

**Preparatory Survey
on the Project for Human Resource
Development Scholarship
in the Lao People's Democratic
Republic**

Final Report

June 2020

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)

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SUMMARY

1. Summary of the Preparatory Survey

Background of the Survey

The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (hereinafter referred to as “JDS”) was first launched in Uzbekistan and Laos in fiscal year (FY) 1999 as part of the “100,000 International Students Plan” of the Japanese government, with the aim of developing human resources who can play core roles in the formulation and implementation of social and economic development policies in developing countries. The project has later been introduced to other countries as well, and has accepted 4,662 fellows from a total of 18 countries since the first intake of fellows in FY 2000 up to FY 2019.

Since FY 2009, the project was gradually switched to a new system as adopted by partner countries subsequently. In this system, an intake framework in four batches is planned, based on the aid policies of the Japanese government and the development issues and the human resources development needs of the target countries. Furthermore, the target of the project is limited to civil servants who are involved in the formulation and implementation of policy in development issues.

The basic research projects conducted by JICA, “Factor Analysis Concerning Results of the JDS Projects” (FY2014) and “Verification of the Outcome of the JDS Project” (FY2019) (hereinafter referred to as the JDS basic research), verified the effectiveness and carried out a comparative analysis of JDS in the target countries, and proposed future project enforcement policies and strategies. In the FY2019 basic research, the average degree recipient rate of JDS fellows from all 13 countries surveyed was 98.7%, and the average civil servants incumbent rate was still high at about 80%. In the questionnaire for returned fellows, it showed that the familiarity with Japan were deepened through JDS, and the knowledge and skills acquired in Japan were sufficiently useful even after a number of years had passed since they returned to their home country. Also, the fact that the senior job position incumbent rate has increased in 9 out of 11 countries since the last basic research project confirms that the rate improvement relates to the continuity of JDS. On the other hand, based on the active cases of competition with other donors, such as Australia, South Korea and China, the future directions of JDS were proposed as follows: 1. target clarification, 2. selection strategy, 3. increasing additional value, and 4. branding.

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic (hereinafter referred to as “Laos”) has been one of the target countries since 1999, the very first year of JDS, with 420 JDS fellows dispatched to Japan from 2000 until 2019. Acceptance of JDS Fellows in FY 2020 will mark the completion of sending JDS Fellows in the present framework. Under such circumstances, this Preparatory Survey was decided to be conducted with the aim of verifying the appropriateness of implementation of the project and properly reflecting the policy of Japan’s economic cooperation to Laos, relevant JICA programs, etc. in the formulation of the project based upon the needs of the government of Laos.

Objectives of the Survey

The main objectives of the survey are as follows:

- To analyze current situation in Laos and needs for human resource development, and formulate a framework for the next four batches starting in FY 2020 (dispatch in FY 2021).
- To formulate a draft basic plan for each priority area, based on the framework, and estimate a budget necessary for the implementation of the project.

Method of the Survey

A part of the preparatory survey, the field survey in Laos has been conducted in November 2019.

- November 2019: Field survey
 - (1) Setting priority areas (Sub-Programs) and development issues (Components) in accordance with Japanese government's economic cooperation policy for Laos and development needs of Laos
 - (2) Confirming the implementation structure of the project
 - (3) Selecting accepting universities in Japan which would provide appropriate educational programs corresponding to each Sub-Program/Component
- February 2020: Estimating the project scale
- April 2020: Drafting the basic plan for each Sub-Program/Component

Results of the Survey

(1) Project Design

The following table shows the JDS priority areas and key development issues and accepting universities identified on the basis of the field survey conducted.

The Framework of the JDS Project in Laos (JDS Fellows 2021 to 2024)

| Sub Program | Component | Accepting University | Slot |
|---|--|---|------|
| 1 Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building | 1-1 Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System | International University of Japan, Graduate School (GS) of International Relations | 3 |
| | | Kyushu University, GS of Law | 2 |
| | 1-2 Enhancement of Public Finance | Yamaguchi University, GS of Economics | 2 |
| 2 Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth | 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure | Hiroshima University, GS of Advanced Science and Engineering | 2 |
| | 2-2 Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion | Ritsumeikan University, GS of International Relations | 3 |
| 3 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation | 3-1 Agriculture and Rural Development | Kyushu University, GS of Bioresource and Bioenvironmental Sciences | 2 |
| | 3-2 Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction | University of Tsukuba, GS of Science and Technology | 2 |
| 4 Improvement of Educational Policy | | Hiroshima University, GS of Humanities and Social Sciences | 2 |
| 5 Improvement of Health Policy | | Nagasaki University GS of Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Department of Global Health | 2 |

Total 20

(2) Target Organizations

For recruitment targets, in light of the JDS purpose of developing core human resources especially in the central government ministries, needs pertaining to studying abroad in each agency were confirmed through the interviews, and the set of target organizations were agreed tentatively. Final determination of the target organizations is to be made at the first Operating Committee of FY 2020 when the project starts. When it is necessary to add or delete a target organization, it will be possible if it meets the purpose of each Component after consultation with the Operating Committee.

(3) Ph.D. Programs

In the current phase, two slots from Laos are allocated for the doctoral scholarship under the JDS. Accordingly, it has been agreed that two slots for the doctoral scholarship will remain in place based on the results of the needs survey during the on-site interview.

(4) Operating Committee

In the field survey conducted in November 2019, it was confirmed that, as in the current phase, seven organizations will be responsible for the JDS Laos as Operating Committee: five on the Laos side (Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Central Committee for Organization and Personnel) and two on the Japanese side (the Embassy of Japan in Laos and the JICA Laos Office).

JDS Laos Operating Committee Members

| Country | Role | Member |
|---------|------------|--|
| Laos | Chair | Ministry of Education and Sports |
| | Member | Ministry of Planning and Investment |
| | Member | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| | Member | Ministry of Home Affairs |
| | Member | Central Committee for Organization and Personnel |
| Japan | Vice-Chair | Embassy of Japan in Laos |
| | Member | JICA Laos Office |

(5) Evaluation of Relevance of the JDS Project

It was analyzed to what degree JDS Laos is consistent with or relevant to Laos's development plans in light of the current state of both these plans and the sectors concerned as well as the challenges faced by the plans and sectors. The target priority areas for the next phase of the JDS correspond to some of the issues raised in the 8th Five-Year National Socio-economic Development Plan (8th NSEDP) of the government of Laos. Accordingly, the JDS is deemed to help achieve 8th NSEDP.

In addition, Japan's country assistance policy for Laos, as revised in April 2012, sets out four priority areas (Intermediary goals): (i) Development of Economic and Social Infrastructure; (ii) Agricultural Development and Forest Conservations; (iii) Improvement of Educational Environment and Human Resource Development and (iv) Improvement of Health Care Services. The JDS Laos, which is designed to develop the core human resources of the country's competent government offices in their respective fields in order to address the identified issues, is consistent with Japan's and JICA's cooperation policies for Laos.

JDS Laos is an initiative that helps the country achieve the goals of its mid- to long-term development plan, since it is designed to develop human resources for state building in Laos. It is also significantly consistent with Japan's assistance policies for Laos; it complements technical cooperation, ODA loans, and other modalities in the cooperation programs for Laos for greater synergy.

2. Recommendations

Issues and recommendations obtained in this survey are as follows.

(1) Implementation of JDS with awareness of diplomatic effects

In Laos, in order to make the most of the project of 20 years, it will eventually become necessary to consider the transition from the human resource development of civil servants working on development issues to the second stage of development, conscious of expectations for more diplomatic effects. In addition to JDS, various JICA long-term training programs are being implemented, so it is necessary to characterize that JDS is a project that is more conscious of diplomatic effects in order to differentiate and organize from other programs.

(2) Strategic personnel selection with awareness of formation of critical mass

The critical mass generally refers to the "branch point where the penetration rate of products and services jumps at a stretch" in marketing. It would be possible to propose that the critical mass in JDS be defined as "20% of JDS returned fellows who have familiarity with Japan occupy the executive posts." JDS returned fellows with an understanding of Japan's standpoints and diplomatic policies will be promoted at opportunities for diplomatic negotiation between the two countries and in multinational conferences. It is proposed that JDS's recruitment and selection basic strategy is to be carried out based on the image of the number distribution of JDS fellows after 5 years and 10 years by focusing on ministries that are expected to form such critical masses or line ministries such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Investment, and Ministry of Justice.

(3) Strengthening promotion and selection activities: improvement of academic ability

JDS fellows from Laos are often pointed out that they require more academic ability to study in Japanese universities compared to JDS fellows from other countries. In particular, in addition to basic subjects such as English and mathematics, it is often said that there is a lack of academic background and basic knowledge for academic research and thesis writing, which directly leads to difficulties in obtaining a master's degree. It cannot be simply generalized that candidates with English proficiency are good candidates, but in order to study at a graduate school in Japan after selection and obtain a network that will lead to the future, improving English proficiency and mathematical skills are still considered necessary at the bottom line. Holding an English/mathematical examination seminar can be considered during the selection.

(4) Use of JICA experts and policy advisers

Collaboration and cooperation of JICA experts and policy advisers is important in JDS. However, the current situation is that JICA experts and policy advisers have not been fully conveyed to JDS. Therefore, with the cooperation of the JICA Laos Office, it is necessary to have an opportunity to hold a briefing session with experts and advisers of the target ministries and agencies to seek cooperation and collaboration between other JICA projects and JDS. JDS returned fellows are already back in their original ministries to which experts and policy advisers have been dispatched. In order to build a beneficial relationship for both parties, first step will be increase awareness of JDS among Japanese officials by letting them know that there are JDS returned fellows.

In addition, obtaining good candidates is an issue. In this survey, the experts also pointed out the issues in applying to JDS, such as difficulties in English ability, passive attitude, and shortage of human resources within their office. On the other hand, if experts can take some the time to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of studying in Japan, it will lead to a change in the consciousness of potential applicants. Also advice from the experts is valuable for the potential

applicants and the organization itself to set indispensable issues as research themes. Such cooperation can lead to the achievement of JDS results.

(5) Points to consider regarding recruitment activities

Acquiring excellent fellows is a prerequisite for achieving the JDS goals. Therefore, it is important to recruit more good applicants from major target organizations in recruitment activities. It is expected that the information dissemination within the ministries will have a certain effect by utilizing the network established with the officers in charge of JDS in the target organizations.

In addition, especially in Laos, since the number of students study in Vietnam and China is large, JDS should appeal the advantages of the program and that of Japan. Following points can be considered as advantages: JDS is a program for human resources development that is aimed at government officers and matches the development issues of the country; it is a program that contributes to the medium- to long-term development of Laos; the accepting universities are positioned as a project partner, and providing curriculum that is more relevant to the country through a special program and has a consistent guidance and support system; there is generous support for JDS fellows, and various value-added programs are offered to the fellows such as networking events with government officials, and individual internships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA.

In addition, in the “JICA-Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP)” that is currently being promoted by JICA, not only research in the specialized fields of the fellows themselves but also the fact that they can learn Japanese development experience will be a major appealing material.

(6) Follow-up activities for the returned JDS fellows

So far, 420 JDS fellows have come to Japan in Laos, and 376 of them have already returned to Laos. JDS fellows have returned to their original workplaces, utilizing the knowledge learned through study abroad, solving problems and discover new issues to be tackled, and contribute to further strengthening the organization.

JDS Laos has effectively continued “target organization system”, and is steadily forming a group of returning fellows within the target ministries. Taking advantage of this, it will be useful to strategically recruit and select human resources who can work as counterparts for Japan's foreign affairs and ODA projects. While these results are being continuously expressed, JDS returned fellows are expected to be more organically connected to each other, forming a group of fellows (critical mass). Also, it is desirable to collaborate beyond the boundaries of ministries, aiming for greater policy planning and realization. To that end, providing opportunities to report examples of policy proposals and/or implementation of JDS returned fellows to the Operating Committee, regularly updating information in each field, and supporting the construction of a mechanism for sharing/collaboration among JDS alumni would be necessary.

In Laos, collaboration with JAOL (Japan Alumni of Laos), which is the existing Alumni

Association for those who studied in Japan will play an important role in follow-up, but the participation rate of JDS fellows is not necessarily high. It is desirable to create a place for JDS fellows in the same sector who share issues to meet while using “JDS” as a platform supported by the implementing agent.

(7) All-Japan initiative to implement the project

JDS is to be implemented as an ODA project. Therefore, further collaboration involving other ODA projects is important based on the following standpoints: (i) this program is not merely a scholarship program for individuals; and (ii) support for development related to contribution to prioritized areas in country assistance policies. In particular, in order to promote cooperation with technical cooperation projects that are being implemented, it is important not only to have close information sharing with the JICA experts and advisors, but also to provide opportunities for the experts to talk directly with JDS returned fellows. In this regard, it is necessary for the implementing agent to deepen the understanding of the projects being implemented by JICA and the related policies of the Lao government, and to make useful proposals.

It can be considered to share the know-how for selecting candidates, by exchanging opinions among the officers in charge of scholarship projects in Japan to obtain high-quality candidates, and providing information on other scholarships during the recruitment process such as JDS recruitment briefing sessions.

In order to strengthen the capacity of young administrative officers who contribute to the promotion of socio-economic development, it is necessary to cooperate with and supplement not only JDS but other programs. By doing so, it becomes possible to enhance the synergistic effect of other projects in Japan. As the role of the implementing agent, it should be aware of cooperation with other ODA projects centering on the JICA human resource development project in Laos.

(8) Need for Enrichment Programs

From the ministries and agencies which were visited by the survey team during the field survey, they proposed that it will be useful if internships are conducted in ministries and agencies and private companies, etc. during the two-year stay in Japan. In terms of capacity building of JDS fellows and building human relationship which is a basis for good bilateral relations, and differentiation from other scholarship programs, further effort should be promoted for this kind of engagement. Then, with regards to the utilization of special program expenses, it is necessary not only to contribute to the quality of research for JDS fellows but also to examine other mechanisms that can be used for the project achievement after JDS fellow's return to their home countries.

(9) Importance of Japanese Language

Acquiring knowledge of the Japanese language is helpful to understand the Japanese mind and spirituality more deeply and to help to form a bridge between Japan and Laos in the future. A

certain level of Japanese conversation skill is a common feature among returned fellows who maintain their connection with Japan after returning to their home country, the effectiveness of acquiring the Japanese language has been confirmed to contribute to strengthening bilateral relations. Since academic English training is implemented in Laos for about 10 weeks before departing to Japan for the JDS fellows, it is proposed to restore the approx. 2-month training in the Japanese language after coming to Japan.

(10) Networking, Establishment of a Follow-up Scheme and Roles of Implementing Agent

Measures to be taken during the fellows' stay in Japan for follow-up conducted after they return home

To make continuous follow-up easier and link those activities to the results of strengthening the partnership between Japan and Laos, the familiarity with Japan needs to be increased from while students' stay in Japan so that they will be motivated to maintain their relationship with Japan following their return. By implementing measures to maintain and develop the familiarity that was increased during their stay in Japan in post-return follow-up, better results can be expected.

Follow-up measures implemented after the JDS fellows return home

In order to conduct continuous follow-up, it is expected to support the activities and enhance follow-up content coordinating with JAOL to maintain and to stimulate the familiarity with Japan that JDS fellows gained during their study. JAOL has many graduates of Japanese government (MEXT) scholarship, so their activities are not specialized for JDS returned fellows. In addition to JAOL's activities, while also providing support from the implementing agent, it is proposed to provide opportunities for activities such as social gatherings, professional seminars by each sectors, social contribution activities etc. that emphasize the strengthening of the network between JDS returnees.

Networking with Japanese administrative officers for networking

From the viewpoint of improving the familiarity with Japan, the measures to be provided to the JDS fellows during their stay in Japan generally include the holding of lessons for understanding the Japanese culture, and seminars for informing about development experience in Japan. However, it is desirable to implement measures utilizing the greatest characteristics of the JDS, which mean that the JDS fellows are government officials involved in policy making of each country. For the JDS fellows who are expected to serve as a bridge between Japan and Laos as people who are well versed in Japan, a network with the Japanese ministries would be useful for their future career. It is desirable to provide support for establishing a network through exchange with administrative officials and the holding of seminars and workshops with the persons concerned with the Japanese ministries as a lecturer.

Roles to be performed by the implementing agent

Role as a mediator

The JDS fellows formulate a network with various Japanese people during their stay in Japan. However, it is not easy to meet an appropriate person only by establishing a personal relationship between individuals and such network merely connects a point with a point, having only a sporadic effect. For this reason, the implementing agent is expected to function as a mediator between the JDS fellows and the Japanese ministries and agencies and the persons concerned with ODA. It is expected that the implementing agent will perform matching based on the interest of both parties and work for establishing an organizational network and thereby contribute to better project achievements.

Firm network foundation with JDS fellows

The implementing agent regularly contacts with the fellows through monitoring, etc. during their stay in Japan and provides immediate support in the case of emergency. For the JDS fellows, the implementing agent is like a partner having a firm trust relationship. For this reason, the implementing agent can understand the information on the quality and other matters of JDS fellows in a detailed and integrated manner.

The role to be played by the implementing agent would be to function as the network foundation with the JDS fellows who are staying in Japan or have returned home based on their mutual trust relationship. The implementing agent's function for establishing a relationship with the JDS fellows should be focused on from the viewpoint of follow-up activities.

Network foundation with the Japanese ministries

It is important for Japanese government officials to build a network with JDS fellows. JDS fellows are a diplomatic asset of Japan, and in the future, some become diplomatic counterparts and some become development partners. For example, in the future, JDS returned fellows may be in charge of infrastructure in their countries, and may become the largest key person in Japan's quality infrastructure exports. In addition, in multilateral diplomacy situations, JDS returned fellows can become partners who can share basic values with Japan while various positions of each country are considered.

However, it is difficult to take full advantage of the network with JDS returned fellows unless both the Japanese government officials and the JDS fellows have built it. Therefore, it is expected that the implementing agent will have opportunities to actively disseminate information and build networks not only to ODA-related parties but also to other ministries and agencies in Japan. By being utilized by each ministry and agency, JDS will be a human resource development project that will contribute not only to the development of the country but also to the development of strong relations between both countries at the same time.

Follow-up perspective

Follow-up activities are important from the viewpoint of critical mass formation and network construction/continuation, and are essential for maximizing project results that cannot be measured by quantitative indicators.

At present, in many JDS implementing countries such as Laos, after JDS fellows return from Japan, the implementing agent acts as an active hub for the JDS returned fellows, supporting the alumni association activities and conducting follow-up activities. The implementing agent has established the “JDS Follow-up Fund” in each country, and provides financial support for the follow-up activities that JDS returned fellows are able to plan independently. Considering the importance of follow-up activities in the manifestation of project results, it is desirable that follow-up activities will be standardly incorporated into the JDS project in addition to the spontaneous action of the implementing agent. As a result, it can be expected that follow-up activities ensuring the scale and quality will be developed.

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[Appendix]

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Description |
|--------------|--|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| ASEAN | Association of South-East Asian Nations |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee |
| DSP | Development Studies Program |
| E/N | Exchange of Notes |
| G/A | Grant Agreement |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| JAOL | Japan Alumni of Laos |
| JDS | Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship by Japanese Grant Aid |
| JETRO | Japan External Trade Organization |
| JICA | Japan International Cooperation Agency |
| JICE | Japan International Cooperation Center |
| JISPA | Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Asia |
| JJ/WBGSP | Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program |
| JSP | ADB-Japan Scholarship Program |
| LDC | Least Developed Country |
| M/D | Minutes of Discussions |
| MOES | Ministry of Education and Sports |
| MOFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MOHA | Ministry of Home Affairs |
| MPI | Ministry of Planning and Investment |
| NSEDPP | National Socio-Economic Development Plan |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PCM | Project Cycle Management |
| QS | Quacquarelli Symonds |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SMS | Short Message Service |
| SNS | Social Networking Services |
| THE | Times Higher Education |
| TOEFL | Test of English as a Foreign Language |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |
| YLP | Young Leader's Program |

Chapter 1. Background of the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)

1-1. Present Situation and Issues of the JDS Project

1-1-1. Background of the Project

The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (hereinafter referred to as “JDS”) is a grant aid project conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (hereinafter referred to as “JICA”) that provides scholarships to international students from partner governments. It was established in fiscal year (FY) 1999 under the Japanese government’s “100,000 International Students Plan.” The purpose of the JDS project is that “young administrative officers and others, who are involved in formulating and implementing the social and economic development plans of the country and are expected to play important roles in the future, shall obtain master’s degrees and Ph.D. degrees at Japanese graduate schools and they shall then contribute to solving development issues of the country as core human resources after returning to their home country; they shall also contribute to strengthening the partnership between the two countries by building up person-to-person networks.” The project has accepted 4,662 international students from a total of 16 countries since the first intake of international students in FY 2000 up to FY 2019.

Although the original target countries of the JDS project were transition economies in Asia, they were expanded later to other Asian countries such as the Philippines. The project expanded to Ghana in Africa in FY 2012, to Nepal in FY 2016 and to Bhutan, Pakistan, and East Timor in FY 2019. At present, the project has 18 target countries. Indonesia left the JDS project in FY 2006, when scholarships began to be coursed through the Japanese ODA loan scheme. China also has left the JDS project with the last JDS participants from China accepted in FY 2012¹.

Table 1 Number of JDS Fellows Dispatched (2000-2019)

| Year | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. Uzbekistan | 20 | 19 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 345 |
| 2. Laos | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 420 |
| 3. Cambodia | | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 26 | 26 | 444 |
| 4. Vietnam | | 20 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 35 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 62 | 63 | 639 |
| 5. Mongolia | | 20 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 18 | 18 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 346 |
| 6. Bangladesh | | 29 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 25 | 30 | 30 | 33 | 33 | 394 |
| 7. Myanmar | | 14 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 44 | 44 | 44 | 48 | 48 | 48 | 557 |
| 8. China | | | 42 | 43 | 41 | 43 | 47 | 47 | 48 | 45 | 39 | 35 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 430 |
| 9. Philippines | | | 19 | 20 | 20 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 21 | 21 | 361 |
| 10. Indonesia | | | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 120 |
| 11. Kyrgyz | | | | | | | 20 | 20 | 18 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 19 | 210 |
| 12. Tajikistan | | | | | | | | | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 62 |
| 13. Sri Lanka | | | | | | | | | | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 154 |
| 14. Ghana | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 65 |
| 15. Nepal | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 80 |
| 16. Timor-Leste | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | 8 |
| 17. Pakistan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | 17 |
| 18. Bhutan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 | 10 |
| Total | 40 | 79 | 152 | 239 | 243 | 240 | 271 | 266 | 266 | 256 | 241 | 234 | 237 | 203 | 226 | 241 | 266 | 281 | 321 | 360 | 4,662 |

¹ After its termination as grant aid, the project has been shifted under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and continued as “Japan Human Resource Development Scholarship for Chinese Young Leaders” (JDS China).

