on the Committee's proposals, cited evaluation as one of the five priority areas that should be tackled swiftly, recommended such specific steps as reinforcement of ex-post evaluation incorporating independent reviewers' viewpoints, strengthening of the roles of the Advisory Committee on Evaluation composed of external experts, and holding of open seminars to publish evaluation results for better feedback.

Political parties have also started addressing the issue of ODA evaluation. In December 2002 the Liberal Democratic Party announced "Concrete Measures for ODA Reform," taking up the issue of evaluations and feedback from evaluation results.

Taking account of these discussions over ODA reform and evaluation, the Council of Overseas Economic Cooperation-related Ministers revised Japan's ODA Charter in August 2003. The revised Charter added "enhancement of evaluation" to the list of measures needed for effective implementation presented in Chapter 3 as "Matters Essential to Effective Implementation".

As the "Government Policy Evaluation Act", which sets rules for assessing policies implemented by administrative organizations, came into force in April 2002, the ODA has also been obliged to evaluate. The ex-ante evaluation of ODA policies as prescribed by the Act was formally introduced in April 2003 after a preparatory period for working out the evaluation method. As JICA and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) have already launched ex-ante evaluation since FY2001, this completed the ex-ante evaluation system in ODA for both policy and implementation level.

(3) JICA's Reorganization into an Independent Administrative Institution and JICA's Efforts on Evaluation

The reorganization of JICA into an Independent Administrative Institution (IAI) was endorsed by the Cabinet in December 2001 as part of the "Reorganization and Rationalization Plan for Special Public Institutions". Since October 1, 2003, the new JICA, operating under the IAI system, has been required to make its operation more results-oriented and efficient to achieve the mid-term objective set by the Government and also to ensure the transparency of its management by publishing the implementation processes and results of its projects. JICA is subject to the government's performance evaluation in terms of achievement of the mid-term objectives (BOX 1).

Major Proposals Concerning Enhancement of Evaluation

- 1998 The Final Report of the "Committee on ODA Reform for the 21st Century"
- 2000 "Final Report on Improvements to the ODA Evaluation System" by the ODA Evaluation Reviewing Panel
- 2001 "Report of the ODA Evaluation Study Group"
- 2002 The Final Report of the "Second Consultative Committee on ODA Reform"
"Fifteen Specific Measures for ODA Reform",
by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
"Concrete Measures for ODA Reform" by the
Liberal Democratic Party's Working Team
on ODA Reform

BOX 1 Performance Evaluation of an Independent Administrative Institution

1. What is the Independent Administrative Institution System?

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was reorganized into an Independent Administrative Institution (IAI) on October 1, 2003. The IAI system, established in April 2001 in line with the proposals made by the Administrative Reform Council in its final report published in December 1997, is designed to provide more efficient and effective administrative services. An outline of this system is given below.

■ In order to separate clearly the authorities and responsibilities of each IAI from those of the competent minister of state (Minister of Foreign Affairs for JICA) and thereby ensure that both competent ministry and IAI perform their undertakings at maximum efficiency the following system was introduced:

- (1) The government sets objectives for each IAI to accomplish, conducts ex-post evaluations of the IAI's performance in terms of achievement of the objectives, and holds the president of the IAI accountable for unsatisfactory performance.
- (2) The autonomy of IAI's operation must be respected with regard to achievement of the pre-set objectives by the competent minister. The minister's control on the IAI's management is limited to the minimum necessary and defined clearly in the law. The authorities and responsibilities of the IAI are clearly separated from those of the minister so that the institution can maintain autonomy in its operations.

■ In addition to regular review of the organization and operation to scrap unnecessary sections and operations, each IAI is subject to periodical review to decide whether it should be allowed to continue operating as a public body, or privatized, or dismantled.

■ Increased transparency of each IAI's management through the introduction of corporate accounting principles and information disclosure.

(from the "Reorganization and Rationalization Plan for Special Public Institutions" approved by the Cabinet on 19 December 2001)

2. Evaluation of IAI's Performance

The competent minister of state presents "mid-term objectives" for each IAI, which are management targets the IAI must accomplish usually within three to five years. Based on the given objectives the IAI is required to draw up a "mid-term plan" to achieve these objectives and request the minister for approval. The IAI also has to craft an "annual plan" for each fiscal year based on the "mid-term plan" and submit it to the minister. The IAI is supposed to operate autonomously under this framework prescribed by the law, while IAIs are subjected to periodical performance evaluations by external committees. The performance evaluation mentioned here is not evaluation on individual programs and projects carried out by the IAI itself. Instead, it is an overall assessment of the institution's entire operations and management, including the financial, organizational and personnel management aspects, from the viewpoint of progress in its effort to boost the efficiency and quality of its operations based on the mid-term objectives and the mid-term plan.