At first, intake plans for the various academic fields were made each year and human resources from both public and private sectors were accepted. Since FY 2009, the project was gradually switched to a new system as adopted by partner countries subsequently. In this system, an intake framework in four batches is planned, based on the aid policies of the Japanese government and the development issues and the human resources development needs of the target countries. Furthermore, the target of the project is limited to civil servants who are involved in the planning and implementation of policy in development issues. This system endeavors to select and focus Japanese government development aid through the JDS project by accepting international students in four batches in the same target area and from the same target organization and assigning them to the same accepting university. The system aims to form a “critical mass” with a group of JDS returned fellows in each government ministry and agency, so that JDS fellows will be able to smoothly utilize the fruits of their studying in Japan in each organization they belong to after returning to their home countries. In addition, by fixing the accepting university for four years, the system plans to form networks between related organization in the target countries and Japanese accepting universities and to provide education and research programs which match the development issues and the human resource development needs of each country.

1-1-2. Current Situation and Issues of the JDS project

The basic research projects conducted by JICA, “Factor Analysis Concerning Results of the JDS Projects” (FY2014) and “Verification of the Outcome of the JDS Project” (FY2019) (hereinafter referred to as the JDS basic research), verified the effectiveness and carried out a comparative analysis of JDS in the target countries², and demonstrated the proposal of future project enforcement policies and strategies. In the FY2019 basic research, the average degree recipient rate of JDS fellows among all 13 countries surveyed was 98.7%, and the average civil servants incumbent rate was still high at about 80%. In the questionnaire for returned fellows, it showed that the feelings of familiarity with Japan were deepened through JDS, and the knowledge and skills acquired in Japan were sufficiently useful even after a number of years had passed since they returned to their home country. Also, the fact that the senior job position incumbent rate has increased in 9 out of 11 countries since the last basic research project confirms that the rate improvement relates to the continuity of JDS. On the other hand, based on the active cases of competition with other donors, such as Australia, South Korea and China, the future directions of JDS were proposed as follows: 1. target clarification, 2. selection strategy, 3. increasing additional value, and 4. branding.

²The FY2014 basic research was conducted in 11 countries except Ghana, which was excluded because its first JDS fellows had only just returned to the country. The FY2019 basic research was conducted in 13 countries. East Timor, Pakistan and Bhutan were excluded because they did not have any graduated students.

Table 2 Recommendations from JICA Basic Research (source: JICA)

| Recommendation | Specific measure | |
|--|--|--|
| Target clarification | Role allocation with other JICA scholarship programs | |
| Selection strategy | Setting special selection capacity | |
| Increasing Additional Value ↓ Branding | Basic project framework | Setting 1-year course Expansion of target candidates to the middle-aged group (reduced age requirements) |
| | Pre-arrival program | 3-month Japanese language training |
| | Program during study in Japan | Formation of a network with Japanese ministries and local governments Implementation of internships in government agencies, NGOs, companies, etc. Service and ceremony (VIP visit on arrival in Japan, etc.) |
| | Activities after returning to home country | Strengthening follow-up activities (support for alumni association networks and research activities after returning to home country, etc.) Sharing and disseminating returned fellows lists to Japan-related institutions |
| | Improving and strengthening public relations and promotion methods | Redesigning brochures Introducing web applications |

In addition, for countries where JDS is being conducted, the number of development issues which require donors to deal with is likely to decrease as the project continues. Therefore, JDS sets three stages of development; 1. response to development issues, 2. response to development issues and Japan's national interest, and 3. Japan's national interest. The focus of the target institution and the human resources should be shifted according to each stage.

Table 3 Transition in the Focus of HRD and the Targets of JDS According to the Developmental Stage of the Partner Country

| Assumed Stage of the Partner Country | A. Many development issues : The framework in line with Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy = Current JDS program | B. Development Issues + Important Issues for Japan | C. Country of Political, Economic, and/or Diplomatic Importance (e.g., China) |
|--|--|---|---|
| Focus of Human Resources Development (HRD) | Development of core human resources in civil service who address development issues (Responding to development issues) | Development of core human resources in civil service who have influence on development issues (Development issues + Japan's national interests) | Fostering of government officials who serve as a bridge between the partner country and Japan (Expected diplomatic benefits) |
| Targets of JDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openly calling for applications - Young government officials (at government offices whose duties include policymaking and planning, as well as sectoral government offices), university faculty members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calling for applications only from government offices or departments whose duties include policymaking and planning - Introducing a smaller quota or cost-sharing between the partner country and Japan - Designating target organizations or departments under the Japan special quota | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministries, organizations, or departments agreed upon between the partner country and Japan - Cost-sharing agreed upon between the two countries |

1-1-3. Current Situation in JDS Laos

(1) Establishing Assessments of JDS in Target Organizations

The JDS Project in Laos turned 20 years old in 2019. It has sent a total of 420 students to Japan, 374 of whom have returned home. Since 2009, only civil servants has become eligible, and the levels of awareness and regard for the JDS Project in central government ministries is high. In particular, the top ten main target organizations for returned JDS Fellows (Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Bank of Lao PDR, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Sports, etc.) have sent out 245 of the returned JDS Fellows, about 60% of the total³.

In addition, returned JDS Fellows are utilizing their experiences studying in Japan to support cooperative bilateral programs run by Japan, contributing to strengthening the relationship between our two countries. As an example, in drafting Laos' first Civil Code, which was established in December 2018 with the support of JICA's legal system development support, returned JDS Fellows working in the Ministry of Justice and the People's Supreme Court served as counterparts.

³ Dispatch record of MOES includes faculty members of National University of Laos and teacher training colleges.



Figure 1 Number of JDS returned fellows in government organizations (Batch 1 ~ 20)⁴

⁴ Of the Batch 1 to Batch 20 fellows, only civil servants are counted. Returnees were calculated based on their status as of May 2020, and those who were in Japan were calculated as the status before their arrival in Japan.

Table 4 Major JDS returned fellows who take active roles in Laos (as of May 2020)

| Batch (arrival year) | Name | Organization | Position |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Batch 1 (2000) | Ms. Phonevanh OUTHAVONG | Ministry of Planning and Investment Department of Planning | Director General |
| Batch 2 (2001) | Mr. Bountha SONGYERTHAO | Ministry of Justice, Department of Personnel | Director General |
| Batch 3 (2002) | Mr. Bountheung DOUANGSAVANH | Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Department of SME Promotion | Director General |
| Batch 4 (2003) | Mr. Thongsay SAYAVONGKHAMDY | Ministry of Planning and Investment, Savan SENO Special Economic Zone Authority (SEZA) | Governor |
| Batch 5 (2004) | Mr. Sengsouvanh CHANTHALOUNNAVONG | The People's Supreme Court, Vientiane Capital Court | President of Vientiane Capital Court |
| Batch 7 (2006) | Mr. Bounkhouang THAVISACK | The People's Supreme Court | Vice President |

(2) Academic Concerns of JDS fellows

While the overall completion status for JDS Fellows was 98.7% as of May 2020, ensuring highly qualified candidates, as well as their basic academic abilities including English skills, remain issues. Normally, graduate schools in Japan require a TOEFL score of 550 (PBT), but the average score of Laos Fellows who are selected is less than 450. The preparatory survey in FY2015 also noted the same issues, and, starting with the fellows arriving in Japan in Phase 3, a ten-week English training program has been held in Vientiane before the departure. Even so, there are always a few fellows each year who present concerns regarding their academic performance after arrival in Japan. There are also examples of concerns regarding plagiarism, so fellows need to properly understand any differences in study environments and rules between Japan and Laos. Therefore, it would be better to allocate universities that offer extensive support for students from non-English speaking countries and for the program to provide study support.

1-1-4. Socio-Economic Situation and Situation of Higher Education**(1) Social and Economic Situation**

Laos is located in the middle of the Indochinese Peninsula, and is the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia. Sharing borders with the five countries of China, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, it forms a key part of the Mekong region. Its geographic limitations and past internal conflicts have caused its development to lag, but recently it is repositioning itself from a “land-locked” country to a “land-linked” country, focusing on its geographical superiority in the heart of the Indochinese Peninsula, where it can become a hub of distribution in the region, or otherwise use its regional connectivity to find a path to economic development.

Its area is 237,000 m² (about the same size as Japan’s Honshu island), and its population is about 6,490,000 (2015 National Census). Including the Lao people, who make up about half the population, the country is home to fifty different ethnic groups.

Its diplomatic relations since 1975 emphasized its relationship with socialist nations, in particular the Soviet Union, but since adopting a reform path in 1986, it has maintained and expanded friendly relations with neighboring countries while basing its diplomacy on all regions, including the West, as a way to attract foreign capital and obtain foreign aid. It joined ASEAN in July 1997. It served as Chair of ASEAN in 2004 and 2016.

In terms of economy, since 1975 Laos has maintained political stability under a single-party rule by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, and has been working to transition to a market economy while maintaining its socialist system. In 1986, it introduced the Chintanakan Mai (New Thinking) Policy, promoting its New Economic Mechanism, and, under the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, it includes leaving the ranks of least developed countries by FY2020 and joining the ranks of upper middle income countries by 2030.

(2) Political situation

The government system in Laos is single-party rule, and party leaders also occupy key posts in the country's various organs. The Lao People's Revolutionary Party has a general congress every five years, where they determine their government policies, as well as key posts such as general secretary, members of the politburo, the secretariat, and the central committee.

The head of state of Laos is the President of Laos, who is selected by the Laos National Assembly. The National Assembly is a unicameral parliament. It holds general elections every five years and normal sessions are held twice a year. The National Assembly also has, in addition to its role as the legislative organ, authority to supervise administrative and judiciary organs. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are appointed by the President with the approval of the National Assembly.

At the 10th General Assembly in January 2016, the Party's leadership role was emphasized, and a policy of maintaining the path of reform and openness while preserving social systems was presented. In addition, the "Vision 2030," the "Socioeconomic Development Strategy Ten-Year Strategy 2016-2025," and the "8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan" were approved as socioeconomic development plans.

(3) Situation of Higher Education

Laos' education system consists of five years of primary education (compulsory education), seven years of secondary education (4 years + 3 years), and four years of tertiary (higher) education. The enrollment rate in 2017 was 93% for primary education, 78% for secondary education (62% for upper secondary), and 16% for tertiary education⁵.

There are currently five national universities in Laos. The National University of Laos was founded in 1996 as the country's first general national university. A large comprehensive

⁵ UNESCO "Global Education Monitoring Report 2019"

university, it has eleven faculties (Agriculture, Architecture, Economics and Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Forestry, Law and Political Sciences, Letters, Natural Sciences, Environmental Sciences) and seven centers or organizations. Its enrollment is over 40,000. The other national universities are Souphanouvong University, Champasack University, Savannakhet University, and the University of Health Sciences. There are 80 private colleges in Vientiane and other areas, most of which are small schools that specialize in single subject areas such as English, accounting, management, or IT.⁶

The Laos government has been emphasizing the development of human resources with skills and knowledge in line with its change to a market economy, and has been engaging in higher education reforms since 1995. With the rapid economic development in the 2000s, there is an increased need for higher education. Since around 2005 there has been a rapid increase in the number of higher education institutes in Laos, and the number of tertiary students is also increasing steadily. The 30,000-strong number of tertiary education students in FY2005-06 (undergraduate level) has doubled to nearly 60,000 by FY2012-13. On the other hand, the decline in quality in line with the rapid increase in access to higher education has been noted by some. Strengthening the strategic characteristics for higher education overall is part of the 8th Five-Year Education Development Plan put out by the Ministry of Education and Sports. A multi-faceted framework has been established within the sector that includes the strengthening of specific plans, operation and management, and monitoring systems, the development of curricula that cater to the needs of the labor market, the setting of qualifications for teachers to ensure education quality, and so on.

1-1-5. Development Plan

The Laos government has included the following five points and three outcomes in its 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) (8th NSEDP).

Table 5 Five growth targets under 8th NSEDP

- (1) With regards to the Gross National Income (GNI) growth rate, it is aimed at the average GNI by 2020 to be 2,520 USD per person, and for Gross Domestic Products (GDPs) growth rate to be not lower than 7.5%.
- (2) Aiming for National Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which include 18 goals (17 Goals belong to International standard for SDGs, one additional goal (UXO clearance) for Lao National Sustainable Development Goal).
- (3) Continue for poverty eradication, Aiming to exist from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) status by 2020 with continuous economic growth, stability and sustainability.
- (4) The stability of politics and society will be maintained and the integration of the regional and international community will be promoted.
- (5) Promote the management and utilization of natural resources in an effective manner, direct the development of the nation in parallel to the strength and hidden potentials of the country.

In order to achieve these goals, the following output is set out under each outcome shown in the following.

⁶ About 70% of past candidate of JDS were graduates of NUOL.

Table 6 Summary of Outputs Required to Achieve Each Outcome

| | |
|---|---|
| Outcome 1: Sustained inclusive economic growth with economic vulnerability (EVI) reduced to levels required for LDC graduation and consolidated financial, legal and human resources to support growth. | |
| Output 1 | Sustained and Inclusive Economic Growth |
| Output 2 | Macroeconomic Stability |
| Output 3 | Integrated Development Planning and Budgeting |
| Output 4 | Balanced Regional and Local Development |
| Output 5 | Improved Public/Private Labour Force Capacity |
| Output 6 | Local Entrepreneurs are Competitive in Domestic and Global Markets |
| Output 7 | Regional and International Cooperation and Integration |
| Outcome 2: Human resources are developed and the capacities of the public and private sectors is upgraded; poverty in all ethnic groups is reduced, all ethnic groups and both genders have access to quality education and health services; the unique culture of the nation is protected and consolidated; political stability, social peace and order, justice and transparency are maintained. | |
| Output 1 | Improved Living Standards through Poverty Reduction and 3-builds implementation |
| Output 2 | Food Security Ensured and Incidence of Malnutrition Reduced |
| Output 3 | Access to High Quality Education |
| Output 4 | Access to High Quality Health Care and Preventative Medicine |
| Output 5 | Enhanced Social Welfare |
| Output 6 | Protection of Traditions and Culture |
| Output 7 | Political Stability, Order, Justice, and Transparency |
| 3: Natural resources and the environment are effectively protected and utilized according to green-growth and sustainable principles; there is readiness to cope with natural disasters and the effects of climate change and for reconstruction following natural disasters. | |
| Output 1 | Environmental Protection and Sustainable Natural Resources Management |
| Output 2 | Preparedness for Natural Disasters and Risk Mitigation |
| Output 3 | Reduced Instability of Agricultural Production |

1-2. Background and Overview of the Grant Aid

While ruled by a single-party system by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party since its independence, in 1986 the concept of New Thinking (Chintanakan Mai) was raised, and the country has embarked on free economic reforms based around market economy principles. In particular, its economic growth has been impressive following its entry into the ASEAN in 1997. Through realizing the three outcomes (development balanced between the fields of (1) economy, (2) society, and (3) the environment) in its 8th NSEDP (2016-2020), the Laos government aims to leave the ranks of least developed countries by 2020.

However, there are still numerous issues that need to be solved, such as the development of infrastructure and systems to correct imbalances in the country and abroad. In particular, in addition to recurring budget deficits, the country's public debt due to loans from nearby countries has been increasing. The financial health of Laos remains a serious issue. Since there are still insufficiency in overall capacities for officials, organizations, systems, finances, etc. in the various government organs and related ministries that deal with development issues, there is an urgent

need to develop core human resources who can contribute to improving administration abilities and constructing systems for each development issue.

Under all these circumstances, the Lao government recently requested that the Japanese government accept a total of four batches of Laos JDS fellows starting in JFY2021 under the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS). Japan's acceptance of such students is in line with two of the three pillars of Japan's vision of Free and Open Indo-Pacific: the establishment of the rule of law (through governance capacity building) and the pursuit of economic prosperity (through people-to-people connectivity). It is hoped that efforts to build the capacity of government and other officials in Laos under this program will help the country to strengthen its administrative structure and solve its development issues.

1-3.Civil Service System in Laos

(1) Administration System

The Laos government (Cabinet) has positioned this in the 2015 Constitution (Article 69) as “The government is the executive branch of the State having full rights on the complete management and supervision nationwide. The government administers the National Assembly and the President of the State.” The Laos government (Cabinet) is composed of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, the various ministers, and the heads of the various agencies and other national organs of equivalent status. The terms of office for each are five years. In addition, starting with the 2015 amended Constitution, bureaucrats are prohibited from serving in the same post for two consecutive terms (Article 71).

There are 1 cabinet, 18 ministries, and 2 organs (total: 21 organs) in the central administration of Laos. The country's administrative divisions are divided into Vientiane Capital and 17 provinces, under which are districts and villages.

Table 7 List of Ministries in Laos

| Ministries | |
|--|---|
| The Prime Minister's Office | Ministry of Planning and Investment |
| Ministry of Defense | Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare |
| Ministry of Public Security | Ministry of Industry and Commerce |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs | Ministry of Energy and Mine |
| Ministry of Finance | Ministry of Justice |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry | Ministry of Education and Sport |
| Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism | Ministry of Health |
| Ministry of Public Work and Transport | Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment |
| Ministry of Home Affairs | Ministry of Post, Telecom and Communication |
| Ministry of Science and Technology | The Bank of Lao PDR |

(2) Civil Service System⁷

The definition of a civil servant in Laos is stipulated in the 2015 Civil Service Law. The term civil servant encompasses personnel in both central and regional government organs, personnel at government-related banks, and personnel at universities and colleges. Ministries and agencies with jurisdiction over civil servants are the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Central Committee on Organization and Personnel. Personnel of bureau director or higher in central government agencies are under the jurisdiction of the Central Committee for Organization and Personnel, while those of deputy director or lower are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

As of February 2019, there were 184,161 civil servants, but the Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith has called for a reduction in the number of civil servants through controlling new recruitment, merging or abolishing departments within ministries or agencies, and so on, on the grounds that the number of civil servants, at 2.8% of the total population, is excessive and a drain on the national budget⁸. In FY2011-12, there were about 17,000 new hires, but in FY2018 that number was down to 3,000, and in FY2019 it was only about 1,500. The number of civil servants, which had been on an increasing trend since FY2009, has been declining since FY2018.

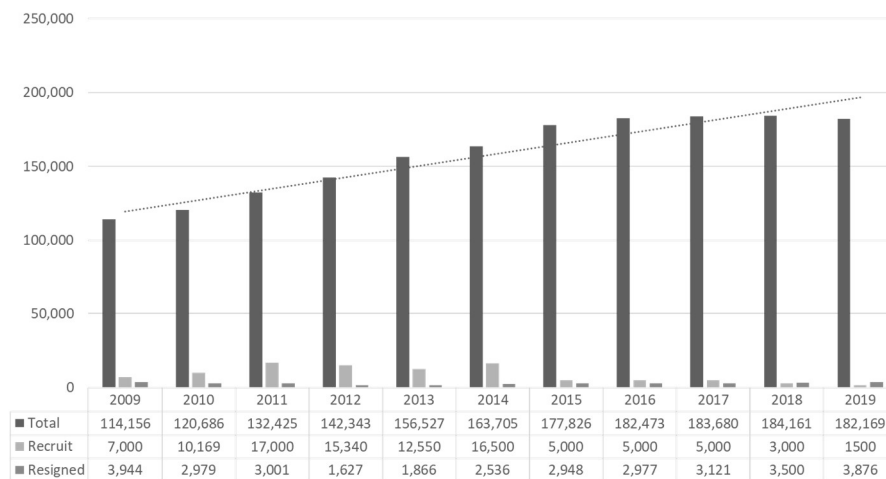


Figure 2 Number of civil servants, new hires and retirees over the last 10 years⁹

Looking at the target group of JDS in the statistics, 68% of the age group is under 40 years old, which matches the number of valid applicants for JDS, but the total number of civil servants belonging to central and prefecture level is about 35% of the total, of which about 15% belong to the central ministries, so the number is narrowed down to some extent. The ratio of staff with bachelor's degree or higher to all public servants is 41.21%, but most of them are bachelor's degree holders (35.5% of the total), 5.4% for master's degree and only 0.3% for doctoral degree. Therefore it can be said that the demands for master's and doctoral degrees are still high.

⁷ Based on interviews conducted to Ministry of Home Affairs in November 2019 and February 2020.

⁸ Vientiane Post, "PM: Downsize state organizations, cut civil servant numbers" 14 February 2019

⁹ Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020

Table 8 Number of Civil Servant in each level (2019)

| | Total | | Female | | Male | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| Total Civil Servant in Country | 182,169 | | 84,713 | 46.5% | 97,456 | 53.5% |
| Ministry Level (Central) | 26,381 | 14.5% | 11,675 | 6.4% | 14,706 | 8.1% |
| Local - Provincial Level | 37,620 | 20.7% | 15,977 | 8.8% | 21,643 | 11.9% |
| Local - District Office Level | 118,168 | 64.9% | 57,061 | 31.3% | 61,107 | 33.5% |

Table 9 Number of Civil Servant by age group (2019)

| | Total | | Female | | Male | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| According to ages | 182,169 | | 84,713 | 46.5% | 97,456 | 53.5% |
| 25 and younger | 4,273 | 2.3% | 3,211 | 1.8% | 1,062 | 0.6% |
| 26-30 | 40,115 | 22.0% | 23,636 | 13.0% | 16,479 | 9.0% |
| 31-35 | 49,336 | 27.1% | 24,140 | 13.3% | 25,196 | 13.8% |
| 36-40 | 30,136 | 16.5% | 12,255 | 6.7% | 17,881 | 9.8% |
| 41-45 | 16,801 | 9.2% | 6,602 | 3.6% | 10,199 | 5.6% |
| 46-50 | 16,888 | 9.3% | 7,731 | 4.2% | 9,157 | 5.0% |
| 51-55 | 15,761 | 8.7% | 6,027 | 3.3% | 9,734 | 5.3% |
| 56-60 | 7,815 | 4.3% | 1,041 | 0.6% | 6,774 | 3.7% |
| 61 and older | 1,044 | 0.6% | 70 | 0.0% | 974 | 0.5% |

Table 10 Number of Civil Servant by academic degree (2019)

| | Total | | Female | | Male | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| According to Academic level | 182,169 | | 84,713 | 46.5% | 97,456 | 53.5% |
| Ph.D | 550 | 0.3% | 90 | 0.0% | 460 | 0.3% |
| Post Master | 905 | 0.5% | 383 | 0.2% | 522 | 0.3% |
| Master | 8,946 | 4.9% | 2,374 | 1.3% | 6,572 | 3.6% |
| Post Bachelor | 4,490 | 2.5% | 2,491 | 1.4% | 1,999 | 1.1% |
| Bachelor | 60,174 | 33.0% | 24,538 | 13.5% | 35,636 | 19.6% |
| Higher Diploma | 69,549 | 38.2% | 36,344 | 20.0% | 33,205 | 18.2% |
| Medium Diploma | 31,780 | 17.4% | 16,159 | 8.9% | 15,621 | 8.6% |
| Lower Diploma | 4,831 | 2.7% | 2,012 | 1.1% | 2,819 | 1.5% |
| No Certificate level | 944 | 0.5% | 322 | 0.2% | 622 | 0.3% |

Recruitment and career path

Recruitment is done based on the Civil Service Law. Until FY2012, it was done by each ministry or agency, but to counter accusations of nepotism and ensure quality personnel, a nationwide unified civil service examination was introduced by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2013. However, the exams were stopped due to budget crunches and decentralization, so now each organ has reverted to the previous system before the hiring exams were used.

The number of people that may apply and be selected is governed by the numbers permitted by the government. Once selection has been carried out by the department of personnel of each ministry based on the regulations, the appointment will be made by that ministry's minister following approval by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Recruitment is held twice a year, in the first and third quarters. The Ministry of Home Affairs compiles from each ministry the number of people seeking employment and these are proposed to the government, which allocates them

based on the number that can be hired. The conditions for being hired as a civil servant are to have had Laotian nationality for at least three years, be over 18 and under 35, and to have a degree related to the work.

Civil service promotions are regulated in Article 15 of the National Civil Service Personnel Act. Promotion to management levels is based on number of years of service, academic background, work evaluations, whether there are any vacant posts, and work qualifications. In addition, the base salary of civil servants is stipulated by the salary index. Civil servants of deputy director rank or below are classified into Grades I to V, each of which has 15 levels. Higher ranks are Grade VI, which has 7 levels. Which grade and level a newly hired civil servant is appointed at is determined by their academic background, and there are regular raises once every two years. A civil servant who studies abroad will be raised one level within the same grade for a bachelor's degree and two levels for a master's degree, and will not need to wait for the regular raise. Interviews with Ministry of Home Affairs officials have shown that as this raise system has been used in Laos for about 25 years now, shifting from academic-based regular raises to outcome-based raises that emphasize abilities and results is an issue that will need resolving in the future.

Promotion to the top post for administrative officials, such as Director General of Department, requires at least a master's degree. In addition, five-stage performance evaluations are carried out annually based on both self-evaluations as well as those of colleagues, the organization, and superiors. However, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party has a lot of influence, and being appointed to posts in the higher ranks requires holding an equivalent position in the Party. At present, those who obtained their degrees in countries like Vietnam or China tend to be more favored for promotion within ministries or agencies. This reflects the fact that there are many Laotians studying in the neighboring countries of China and Vietnam that have similar socio-economic systems, and that many of the superiors who determine promotions have themselves studied abroad in those countries so have ample understanding of students who have studied there as well.

The main ranks in the central organs of Laos are as follows. Of these, applications to be a JDS Fellow mostly come from (6) Deputy Head or Chief of Division or below. In addition, (1) Ministers are political appointments, so the most a civil servant can be promoted to as an administrative official is (2) Vice-Minister.

| |
|---|
| (1) Minister |
| (2) Vice Minister |
| (3) Director General of Department |
| (4) Deputy Director General of Department |
| (5) Head or Chief of Division |
| (6) Deputy Head or Chief of Division |
| (7) Senior Officer |

Human resource development system

The National Academy of Politics and Public Administration (NAPPA), established with the support of the French École Nationale d'Administration, is responsible for training civil servants. NAPPA is the only research and training institute for civil servants in Laos, but is positioned not only as a government organ but as a Party organ as well, so the emphasis is on socialist principles, Party policies, and government administration skills, in that order.

After surveying the status of human resources training in target organs in this preparatory survey, it was confirmed that opportunities for study and training abroad are required in order to foster human resources further within many ministries. For civil servants in Laos, time spent studying abroad is treated as leave, and their position is guaranteed. JDS Fellows are required to serve for a period of four years, after returning to their former posts once they return to Laos where they shall utilize the knowledge and skills they have gained abroad and strengthen their ministries.

There are differences among policies, plans, budgets, etc. for foreign study, and while some ministries offer almost no chances for study or training abroad, the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, and Industry and Commerce are some that have their own training programs with the assistance of donors. Each ministry is studying long-term human resources training plans, but at present JDS Project applicants are also being sent for strategic reasons, and JDS Fellow returnees are unable to be fully utilized within their organizations.

Gender Consideration

Laos is ranked 47th out of 153 in the Global Gender Gap Index, second after the Philippines among ASEAN nations¹⁰. Of the four categories “Economic participation and opportunity” is the third highest, but “Political empowerment” is 98th, and “Educational Attainment” is 110th in rank.

According to interviews with officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Laos government promotes gender equality, and while at present more men are hired, there are a number of opportunities for women to be promoted to the bureau director level or higher (ages 55-60). At present, the government guarantees at least 30% of all higher grades will be women. In addition, in the past, the retirement age for women is set at 55, but they can optionally choose to extend that until 60.

Looking at JDS Fellow statistics, the gender ratio for the total number who have come to Japan is 70% male, 30% female, but in the new-style Second Phase (Fellows arriving in 2013-2016), the ratio was 36.3% female, while in the Third Phase (Fellows arriving in 2017-2020) it was 41.7%, showing that more and more female Fellows are being selected. However, men still dominate the key posts, and an examination of returned JDS Fellows who have been promoted or otherwise excelled showed that of the 50 at the rank of ministry Chief of Division or higher (as of the FY2019 survey), there were 6 women (12%). Continued steady development of female

10 World Economic Forum: “Global Gender Gap Report 2020”, December 2019

civil servants through JDS is expected to contribute to gender equality within the government and promotion of female participation.

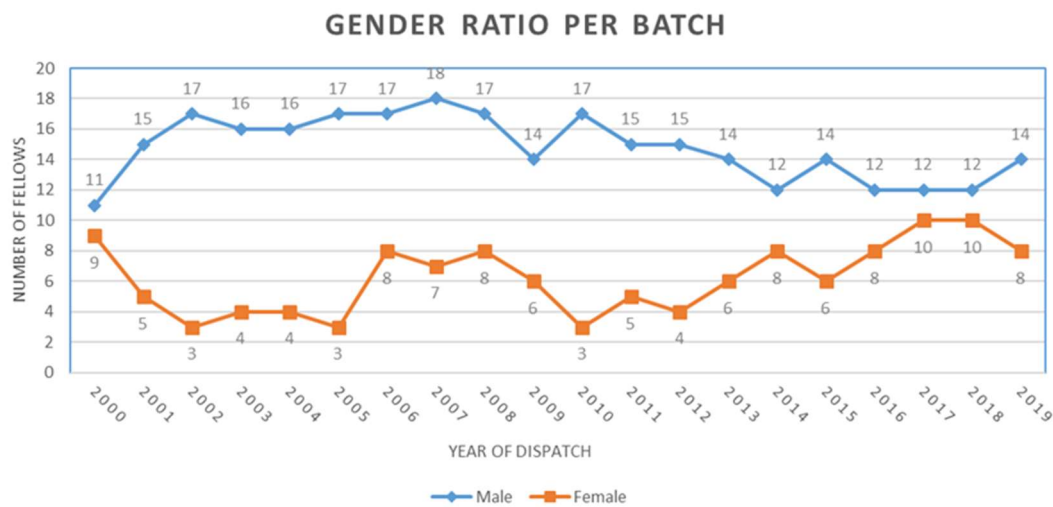


Figure 3 Number of JDS fellows by gender in each batch

1-4. Trends of the Japan's ODA to Laos

1-4-1. Trends of the Japanese ODA

(1) Overview

Japan and Laos established diplomatic relations in 1955, and in March 2015, when the two countries celebrated 60 years of relations, the Comprehensive Partnership between the two countries was promoted to a Strategic Partnership. Shortly after Laotian independence, in 1958, Japan and Laos signed an agreement for economic and technical support. Japan has continued to provide aid, through ODA from 1966 to present. Laos is also the first country where Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers were dispatched. In 2016, the Japan-Laos Development Cooperation Joint Project was agreed upon by both prime ministers, and Japan has continued to support Laos' initiatives towards its goal of leaving the ranks of least developed countries (LDC) by 2020. The total amount of ODA provided by Japan to Laos exceeds 2.22 billion USD, so for Laos, Japan is a top partner in bilateral aid among OECD/DAC member nations.

The Country Assistance Policy for Laos (April 2012) sets the core assistance areas as "Development of economic and social infrastructure," "Development of agriculture and preservation of forests," "Development of educational environments and human resources training," and "Improvement of health and medical services." In addition, to support development initiatives in Laos, the "Japan-Lao PDR Joint Development Cooperation Plan" signed by the leaders of both countries in September 2016 lists three pillars of cooperation, the second of which

is “Diversifying industry and strengthening competitiveness, and training industrial human resources for that end,” so the JDS Project is positioned as a project that will contribute to enhancing higher and technical training education.

Table 211 Country Assistance Policy for Laos by the Japanese Government (April 2012)

| Basic Policy | Priority Areas | Concrete Measures |
|---|--|---|
| Supporting for (1) Achieving MDGs by 2015 and (2) Graduating from the LDC index by 2020 | ①Development of Economic and Social Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of transport networks • Expansion of safe and stable power supply • Investment and export environment improvements • Creation of an environmentally harmonious and comfortable society |
| | ②Agricultural Development and Forest Conservations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased productivity in agriculture and fisheries, and step-by-step development from self-sufficiency to market-oriented agriculture • Sustainable use of forest resources and livelihood improvement |
| | ③Improvement of Educational Environment and Human Resource Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of basic education • Expansion of higher and technical education that is instrumental in strengthening the private sector and the transition to a market economy |
| | ④Improvement of Health Care Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening health systems to improve maternal and child health services |

Table 12 The Japan-Lao PDR Joint Development Cooperation Plan for the Sustainable Development of Lao PDR (September 2016)

| Three pillars of cooperation | Cooperation program |
|---|---|
| I Strengthen connectivity with countries in the region on the tangible and intangible fronts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦Develop the road and bridge infrastructure for making Lao PDR a transportation hub of the Mekong region. ◦Develop the systems and infrastructure (improve customs clearances, international border check-point etc.) for making Lao PDR a distribution network base of the Mekong region. ◦Develop and operate Vientiane International Airport in order to strengthen the connectivity of the sky ◦Develop safe operating structures at regional airports ◦Develop power sources and the electricity transmission network in Lao PDR, which is being counted on to become the “battery” of the Mekong region |
| II Develop the industrial human resources in order to diversify Lao PDR’s industries and enhance their competitiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦Strengthen basic education in such areas as science and mathematics, and enhance higher education and develop vocational training ◦Develop the investment environment, enhance the capacity for formulating industrial policy, and promote public-private sector dialogues ◦Improve access to the funding needed to establish and nourish SMEs ◦Promote areas such as irrigation agriculture in order to encourage commercial crops, and clean agriculture that offers safety and peace of mind. ◦Build a food value chain that meets the standard for the markets of neighboring countries |
| III Rectify disparity through balanced urban and regional development that takes environmental and cultural preservation into account | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦Develop public transportation modes such as buses, including formulating strategies for transport development in the capital. ◦Develop basic public infrastructure, such as waterworks ◦Pursue sustainable development in regional cities, including Luang Phabang, a World Heritage City ◦Conserve the environment and develop it sustainably, including by preserving the forests of the Mekong River basin. ◦Improve the quality of healthcare, education and other sectors, and rectify domestic disparity |
| Cross-sectoral issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Reinforce the annual government revenue, improve and disseminate for the citizen, entrepreneurs and private sector awareness related to custom clearance and tax-payment and strengthen the planned management and monitoring of development budgets in order to stabilize the macro economy and finances ·Formulate the laws required to promote the rule of law and strengthen the capacity for disseminating and enforcing them, while striving to enhance central and regional administrative capabilities so that development projects can be executed appropriately based on the Sam Sang Policy. ·Seek to develop the facilities and equipment needed for removing unexploded ordnance and enhance the capabilities of the relevant organizations, while coordinating with other development partners |

1-4-2. Japanese Government’s Scholarship Programs

(1) Overview

The total number of Laotian students coming to Japan to study, whether government funded or privately funded, in FY2018 was 232, showing a slight increase over the past five years (See Table below).¹¹ Looking at the figures by enrollment stage, there are 62 privately-funded master’s

¹¹ See “Changes in Numbers of Laos International Students: 2006-2018 (government/private, enrollment level)”

students, 32 privately-funded undergraduates, followed by government-funded students at technical colleges, then in doctoral courses. As JDS fellows are normally categorized as “privately funded,” about 2/3 of the privately-funded 62 students and about 20% of the whole are JDS Fellows.

Table 13 Overseas scholarship program to Japan

| Year | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Government sponsored | 135 | 134 | 116 | 99 | 101 | 99 | 94 | 108 | 103 | 104 |
| Private funded | 150 | 147 | 135 | 133 | 121 | 111 | 120 | 113 | 122 | 128 |
| Total | 285 | 281 | 251 | 232 | 222 | 210 | 214 | 221 | 225 | 232 |

The Japanese government’s international student projects for Laos are carried out mainly by five institutions. Projects which target administration officials, like JDS, can be divided into the following: (1) the Young Leaders Program (YLP) for government-sponsored overseas education systems run by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, (2) scholarship projects through donations from the Japanese government to international institutions, and (3) JICA long-term trainees. However, there are some that are targeted but have no recent record of dispatch.

Table 14 Overseas scholarship program to Japan

| Implementing Organization | Program | Purpose, etc |
|---|---|---|
| Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) | The Japanese Government Scholarship | To promote international cultural exchange between Japan and other countries and to promote mutual friendship, as well as to contribute to human resources development of foreign countries. Dispatched from Laos to doctors, masters, faculties, technical colleges, etc. |
| Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) | JSPS Fellowship Programs for Overseas Researchers | To support the progress of research by individual foreign research fellows, as well as to promote Japanese academic research and internationalization through cooperative research relationships with foreign researchers. |
| | RONPAKU (Dissertation PhD) Program | To support outstanding researchers from Asian and African nations in obtaining PhDs from Japanese universities by submitting theses, regardless of the graduate school course. The aim is to improve academic research standards in the target countries and to develop academic exchange relationships between Japan and the target countries. |

| Implementing Organization | Program | Purpose, etc |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) | Joint Japan/ World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP) | To provide middle managers in developing countries with opportunities to study in Master's degree courses in development-related areas in Western countries, Japan, etc. The project has been administered with donations from the Japanese government for longer than 25 years. More than 5,000 people have received the scholarship so far and more than 200 million dollars has been spent by the Japanese government. The project is intended for personnel in both the government and the private sector. 23 people have been dispatched from Laos by FY2015, but no dispatch since FY2016. |
| | Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Asia | This is a scholarship system run in Tokyo by the IMF Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, based on aid from the Japanese government. The scholarship is offered in order to contribute to the reinforcement of government capabilities in macroeconomic and financial policy planning and implementation, with the aim of training young administration officials in the Asia-Pacific region. From Laos, it has a track record of dispatching staff from the Central Bank of Laos. |
| | Asian Development Bank - Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP) | For developing countries who are members of ADB, the program offers opportunities to obtain degrees in development-related fields in 27 designated graduate schools in 10 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. It was established in April 1988, and the Japanese government has spent more than 100 million dollars. More than 2,700 people from 35 member countries have received the scholarship. About 300 people receive the scholarship every year. |
| JICA | Long Term Training Program | A technical cooperation program to accept outstanding young human resources from counterparts to JICA projects in developing countries, and from government-related organizations of target countries, for a period of longer than one year, and to have them learn comprehensive and advanced knowledge and techniques. |
| Japan Foundation | Japanese Studies Fellowship Program | In order to promote Japanese Studies overseas, this program provides support to outstanding foreign scholars, researchers, and doctoral candidates in Japanese Studies by providing them with the opportunity to conduct research in Japan. Natural sciences, medicine, or engineering fields are not applicable. Maximum 14 months. |

(2) Overseas studies scheme under ODA

Laos has an extensive track record in hosting the long-term training system (graduate school level) operated by the JICA Office. Universities which host JDS Fellows also host long-term trainees through other technical cooperation projects as well. The main projects that dispatch trainees from Laos are as follows.

Table 15 Overseas studies scheme under ODA (as of April 2020)

| No. | Programs |
|-----|---|
| 1 | SDGs Global Leader Program |
| 2 | Advanced Program for Legal and Judicial Human Resources Development |
| 3 | Water Engineering and Utility Management Future Leaders Training Program |
| 4 | Core Human Resource Development for Road Asset Management |
| 5 | Forest Governance initiative |
| 6 | Innovative Asia |
| 7 | Human Resources Development for Electricity and Energy Sector |
| 8 | Human Resources Development for Governmental Officers and Researchers in Mineral Resources Rich Countries |
| 9 | Agriculture Studies Networks for Food Security (Agri-Net) |
| 10 | Sustainable Urban Planning and Urban Transportation Development |
| 11 | Investment Promotion and Industrial Development for Asian Region |
| 12 | Human Resources Development in Science, Technology and Innovation |

1-4-3. Situation of Private Cooperation and Exchange

(1) Example of Private Cooperation and Exchange

In the Country Assistance Policy for Laos, Japan also actively supports the development of an investment/trade environment to encourage Japanese companies to enter Laos as the country moves to a market economy. At the Lao-Japan Public and Private Sector Dialogue, held every year since 2007, a policy proposal regarding the development of an investment environment for increasing Japanese investment in Laos was made, and in response, Laos has begun initiatives such as the Unified Investment Promotion Act and laws related to promoting investment.

In the JDS Project too, starting with the first phase, improving administrative capacities in the development of an investment environment, trade promotion, and promotion of industrial development have been goals, and the development issue of “Development of an Environment for Promoting Investment and Exports” has been set. Strengthening administrative capacities through this Project remain a key issue in the development of systems in Laos’ changes to a market economy. The development of systems is important in Laos’ changes to a market economy, but within Laos, administrative procedures are often complicated and time-consuming, creating barriers to Japanese companies moving into the country, so for companies, it is important to find key, reliable partners. For example, Laotians with experience in Japan could become contact persons.

There are more and more Japanese companies moving into Laos. Ministry of Foreign Affairs statistics show that as of October 2018, 144 companies had opened offices there¹². Direct investment from Japan to Laos comes in three forms: (1) Investment in Special Economic Zones; (2) Investment in other than Special Economic Zones through the Ministry of Planning and Investment; and (3) General investment through the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Laos’

¹² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, “Annual Report of Statistics on Japanese Nationals Overseas 2019” (data as of 1 October 2018)

geographic advantage of being located at the crossroads of the north-south corridor and the east-west corridor, its cheap labor costs, its wealth of natural resources, and its cheap and stable electricity supply are all increasing its investment appeal as part of “Thailand-Plus-One.” If these companies and JDS Fellows who have been educated in Japan can form a network, then we can expect a follow-up strategy that incorporates utilizing private-sector networks following the return of Fellows to Laos.

1-5. Trend of Other Donor’s Aid

The changes in aid amounts by major donors among OECD nations and international organizations over recent years is shown in the diagram below. Japan has contributed to the development of Laos as the largest single donor among OECD nations. Looking at the last five years, South Korea and the United States have increased their presence in particular. In particular, South Korean president Moon Jae-in was the first South Korean president to visit Laos, in September 2019, and the two countries have signed an agreement for an international economic cooperation fund that will provide 500 million USD support between 2020 and 2023.¹³

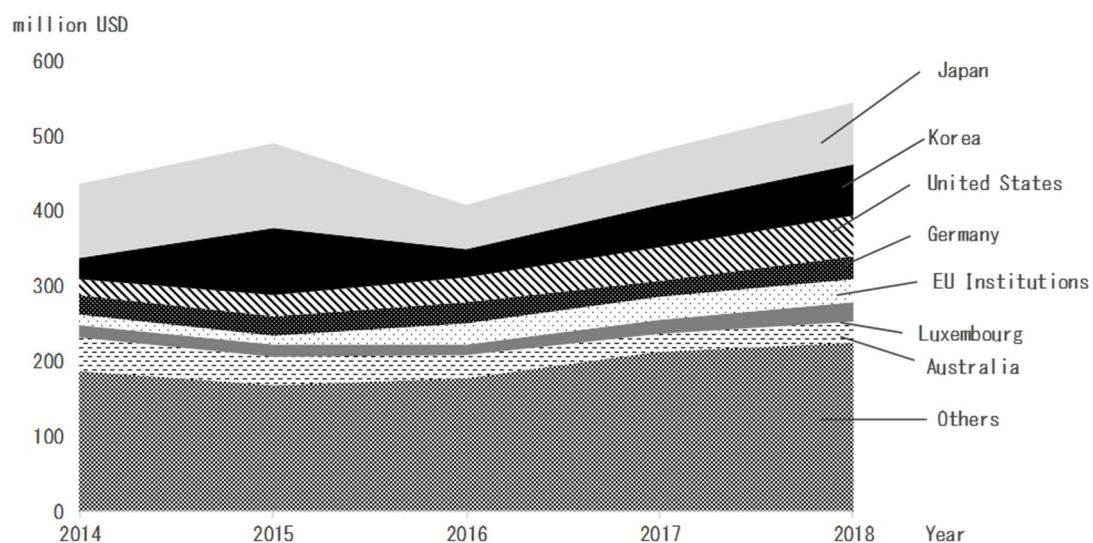


Figure 1 Changes in Aid Expenditure of Major Donors and International Organizations to Laos¹⁴
(U.S. dollars in millions, based on aggregate spending)

Outside OECD nations, China is increasingly interested in Laos as part of its Belt and Road Initiative. Starting around 2006, Chinese support for Laos, direct investment, and trade between the two countries have been growing rapidly. In FY2017 Chinese support for Laos was

¹³ Korea JoongAng Daily (Japanese edition), 6 September 2019 <https://japanese.joins.com/article/357/257357.html>

¹⁴ OECD.Stat <http://stats.oecd.org>

approx.422.9 million USD¹⁵, compared to which Japan's aid amount for the same year (103.33 million USD) falls far short in a simple comparison. In addition, the Laos-China High Speed Rail Construction Project (total cost: 5,986 million USD) is going ahead.

There is also a lot of personnel flow and exchange between China and its Belt and Road Initiative partner nations, and generous support is provided in the form of scholarships for administration officials. China's scholarship program is focused on specific ministries or departments, and hosts a large number of students, as part of a strategy to increase its own influence. In particular, there were 6,918 students from Laos going to China in 2015, which has more than doubled to 14,645 as of the latest statistics (2018).¹⁶ Laotians make up the 8th largest number of foreign students in China (note that these statistics include the number of students in non-degree courses as well).

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports, there are more than 6,000 students a year going to study in other countries.¹⁷ The top destination is Vietnam, followed by China, Thailand, then Japan. Narrowing it down to master's and doctoral course students by government sponsored projects (JDS Fellow targets), there are 454 in Vietnam (Master's: 416; Doctorate: 38), 380 in China (Master's: 344; Doctorate: 36), 168 in Thailand (Master's: 144; Doctorate: 24), 34 in Australia (Master's: 34; Doctorate: 0) and 47 in Japan (Master's: 36; Doctorate: 11).