In performance evaluation, the "Evaluation Committee for Independent Administrative Institutions (the Evaluation Committee)" in each ministry assesses the IAI's performance concerning the following points (see the Note below) with objective evaluation criteria. The results of the Evaluation Committee are to be conveyed for double checks by the "Commission on the Policy Evaluation and Evaluation of IAIs" established in the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications.

(Note) Components of IAI Performance Evaluations

- ① Evaluation of performance in each fiscal year
 - Examination and analysis of the implementation of the mid-term plans in each year
 - Rating of the overall performance
- ② Evaluation of performance concerning mid-term objectives
 - Examination and analysis of the progress toward achieving the objectives
 - Rating of overall performance

The results of performance evaluation are to be reflected, as appropriate, in mid-term objectives, mid-term plan and annual plan in the future as well as in IAI's organizations, operations and personnel affairs. The Evaluation Committee has the authority to make recommendations for improvements in operations and other purposes to IAIs as well as to perform evaluations. Both evaluation results and recommendations by the committee are made public.

Performance evaluation under the IAI system is supposed to cover the entire operation and management of the IAI including the organizational, personnel and financial aspects. Achieving the strong performance as an organization requires achievement of project goals in each individual project. In this sense, evaluations of programs and projects as a means to improve project planning and execution for higher efficiency complement performance evaluation.

In response to these developments both at home and overseas, JICA has made serious efforts to improve and expand evaluations of programs and projects. In particular, the new JICA has set six strategic fields to extend its effort to boost the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of its operations. (These efforts will be described in detail through concrete examples in “Chapter 2: Toward Expanding and Enhancing Evaluation – Efforts in Six Strategic Fields.”)

Six Strategic Fields for Enhancing Project Evaluations

- ① Establishing a consistent evaluation system
- ② Expanding coverage of evaluation
- ③ Reinforcing the evaluation system and capacity
- ④ Developing and improving evaluation methods
- ⑤ Promoting evaluation by third parties
- ⑥ Enhancing disclosure of evaluation results

JICA intends to make further attempts to upgrade and strengthen its evaluation as an important means to make its management and operations more effective and efficient while seeking wider public understanding and support. That is a crucial part of JICA’s effort to fulfill its mission of contributing to the economic and social development, reconstruction of developing countries and promotion of international cooperation.

1-2 JICA’s Project Evaluation

(1) Definition and Objectives of JICA’s Project Evaluation

JICA’s evaluation is a tool for judging as objectively as possible the relevance and effectiveness of JICA’s cooperation activities at four different stages during the project cycle; ex-ante, mid-term, terminal and ex-post. The primary objective of evaluation is to improve the effectiveness and

efficiency of projects by using evaluation results for better planning and implementation. JICA also intends to gain public support and understanding by using them to ensure accountability.

JICA has been focusing its effort to bolster its evaluation with the following three objectives.

1) Using Evaluation Feedback as a Means for Project Operation and Management

By using them in decision-making process, JICA refers to evaluation results when formulating its aid strategies and JICA Country Programs. It also uses them when making decisions regarding project execution, selecting target projects, reviewing plans and determining the continuation or termination of a project.

2) Enhancing the Learning Effects of the Personnel and Organizations Concerned for More Effective Project Implementation

Lessons learned from evaluation help enhance learning effects for those concerned in various occasions. For instance, the lessons from past projects serve as useful reference for JICA staffs and officials of recipient countries when they plan and implement similar projects. Also, the evaluation process itself contributes to expanding the knowledge and developing the capacities of the people involved, and thus serves as a “learning process”.

3) Disclosing Information Widely to Secure JICA’s Accountability

Disclosing evaluation results to the public and explaining that JICA is fulfilling its responsibility for its undertakings is indispensable for winning public support and understanding. In order to ensure accountability to taxpayers, JICA needs to ensure adequate information disclosure.