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports, Vietnam and China do not have high application and selection criteria, and China has various types of scholarships in addition to government scholarships, making it easy to apply. Scholarships from Russia and Hungary are also increasing, but especially in Hungary, there are many cases of underwork or returning to the country due to lack of credit or lack of academic ability after admission. According to the interview surveys from each ministry in this study, Vietnam, China and Thailand were the most recognized scholarships, and many other institutions listed Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

¹⁵ China Statistical Yearbook 2018 "Economic Cooperation with Foreign Countries or Regions 2017" National Bureau of Statistics of China <https://spc.jst.go.jp/statistics/stats2018/index.html>

¹⁶ Ministry of Education of China "Statistical report on international students in China for 2015 and 2018. The statistics includes short-term program, privately funded program. Therefore the numbers are different from the statistics from the Ministry of Education and Sports of Laos.

¹⁷ Ministry of Education and Sports, 2019.

Table 16 Scholarship Program by other donors in Laos

| Program/Project | Provider | Outline |
|--|-----------|--|
| Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS) | Australia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: Scholarships are offered to meet long-term development needs of recipient countries. It is full scholarship program. • Targets: (1)Government sector, (2) Open category • Qualifications: No age restrictions. At least two years work experience • Acquirable Degrees: Master's degree, Ph.D. • Fields of Study: Governance, public policies, international development, living assistance, education, gender, environmental management, social inclusion, etc. • The Number of Slot: Approximately 30 |
| Chinese Government Scholarship Program | China | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: Development of personnel who are able to contribute to the development of Laos in fields of Economics, public policies, agriculture, transportation. Full/Partial Scholarship. Pre-language training available (1 to 2 years), age requirements, total scholarship payment period, and amount of payment vary depending on program. • Targets: Ministry officials in target fields • Qualifications: Recommendation by ministries • Acquirable Degrees: Bachelor degree, Master's degree, Ph.D. • Fields of Study: Science, engineering, agriculture, pharmacy, economics, law, management, education, history, literature, philosophy, art |

The track record of Australia is presented below to show the trends in aid of a typical donor nation. The Australian government's scholarship program started in the 1990s, has had more than 1,000 students complete its program. The number of students annually varies according to the Australian government's budget, but at present it is around 30 people. The program previously covered undergraduates as well, but now it is mainly focused on master's course students. Half the students are government officials, while the other half are from NGOs or the private sector under the "Open Category." In addition, under the AusAID policy, half have to be female. As a program with a strong track record and a long history, it is well-known and popular in Laos, and more than ten times the 30 positions offered in FY2020 were applied for. However, according to the Australian embassy, there has been a decline in applicant numbers in recent years.

The program's main PR activities are carried out through Facebook, posters, internet banners, visits to key organizations, and so on, as well enlisting the cooperation of returned international students. There is an upper limit of 80 students who can be interviewed for the 30 positions, so applicants hire consultants to help them with their academic backgrounds, motivations for applying, and so on to help them pass the screening and be shortlisted.

IELTS is used for the English proficiency exam, with a required score of 6.5 (with a band score not less than 6.0). However, if this minimum score is not met, there is a one-year English training program at Vientiane College before dispatch. Students meeting the IELTS 6.5 level have the option of going directly to Australia without the training, but the trend is for more and more students to opt for this English training. If, even after this training, students are unable to meet the minimum score, they have the opportunity to take the test again, and some of the hosting

universities may also accept students with a lower score. However, most students are accepted in the end after this year-long preliminary training.

With budget cuts, other countries will only accept a maximum of six months for current English tests. As a large budget is required for training, at present there are programs which liaise with universities in the host country so students can undertake preliminary training at the university. (This is because while when taking English training locally, payment is made from the budget assigned to that country, a separate budget is used when taking the study preparation courses, etc. run by universities in the host country.)

The Australia Awards Global Strategy is used as a basis for follow-up activities. An event is held once a month as far as possible: these events include the Re-integration Workshops held half a year after returning home, exchanges of views with Australian specialists, events held in collaboration with the chambers of commerce and industry, seminars with instructors invited from among former students, and Australian cultural events. In addition, VIP Dinners have been held after students return, inviting former students who have high positions. These finished successfully with about 200 participants. Also, at 18 months and 36 months after returning home, follow-up survey questionnaires are held to check the outcomes of the study abroad. In addition to emphasizing the impact in sectors that Australia emphasizes in particular (such as education), efforts are also put into discovering tangible examples of international students who have had notable post-study careers.

1-6.Situation and Needs for Human Resource Development in Target Organizations

Toward selection of qualified human resources, which is a precondition as an expression of outcomes for JDS, literature study, questionnaire survey, and a hearing interview were implemented in order to understand the needs of human resource development and the situation of the human resource layer of targeted organization.

(1) Findings of Surveys

Development issues and needs for human resource development

Priority areas and development issues confirmed by the questionnaire survey and interviews are summarized in the table below. In the field survey, there were many requests for additional issues for cross-sectoral/ministerial issues, such as economic policies related to investment and export promotion, needs for promotion of SMEs, administrative strengthening in each field, and legal system development. It was confirmed that human resources development in a wide range of fields is required in each province.

Table 17 Priority Areas and Development Issues of Main Target Organizations

| Organization | Areas where human resources development is required |
|---|--|
| The Prime Minister's Office | IT, Human Resource Development, Organizational Management |
| Ministry of Public Security | International Relations, International Cooperation |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs | Various fields |
| Ministry of Finance | Commercial law, financial law, taxation, management of national enterprises, IT |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry | Food industry, livestock raising industry, aquaculture industry, agricultural product export, SME promotion, ecotourism |
| Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism | Fields that contribute to the development of information, culture and tourism |
| Ministry of Public Work and Transport | Transportation and road maintenance, water and sewage maintenance, housing supply, public-private partnership, climate change |
| Ministry of Home Affairs | Improvement and upgrading of civil service system |
| Ministry of Science and Technology | Computer science, IT, nuclear security, public administration |
| Ministry of Planning and Investment | SME development and promotion |
| Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare | Social security, welfare system, social insurance, labor economics, disaster prevention |
| Ministry of Industry and Commerce | Small and medium-sized enterprises/regional promotion (commercialization and strengthening of sales in the One District One Product (ODOP) movement), establishment of commercial law |
| Ministry of Energy and Mines | Hydropower business management, renewable energy, development of new energy sources, strengthening of administrative capacity (cooperation with ministries) |
| Ministry of Education and Sport | Curriculum improvement, education quality improvement, strategic education improvement |
| Ministry of Health | Breaking down from severe poverty and hunger, reducing infant mortality, improving maternal and child health, environmental sustainability, eradicating HIV/AIDS, malaria, etc., ensuring the quality and quantity of health workers in remote areas |
| Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment | Green transport, ecotourism, climate change, health impact assessment |
| The Bank of Lao PDR | SME development, Macro-Micro economics |
| Vientiane Capital | Public policy/governance, commercial law for economic development |

Major Scholarship Programs Offered by Other Donors

Many of target organizations send their personnel to study in Japan on the JDS Project as well as other Japanese scholarship programs, especially to Vietnam, China, Thailand, and then Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, and the United States.

Table 18 Study abroad destination of Lao civil servant other than JDS

| Organization Responded | Scholarship Program other than JDS |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Prime Minister's Office | China, Vietnam, Australia, Thailand |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs | China, Vietnam, Japan, Australia |
| Ministry of Finance | Vietnam, China, New Zealand, Japan |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry | Vietnam, China, Thailand, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Hungary |
| Ministry of Public Work and Transport | China etc |
| Ministry of Science and Technology | Vietnam, China, Thailand, Korea |
| Ministry of Planning and Investment | Japan, Vietnam, Australia, the United States, China |
| Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare | China, Vietnam, Korea |
| Ministry of Energy and Mines | Vietnam, China |
| Vientiane Capital | China, Vietnam, Thailand, Korea, Australia |

Requests to the JDS Project

English Language Training

At the interviews, almost all of the target organizations requested that English language courses be provided on the JDS Project. Although these organizations are aware of the need for their personnel to study abroad, all of them are not able to do so because of their poor command of English. Especially in comparison with other donors, preparatory language trainings are offered by China for two years, or one year by Vietnam before the start of research those programs in respective countries, and Australia has one year English training in Laos. There were several ministries referring to the point as comparison to JDS.

In the interview, JDS returned fellows mentioned that JDS has a longer selection period than other programs, and it is not possible to secure sufficient preparatory period before traveling and before entering university. Therefore, they proposed to shorten the selection period to prepare for study abroad. In JDS Laos, 10 weeks of English training has been conducted as a project since the start of the third phase (since FY2017), as well as on-site preparatory seminar by some accepting universities by utilizing a special program. These points should be more actively promoted to strengthen the competitiveness with other donors.

Setting the Program Duration

Several ministries mentioned that due to staff shortages, they prefer one-year programs rather than two-year programs, if offered. However, to reduce the time required to acquire the knowledge and experience which would normally take two years, to one year, higher levels of academic competence and English language skills would be expected. Careful discussion is required to introduce the system in Laos, where the applicant's English ability and basic academic ability at the graduate school learning level are issues. However, some JDS returned fellows gave positive comments. They said that their two-year programs had not only enabled them to obtain degrees, but also had allowed them to gain insights about Japan. They added that experiences in Japan would be definitely beneficial once back in Laos. For this reason, it is essential to stress to the

potential applicants and to their organizations the advantages of two-year programs, and to communicate that the target organizations will be able to look forward to returns from their two-year investment on their officials on the JDS Project.

Practical Training

Some people expressed their opinion that the JDS Project should offer programs that combine its existing graduate programs of an academic nature with more practical training such as government or corporate internship programs. Those who had studied in Japan commented that JDS fellows, whether they are technical officers or administrative officers, need practical training to gain hands-on experience of learning both mentally and manually how to leverage their knowledge.

Short-term Training Programs

Many target organizations have short-term training programs as well as degree programs in place for their overseas programs and they requested short-term courses also be offered on the JDS Project. This request may be worth considering in view of the fact that more options for short-term courses were recommended in the JDS basic research to add higher value to the JDS Project. It is possible that short-term training participants would be so impressed with life in Japan, Japanese culture, and the quality of the course that they would subsequently decide to apply for the JDS Project. It may be a good idea to approach and attract potential applicants, using a list of young civil servants who have participated in the JICA's theme-specific or country-specific training programs before.

Ph.D Program

Many organizations responded that the number of master's degrees is increasing year by year within the organizations, but the number of doctoral degrees is still small, and the need for doctoral degrees is growing as a person with more specialized expertise. In addition, many organizations commented that they would like to support those who wish to go on to school as much as possible. In the promotion system for civil servants, many ministry agencies mentioned that obtaining a PhD is not a factor that leads to a concrete promotion, but it is one of the important statuses when making a promotion decision. Since the first year graduate of the PhD program at Laos JDS has finally graduated at the end of March 2020, it is important to confirm the results from the career changes and performance of returnee students.

Chapter 2. Contents of the JDS Project

2-1. Overview of JDS Project

The JDS project is a grant aid project that provides scholarships to international students from partner governments with purpose on developing human resources who can be expected to play central roles in policy making and implementation for socio-economic development of the developing countries. It was established in FY 1999 under the Japanese government's "100,000 International Students Plan."

The JDS project is not for supporting individuals, but characterized by focusing on developing human resources engaging in the priority areas (Sub-Programs) that are selected through discussions between target countries and Japanese related parties.

On the basis of the above mentioned aim and features of the JDS project, the preparatory survey team investigates human resource development needs corresponding to the concerned Sub-Programs established based on the national development plan of the target country and Country Assistance Policy for Laos by the Japanese government, and existence of potential candidates at expected Target Organizations and others. Further, based on the result of the said survey, the survey team formulates the scale of the JDS project set as four-batch package, and program plan of each Sub-Program (the Basic Plan for the Sub-Program).

2-1-1. Project Design

Table below shows the JDS priority areas and key development issues and expected degrees identified on the basis of the field survey conducted from November 2019.

Table 19 Framework of JDS Laos (intake FY2021-2024)

| Sub Program | Component | Slot | Increase or decrease from the current phase |
|---|--|------|---|
| 1 Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building | 1-1 Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System | 5 | |
| | 1-2 Enhancement of Public Finance | 2 | |
| 2 Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth | 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure | 2 | -1 |
| | 2-2 Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion | 3 | +1 |
| 3 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation | 3-1 Agriculture and Rural Development | 2 | |
| | 3-2 Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction | 2 | |
| 4 Improvement of Educational Policy | | 2 | |
| 5 Improvement of Health Policy | | 2 | |

Total 20

(1) Number of JDS fellows

Through local interviews, the population parameter and needs have been determined and used to come to an agreement for the number of students who will be accepted in the next phase: up to 20 master's students, and up to 2 doctoral students..

(2) Component and Research Theme

Agreement has been reached on carrying out the sub-programs and components in the current phase with few changes. Changes are as follows.

① Sub-program 2: Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth

Under the current framework, Component 2-1 “Improvement of Economic Infrastructure” has 3 slots and Component 2-2 “Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion” has 2 slots. In line with JICA's policy on international student programs to focus more on social sciences, it was proposed to increase the number of Component 2-2 from 2 slots to 3 slots. Also, in addition to originally expected target organizations such as the Bank of Lao PDR and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, etc. to the Component, which were confirmed with high demands for the promotion of SMEs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry also requested additional requests to be included as the target organizations under this component. Therefore, it is reasonable to increase the number of slots.

② Component 3-2: Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Along with the increase in natural disasters in recent years, interest in disaster risk reduction is rapidly increasing in Laos. When the draft of the framework for the next Phase of JDS was presented to the relevant ministries and the hearing survey was conducted on the addition of the disaster prevention field, it was confirmed that the Lao government had a high need for the disaster risk reduction field. Since it is in line with the Japanese government's cooperation policy with Laos, it was discussed with the Laos side about including disaster prevention in Component 3-2 and agreed that the name would be "environmental conservation and disaster risk reduction." However, “Disaster prevention” covers wide topics as sector crossing issue, it can be studied under Component 1-1 “Enhancement of Public Administration” or Component 2-1 “Improvement of Economic Infrastructure” depends on the specific needs of the organization and applicants.

③ Other Components

All other fields such as Component 3-1 “Agriculture and Rural Development” and Sub-program 4 “Improvement of Educational Policy” are set as priority areas in Laos. Since it is a field which requires continuous development of human resources who will be partners in Japan at the policy/practical level in cooperation with the technical cooperation project, it is appropriate to continue setting this phase.

In addition, to prevent mismatches with applicants' research themes, it is thought to be important

to show any expected research themes for each development issue when starting recruitment of applicants. The First Operating Committee will discuss the listed research themes.

(3) Target Organization

A provisional agreement for recruitment targets has been reached with the main target ministries following confirmation of the human resources training needs through interviews with each envisaged ministry, based on the goal of the JDS Project as training core personnel in central government ministries. Note that if target organs are increased or decreased, additions, following discussions by the Steering Committee, will be possible for target organs that match the purpose of each component.

(4) Accepting Universities

JICA has presented the envisaged target fields and development issues in the JDS Laos to both universities with a track record in hosting JDS Fellows and universities seeking to newly host them, and called for submissions of hosting proposals regarding the issues and countries each university wishes to host. As a result, a total of 57 submissions were received from 33 graduate schools of 25 universities.

The contents of the accepting proposals submitted from the various universities and the record for accepting and guiding international students, including JDS Fellows, were used to assess the hosting proposals based on the evaluation guidelines within JICA. After that, at the local meeting in November 2019, the top universities selected through the Japanese evaluation from among Japanese universities that had proposals for the various components were presented to the Laotian government, and the characteristics, etc. of each university were explained. As a result of these discussions, agreement was reached on the hosting universities and the framework for the numbers to be hosted, as shown in Table below.

Table 20 Accepting Universities of the JDS Project in Laos

| Sub Program | Component | Accepting University | Slot |
|---|--|---|------|
| 1 Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building | 1-1 Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System | International University of Japan, Graduate School (GS) of International Relations | 3 |
| | | Kyushu University, GS of Law | 2 |
| | 1-2 Enhancement of Public Finance | Yamaguchi University, GS of Economics | 2 |
| 2 Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth | 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure | Hiroshima University, GS of Advanced Science and Engineering | 2 |
| | 2-2 Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion | Ritsumeikan University, GS of International Relations | 3 |
| 3 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation | 3-1 Agriculture and Rural Development | Kyushu University, GS of Bioresource and Bioenvironmental Sciences | 2 |
| | 3-2 Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction | University of Tsukuba, GS of Science and Technology | 2 |
| 4 Improvement of Educational Policy | | Hiroshima University, GS of Humanities and Social Sciences | 2 |
| 5 Improvement of Health Policy | | Nagasaki University GS of Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Department of Global Health | 2 |

Total 20

(5) Ph.D. Programs

The doctoral program in the JDS Project is designed so that future leaders with expertise in Japan and who have been educated in Japan can, after obtaining their master's degrees, play a leading role in development in Laos in a higher dimension. In Laos, there are two positions for doctoral students in the current phase. In Laos, as the first intake of doctoral students has only just graduated in March 2020, from the perspective of monitoring changes in career after returning home and their career activities, it has been decided to maintain the 2-person scope for the doctoral course in this current phase as well.

2-1-2. Implementation System of the JDS Project**(1) Operating Committee Members**

It was agreed during the on-site survey in November 2019 that as in the current phase, the Operating Committee would consist of members from five Laotian organizations (Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Central Committee on Organization and Personnel, Ministry of Home Affairs) and two Japanese organizations (Japanese Embassy in Laos and the JICA Laos office).

Table 21 Operating Committee Member

| Country | Role | Member |
|---------|------------|--|
| Laos | Chair | Ministry of Education and Sports |
| | Member | Ministry of Planning and Investment |
| | Member | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| | Member | Central Committee for Organization and Personnel |
| | Member | Ministry of Home Affairs |
| Japan | Vice-Chair | Embassy of Japan in Laos |
| | Member | JICA Laos Office |

(2) Role of Operating Committee

The functions and roles of the Operating Committee based on the JDS operational guidelines were confirmed again with the members of the Committee. Since JDS is not a mere scholarship project but is an input for development, the Operating Committee in Laos is expected to provide active cooperation in the collection and screening of applications and use JDS fellows effectively after they return home.

Table 22 Role of Operating Committee

| Role | Details |
|---|---|
| Formulate the recruitment and selection plan | Based on national development plans of Laos and Japan's economic cooperation policy, the basic policy of recruitment activities for each fiscal year (priority development issues, slot allocation, application briefing method, etc.) will be determined. Selection principles for JDS project in Laos determined in accordance with the JDS Operating Guidelines |
| Interview the candidates | At the third-round selection (comprehensive interview), the interviewer evaluates the potential candidate; the Operating Committee makes the final determination on candidates |
| Select JDS fellows from the candidates | The final candidates chosen through the selection process are approved by the Operating Committee |
| Promote effective utilization of JDS returned fellows and follow-up | Follow-up including strategies for utilizing JDS returned fellows to promote the outcomes of the project |
| Others | Principles to be determined when JDS returned fellows occur and necessary measures to be undertaken Attendance at events such as send-off party and debriefing upon return, with suggestions provided with a view to encouraging statements to be made about the outcomes of JDS In addition, respond to any necessary matters in relation to operation of the JDS scheme and make decisions as appropriate |

2-1-3. Basic Plan for Sub-Programs (Master' Program)

Based on the framework agreed upon during the field survey in November 2019, the Basic Plan will be drafted in each of the JDS priority areas (Sub-Programs) and it will be presented to the first Operating Committee.

Each Basic Plan outlines the objectives and evaluation indicators and also describes the role of

JDS in the context of development policy in Laos in each of the JDS priority areas. In addition, it sets out the principles and a summary of the history of aid provided by Japan, and describes the initiatives undertaken by the accepting universities. The JDS fellows for four batches will be formulated as a single package or phase. JDS fellows are sent under the same Sub-Programs/Components, Target Organizations and accepting universities for six years, in accordance with the Plan. This approach is designed to boost the policy-making and administrative competencies of core personnel and in turn enhance the policy-making capacity of Target Organizations.

Below table is proposed applicant eligibility of the JDS project in Laos. Details will be approved at the first Operating Committee of FY 2020.

Table 23 Applicant Eligibility of the JDS Project in Laos (Tentative)

| item | Condition |
|---------------------|---|
| Nationality | Citizens of Laos |
| Age | Between 22 and 40 as of April 1st in the year of dispatch |
| Academic Background | Hold a Bachelor Degree |
| Occupation | Currently employed in the Target Organization with permanent status. (Officials who work in Vientiane Capital and Provincial level department can apply) |
| English Proficiency | Have a good command of both written and spoken English. TOEFL score of 500 or equivalent is preferable. |
| Others | A person who falls under the following category is NOT eligible to apply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has obtained a master's degree in a foreign country under any kind of scholarship. - Has studied abroad for more than 1 year under any scholarship and had returned to Lao P.D.R. within the past 2 years |
| | JDS Fellows are obliged to return and work within Laos in order to make a contribution to the development of Laos through their work in the Allocated Ministry/Organizations, complying with the Pledge required by the Ministry of Education. |
| | Basically, military personnel and military civilian employees registered on the active list, personnel on temporary leave from the active list, and personnel in compulsory military service are ineligible to apply for admission. |
| | In good mental and physical health |

2-1-4. Acceptance into the Ph.D. Program

In the current phase, high needs for the doctor's course among JDS graduates were confirmed. Therefore, in the next phase as well, the first meeting of the Operating Committee will determine how to collect and screen applications in accordance with the objectives and basic policy described below.

(1) Objectives

In addition to allowing JDS fellows to make policy and other decisions on development issues in their respective countries from a broad point of view based on high-level knowledge and research results, the objective of the doctor's course is to develop human resources that lead international discussions as representatives of their respective countries and exert influences on domestic and

foreign affairs from a global perspective by establishing a network of personal connections worldwide. Another objective is to develop true leaders knowledgeable about Japan in the countries covered by JDS by encouraging them to build and evolve favorable relationships with Japan throughout the doctor's course.

(2) Basic policy

This is the second year to accept JDS fellows in autumn since the project started to be implemented. Aside from that for the master's courses, the number of JDS fellows to be accepted is set at four. The quota for the doctor's courses is not considered a goal to be satisfied and is applied only if there are appropriate candidates for the course.

(3) Form of acceptance and treatment

In principle, the upper limit to the period of support is three years¹⁸. The scholarship during the stay in Japan is granted in the same way as for government-financed research students in the doctor's course.

(4) How to collect and screen applications

Apart from those for the regular master's course quota, applications are collected and screened by the JDS Operating Committee for decision. Applicants are required to obtain the prior approval of the organization with which they are affiliated and the accepting university (and required documents such as guidance plans and letters of recommendation) and submit an application together with a set of application documents and research plans.

Applications are screened by the JDS Operating Committee. If the number of applicants is three times the acceptance quota or larger, Operating Committee conducts document screening. Later, the Operating Committee interviews the selected applicants and decides a short list of candidates.

Unlike the master's course, the JDS doctor's course requires final applicants to submit an application to the university to which they apply and take entrance examinations there. If they fail to pass the examinations, their right to study there under JDS will be revoked. This does not necessarily mean that each year four JDS fellows are admitted to a Japanese university to study in the JDS doctor's course.

¹⁸ The period can be extended by up to six months only if it is judged that the student concerned is highly likely to obtain a doctor's degree.