(2) Targeted Level of JICA’s Evaluation

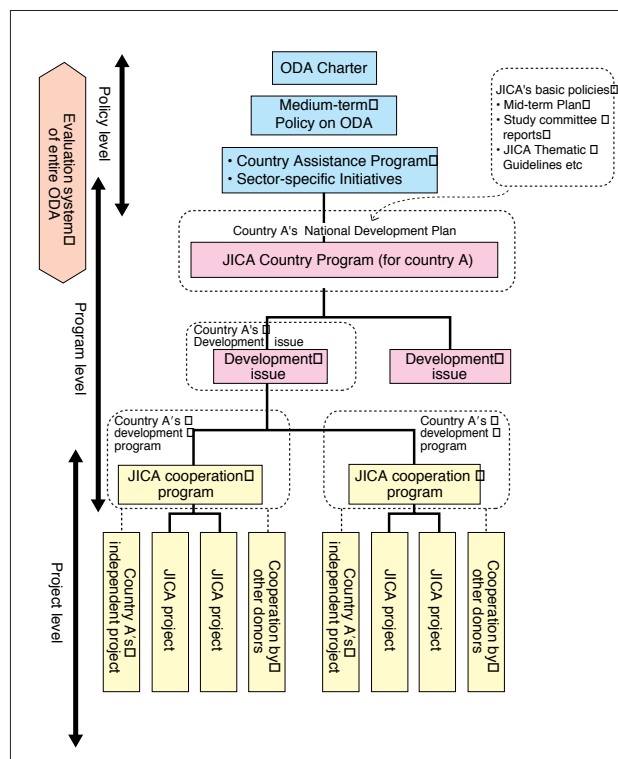
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ “Report on Improvement of ODA Evaluation System”, released in March 2000, classified ODA evaluation into three levels: policy-level, program-level and project-level. The report called for enhancement of policy- and program-level evaluation. JICA conducts program- and project-level evaluation (see Figure 1-1).

(3) Types of JICA Evaluation

● Project-level Evaluation

Project-level evaluation covers individual projects. This

Figure 1-1 ODA System and JICA Evaluation



type of evaluation, conducted by JICA's departments responsible for project implementation and overseas offices, is intended to be reflected in planning and reviewing individual projects, making decisions as to continuation of projects and revising project plans, planning and executing other similar projects and ensuring accountability into operations. Project-level evaluation is classified into four types conducted at different stages during the project cycle: ex-ante evaluation, mid-term evaluation, terminal evaluation, and ex-post evaluation (see Table 1-1).

● Program-level Evaluation

Program-level evaluation includes comprehensive evaluation applied to such groups of projects as those that share the same overall goal and development issues. It also directed at a set of projects under a specific cooperation scheme (see Table 1-2). These evaluations are principally conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring, in JICA at ex-post stages as country-program evaluation or thematic evaluation. The evaluation results are used mainly for improving JICA Country Program and finding and formulating new projects.

Table 1-1 Project-level Evaluation (by Stages During the Project Cycle)

Ex-ante Evaluation	Ex-ante evaluation conducted on a project requested by a recipient country. It first involves a study of the project to determine its necessity as well as its conformity with JICA Country Program. Details of the project and its expected outputs are clarified. Then, the relevance of the project is comprehensively examined and evaluated. In ex-ante evaluation, evaluation indicators are set and they are used to measure the effect of the project in subsequent evaluation, from the mid-term evaluation to the ex-post evaluation.
Mid-term Evaluation	Mid-term evaluation is conducted at the mid-point of projects. This evaluation aims at examining the achievements and process of the project, focusing on efficiency and relevance among the Five Evaluation Criteria. Based upon its results, the original project plan may be revised or the operation structure strengthened if necessary.
Terminal Evaluation	Terminal evaluation is performed upon completion of a project, focusing on its efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Based upon the results of the evaluation, JICA determines whether it is appropriate to complete the project or necessary to extend follow-up cooperation.
Ex-post Evaluation	Ex-post evaluation is conducted after a certain period has passed since the completion of a target project with emphasis on the effectiveness and sustainability of the project. This evaluation aims at deriving lessons and recommendations for the improvement of JICA Country Programs and for the planning and implementation of more effective and efficient projects.