Table 24 Applicant Eligibility of the JDS doctor's course in Laos (Tentative)

| Item | Condition |
|---------------------|--|
| Age | Under 45 years old as April 1st in the year of dispatch |
| Academic Background | Obtained a Master's degree under JDS |
| Work Experience | 2 years full time work experience after obtaining a Master's degree with JDS or more years followed by the regulation of each ministry. |
| English Proficiency | Sufficient English ability to obtain a PhD from a Japanese graduate school |
| Others | Obtaining a letter of recommendation from the prospective supervisor (being able to confirm the possibility of graduation for three years) |
| | Must obtain a permission letter (Official Nomination Letter) from his/her belonging organization |
| | Military personnel and military civilian employees registered on the active list, personnel on temporary leave from the active list, and personnel in compulsory military service are ineligible to apply for admission. |
| | Must be mentally and physically in good health |

2-2. Obligations of Recipient Country

In collecting and screening applications for JDS scholarships, the Ministry of Education and Sports which serves as the chairman of the Operating Committee, plays a leading role in planning, implementing, managing, and supervising JDS.

During the period when JDS fellows study in Japan, the Lao government periodically monitors them through its implementation agent and submits reports to JICA. It also confirms the progress in JDS, pending matters, and so forth through periodical reports submitted by the agent and works with other members of the Operating Committee to take appropriate measures as required, and in addition, it takes actions such as supporting JDS fellows in collecting necessary data to write a master's thesis.

After JDS fellows return to Japan, the Lao government will return to Japan after returning to Japan, considering that returning international students will contribute to efforts to solve development issues in their home countries and that building a human network is one of the main purposes of JDS. A briefing session will be held to understand the results of study abroad, and necessary measures will be taken for subsequent trend surveys, academic and cultural exchanges and cooperation with Japan. In addition, when the international students return home, the Operating Committee encourages relevant ministries and agencies to be given the same job as before studying abroad or to take advantage of their JDS study abroad experience so that they can play an active role in the center of the executive branch, and promote the realization of business effects.

After the JDS fellows return to Laos, taking into consideration that main objectives of the JDS project include contribution of the JDS returned fellows to solving development issues of the country as well as the development of the human network, the Lao government shall hold a

Reporting Session in order to acknowledge their achievements, and take necessary measures including the subsequent trend survey or the promotion of academic and cultural exchange and cooperation with Japan. The Operating Committee takes necessary measures to facilitate the outcomes of the project, particularly it is essential for them to make efforts to let JDS fellows return to their previous job or have a position in a key government organization where they can utilize their experience in Japan.

In addition, Ministry of Education and Sports, which is the implementing agency of the project, agrees to continue providing the office space of the implementing agent free of charge.

2-3.JDS Project Implementation Schedule

When Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and JICA officially make a decision to implement the JDS project from FY 2020 onwards as the result of the Preparatory Survey, the project will presumably be implemented for the next four batches according to the schedule shown in Figure below. More specifically, following the conclusion of the Exchange of Notes (E/N) and Grant Agreement (G/A) every year, JICA will recommend a consultant entrusted to conduct said Preparatory Survey as the “Agent” to the government of Laos. The Agent will conclude a contract with the government of Laos to implement JDS project on behalf of the government.

| | FY2019 | FY2020 | FY2021 | FY2022 | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | FY2027 |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Preparatory Survey | | | | | | | | | |
| 1st Batch (Master) | | R/S | A | | R | | | | |
| 2nd Batch (Master) | | | R/S | A | | R | | | |
| 3rd Batch (Master) | | | | R/S | A | | R | | |
| 4th Batch (Master) | | | | | R/S | A | | R | |
| 1st Batch (Ph.D.) | | R/S | A | | R | | | | |
| 2nd Batch (Ph.D.) | | | R/S | A | | R | | | |
| 3rd Batch (Ph.D.) | | | | R/S | A | | R | | |
| 4th Batch (Ph.D.) | | | | | R/S | A | | R | |

R/S: Recruitment & Selection A: Arrival in Japan R: Returning home

Figure 5 Implementation Process

2-4. Recruitment and Selection Methods

2-4-1. Recruitment Methods

(1) Recruitment Tools / Materials

In order to obtain good applicants, it is necessary for many potential applicants to get interested in JDS and understand its appeal. In addition to creating recruitment websites, recruitment brochures, posters and leaflets as recruitment tools, recruitment activities using SNS such as

Facebook so that information should be effective to reach more potential applicants. After the Operating Committee meeting to set out recruitment and selection policy of the year, these recruitment tools should be distributed and widely disseminated to each administrative agency, with the cooperation of channels such as the executing agency, related ministries, and JICA/Embassy of Japan.

In particular, since many Lao people use SNS such as Facebook, it is considered effective to send via SNS. In addition to providing the latest information to potential candidates, it is possible for JDS fellows currently studying Japan to introduce their college/student life, or JDS returned fellows to introduce success stories, and to disseminate the attractiveness of Japan in collaboration with the Japanese Embassy and JICA.

(2) Recruitment Methods

Recruitment tools, in addition to spreading information, include visiting ministries and government organs to encourage applications as well as briefings held in the capital and various places around the country. At these briefings, former JDS Fellows provide advice for applicants related to writing research plans and talk about their experiences studying in Japan. In addition, in order to improve the image of studying in Japan, model cases of former JDS Fellows who have gone on to excel need to be introduced, and information that allows applicants to check the features of the JDS Project actively provided. Also, there need to be ways to distinguish the JDS Project from other donor scholarships.

(3) Gender Consideration

As mentioned above, according to the statistical data of JDS, the average proportion of women in the second phase of the JDS new system (2013-2016 dispatch) is 36.3%, and in the third phase (2017-2020 dispatch) is 41.7%, which has increase to produced more female fellows. In order to continue to encourage not only men but also women to participate in the JDS project, it is important to consider measures while incorporating the opinions of the parties concerned, for example, to describe as "female applicants are welcomed" in the application guidelines.

2-4-2. Selection Method

Selection will be conducted in three stages: document screening by accepting university, technical interview by professor of accepting university, and comprehensive interview by the Operating Committee. Prior to the selection, guidelines for selection procedures will be formulated, which are to be approved by the Operating Committee, to select candidates according to the purpose of this project.

In addition, in order to utilize it as a reference for the selection of documents by the accepting university, English and math tests are conducted for applicants. In Laos, two tests are conducted, a trial test and a main test, and have called on applicants to study in advance. If the score is

continues to be low, it is better to consider implementing exam preparation training for applicants.

2-5.Pre-departure and Post-arrival Orientation, Enrichment Program and Special Program

2-5-1. Contents of Pre-departure and Post-arrival Orientation

In order to achieve the project goal through the JDS fellows, it is further essential to understand the society and development experiences of Japan as background knowledge. According to results of the questionnaire subjected to JDS returning fellows, as for questions about pre-departure and post-arrival orientations, more than half of them responded that Japanese language trainings and lectures focusing on Japanese culture and society were useful. Therefore, (1) Lectures to understand the social and development experiences of Japan, the basic knowledge of assistance policy toward Laos, (2) Programs to improve self-awareness as JDS fellows such as courtesy call to the president of JICA, (3) Orientations with the aim of enabling them to smoothly commence their life in Japan, (4) Programs to understand Japanese culture and language are going to be implemented.

During the pre-departure orientation program in Laos, likewise in other countries, JICA Laos Office will be requested to give a briefing on Japan's development experience and assistance policy toward Laos as well as projects currently implemented in Laos. In addition, the Agent will explain JDS program, necessary preparations and procedures to go to Japan, and introduce Japan society and culture. Also, from the previous phase, JDS Laos has been providing about 10 weeks of local English training. In the field survey, it was confirmed that it is necessary to carry out efforts to strengthen basic academic ability as well as English, so effective preparatory programs before going to Japan should be provided.

After arrival, the gist and objectives of this project, the roles JDS fellows are expected to play and possibilities of coordinating with other projects will be communicated to improve recognition of participation to the JDS project and their motivation. By incorporating leadership training and through active group work, the fellows will be urged to have a sense of purpose as leaders and an opportunity to learn about what elements are necessary to become a leader. University faculties will be requested to give lectures on the basic knowledge of Japanese politics, economy, society and culture.

JDS fellows will also be given information on rules, procedures and lifestyle in Japan. In particular, with regards to managing their safety during their stay in Japan, they will be given explanations regarding natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons and avalanches, as well as crime and traffic rules. They will gain an understanding and be prepared to spend their time in Japan safely with peace of mind. Hands-on training using anti-disaster training facilities will also be implemented.

The Japanese language training will be implemented for around at least 35 hours. JDS fellows

will not only gain necessary conversation ability in Japanese, they will also gain an understanding of Japanese culture, lifestyle and social manners through hands-on learning, and they will be taught useful communication techniques for daily life. Learning Japanese is useful not only for facilitating the student life of JDS fellows, but also for building a network with Japanese people and should increase the number of learning hours in the future.

Opportunities for JDS fellows to smoothly adapt to Japan will also be offered, such as workshops for overcoming culture shock in an unfamiliar lifestyle environment and to promote understanding of other cultures with opportunities to learn the experiences of JDS returned fellows.

In regards to the impact of the new coronavirus infectious disease that occurred in 2020, it is difficult to predict the impact of orientation before and after training for JDS fellows in the next phase, which will be accepted from the next fiscal year. Considering the social changes after corona, taking care of the infection prevention, it is required to consider using video content and conducting online orientation without compromising the quality and quantity of training content.

2-5-2. Contents of Enrichment Program

JDS fellows are expected to contribute to solving the country's development problems as core human resources after returning home and contributing to the expansion and strengthening of friendly relations between the two countries with good understanding of Japan. While other similar projects by other donors are being offered, it is possible for the JDS project to be competitive not only by obtaining a degree at a graduate school, but also by offering a program to increase added value.

For this reason, in addition to education in high quality and research at each accepting university, it is desirable for the JDS project to improve the quality of existing programs such as pre-departure and post-arrival orientation, special programs offered by accepting universities, joint programs. At the same time, it is important to provide more useful opportunities for the JDS fellows such as networking events during their stay and internship programs at JICA or other organizations.

According to the results of the questionnaire to the returned fellows of other countries, many of them wanted internship opportunities in the Japanese ministries and agencies, networking events with Japanese administrative officers, etc. as possible programs provided during their stay. Some programs have been already implemented, such as networking events with Japanese administrative officers conducted by the implementing agent and individual internships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA, and it is desirable to be continued as a part of the project and further developed.

In addition, exchange events with local communities are also of great interest to returned fellows. In the questionnaire survey conducted before the return of JDS fellows by the implementing agent, many fellows comment that they wanted to have more opportunities to interact with Japanese

people, along with Japanese language. If those opportunities to exchange with local Japanese people and community are provided such as events coordinated with a local international communication organization and homestay programs, it will lead for the JDS fellows to gain deeper experience of Japanese society.

In the JDS basic research conducted in FY2019, the following recommendations were made for adding value and branding so that JDS will continue to be recognized as a high-value scholarship program. As mentioned above, some programs are already being implemented, but it is necessary to promote efforts with these recommendations to differentiate JDS as a scholarship program with more distinctive features.

Table 3 Methods of added value to make JDS more attractive¹⁹

| Timing | Examples of efforts to increase the added value of the project |
|--------------------------|---|
| Before studying in Japan | Japanese language training improvement (conducted approx. 3 months) |
| During study in Japan | Social meetings with the JICA Issues Department, Japanese government agencies, local governments, etc. |
| | Lectures on Japanese development experience, Japanese politics and administration, Japanese diplomacy and Asia/Africa, and Japanese culture and society |
| | Leadership training |
| | Internships in government agencies, NGOs, companies, etc. |
| | Service and ceremony as a JDS fellow (VIP visit on arrival in Japan, etc.) |
| After studying in Japan | Follow-up activities improvement |
| | Sharing and disseminating the list of returned fellows to relevant Japanese organizations |
| | Online database of returned fellows list |
| | Support for alumni networks |
| | Support for returned fellows' research activities and their families |

2-5-3. Contents of Special Program

The accepting universities will engage in extra activities for JDS fellows in accordance with necessities of their country and development issues taking into consideration circumstances of JDS fellows in addition to the existing university program.

The special program consists of the following aims.

- (a) To solve development issues in the relevant countries, JDS fellows learn about practical knowledge and experiences through more practical and specific cases.
- (b) Through special program activities, JDS fellows or related organizations in the relevant countries build a network for future activities of researchers and organizations from Japan and overseas.
- (c) JDS fellows will gain the necessary support within a limited period to engage in school research and smooth communication with related persons, and to attain their goals.

¹⁹ Basic research (110 pages) etc. are summarized.

Many universities who have already accepted JDS fellows have already implemented field trips and seminars both in Japan and abroad by utilizing the special programs. Among them, field trips were particularly highly evaluated in the questionnaire to the JDS returned fellows. As well as continuous encouragement by the Agent for the use of special programs at each university, it is expected that appropriate consultation should be provided by the Agent to the universities so that the universities can provide useful programs that will contribute to the above purpose of the JDS project with reference to the questionnaire results of JDS returned fellows.

2-6. Monitoring, Guidance and Counseling

2-6-1. Implementation System

A coordinator of the implementing Agent is assigned to each university, which accepts the JDS fellows in order to build a good relationship with faculty members and staff of the university and to respond to the fellows promptly in case of emergency. In case the university is located in a provincial city, a responsible person is assigned in the nearest branch of the agent.

2-6-2. Guidance and Counseling

The coordinator provides advice for the JDS fellows with regard to their campus life and daily life after they arrive Japan until immediately before they leave Japan. In addition, the responsible person assists the fellows by arranging for accommodations, assisting them to go through a procedure for notifying moving-in, to enter the national health insurance plan, to get insurance coverage, and to vacate housing, etc.

2-6-3. Monitoring meeting

In order to check the efficient implementation of the Project, it is necessary to understand the condition of the academic and daily life of the JDS fellows under the project. For appropriate monitoring, a good relationship needs to be built with the university staff to receive information on the fellows on a daily basis. In addition, it should be prepared to have an opportunity to have an interview with the fellows regularly to understand their academic and daily life, and provide necessary support in an appropriate timing.

In particular, regular monitoring system by one on one interview helps to find the fellows' problem in an early stage, which normally cannot be seen on daily life, and problems such as the incompleteness of academic courses and aggravated physical condition can be prevented by this system. Furthermore, good practice such as distinguished academic research accomplishments can be found through regular interviews, and they are reported as the result of the project through periodic and other public relations reports on the project.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, when it is difficult to conduct face-to-face

monitoring, interviews will be conducted remotely such as online interviews. In case a possible case of infection is found among JDS fellows, the implementing agent will contact frequently with them, and take the necessary support by working together with related stakeholders until the concerns is solved.

2-6-4. Response in Case of Emergency

A support system is established with the assistance of call centers in the private specialized company to respond to the JDS fellows with regard to their health problems and other life-related problems during night time, weekends and holidays, and during the year-end and New Year holidays.

In addition, the e-mail delivery system and the safety confirmation system are provided so that information on the safety and whereabouts of all the fellows can be consolidated promptly and accurately even if phone lines are disconnected while large-scale disasters and other emergencies happen.

Furthermore, the following measures will be taken to prevent JDS fellows from being infected with COVID-19 during their stay in Japan.

- Providing the information on COVID-19
- Bring to JDS fellows attention to prevention of infection
- Request for postponement of overseas travel (oversea research, private travel), provision of support for JDS fellows to return to Japan
- Hearing from JDS fellows on their health conditions, supporting JDS fellows with a possible case of infection, and providing counseling who are worried

For JDS fellows who are concerned about infection, the implementing agent promptly consults with medical institutions and provides the necessary support under the guidance. In addition, if there is a possibility of infection, the implementing agent will immediately report to JICA and the persons involved in the project.

2-7. Follow-up Activities

An objective of JDS is to allow certain young administrative officials to obtain degrees (i.e., masters and PhDs) at graduate schools in Japan. Such officials are involved in socio-economic development in Laos and are expected to play important roles in the future to contribute to the solution of developmental issues in Laos as core personnel after returning home.

In Laos, target institutions and accepting universities have been set and maintained under the JDS new system for efficiently solving specific problems, and there are also reinstatement rules for studying abroad for civil servants. Due to these synergistic effects, results of JDS are likely to be realized.

On the other hand, according to an interview with returnees in this survey, it was found that the network of JDS returnees is currently formed mainly by "same batch" and "same university". In the future, forming a network of JDS returnees from the "same ministry" and "in the same field" should be more important and need to encourage the organic use of JDS network for each work.

The JAOL (Japan Alumni of Laos) serves as the alumni association for JDS students in Laos, and includes a JDS student group. The JAOL is an organization under the auspices of the Laos-Japan Friendship Association and has some 500 former Laotian international students who spent at least six months in Japan registered with it. There are 12 board members under the chairman, of which four are former JDS fellows. The JAOL receives part of its operating expenses from the Embassy of Japan and the Japan Foundation, and also receives funds from private businesses in both Japan and Laos. It holds Japanese speech contests, sports meets, group cleaning events, homestays, and coordinates a range of scholarship programs. In the Laotian political and social system, it can be hard to form a society voluntarily, so it would be better to make use of the JAOL.

Some accepting universities have established their own alumni associations to strengthen the network with returning students. In addition, the agent will support the alumni association activities and strengthen the network of JDS returnees, thereby building relationships where returnees will cooperate and organize groups that can contribute to the development of Laos. Furthermore, through the alumni association organization, JDS returnees, who are a valuable resource for studying in Japan for two years, will be effectively utilized in building a partnership between the two countries.

Chapter 3. Evaluation of the JDS Project and Recommendation

3-1. Relevance between JDS Project and Development Issues / Country Assistance Policy

Based on the development plan of Laos and the current situation and problems of each sector, the consistency of JDS and development plan of Laos was analyzed as follows.

3-1-1. Conformity with Priority Development Issues in Laos

In 2016, the Laos government announced its 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) (8th NSEDP), which includes 3 outcomes (development balanced between the fields of (1) economy, (2) society, and (3) the environment). Consistency with the 8th NSEDP is as follows.

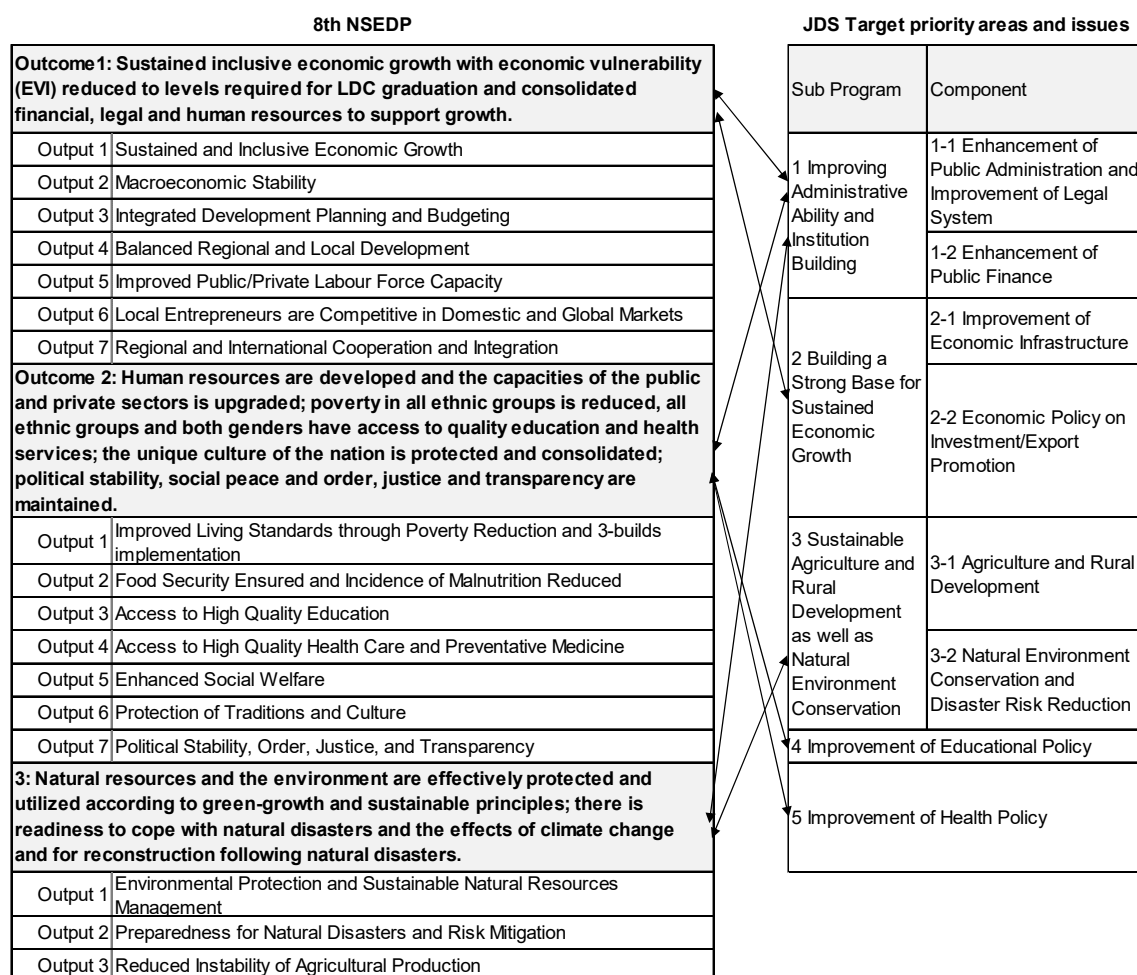
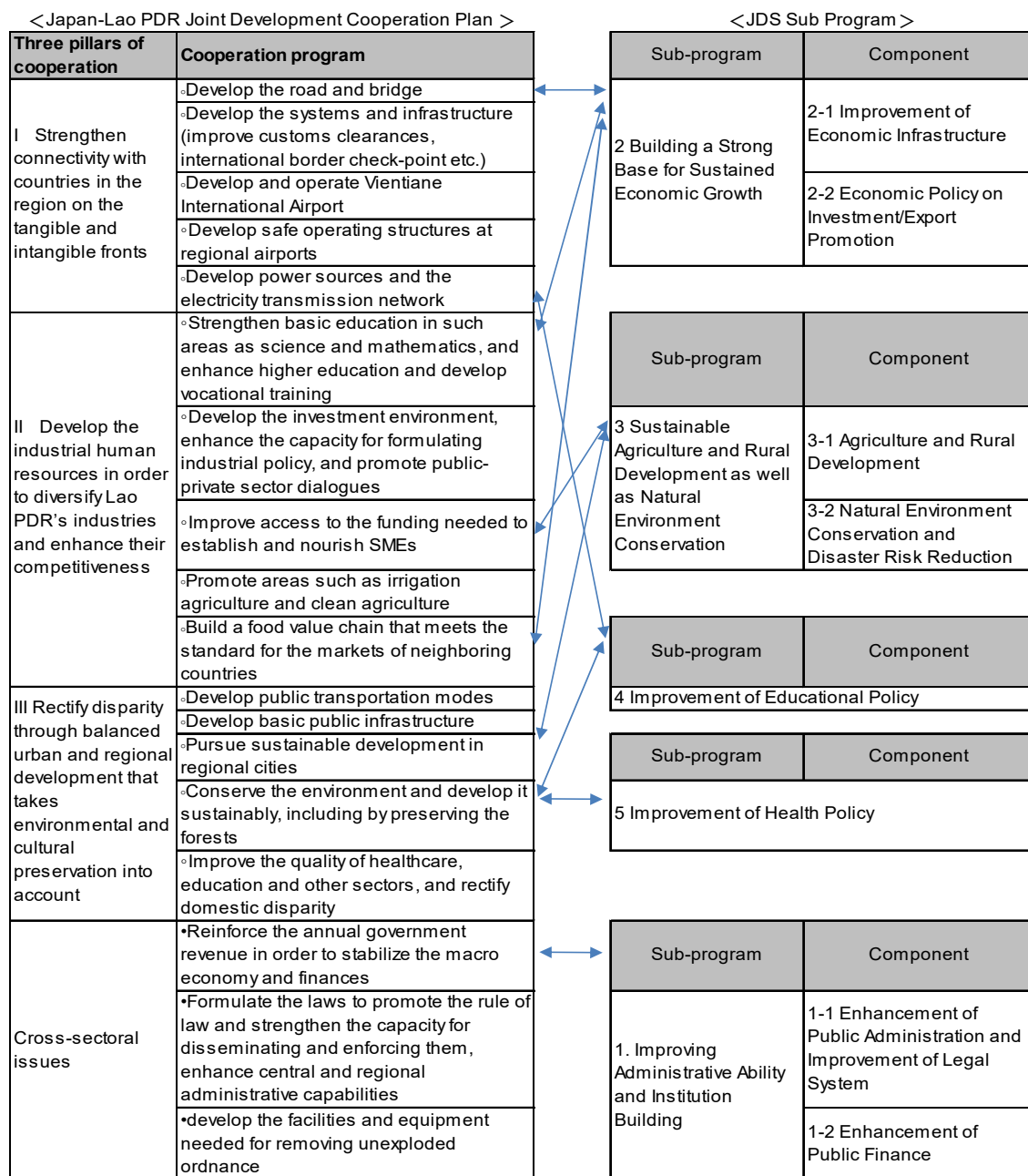


Figure 6 JDS Key Assistance Areas and 8th NSEDP

3-1-2. Conformity with Japanese Cooperation Policy to Laos

The Country Assistance Policy for Laos (April 2012) by the Japanese government sets the core

assistance areas as “Development of economic and social infrastructure,” “Development of agriculture and preservation of forests,” “Development of educational environments and human resources training,” and “Improvement of health and medical services.” In addition, in the Japan-Lao PDR Joint Development Cooperation Plan for the Sustainable Development of Lao PDR of September 2016, based on their mutual strategic partnership, Japan and Laos will work together on achieving the 8th NSEDP, and Japan will provide the following three pillars for cooperation.



3-1-3. Feasibility of Providing Grant Assistance through JDS

Target countries for grant aid are determined with reference to the criteria for an interest-free loan qualified country (1,175 USD per person, FY2020) of the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group. A target case is determined on the basis that though a project is a basic area necessary for nation-building and poverty mitigation, it is difficult to conduct such a project with the relevant government's own funds or borrowed funds. Grant aid contributes to nation-building toward the autonomy of the recipient country, broadly in collaboration with technical assistance and interest-bearing loan projects conducted by donors, including Japan.

The per capita GNI of Laos is 2,450 USD as of 2018,²⁰ and it is classified as a high middle income country by the World Bank.²¹ The IDA considers Laos to be one of the 76 countries eligible for financing even as it strengthens its financing conditions for Laos. In addition, in the DAC classification, Laos remains positioned as a least developed nation, so it has a very high need for development aid.

Laos is positioned by IDA, as an exception, as a country eligible for interest-free loans, so the situation was carefully examined, with reference to the perspectives to be examined in the notification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,²² from the perspectives of “project quality,” “Japan’s foreign policy,” and “status of developing countries that are beneficiaries” regarding the appropriateness of implementing the grant-in-aid of the JDS Project.

(1) Perspectives regarding Japan’s foreign policy

Japan is one of the top donors to Laos (OECD-DAC Reporting Standard), and, along with building a good bilateral relationship, maintaining cooperative relationships in the international arena, including the United Nations. The 2015 elevation of the bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership²³ and the agreement in the 2016 Japan-Lao PDR Joint Development Cooperation Plan²⁴ have strengthened the relationship. In 2018, there were numerous heads of government and foreign ministerial meetings, which are working towards bringing the two countries even closer together. In addition, this Project is positioned as an initiative to realize the statement by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan when he visited Laos in April 2018 and said, “Japan wishes to do what it can to help Laos foster its human resources.”²⁵ Thus, this Project is expected to contribute to furthering the diplomatic relations between the two countries.

JDS provides its unique opportunities, including the JICA Developing Studies Program, intern training, and interaction of administrative officials with Japan’s government ministries, and

²⁰ World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/lao-pdr>

²¹ World Bank IDA Borrowing Countries: <https://ida-ja.worldbank.org/about/borrowing-countries>

²² Ministry of Foreign Affairs: “Effective Use of Grants-in-Aid for Countries with Relatively High Income Levels,” April 2014

²³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/s_sa/seal/la/page2_000060.html

²⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ic/cap1/page22_002692.html

²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_006103.html

hospitable support during the stay in Japan by the implementing agent is also a key feature. JDS targets young administrative officers, etc. who act in the role of policy planning/implementing for socioeconomic development for Laos, and JDS returned fellows are expected to become future leaders in the group with extensive understandings on Japan. They can be a valuable asset toward the enhancement of bilateral relations, so from the viewpoint related to Japan's external policy, this is highly meaningful.

(2) Perspectives on the situation of the recipient country

While Laos' per-capita GNI is 2,450 USD (2018), in the DAC classification, Laos remains positioned as a least developed nation. The 8th NSEDP calls for leaving the ranks of LDCs by 2020, but there are severe gaps between urban and rural areas, which remain either in poverty or near poverty line, with about half the population having an income of no more than 3 USD a day.²⁶ From the perspective of protecting people, too, responding to threats to individual life or lifestyles is vital ("Economic vulnerability" perspective).

Training administration officials who can contribute to the planning and policy-making needed to solve these vulnerabilities and issues is an urgent task, and where the appropriateness of cooperation through the JDS Project and the meaning of its implementation are both high.

3-2.Expected Effect of JDS Project

3-2-1. Identifying Relationships with Other JICA Cases and Considering the Feasibility of Collaboration

(1) Division of roles with other JICA international study programs

As described in "1-5. Assistance trends in Japan," in Laos, in addition to JDS, JICA implements many other projects for studying abroad. It is highly possible for there to be mix-ups among applicants to Japan's many programs for studying abroad, which would cause confusion when candidates file their applications. Therefore, skillfulness for preventing the aforementioned negative occurrences will be required. Discussion of the relationship with other projects for studying abroad took place through the preparatory survey in question as well.

Table below presents a summarization of overlapping targets of JDS and the JICA's programs for studying abroad below. Although the fields overlap, differentiation can be proposed by distinguishing the targets. As a general rule, JDS should be targeted at administrative officers who contribute to policy making, while other JICA training programs should focus on technical personnel who contribute to solving development issues.

²⁶ World Bank: "Poverty & Equity Brief" <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/LAO>

Table 26 Overlap of JDS and JICA long-term training programs

| Other JICA Study Programs | JDS Development Issues |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDGs Global Leader Program • Legal and Judicial Human Resources Development | 1-1 Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment Promotion and Industrial Development for Asian Region | 1-2 Enhancement of Public Finance 2-2 Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Human Resource Development for Road Asset Management • Human Resources Development for Electricity and Energy Sector | 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Engineering and Utility Management for Future Leaders • Sustainable Urban Planning and Urban Transportation Development • Human Resources Development for Governmental Officers and Researchers in Mineral Resources Rich Countries • JICA Long-term Training Program on the Forest Governance Initiative • Agriculture Studies Networks for Food Security (Agri-Net) • Innovative Asia • Human Resources Development in Science, Technology and Innovation | 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure 3-1 Agriculture and Rural Development 3-2 Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction |

(2) Collaboration with policy advisers

In Laos, JICA policy advisers are stationed in ministries as counterparts. It is important to closely share information with active specialists as described above and to establish opportunities for specialists to hold direct discussions with JDS returned fellows.

During the recruitment phase, it is desirable that JICA experts encourage superior candidates to file applications. Moreover, it is possible for experts to make use of JDS returned fellows for their own services. Such collaboration would be possible. Experts are enrolled with ministries and are familiar with internal circumstances. Thus, it seems that supplementary relationships with the JDS projects can be established in various forms.

(3) Collaboration for other projects

JDS is to be implemented as an ODA project. Therefore, further collaboration involving other ODA projects is of importance based on the following standpoints: (i) this program is not merely a scholarship program for individuals; and (ii) projection for development related to contribution to prioritized areas in assistance policies classified by country, as is the case with other projects.

It is necessary to review collaborative projects with associated parties on the side of Japan through use of Table below.

Table 27 List of JICA project for future collaboration with JDS (example)

| JDS Development Issues (Component) | JICA Project |
|--|---|
| 1-1 Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project for Promoting Development and Strengthening of the Rule of Law in the Legal Sector of Lao P.D.R. • The Project for Training Program on Leadership Enhancement for leaders |
| 1-2 Enhancement of Public Finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project for Improving Public Investment Management • Project for the Capacity Development of Tax Administration |
| 2-1 Improvement of Economic Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project for Improvement of Management Capacity of Water Supply Sector • Project for Capacity Enhancement for Sustainable World Heritage Management and Preservation in Luang Prabang • Vientiane International Airport Terminal Expansion Project/ • Vientiane Capital Water Supply Expansion Project/ |
| 2-2 Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project conducted in Lao Japan Institute (LJI) on business human resource development and networking |
| 3-1 Agriculture and Rural Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project for Participatory Agriculture Development in Savannakhet Province • Clean Agriculture Development Project • The Project for the Improvement of Irrigated Agriculture in Tha Ngon |
| 3-2 Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+ Support Project/ |
| 4 Improvement of Educational Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project for Improving Teaching and Learning Mathematics for Primary Education • The Project for Improving Secondary School Environment in the Central and Southern Provinces |
| 5 Improvement of Health Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project for Sustainable Development and Quality Assurance of Health Care Professionals/ • Project for Improving Quality of Health Care Services • The Project for the Improvement of Setthathirath Hospital and Champasak Provincial Hospital |

3-2-2. Measures to be taken with each indicator toward the achievement of JDS project goals

The effect of the human resource development program is expected to manifest itself in the long term. Therefore, the project goal which is to be reached at the completion of the project, is that “the capacity of human resources engaged in the development issues improves.” In addition, overall goal is “to improve the competence of related administrative agencies concerning the development issues” through the effective use of the knowledge and experience acquired by the returned fellows to their organization. Through these, it is expected ultimately “to contribute to solving the development issues of their home country.”

The appropriateness of implementing the JDS in Laos will be evaluated on the basis of this preparatory survey, and will eventually be reviewed by the Japanese government. It is, however, necessary for the Laos government dispatching JDS fellows to provide support during their study and after their return and, in addition, for the accepting universities to provide a curriculum that makes contributions to solving the development issues of the country. It is, therefore, expected

that the achievement of the project goal will continue to be promoted.

The following indicators used to measure the achievement of the project goal are common to all Components in view of the perspectives mentioned above.

- Ratio of JDS fellows who have obtained master's degree
- Enhancement of the capacity of JDS returned fellows on analysis, policy making and project operation/management
- Policy formulation and implementation by utilizing the study outcomes of JDS returned fellows

With respect to the indicators of “ratio of JDS fellows who have obtain master's degree” and “enhancement of the capacity of JDS returned fellows on analysis, policy making and project operation/management,” a high completion rate is expected to be achieved as a result of the steady implementation of the following: 1) Encouraging applications by appealing to Human Resource Department in the organizations that are consistent with each Sub-Program and Component as well as the human resources that match the intent of the project at the time of recruitment; 2) Selecting JDS fellows on the basis of academic knowledge, relevant work experience, basic quality, and potential for contribution after returning to the country; and 3) Offering various types of support and regular monitoring (namely, managing and advising on academic, lifestyle, and health issues in the form of interviews) to JDS fellows in Japan.

Regarding the other indicator, “policy formulation and implementation by utilizing the study outcomes of JDS returned fellows,” it is desirable to make efforts so that returned fellows are able to use the knowledge and capabilities acquired in Japan. In the Laos Civil Service System, it is possible to impose an obligation of reinstatement on the civil servants who obtain a scholarship and study abroad. Although only obtaining a master's degree by studying abroad does not affect promotion, by returning to work at the same position as before dispatching, the civil servants can build a career that can make more effective use of the knowledge gained from studying abroad. It is desirable to ensure these obligations in cooperation with the Ministry.

In addition, it is integral to monitor how the JDS fellows' experience in Japan will be utilized in their professional careers after returning to their country over the mid to long term in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the JDS project. Through the monitoring, it is required to conduct follow-up activities necessary for producing project outcomes and support JDS fellows to further develop their professional skills and expand the networking. Appropriate follow-up activities will not only clarify the project outcomes, but also maintain relations between JDS fellows and Japan, and benefit Japan into future collaboration with JDS fellows who are familiar with Japan and will be leaders of the country.

3-3.Comparison with Other Scholarship Programs Provided by Other Donors

The JDS basic research analyzed the factors that contribute and hinder the effective progress and achievement of the JDS project, in comparison with other donor's scholarship program. Based on this the factors in terms of JDS Laos are summarized as shown in the table below:

**Table 28 Examples of Factors that Affect the Achievement of JDS Laos
(Findings from JICA Basic Research)**

| Items | Contributing Factors | Inhibiting Factors |
|---|---|--|
| Recruitment, selection, before coming to Japan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly transparent selection University faculty members conduct local interviews and contribute to the selection of appropriate human resources. Acceptance field meets development needs Recommendation for application by the partner government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work experience is required Limited target organizations / fields Long selection period There is little pre-training for improving English There is no training to learn Japanese culture and language Strict rules during study abroad |
| During the arrival in Japan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing high-quality educational opportunities in Japan Living support for JDS fellows | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low awareness by Japanese ministries |
| After returning home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a network between returned fellows and the accepting universities There are regulations for returning to work. The Japanese government is working on the appropriate allocation of returned fellows to the partner government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undeveloped mechanism for Japanese government and companies to utilize returned fellows As there is no way to obtain information from Japan, it is difficult to have an identity as a "JDS returned fellow." |

Comparing between JDS and Australian scholarship that is highly popular in Laos by using this, the advantages and disadvantages of JDS are considered as follows.

Table 29 Comparative advantages and disadvantages between JDS and Australia Awards Scholarship

| Items | JDS | Australian scholarship |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Comparative advantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University faculty members carry out local interviews themselves, contributing to the selection of the right people. - Strong support for student life for fellows - Provision of added-value training. - By carrying out special programs at host universities, international students can be provided with the support they need, and the program can be utilized both before arriving in Japan and after returning home. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A high level of awareness and regard thanks to its long history. - Up to 12 months of English training can be taken after selection. - While there are priority fields, the target organizations and fields are unlimited, so there is a lot of freedom in recruitment. - Students can have part-time jobs- There are follow-up strategies for after returning, and activities are actively carried out. |
| Comparative disadvantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long selection period. - Short training to improve English skills. - Strict regulations apply during study abroad. - The follow-up system for after returning is undeveloped. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The English selection criteria are strict. - Not a program restricted to government workers. |

One of the major comparative advantage of JDS is that project partnership with accepting universities enables each university to be widely involved in the selection of candidates, and the Special Program, which is offered in addition to existing university programs, provides curriculums that meet needs of each JDS fellow and country. The throughout involvement of accepting universities in the selection, guidance, acceptance and follow-up works as an advantage to JDS project.

In addition, proactive involvement of the Agent in the establishment of project policy each year and its versatile support for JDS fellows, such as recruitment and selection of candidates, send-off, regular monitoring throughout their stay in Japan, alumni activities and reappointment to their original job posts after their return, give JDS project a comparative advantage over other donors. Though the average completion rate of Japan's master's program for the past 10 years (2008-2017) is 87.8 percent that of JDS is 98.6 percent for the past 20 years.

On the other hand, one of the disadvantages of JDS is considered to be follow-up. Follow-up activities for Australian scholarships are based on the "Australia Awards Global Strategy." This is a comprehensive alumni strategy for all alumni of Australia Awards Scholarship, and alumni are considered to be an important human resource in Australia's diplomacy, business and public relations for returning students active in every country in the world. Based on this strategy, the establishment of an online community, the calling of graduate ambassadors, the fostering of connections among researchers, and the organization of digital libraries for returnees are strengthening the network and promoting exchanges all over the world.

As mentioned above, in Laos as well, activities based on this strategy are proactively being carried out based on the Australian Embassy (re-integration workshops six months after returning to Laos, discussions with Australian experts, and collaborative events with the Chamber of Commerce, seminars inviting prominent alumni as lecturers, cultural events, VIP dinners for high-class alumni, etc.).

In comparison, follow-up activities at JDS are left to the voluntary activities of each JDS fellows and alumni associations in each country. It is considered that each JDS fellow maintains the identity as a "JDS scholar" and forms a group with other JDS fellows who have the same aspiration, which will lead to the achievement of project results.

3-4. Project Evaluation Indicator Data

The following table shows the proposed indicators for the project results and impact of JDS in Laos. Through the project implementation, the quantitative data will be accumulated before assessing the results and impact.

Table 30 Project Evaluation Indicator Data on JDS Laos (Tentative)

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Inaugural year | | 1999 (Batch 1 was dispatched in 2000) |
| Number of Slots per year | | 20 Masters, 2 Ph.Ds |
| Fellows accepted | Total | 420 |
| | Sex | Male:295, Female:125 (30%) |
| | Average age | 30 years old (upon arrival to Japan) |
| Returned fellows | Total | 376 |
| | Fellows who obtained degree | 370 |
| | Fellows who failed degree | 6 (but 5 of them successfully completed their study after project supporting period) |
| | Completion rate | 98.4% |
| Ration of management level (upper than director) | Upon arrival | 14 (3.7 %) |
| | After return to country | 50 (13.3 %) |

In addition, in order to decide the items for measuring qualitative effects, information will be gathered focusing on the following items as the definition of best JDS practices.

Table 31 Items indicating Qualitative Effects of JDS (Proposal)

| |
|---|
| 1. Contribution to resolving development issues in the country |
| Attaining promotion, obtaining influential power inside the organization, and engaging in policy making as a key person |
| Especially utilizing research conducted on the Master's Degree Course |
| Conducting activities concerning political measures as a member of JDS alumni |
| 2. Contribution to strengthening relationships with Japan as a Japanophile |
| Engaging in JICA projects as the counterpart |
| Participating in diplomatic negotiations with Japan |
| Collaboration with private businesses in Japan and participating in joint research studies with Japanese universities |
| Implementing activities concerned with strengthening relationships with Japan as JDS alumni members |
| 3. Utilization of networks other than the above |
| Smoothly conducting services utilizing the JDS fellow network |
| 4. Other secondary outcomes |
| Contribution to university internationalization (mainly JDS fellows staying in Japan) and contribution to regional internationalization (mainly JDS fellows staying in Japan) |
| Planning and implementing social contribution activities, activities concerning Japan, and other activities to raise JDS values using the name of JDS outside the worksite |
| Academic contribution (excellent academic achievement, submission of articles to journals, sharing of research outcomes, etc.) |

3-5.Past JDS Outcome Status

In this preparatory survey, the status of the project effects of JDS returnees after returning to Japan was based on the quantitative indicators described in “3-4. Project evaluation index-related data (JDS results / impact indicators)”. In addition to the data analysis survey, set the index items for qualitative effect measurement based on the outcome index, individual questionnaire survey and interviews with JDS returned fellows are conducted to collect good practices of with the experience of JDS.

(1) Degree acquisition and acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills

By May 2020, the rate of completion of JDS Laos fellows has reached 98.7%, and it can be considered that one of the indicators, “Master's degree for international students,” has been sufficiently achieved in Laos. In the questionnaire before returning to Laos, when fellows were asked about how they felt their changes after studying abroad, many respondents said that their skills and attitudes, such as time management skills, sense of responsibility, active participation, and academic abilities such as data collection skills, and academic research and analysis had improved. From these results, it can be seen that Lao JDS fellows have gained confidence in these abilities through study abroad.

In the questionnaires and visit interviews with the target organizations, it is highly appreciated that JDS returnees from Laos are playing an active role and contributing to their ministry. One of the achievements of JDS is to improve the capabilities required for civil servants through studying abroad in Japan and to utilize these capabilities to contribute to the development issues of the institution to which they belong and Laos. After returning to Japan, JDS fellows are expected to make use of these abilities and further contribute to the development issues of their institutions and Laos.

(2) Promotion rate, formation of critical mass

In the JICA basic research in 2019, the ratio of job titles in 2014 and 2019 in each country is compared. In Laos, as of December 2014, the percentage of returnees who hold managerial positions in government institutions was 63.0%, and the rate of director general and above was 4.4% .However, according to the survey as of August 2019, the ratio of returnee with managerial positions was 67.8% and that of director general and above was 5.3%. It can be confirmed that the number of JDS fellows returning from Japan is steadily increasing during the target period, although it does not significantly increase in a short period in Laos where the seniority-based tendency is strong due to the civil servant system.

In this preparatory survey, a survey was conducted on the total number of employees and the proportion of JDS returnees in managerial posts to major ministries and agencies. As shown in the figure below, remarkable achievements are able to be seen in Ministry of Justice. Two JDS returnees serve as Director Generals, out of 12 of the director's posts, and 5 others serves as deputy director general's posts among overall 34 posts.

Next to this is the Ministry of Home Affairs. Although the director general has not yet appeared, the three are serving as deputy director general, followed by 2 directors of divisions, so it can be said that the group which is expected to be active in the future, is steadily being formed.

| | Target Organization | Number of Staff | | Director General | Deputy Director General | Director of Division | Deputy Director of Division |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Ministry of Justice 法務省 | Total Officers | 460 | 12 | 34 | 65 | 79 |
| | | JDS Returnees | 11 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| | | Ratio | 2% | 17% | 15% | 3% | 0% |
| 2 | Ministry of Home Affairs 内務省 | Total Officers | 462 | 15 | 36 | 50 | 68 |
| | | JDS Returnees | 7 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| | | Ratio | 2% | 0% | 8% | 4% | 1% |

In the future, it is essential to strengthen the network within the ministries and to form a network that crosses ministries, in order to surely bring this to fruition. There are cases where the JDS returnees are giving advice to juniors in the ministry at the application stage, and there are exchanges in the close relationship between the year and departments, but more advanced efforts are needed in the future to build a network as JDS returnee students.