Table 1-2 Program-level Evaluation (by Evaluation Targets)

Country-program Evaluation	This comprehensive evaluation examines the overall effects of JICA's cooperation on the development of a targeted country across projects. After clarifying and analyzing the overall effects of JICA's cooperation and difficulties it faced, this evaluation derives lessons and recommendations for the improvement of future JICA Country Program of the country in question.
Thematic Evaluation	This evaluation looks at a number of projects, by focusing on specific sectors, issues (environment, poverty, gender, peace-building, etc.) or cooperation schemes (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer Program, etc.). After clarifying and analyzing the overall effects and common impeding factors of JICA's projects of the issue in question, this evaluation derives lessons and recommendations for the implementation of future projects focusing on those themes. It also considers the effective approaches and methods to implement projects focusing on the specific theme.

Table 1-3 Type of Evaluation by Evaluators

Evaluation by Third Parties (External Evaluation)	In order to improve the quality and objectivity of its evaluation, JICA entrusts a certain portion of its evaluation studies to external third parties that were not involved in planning and implementation of the projects to be evaluated as well as those that have high expertise in the targeted fields for evaluation, such as universities, research institutions, academics, consultants, etc..
Evaluation by JICA (Internal Evaluation)	In order to derive lessons and recommendations that meet the actual condition or needs of recipient countries, this evaluation is conducted mainly by JICA with the knowledge of systems and other surroundings of a project or an issue. JICA also promotes the review of such internal evaluation results by the third parties (academics, journalists, NGOs, etc.) with expertise in development assistance and familiarity with JICA's undertakings to assure transparency and objectivity.
Joint Evaluation	This evaluation is conducted in collaboration with organizations in the target countries or with aid agencies of other donor countries. Joint evaluation with the partner countries is effective for sharing recognition with JICA on effects and issues about projects. It also contributes to leaning evaluation methods and improving the capacity of those countries in carrying out evaluation. This evaluation is effective in promoting mutual leaning of evaluation methods and aid coordination.

● Evaluation by Evaluators

JICA’s evaluation can be classified by evaluators as follows: “Evaluation by third party (external evaluation)”, “Evaluation by JICA (internal evaluation)” and “Joint Evaluation” (see Table 1-3).

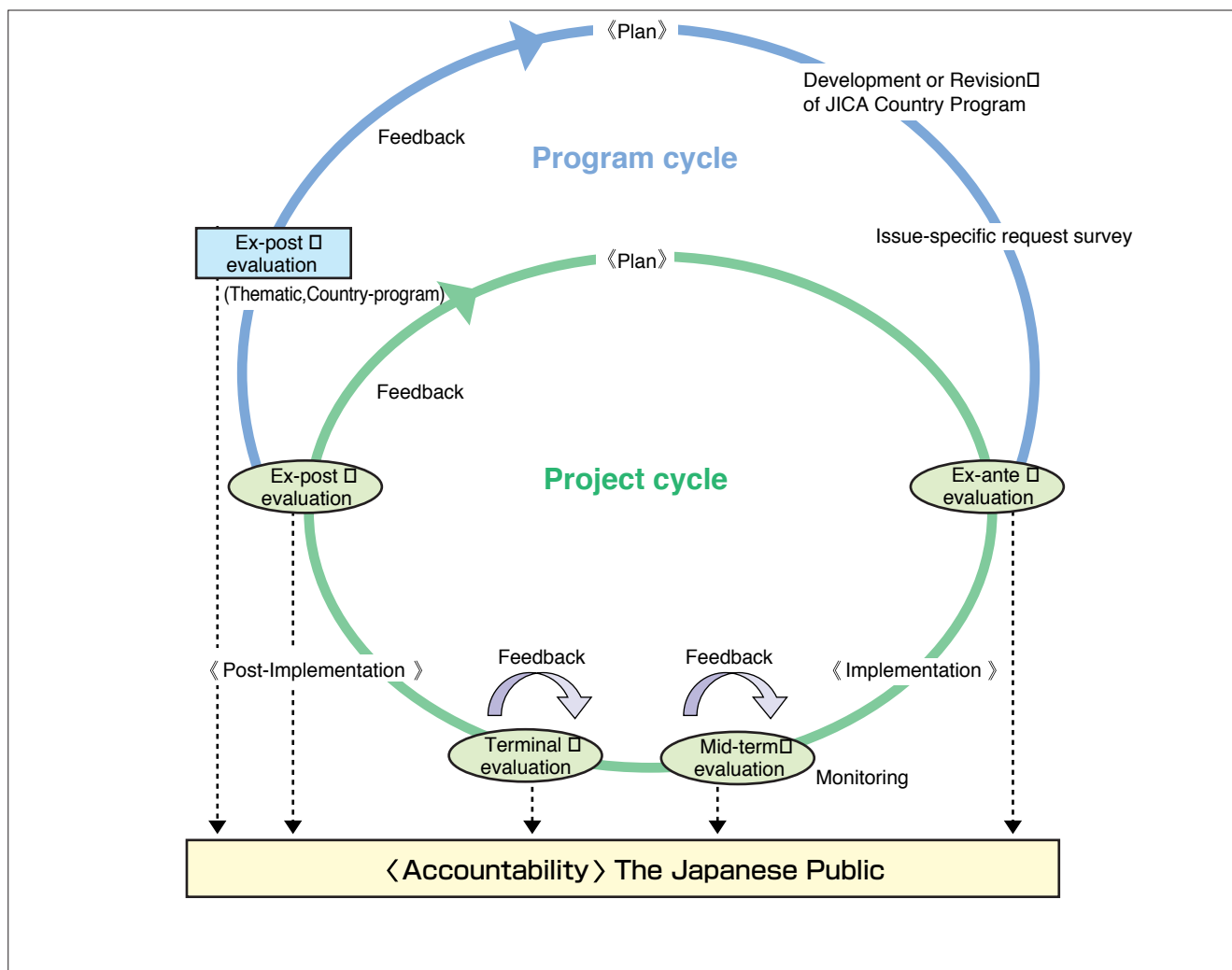
(4) JICA’s Management Cycles and its Evaluation