(3) Contribution to Development Issues of Laos

Regarding the contribution to the tackling of the country's development issues, it was confirmed that several JDS Alumni were involved in important government policy making. Below is a list of those good examples.

- Currently belongs to the joint project research of Laos and Japan and is a supporting member of the drafting national socio-economic development plan. (Alumni from Bank of Lao)
- Worked as a key person in policy making by involving in the drafting of Civil Code of Laos as supported by JICA project for the Promoting Development and Strengthening the Rule of Law in the legal sector. The Civil Code will be effective on 27 May 2020. (Alumni from Ministry of Justice)
- Participating as the taskforce member for Wastewater Sector which is supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integrated Fund (JAIF) Project on "Policy Dialogue and Network Building of Multi-stakeholders on Integrated Decentralized Domestic Wastewater Management in ASEAN Countries". (Alumni from Ministry of Public Works and Transportation)

(4) Example of utilizing research contents of master's course

It was also confirmed that the research contents of the master's course were utilized to solve the development issues in the country. Below is a list of some good examples.

- In the current duties of the Banking Supervision Department, the master's research is master's research is able to help me classify how regulation should be suitable for each banking types and help me to well understand banking behavior. (Alumni in Bank of Lao)
- Not only the master's research content itself, but also all the knowledge, experience, and research methods acquired in the research are useful, and the experience is shared with staff and colleagues in the department. (Alumni in Ministry of Natural Environment and Resources)

(5) Contribution to strengthening relations with Japan

Regarding the contribution to strengthening relations with Japan as a Japan Alumni, some good examples are confirmed in which JDS returnees are actively building project formations and cooperative relationships with JICA offices, and cases where they are contributing to strengthening business relations with Japanese companies.

- Served as a coordinator for Project which JICA support program for Capacity development, presently I am a coordinator for Pilot Wastewater treatment plant under support by JICA and Private Japanese Company. (Alumni from Ministry of Public Works and Transportation)
- As the director general of the department of international relations, Ministry of Public Security, I have the responsibility to develop the international cooperation policy of the ministry, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements between the Ministry and its counterparts. I have good cooperation with a Japanese security representative at the Japanese Embassy in Laos. (Alumni in Ministry of Public Security)


3-6. Issues and Recommendations

Issues and recommendations obtained in this survey are as follows.

(1) Implementation of JDS with awareness of diplomatic effects

In relation to the next-phase JDS Project, projects conducted with an awareness of generating more diplomatic effects should be implemented. As described in "1-1-2. Project-related issues," according to the preliminary studies "JDS's effect verification (2019)" implemented by JICA, three development phases of JDS ((i) responses to development issues, (ii) responses to development issues + national interest of Japan, and (iii) national interest of Japan) have been designated. It is suggested that the focus on targeted institutions and personnel should be shifted eventually. In regard to the JDS Laos, to maximize the outcome of 20 years or implementation, a shift to the second development phase can be considered with possible awareness of diplomatic effects. Moreover, various JICA international study programs have been implemented in addition to JDS. Therefore, it is necessary to characterize JDS as a project that evidences awareness of the diplomatic effect in terms of the sorting out of other programs.

Table 4 Changes in the focus of human resource development and the targets that JDS should bear by the development stage

| Assumed Stage of the Partner Country | A. Many development issues The framework in line with Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy = Current JDS program | B. Development Issues + Important Issues for Japan | C. Country of Political, Economic, and/or Diplomatic Importance (e.g., China) |
|--|--|---|---|
| Focus of Human Resources Development (HRD) | Development of core human resources in civil service who address development issues (Responding to development issues) | Development of core human resources in civil service who have influence on development issues (Development issues + Japan's national interests) | Fostering of government officials who serve as a bridge between the partner country and Japan (Expected diplomatic benefits) |
| Targets of JDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openly calling for applications - Young government officials (at government offices whose duties include policymaking and planning, as well as sectoral government offices), university faculty members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calling for applications only from government offices or departments whose duties include policymaking and planning - Introducing a smaller quota or cost-sharing between the partner country and Japan - Designating target organizations or departments under the Japan special quota | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministries, organizations, or departments agreed upon between the partner country and Japan - Cost-sharing agreed upon between the two countries |
| the current position of JDS Laos |  | | |

(2) Strategic personnel selection with awareness of formation of critical mass

In the preparatory survey, in order to produce the project achievement in JDS, the definition of the critical mass for JDS, and the recruitment and selection strategy based on the definition was attempted as follows.

Definition of critical mass

The critical mass generally refers to the "branch point where the penetration rate of products and services jumps at a stretch" in marketing. When trying to define critical mass in JDS, there is a theory that "the critical mass is achieved if JDS returned fellows can occupy 16% of the executive posts in an organization" by quoting the idea of "early adapter and early majority" in marketing. However, in this case, the concept of the chasm theory that "there is a large gap between the early adopter and the early majority, and the new product will not explosively spread if it does not exceed this" is a problem. Therefore, as a method to overcome the gap pointed out by this chasm theory, JDS would like to use the concepts of ambassador marketing and influencer marketing.

Ambassador marketing is that there are people who are enthusiastic about the spread of new products, influencer marketing approaches consumers through influencers with a certain influence, rather than directly approaching consumers. In other words, it is important for JDS

returned fellows to play the "role to enthusiastically disseminate Japanese policy." For example, occupying two of the 10 executive posts of an organization with JDS returned fellows does not mean that a critical mass has been achieved. It can be achieved only when they become ambassadors and influencers who understand and disseminate Japan's policies.

Therefore, it would be possible to consider that the critical mass in JDS be defined as "20% of JDS returned fellows who have familiarity with Japan occupy the executive posts." Even if it is difficult to achieve only with JDS, it will be achieved as an All Japan initiative also by counting on the other students who are studying in Japan including JICA long-term trainees, government-sponsored international students, and even privately-sponsored international students. In that case, JDS returned fellows would be mostly suitable for taking a role as a leader among them. For that reason, the follow-up activity of JDS returned fellows is important. In addition to efforts to prevent decreasing the familiarity with Japan of JDS returned fellows, a strong network of JDS returned fellows is also required. This idea is also taken as a reference when considering the definition in the future.

In JDS Laos, as mentioned above, as an example, 17% of the director general level position and 15% of the deputy director general of the Ministry of Justice are JDS returned fellows. There is already a cooperative relationship with the ministry in a series of legal development support projects by the Japanese government, and some JDS returned fellows have been involved as project counterparts

If JDS returned fellows increase, it can be expected that understanding of Japan's standpoints and diplomatic policies will be promoted at opportunities for diplomatic negotiation between the two countries and in multinational conferences.

Long-term strategy for recruitment and selection in JDS Laos

In particular, in line ministries such as Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Justice, set target occupancy ratio by JDS returnees as 20% of the executive posts. The recruitment activities will be strengthened by pinpointing the lack of organizations, and the selection will be carried out with that awareness, especially on the side of the Japanese government.

JDS's recruitment and selection basic strategy is to carry out recruitment and selection based on the image of the number of people after 5 years and 10 years (the aim is to achieve the maximum result in a limited budget investment).

(3) Enhancing Recruitment and Selection: Improving Basic Academic Abilities

Comments have been made by accepting universities that JDS Fellows from Laos needs more basic academic abilities in comparison with JDS Fellows from other countries. In particular, in addition to basic subjects like English and mathematics, many universities have noted that they need more the academic background and basic knowledge required for academic research and

essay writing. This creates a lot of problems when it comes to obtaining a master's degree. While countries like Australia offer training over the long-term English training before their departure to Australia for study, the JDS Project has, as of the previous phase, been carrying out English training for 10 weeks prior to departure for Japan. While it is not possible to say as a rule that candidates with good English skills are the good quality candidates, it does appear to remain necessary to improve English and other academic skills in order for applicants to pass the selection process and study at universities in Japan, and to form networks that will be useful in their futures.

The average scores in the mathematics exams are also issues during the selection as shown by the fact that comments have also been received from some ministries that, in addition to English, the mathematics exam is also a hurdle. To ensure the project outcome, it is proposed to study holding seminars on English and mathematics exam techniques in future selection processes.

(4) Utilization of JICA Experts and Policy Advisors

In the JDS Project, the cooperation of JICA experts and policy advisors is important, though at present, there is insufficient presentation of the JDS Project to these experts and advisors. Therefore, by obtaining the help of the JICA Laos Office, it is proposed to hold briefings for specialists in the target ministries, and create chances to obtain cooperation for forging links with other JICA projects.

Returned JDS Fellows are already working at ministries where experts and policy advisors have been dispatched to, so for both sides to create useful relationships, what should be done is to start with increasing awareness of the JDS Project among related parties on the Japan side, informing them that there are returned JDS Fellows in those ministries.

As a specific initiative, one suggestion is for the JICA Office to take the lead and provide information about the JDS Project when experts are appointed, or provide a forum for an exchange of views with the returned JDS Fellows working in the relevant ministry. For the experts, it will make their work following appointment go more smoothly, and for JDS Fellows, they will be able to retain ties with Japan even after returning home, and have ways to utilize what they learned in Japan. So it is a win-win situation for both sides.

In Laos, as noted earlier, ensuring high quality candidates is an issue. In this survey, experts also called out the issues of English skills, the passive attitudes of the students, and the lack of personnel in the ministries as issues with recruitment. On the other hand, by taking the time to encourage, even indirectly, an understanding of the effectiveness of studying in Japan, this sort of support will help to change awareness for latent applicants and on the sending side, which should lead to ensuring high quality candidates. In addition, there was a good example of how an agriculture policy advisor previously provided specific advice on creating a research plan. It can be expected advice on setting issues vital for strengthening the target organizations as research

themes. This sort of connection should also lead to manifesting JDS Project results.

(5) Points to be note on Recruitment Activities

To achieve the goals of JDS, it is essential to acquire highly potential candidates, making it important to attract many competent applicants from major target organizations in the recruitment activities. However, at a time when higher education mobility is high, there is fierce competition among donors for acquiring would-be foreign study fellows.

A look at the current situation shows that Japanese universities are low in international competitiveness and brand recognition, as evidenced by the fact that they are not ranked highly in global university ranking programs such as Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and they are not necessarily popular compared to western famous universities although they are proud of their high-level research and education. For this reason, in order to have foreign officers consider studying abroad in Japan, it is necessary to use a different approach, in addition to communicating universities' appeal.

In addition, especially in Laos, since the large number of people studying in Vietnam and China, JDS should demonstrate the advantages of JDS and the advantages of Japan to the officers in charge of each ministry in order for them to understand, and disseminate to their office the comparative advantage of JDS. First, the advantages of JDS must be demonstrated to local ministry officers responsible for the program. It is advisable to emphatically stress that: i) JDS, targeting administrative officers, is a human resource development program befitting development challenges of Laos, and is a program that will contribute to the nation's medium- to long-term growth; ii) each accepting university is designated as project partner; iii) JDS delivers value-added by providing curriculum more suitable to the country through a special program in addition to existing programs; iv) comprehensive instruction and accepting systems are in place; and v) extensive support such as periodic monitoring is provided to JDS fellows throughout the stay in Japan.

It would likely succeeded in spreading information within each ministry to a certain degree by first building a human relationship with human resource officers responsible for JDS at ministries and obtaining cooperation from them. Many of applicants typically obtain information from ministry departments or bureaus responsible for JDS. In order to ensure that relevant information is distributed widely to prospective candidates by officers responsible for personnel affairs, it is most important to build a good relationship with the human resource officers and obtain cooperation from them. It is crucial to engage in low-profile publicity activities in the form of visiting main Lao government agencies frequently and starting with having local officers know JDS itself.

Another appeal point would be the fact that JDS enables each fellow to learn about Japan's development experience through the JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP), currently worked on by JICA, in addition to engaging in research in his/her specialized area.

(6) Follow-up activities

A total of 420 JDS Fellows have come to Japan from Laos, and 376 of them have already returned home. In fact, each ministry places returned JDS Fellows back in their old jobs, utilizing what they have learned in their studies abroad, solving problems and discovering new issues, further strengthening their organization, and, through all that, contributing solving problems.

The Laos JDS Project will continue to maintain “target organization system”, steadily forming groups of returned Fellows within the target ministries. Utilizing these merits, the strategic recruitment and selection of valuable personnel will remain a useful part of Japan's ODA projects. As outcomes continue to manifest themselves, returned Fellows will further deepen their mutual connections organically, forming and maintaining a critical mass of returned Fellows, who shall liaise with each other beyond the limits of their own ministries as a way to propose and realize even greater policies. To that end, it is necessary to provide opportunities to report examples of returned Fellows proposing and implementing policy to the steering committee, and offer support for the construction of a system for regularly updating information in various fields and sharing and liaising among returned Fellows.

In Laos, liaisons with JAOL, the existing organization of former international students who studied in Japan, are expected to play an important role in following up. However, relatively few JDS Fellows are in JAOL, and the organization's activities are not specialized towards JDS Fellows. In order for JDS Fellows to actively carry out activities in future, there need to be incentives for alumni association activities, with content which allows returned JDS alumni to sense the importance of these activities and not just stop at networking among students. In particular, in this survey it was confirmed that there were strong connections among fellows who went to the same university or were in the same batch, but connections across ministries or organizations are rare. Therefore, it would be desirable to see the creation, with the JDS Project as the platform, of a forum for JDS Fellows in the same sector, with the same issues, while the agents provide support.

In this survey, some alumni share comments related to networking and alumni associations as follow-up needs after returning home, in addition to updates to the knowledge obtained overseas and opportunities for self-improvement. In addition, taking Australia's follow-up activities as an example, it was possible to obtain examples such as meetings of returned international students in key posts and workshops utilizing returned students. As on a trial basis, it is worth conducting some activities, such as holding seminars for returned JDS Fellows with university instructors visiting Laos for specialist interviews, for example, to discover follow-up activities that fit Laos.

(7) All-Japan initiative to implement the project

JDS is to be implemented as an ODA project. Therefore, further collaboration involving other ODA projects is important based on the following standpoints: (i) this program is not merely a scholarship program for individuals; and (ii) support for development related to contribution to

prioritized areas in country assistance policies. In particular, in order to promote cooperation with technical cooperation projects that are being implemented, it is important not only to have close information sharing with the JICA experts and advisors, but also to provide opportunities for the experts to talk directly with JDS returned fellows. In this regard, it is necessary for the implementing agent to deepen the understanding of the projects being implemented by JICA and the related policies of the Lao government, and to make useful proposals.

It can be considered to share the know-how for selecting candidates, by exchanging opinions among the officers in charge of scholarship projects in Japan to obtain high-quality candidates, and providing information on other scholarships during the recruitment process such as JDS recruitment briefing sessions.

In order to strengthen the capacity of young administrative officers who contribute to the promotion of socio-economic development, it is necessary to cooperate with and supplement not only JDS but other programs. By doing so, it becomes possible to enhance the synergistic effect of other projects in Japan. As the role of the implementing agent, it is important to be aware of cooperation with other ODA projects centering on the JICA human resource development project in Laos.

(8) Need for Enrichment Programs

Ministries and agencies visited in the field survey requested arranging for a more practical training based on an internship at government offices and enterprises during the two-year stay in Japan as a beneficial step. Further endeavors should be made, which are likely to deliver such added value for the purpose of improving JDS fellows' skills, helping build a human relationship serving as the foundation for a good relationship between both countries and generating differentiation from other scholarship programs. In so doing, instead of merely asking each accepting university to usefully spend special program expenses, it will be necessary to consider introducing a scheme that can be used according to JICA's intention more faithfully.

(9) Importance of Japanese Language

Acquiring knowledge of the Japanese language is helpful to understand the Japanese mind and spirituality more deeply and to help to form a bridge between Japan and Laos in the future. Even though they stay in Japan for two years, it is limited in opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Japanese and Japanese culture. This isn't a problem, if the project only has the purpose of acquiring knowledge in a specialized academic field, but if the purpose is also to foster human resources that will contribute to the friendly relations between the two countries in the future, it is necessary that among the activities of the project there is a program that teaches Japanese language and promotes an understanding of Japanese culture. Language is the foundation of cultural understanding and it is an essential tool to communicate with the Japanese. In order to continue with the study of Japanese, it is possible to provide opportunities for which using Japanese is necessary. For this reason, internships in Japanese government agencies and

companies, homestay programs that give opportunities to interact with ordinary Japanese and the like are effective.

In the FY2019 JDS Basic Research, in addition to the gradual reduction of scholarship amounts in FY2009, it was also pointed out that the withdrawal of pre-arrival Japanese training from FY2010 was a complex factor that reduced the satisfaction level of JDS fellows. Furthermore, as a certain level of Japanese conversation skill is a common feature among returned fellows who maintain their connection with Japan after returning to their home country, the effectiveness of acquiring the Japanese language has been confirmed to contribute to strengthening bilateral relations. Therefore, it is desired to restore the approx. 3-month training in the Japanese language before coming to Japan.

(10) Networking, Establishment of a Follow-up Scheme and Roles of Implementing Agent

Measures to be taken during the fellows' stay in Japan for follow-up conducted after they return home

To make continuous follow-up easier and link those activities to the results of strengthening the partnership between Japan and Laos, familiarity to Japan needs to be increased from while JDS fellows' stay in Japan so that they will be motivated to maintain their relationship with Japan following their return. By implementing measures to maintain and develop the familiarity that was increased during their stay in Japan in post-return follow-up, better results can be expected.

For this reason, the measures provided for the JDS fellows staying in Japan and the follow-up measures provided after they return home should be discussed in an integrated manner as continuous measures.

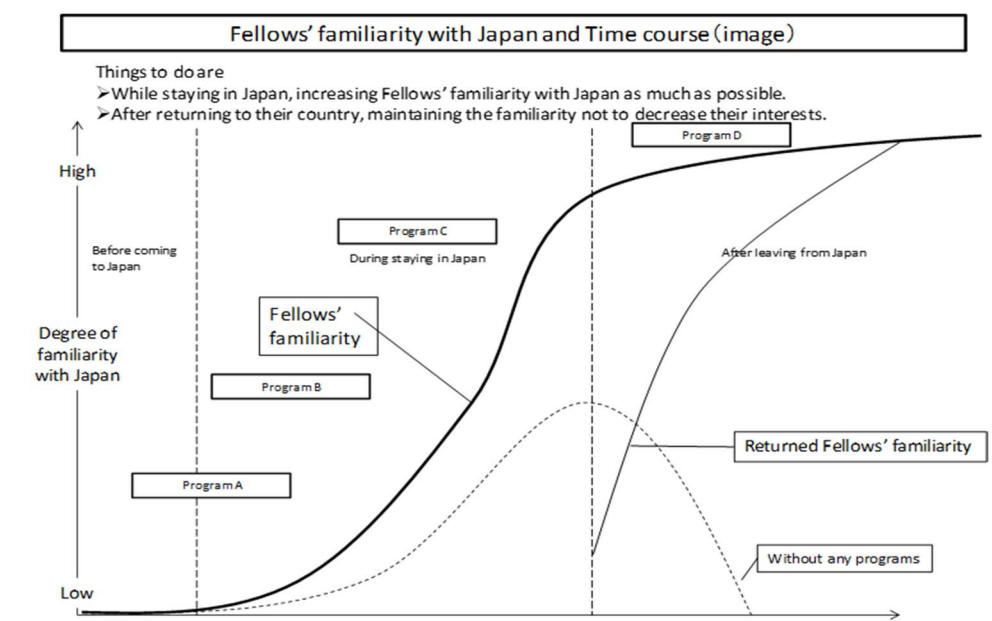


Figure 8 Fellows' Royalty toward Japan and Time Course (Image)

Follow-up measures implemented after the JDS fellows return home

For sustainable follow-up activities, it is expected for the Japan side to enhance the follow-up content in collaboration with the JAOL in order to implement measures for maintaining and improving the familiarity developed during the fellows' stay in Japan. Since JAOL has many returnees who are studying under MEXT scholarship, their activities are not specialized for JDS alumni. In addition to the activities by JAOL, while also providing support by the agent, it is proposed to have opportunities for activities such as social gatherings, events such as social gatherings, etc. that emphasize the strengthening of the network between JDS returnees.

Networking with Japanese administrative officers for networking

From the viewpoint of improving familiarity with Japan, the measures to be provided to the JDS fellows during their stay in Japan generally include the holding of lessons for understanding the Japanese culture and seminars for informing about development experience in Japan. However, it is desirable to implement measures utilizing the greatest characteristics of the JDS project, which mean that the JDS fellows are administrative officers involved in policy making of each country. For the JDS fellows who are expected to serve as a bridge between Japan and Laos as a person fond of or familiar with Japan, a network with the Japanese ministries and agencies would be useful for their future career. It is desirable to provide support for establishing a network through exchange with administrative officers and the holding of seminars and workshops with the persons concerned with the Japanese ministries and agencies as a lecturer.

The network formulated by these measures is practical for the fellows' operations after they return home, giving an incentive to the fellows to maintain such network and therefore it is expected to establish a continuous relationship.

Roles to be performed by the implementing Agent

Role as a mediator

The JDS fellows formulate a network with various Japanese people during their stay in Japan. However, it is not easy to meet an appropriate person only by establishing a personal relationship between individuals and such network merely connects a point with a point, having only a sporadic effect. For this reason, the implementing Agent is expected to function as a mediator between the JDS fellows and the Japanese ministries and agencies and the persons concerned with ODA. It is expected that the implementing Agent will perform matching based on the interest of both parties and work for establishing an organizational network and thereby contribute to better project achievements.

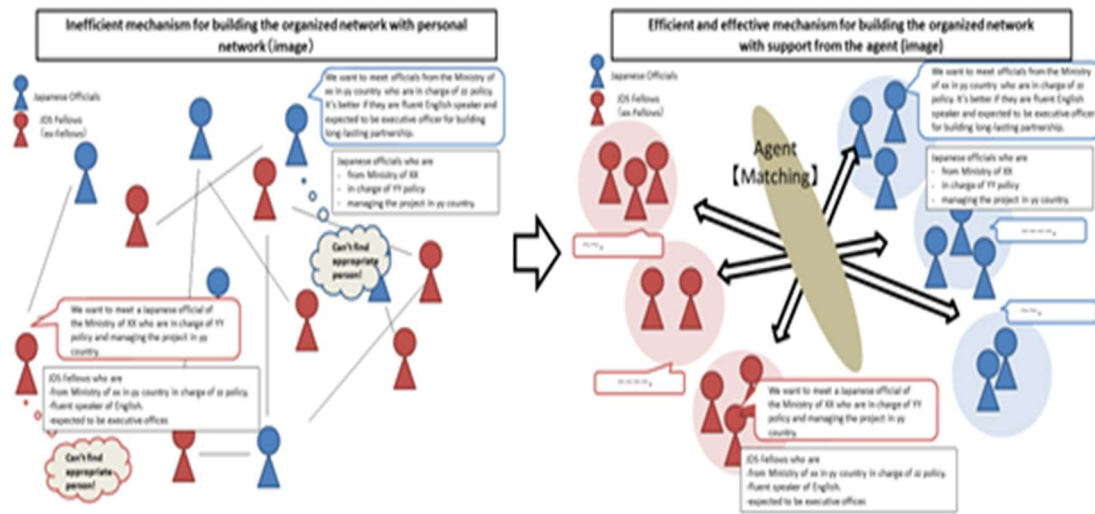


Figure 9 Roles as a Mediator by the Implementing Agent

Firm network foundation with JDS fellows

The implementing agent gets involved with the JDS fellows from the time of public announcement for recruitment and selection, regularly contacts the fellows through monitoring, etc. during their stay in Japan and provides immediate support in the case of emergency. For the JDS fellows, the implementing agent is like a partner having a firm trust relationship. For this reason, the implementing Agent can understand the information on the quality and other matters of JDS fellows in a detailed and integrated manner.