In considering the function of evaluation in JICA’s management cycle, it can be put in two different ways. JICA has the “small cycle” and the “large cycle” in its management as shown in Figure 1-2. The small cycle represents the management cycle of individual projects, where evaluations is used for effective management of projects. In so doing, an integrated process starting with the ex-ante evaluation is necessary, in order to establish a solid foundation for project monitoring and evaluation. Also, communicating feedback from evaluation results in the cycle of each project is crucial to review the project plan, improve the operating

approach as well as to plan and execute similar projects in the future.

The large cycle represents the management cycle at program-level. Individual projects belong to a specific cooperation program designed to solve larger development issues. The results of evaluations of individual projects and cooperation programs supplement each other in enabling aid operations to be more effective. Program-level evaluations can be performed by country, issue or sector. The results are to be used in formulating guidelines for each issue or sector as well as making improvements in the implementation of individual projects.

Figure 1-2 Evaluation Types by Stages during the Project Cycle



1-3 JICA's Evaluation Methods

This section describes the framework of JICA's evaluation on Technical Cooperation Projects. In evaluating other cooperation schemes such as those providing research service, JICA adopts evaluation methods suitable for the characters of each cooperation scheme. For evaluations of Japan Disaster Relief Program, Volunteer Program, JICA Partnership Program and Group Training Programs, JICA develops evaluation methods in line with each feature and implementation conditions and conducts evaluations using each framework.

(1) Evaluation Framework

In order to ensure the use of evaluation results as a means of project management which is one of the objectives of JICA Evaluation, such evaluation as simply assessing achievement of project purpose or rating performance is not enough. What is vital here is to draw lessons and produce recommendations through analyses of the factors affecting the project results and utilize them for improvements in the process.

Hence, JICA's evaluation framework is composed of three stages: ① studying and understanding the situation surrounding the project, ② assessing the value of the project by the Five Evaluation Criteria, and ③ drawing lessons and recommendations and feedback them for improvement.

(2) Evaluations Based on Logical Framework

A logical framework⁶ is a logically constructed table showing the causal relationships between plan and project goal(overall goal, project purpose) and the project implementation (outputs, activities, inputs) as well as important assumptions and other factors that influence the outcomes. In planning projects, JICA formulates a Project Design Matrix (PDM), a kind of logical framework indicating the relationships between causes and results. In evaluations on individual projects, JICA also uses a logical framework as a tool for grasping the details of plans and the causal relationships among related elements.

(3) Evaluation Methods

This section gives a brief description of the actual evaluation procedure based on the evaluation framework explained in (1). JICA's evaluation methods are described in greater detail in the "JICA Evaluation Guidelines," the second edition of which is to be published in February 2004. (in Japanese. English version is forthcoming.)

Figure 1-3 Example of Logical Framework (PDM)

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Measures of Verification	Important Assumptions
Overall Goal Indirect/ long-term effects, impact on target society	Indicators to measure the achievement degree of overall goal.	Information resources of indicators to the left	Assumptions necessary for the effects of the project to be sustainable
Project Purpose Direct benefits to the target groups or society	Indicators to measure the achievement degree of project purpose.	Information resources of indicators to the left	External factors that must be satisfied to achieve the overall goal, but that retain uncertainty as to whether they would be satisfied
Outputs Services and results produced by activities	Indicators to measure the achievement degree of outputs.	Information resources of indicators to the left	External factors that must be satisfied to achieve the project purpose, but that retain uncertainty as to whether they would be satisfied
Activities Activities to realize outputs	Inputs Resources required for carrying out activities (human resources, funds, facilities and equipment, etc.).		External factors that must be satisfied to achieve the outputs, but that retain uncertainty as to whether they would be satisfied
			Prerequisite Conditions must be met before the beginning the project.

1) Grasping and Examining the Conditions of the Project

The first step in evaluation study for a project is to ascertain the project achievements, the implementation process and the causal relationships. In more concrete terms, what has been achieved in the project and how much degree has been achieved are examined. In addition, what is happening in the process of achievement and what kind of effects it has on the achievements are identified and analyzed. It is also necessary to analyze the causal relationships of project and effect, namely examining if the project really contributed to the achievement.

6) A logical framework (log-frame) is a management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level (see the DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-based Management). The Project Design Matrix (PDM) adopted by JICA is an example.

2) Value Judgment about the Project in Terms of the Five Evaluation Criteria

The next step is to make value judgments about the project based on the information on the actual conditions of the project obtained through the above-mentioned procedure. For judging the value of projects, JICA has adopted the Five Evaluation Criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability) proposed in 1991 by the Development Aid Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Figure 1-4 show the relations between the Five Evaluation Criteria and the logical framework.

● Relevance

“Relevance” relates to the legitimacy and appropriateness of aid projects. Primary attention is paid to such questions as whether the expected effects of the project (project objectives and overall goals) meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries and provide proper solutions to the problems and issues in the area or sectors concerned, whether the project is consistent with the partner country’s policies, whether the approach of the project is reasonable, and whether the project should be funded by ODA, or public money.

● Effectiveness

“Effectiveness” relates to the question of whether the implementation of the project has actually benefited (or will benefit) the intended beneficiaries and the target society.

● Efficiency

“Efficiency” is a criterion concerning the relations between the project costs and its outputs. The main ques-

tion asked to judge the efficiency of a project is whether the achievements degree of outputs can justify (or will justify) the costs (inputs), in other words, whether there was no alternative means that could have made the same achievements at lower costs, or whether it was impossible to make greater achievements at the same costs.

● Impact

In judging the “impact” of a project, the longer-term, indirect effects and ripple effects of the implementation of the project are studied. These include unpredicted positive and negative impacts.

● Sustainability

“Sustainability” is a criterion that examines whether the effects produced by the project have been sustained (or are likely to be sustained) even after the project completion.

3) Drawing Lessons and Recommendations for Feedback

Drawing lessons from the evaluation results and formulating recommendations for feedback to the people concerned is essential for necessary revision of the project plan in question and better planning of similar projects. In order to provide lessons and recommendations that can be easily applied, it is necessary to make clear the promoting and impeding factors that have affected the project and who should be feedback target of the lessons and recommendations.

Figure 1-4 Five Evaluation Criteria and Logical Framework

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Impact	Efficiency	Sustainability
Overall Goal	Conformity of Project Purpose and Overall Goal to the recipient country's needs at the time of evaluation	Degree to which achievement of Project Purpose is attributed to Outputs	Positive and negative influences that appeared directly and indirectly as a result of the project		Extent to which benefits gained through the project are sustained even after completion of the cooperation
Project Purpose					
Output			Extent to which Inputs are effectively converted into Outputs		
Input					

1-4 JICA's Evaluation System

(1) Development of JICA's Evaluation System

JICA has long been committed to improving its evaluation system. In July 1981, JICA set up the Evaluation Study Committee to deal with issues and challenges with its evaluation. The Committee has been leading JICA's effort to develop new approaches and techniques for better evaluation. In April 1988, the Office of Evaluation was set up within the Planning Department, as a unit specializing in evaluation. In April 1990, the Office was reorganized as the Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring Division, and then put under direct supervision of the President in October 1996 for greater independence of evaluations.

In January 2000, the Office of Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring was merged again with the Planning and Evaluation Department as a step to enhance the feedback of evaluation results for better project planning.

In an effort to ensure objectivity and transparency in evaluation, the Advisory Committee on Evaluation composed of external experts was established in June 2002 as an advisory body for the Evaluation Study Committee.

A further step to upgrade the evaluation system was taken in May 2003, when an evaluation chief was assigned to each of the departments and overseas offices directly involved in project management. The step is aimed at controlling and improving the quality of evaluation so that

evaluation can meet the needs and conditions at the forefront of aid operations. The evaluation chiefs' main responsibilities include quality control for project evaluations by their departments and offices and the promotion of evaluation feedback to those concerned. Also, in order to ensure the information sharing on evaluation within the entire organization, the "evaluation network" among the evaluation chiefs has been created. The network enables the evaluation chiefs to exchange information and opinions by using mailing lists managed by the Office of Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring.

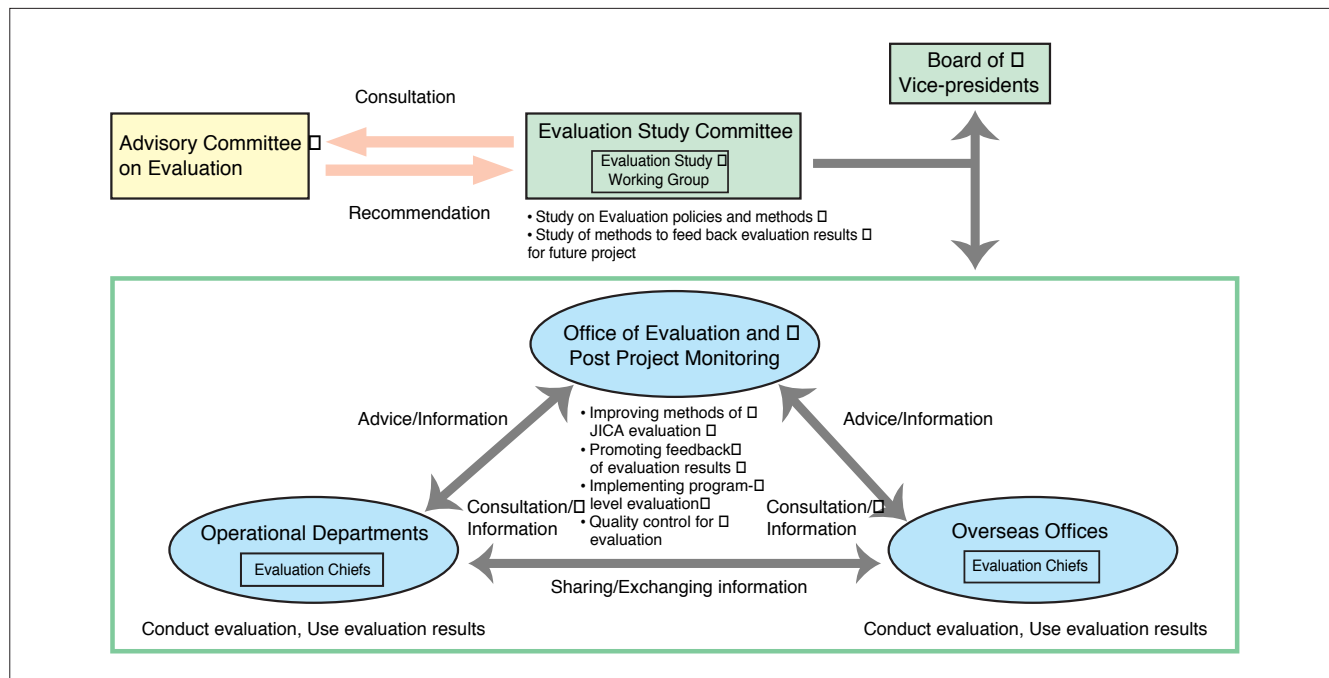
(2) Current Evaluation System and Roles and Efforts of Related Committees and Sections

JICA's current evaluation system involves four main parties: the Evaluation Study Committee, the Advisory Committee on Evaluation, the Office of Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring and the project implementation departments (departments and overseas offices responsible for project operation). The principal roles of the respective parties are described below (Figure 1-5).

1) Evaluation Study Committee

The committee is headed by the JICA Vice President in charge of planning and evaluation and is composed of managing directors of related departments. The committee examines and discusses JICA's basic evaluation policies as

Figure 1-5 JICA's Evaluation System



well as the methods for giving evaluation feedback. Under this committee, an “Evaluation Study Working Group” has set up to study, deliberate and report on related issues and problems.

2) Advisory Committee on Evaluation

This committee is made up of external experts (academics, NGO members, journalists, etc.) well informed about issues concerning development aid and evaluation. The Committee provides advice to the Evaluation Study Committee on evaluation systems and methods. It also reviews the results of internal evaluations to improve objectivity of the evaluations.

3) Office of Evaluation and Post Project Monitoring

The Office is responsible for planning and coordination for overall evaluation activities within JICA, including efforts to improve the evaluation methods and promote evaluation feedback. It also carries out ex-post evaluation such as country program evaluation and thematic evaluation. The Office supports and supervises evaluation activities by departments and overseas offices.

4) Departments and Overseas Offices Involved in Project Implementation

Departments and overseas offices involved in project implementation conduct ex-ante, mid-term, terminal, and ex-post evaluation of individual projects under their responsibility. These evaluation results are used in managing the projects and identifying the effects of projects. As mentioned above, the evaluation chiefs assigned to these departments and offices lead their efforts to improve the quality control for evaluations and evaluation feedback.

(3) Efforts of Fostering Human Resources for Evaluation

In addition to the establishment of a good evaluation system, building human resources with evaluation capacity is also essential for improving the quality of JICA’s evaluation. JICA has provided training programs for its staff both at its headquarters and overseas offices. In addition, JICA plans to introduce a new program to train newly-assigned evaluation chiefs. (Details of these programs are described in Part 1, Chapter 2-3 “Reinforcing the Evaluation System and Capacity.”)

(4) Feedback System

JICA regards the function of evaluation feedback as two-fold: 1) feedback for project management and operation and 2) feedback toward public.

1) Feedback for Project Management and Operation

Feedback for project management and operation involves a process of using evaluation results and lessons and recommendations obtained to improve the planning and implementation of projects. This type of feedback can be further classified into feedback to improve the decision-making process and learning process for the concerned parties.

Feedback to improve the decision-making process involves direct use of evaluation results in making decisions concerning the target project. In most cases, this process forms a part of the project management procedures by the department responsible for the project. For example, the results of the ex-ante evaluation serve as an important reference for deciding whether the project in question should be executed, while those of the mid-term evaluation are considered to decide whether to make a revision of the original project plan. Similarly, the results of the terminal evaluation are used to determine whether the project should be completed, extended or followed up with additional cooperation.

On the other hand, feedback for the organization’s learning process involves the accumulation of evaluation information and lessons by the people involved in development aid operations with the aim of using them in formulating, and planning similar projects and reviewing organizational strategies.

Specifically, feedback for learning process is provided through a variety of measures as follows; debriefing meetings with the participation of stakeholders whenever an evaluation team returns to Japan, information sharing through the evaluation network mentioned above, the creation of a database on lessons concerning the education and telecommunications areas by thematic task teams, and synthesis studies on evaluations to identify common tendencies. Starting 2004, a new column has been added to the “ex-ante evaluation document” for writing down remarks about the lessons applied from similar projects in the past. This is another step for better evaluation feedback.

2) Feedback to the Public

Feedback to the public is a process for JICA to fulfill its accountability which is one of the purposes of JICA’s evalu-

ation. Accountability means more than a commitment to publishing evaluation results. It requires a system in which the ‘trustee’ with undertakings (JICA) gives a full account to the ‘entruster’ (taxpayers) on how it has implemented those undertakings in a responsible manner whereby the entruster can judge trustee’s performance. Also, since cooperation projects need to be carried out jointly with the countries receiving the aid, feedback for those concerned and wider public of these countries is also important.

The accountability requirements include clear cooperation objectives, transparency in the organization’s decision-

making process and efficient use of inputs and accurate measurement of achievements as project results. Ensuring accountability demands the disclosure of evaluation information with quality that meets all of these requirements.

In more concrete terms, JICA’s efforts for feedback to the public include the publication of evaluation reports, holding evaluation seminars to present the results of major ex-post evaluations such as country-program and thematic evaluations to Japanese citizens and the people concerned in aid recipient countries and use of its website for quick disclosure of evaluation results(Figure1-6).

Figure 1-6 JICA Website of “Evaluation”

<http://www.jica.go.jp/english/evaluation/report/index.html>