Generally speaking, a problem arising in connection with the follow-up of the fellows is to obtain the information on their whereabouts after returning home. In the JDS project in other countries, the implementing agent and the JDS fellows have a trust relationship and therefore the JDS fellows can contact the implementing agent even after returning home, and they have already established a relationship and system that make it possible to know the detailed matters on the fellows' division and work.

The role to be played by the implementing agent would be to function as the network foundation with the JDS fellows who are staying in Japan or have returned home based on their mutual trust relationship. The implementing agent's function for establishing a relationship with the JDS fellows should be focused on from the viewpoint of follow-up activities.

Network foundation with the Japanese ministries

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Network foundation with the Japanese ministries

It is important for Japanese government officials to build a network with JDS fellows. JDS fellows studying and growing up in Japan, are a diplomatic asset of Japan, and in the future, they will sometimes become diplomatic counterparts or development partners. For example, in the future, JDS returned fellows may be in charge of infrastructure in their countries, and may become the largest key person in Japan's quality infrastructure exports. In addition, in multilateral diplomacy situations, JDS returned fellows can become partners who can share basic values with Japan while various positions of each country are considered.

However, it is difficult to take full advantage of the network with JDS returned fellows unless both the Japanese government officials and the JDS fellows have built it. Therefore, it is expected that the implementing agent will have opportunities to actively disseminate information and build networks not only to ODA-related parties but also to other ministries and agencies in Japan. By being utilized by each ministry and agency, JDS will be a human resource development project that will contribute not only to the development of the partner country but also to the development of Japan at the same time, contributing to national interest. This will enable Japan and Laos to build a win-win relationship.

3-7. Conclusion

JDS in Laos, which started when JDS was founded in 1999, has already dispatched 420 fellows during this 20 years. Although there are not many cases in which JDS is directly linked to promotion to high class like in other countries, the number of JDS returnees in each organization is increasing, and the number of alumni who are recognized for their performance and are active in management posts is increasing. From the cases of JDS alumni who are active as bridges to Japan in establishing the first civil code in Laos and returnees who are involved in policy planning and system design in each ministry, the results of studying abroad in Japan are surely utilized in

their work and for the development of Laos by their own efforts.

Human resource development in the development needs to take a long-term perspective, and among them, JDS is one of those projects. Although it will take some time for results to be seen, by continuing to carry out the program, returned JDS fellows will form the critical mass within the government and become the core of the central and local governments, which will lead to further development of the country.

Currently, scholarships for various administrative officers are being implemented from other countries, and competition for excellent candidates is intensifying. Given the geopolitical importance of Laos, this trend is likely to remain unchanged or even greater. For this reason, JDS is required to be carried out from a strategic perspective, rather than to be carried out as it has been. Therefore, in this preparatory survey report, two measures were mainly proposed.

The first is the implementation of JDS with a greater awareness of diplomatic achievements. In Laos, in addition to JDS, various scholarships are provided by the Japanese government, including JICA. As suggested in the JDS Basic Research (FY2019), the target organizations of JDS can be decided taking into consideration of Japan's national interests, for example setting a special slot for JDS returned fellows who take important positions to achieve the critical mass at the prospective ministries. It is important to conduct an effective and efficient recruiting strategy while maximizing the project achievement gained in the past JDS implementation.

In addition, even if the target organizations is set in the recruitment strategy, JDS should be selected from various scholarships, so it must be an attractive project for Lao government officials. JDS should continue to appeal that accepting universities of JDS understand the situation of Lao and offer wide range of support for international students as well as the consistent support provided by the agent. In addition to that, it is necessary to implement a substantial value-added program. While studying in Japan under JDS, internships at Japanese government offices and companies and the government networking event with Japanese government officials should be strategically implemented in Japan with a national interest in mind.

The second is the importance of follow-up activities. Currently, many JDS returned fellows are in important positions, but it is necessary for Japan not only to regard this as a mere project achievement, but also to utilize it in order to truly connect it to the national interest. By utilizing and collaborating with the network of JDS fellows, many administrative agencies in Japan, including JICA, JDS are expected to get even more project achievement. With the increasing influence of China in the ASEAN region, utilizing JDS fellows as diplomatic assets is an effective means to strengthen the relationship between Japan and Laos. Considering the fact that many JDS returned fellows take in important positions, it is unavoidable to utilize these results for network formation.

JDS Laos already had marked the 20th anniversary in 2019. To make the project to be regarded as a leap phase, it will be necessary to utilize the project achievement in the past and further

develop the project in a more effective cycle. The next phase is considered to be an important phase in order to improve the recruitment strategy that takes national interests into consideration, the value-added programs during Japan, and follow-up activities to ensure the project outcome.

End

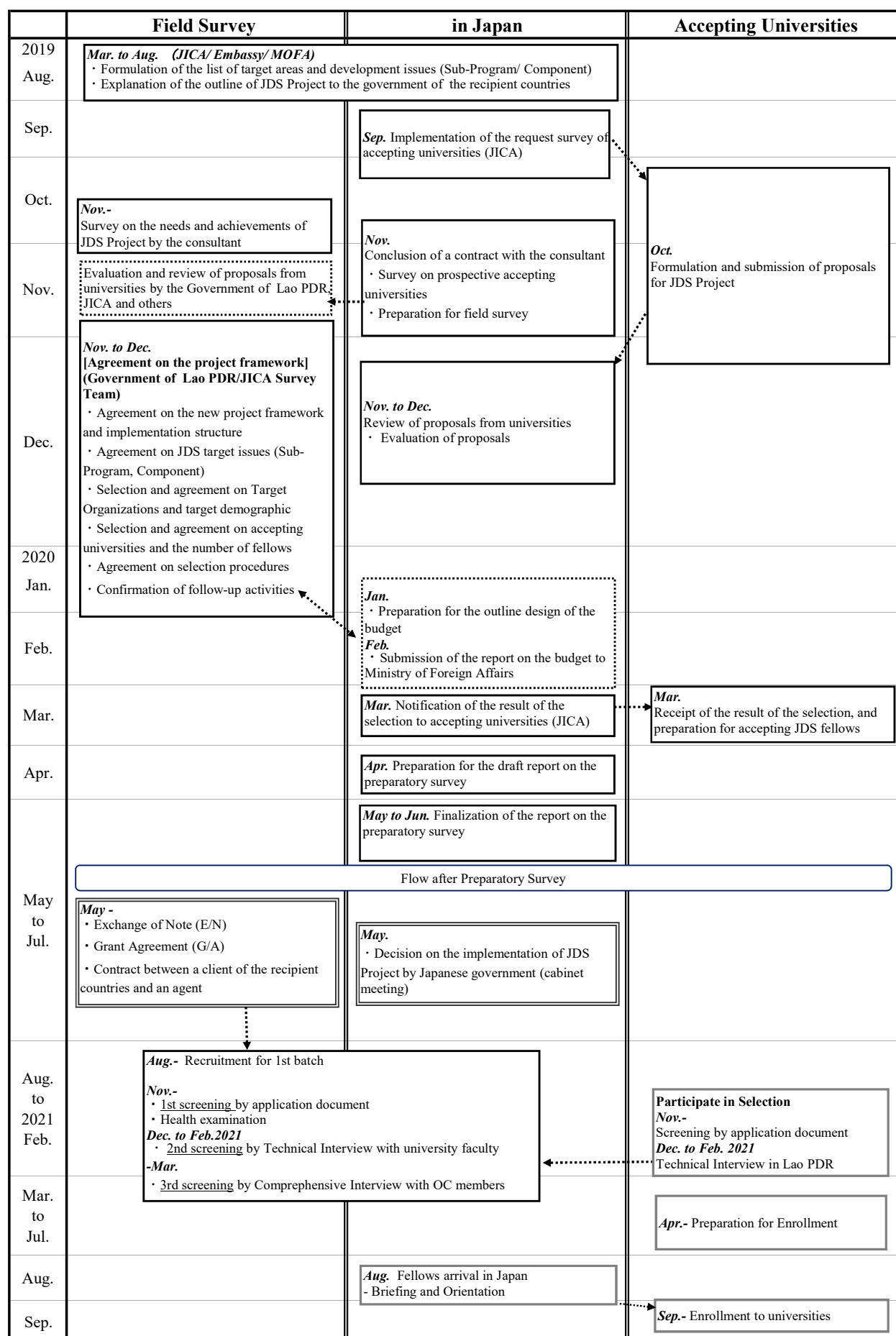
List of Appendixes

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2. Flowchart of the Preparatory Survey for JDS
3. List of Contact Persons
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5. The Number of JDS Fellows to be Accepted for the Next Four Years
under the JDS Project in Lao PDR

Member List of the Survey Team

| Name | Assigned Work | Organization and Position |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Ms. SANADA Akiko | Leader | Senior Representative JICA Laos Office |
| Ms. MATSUBARA Maho | Cooperation Planning | Deputy Assistant Director Grant Aid Project Management Division 2, Financial Cooperation Implementation Department, JICA |
| <Consultants> | | |
| Mr. SHIONOYA Tsuyoshi | Human Resource Development Planning | Managing Director International Student Programs Department I, JICE |
| Ms. AOKI Mayumi | Overseas Study Planning | Director International Student Programs Division, International Student Programs Department I, JICE |
| Ms. HIOKI Rika | Needs Study/Coordination | Country Officer International Student Programs Division, International Student Programs Department I, JICE |

Flowchart of the Preparatory Survey for JDS in Lao PDR



The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarships (JDS)

List of Contact Persons during the Field Survey in Lao PDR

1. Survey by Consultant in 18th to 22th November, 2019

| Date and Time | Organization | Contact Person | Remark |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 18th November 2019 9:30-10:30 | Ministry of Home Affairs | - Ms. Vilaythone SOUNTHONE XAYMONGKHOUNH, Deputy Director General, Department of Planning and Cooperation | Discussion with the Operating Committee (OC) members |
| 18th November 2019 14:00-15:00 | Ministry of Education and Sports | - Dr. Vongphachanh VILAYHOM, Director General, Department of Student Affairs | |
| 19th November 2019 9:00 - 9:50 | Bank of Lao P.D.R | - Mr. Phanousack KENEVONGPHACHANH, Director General, Department of Organization and Personnel - Ms. Sonedavanh PHANTHALANGSY, Head of Division, DOP - Ms. Tar, Technical Staff, DOP <JDS Alumni:> - Ms. Toukta PHATTHADAVONG, 13th Batch - Ms. Phoutham SOUVANNAPHAKDY, 15th Batch - Mr. Kittikone MAHOLY, JDS Alumni, 16th Batch - Mr. Somesanook PHONGSOUNTHONE, 16th Batch - Ms. Thippaphone CHANTHALATH, 16th Batch | Human resource needs in Lao PDR, Outcome of JDS fellows |
| 19th November 2019 10:00 -11:00 | Ministry of Planning and Investment | - Ms. Saymonekham MANGNOMEK, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation - Mr. Somkhit TAOYAHEAUNG, Deputy Director of Division | Discussion with the OC members |
| 19th November 2019 15:00 -16:00 | Central Committee for Organization and Personnel | - Mr. Vilaphanh SILITHAM, Deputy Director General, Department of Personnel Development | |
| 20th November 2019 10:00 - 11:00 | Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry | - Mr. Bounthavy XAYAPHET, Deputy Director General, Department of Organization and Personnel - Ms. Sengaloun Vilavong, Head of Division - Mr. Chanphet, Technical/Coordinator | Human resource needs in Lao PDR, Outcome of JDS fellows |
| 20th November 2019 9:00 -10:00 | Ministry of Industry and Commerce | - Mr. Vanxay KEOKHAMPHAN, Deputy Director General, Department of Organization and Personnel (JDS Alumni, 10th Batch) - Ms. Phimmasone CHANTHANYLERD, Technical Staff - Ms. Dalaphet VONGSARAVANH, Technical Staff | |
| 20th November 2019, 15:00 | Vientiane Capital | - Ms. Damduan CHANTHAVONG, Deputy Director General, Department of Organization and Personnel - Mr. Khamphay, Head of Personnel Development Division | Human resource needs in Lao PDR |
| 21st November 2019 9:00-10:00 | Ministry of Home Affairs | - Mr. Anolack SITHIDETH, Deputy Director General, Department of Civil Service Management (JDS Alumni, 10th Batch) - Mr. Nanthaphon LYVAHANA, Deputy Director of Division, Civil Service Planning Division, Department of Civil Service Management (JDS Alumni, 12th batch) | Interview on Civil Service System in Lao PDR |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 21st November 2019 14:00 - 15:00 | Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Phanthaly MANILATH, Deputy Director General, Department of Organization and Personnel (DOP) - Ms. Viengsook KHAMDYBOUTH, Deputy of Division - Mr. Maisisod, Technical Officer (coordinator) <JDS Alumni> - Ms. Daovinh SOUPHONPACDY, 10th Batch - Mr. Singthong PHANTHAMALA, 11th Batch - Mr. Malabou BAYLATRY, 11th Batch - Mr. Phongsavath YINGYONG, 12th Batch - Mr. Sengkeo TASAKETH, 13th Batch - Ms. Chindavanh SOURİYAPHACK, 15th Batch - Mr. Noudeng VONGDALA, 17th, Batch | Human resource needs in Lao PDR, Outcome of JDS fellows |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|

2. Survey Team in 25th to 29th November, 2019

| Date and Time | Organization | Contact Person | Remark |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 25th November 2019, 10:00 -11:00 | Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare | Mr. Xone MONEVILAY. Ph.D, Head of Personnel Management and Development Division, Department of Organization and Personnel | Human resource needs in Lao PDR, Outcome of JDS fellows |
| 25th November 2019, 14:00-14:50 | Ministry of Sciences and Technology. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Bounpone BOUAPHENG, Director General - Mr. Manothong VONGLOKHAM, Deputy Director General - Mr. Somphetoudone DOUANGMALA, Deputy Director of Personnel Management Division | |
| 25th November 2019, 15:00-16:00 | Prime Minister's Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Khomsan XAIYASANE, Director General - Ms. Sisoukham, Deputy Director General - Ms. Soupankham, Technical staff - Ms. Tou, Technical Staff - Mr. Alanyadeth, Technical staff | |
| 26th November 2019, 10:30-11:30 | Ministry of Public Work and Transports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Chanthala PHIMMACHACK, Deputy Director General - Mr. Sivilay, Technical Staff <JDS Alumni> - Ms. Moukmany VANNASY, DHD (15th batch) - Mr. Chanthephah KHATTIYAVONG (17th batch) - Mr. Phouthavishet PHOMMANIVONG (14th batch) - Mr. Vanhsaveng OUTTHACHACK (12th batch) | |
| 26th November 2019, 15:00-16:00 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Khamphai PHANTHONGDY, DDG - Mr. Viengkham, HD - Ms. Philavanh Technical Officer - Mr. Alisavanh Technical Officer <JDS Alumni> - Ms. Bounphady INSISIENMAY (3rd batch) - Ms. Viengchit OUNEPHONGCHALEUNE (14th batch) | |
| 27th November 2019, 9:00-10:00 | Ministry of Energy and Mines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Mone PHETSISOULATH, DDG - Mr. Bouathong XAYALATH, DHD - Ms. Khambai, Technical staff <JDS Alumni> - Mr. Khampeune VOLADET, (10th batch) - Mr. Manopaphath PHITHSAMAY (13th batch) | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 27th November 2019, 10:30-11:30 | Ministry of Finance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Mr. Outhai INTHILATH, Deputy Director General - Mr. Sonethavi LUNGTHONGSAVANH, Deputy Head of Division - Mr. Khetlivone TOUVITHOUN, Technical Officer <JDS Alumni> - Ms. Phaypany CHOUMMALY, (14th batch) - Ms. Souliha KEOPASEUTH (15th batch) - Mr. Sivanhxay KITHSAPANITH (15th batch) - Mr. Chanthasinh PHENGSOBATH (16th batch) | |
| 27th November 2019 | Australian Embassy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Sophie Wilkinson (Second Secretary, HRD and political) - Ms. Dalavieng Thiladej (Senior Program Officer) | Interview on other donors |
| 28th November 2019, 10:00-11:30 | JDS OC members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Tongmy DUANSACKDA, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) - Ms. Vilaythone SOUNTHONE XAYMONGKHOUNH, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) - Mr. Vilaphanh SILITHAM, Deputy Director General, Central Committee for Organization and Personnel (CCOP) - Mr. Bounpan KONGNHINSAYASENG, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) - Mr. Somkhith TAOYAHEAUNG, Deputy Head of Division, Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) - Ms. KATO Asuka, Second Secretary, Economic Cooperation Section, Embassy of Japan in Laos | Minutes Discussion |
| 28th November 2019, 14:00 -15:00 | Ministry of Planning and Investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Bokham VILAYVONG, Deputy Director General - Mr. Thanomsack KOUSONSAVATH, Deputy Head of Division <JDS Alumni> - Mr. Viengsam VILAIPOOK (13th batch) - Mr. Viengkham PHANTHALAMIXAY (17th batch) - Mr. Khamsy CHANKHAM (16th batch) | Human resource needs in Lao PDR, Outcome of JDS fellows |
| 29th November 2019, 14:00 -15:00 | Embassy of Japan in Laos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. IWAMOTO Keiichi, Minister - Ms. TSUMURA Michiko, First Secretary. Culture and Public Relations Section - Ms. KATO Asuka, Second Secretary, Economic Cooperation Section | Report of Survey |

**MINUTES OF DISCUSSIONS
ON THE PREPARATORY SURVEY OF
THE PROJECT FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP
TO THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

In response to a request from the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Japan International Cooperation Agency (hereinafter referred to as "JICA") decided to conduct a Preparatory Survey in respect of "the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship" (hereinafter referred to as "the JDS Project") to be implemented in Lao P.D.R..

In view of the above, JICA dispatched a Preparatory Survey Team (hereinafter referred to as "the Team") headed by Akiko SANADA, Senior Representative of JICA Laos Office, to Vientiane from November 25 to November 30, 2019.

The Team held a series of discussions with the members of the Operating Committee of the JDS Project (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"). The both parties reached an agreement on the JDS Project as attached hereto.

Vientiane, December 9th, 2019



Akiko SANADA
Leader
Preparatory Survey Team
Japan International Cooperation Agency



Dr. Silinthon SACKLOKHAM
Acting Director General
Department of External Relations
Ministry of Education and Sports

I. Objective of the Preparatory Survey

The Lao side understood the objectives of the Preparatory Survey explained by the Team referring to ANNEX 1 “Flowchart of the Preparatory Survey”.

The main objectives of the Survey are:

- (1) To agree on the framework of the JDS Project from Japanese fiscal year 2020 to 2023 to be implemented under Japan’s grant aid
- (2) To design the outline of the JDS Project through collecting basic information on human resource development for civil servants in the Lao P.D.R.
- (3) To explain the outline of the JDS Project to the relevant parties of the Lao P.D.R.
- (4) To estimate overall costs of the first cycle, that is a period of five years, of the JDS Project

II. Objective of the JDS Project

The objective of the JDS Project is to support human resource development in recipient countries of Japanese Grant Aid, through highly capable, young civil servants who are expected to engage in formulating and implementing social and economic development plans and are expected to become leaders in their countries, by means of accepting them in Japanese universities as JDS Fellows. Moreover, the Project aims to strengthen the partnership between their countries and Japan.

JDS Fellows accepted by the Project will acquire expert knowledge, conduct research, and build human networks at Japanese universities, and are expected to use such knowledge after returning to their work, to take an active role in solving practical problems of the social and economic development issues that their countries are facing.

III. Framework of the JDS Project

1. Project Implementation

The Laos side confirmed that the JDS Project is implemented under “Flowchart of JDS Project for the Succeeding Four Batches (ANNEX 2)”.

2. Implementation Coordination

The both parties confirmed that the implementation coordination of the JDS Project is as follows.

(1) Implementing Organization

Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao P.D.R. (hereinafter referred to as “MOES”) is responsible for administrative matter of the JDS Project, and therefore Ministry of Education and Sports is regarded as the Implementing Organization.

(2) Operating Committee

The Committee is composed of the representatives from the following organizations.

Lao side

- Ministry of Education and Sports (chair)
- Ministry of Planning and Investment
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Central Committee for Organization and Personnel
- Ministry of Home Affairs

Japanese side

- Embassy of Japan (vice-chair)
- JICA Laos Office

(3) Role of the Operating Committee

Role of the Committee is to discuss the JDS Project design in the preparatory survey, to select JDS participants from the candidates, to encourage the target organizations in utilization of JDS alumni and following them up, and to supervise the management and implementation of the JDS Project.

3. Target Priority Areas of the JDS Project

Both parties confirmed the definition of “Sub-Program” as JDS target priority area, and “Component” as JDS target development issue.

Based on the discussion held between the both parties, Sub-Program and Component are identified as below and as ANNEX 3 “Design of JDS Project for the Succeeding Four Batches”.

Sub-Program 1 : Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building

Component 1-1: Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System

Component 1-2: Enhancement of Public Finance

Sub-Program 2 : Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth

Component 2-1: Improvement of Economic Infrastructure

Component 2-2: Economic Policy on Investment / Export Promotion

Sub-Program 3 : Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation

Component 3-1: Agriculture and Rural Development

Component 3-2: Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Sub-Program 4 : Improvement of Educational Policy

Sub-Program 5 : Improvement of Health Policy

4. Target Organizations

Based on the discussion held between the both parties, the target organizations were tentatively identified as ANNEX 3. It was agreed that the target organizations shall be continuously discussed with the Committee to be agreed at the next Committee meeting.

5. Maximum Number of JDS Fellows

The total number of JDS Fellows to be dispatched for the first batch in Japanese fiscal year 2021 shall be at twenty (20) for Master's Program and two (2) for PhD Program, and this number would indicate the maximum number per batch for four batches, from Japanese fiscal year 2021 to 2024.

6. Accepting Universities and Supposed Numbers of JDS Fellows per University

Based on the discussion held between the both parties, it was agreed that the educational programs of following universities would be suitable to the development issues in the Lao P.D.R..

- 1) Component 1-1 : Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System
Accepting University:
 - International University of Japan, Graduate School of International Relations (3 slots)
 - Kyushu University, Graduate School of Law (2 slots)
- 2) Component 1-2 : Enhancement of Public Finance
Accepting University:
 - Yamaguchi University, Graduate School of Economics (2 slots)
- 3) Component 2-1 : Improvement of Economic Infrastructure
Accepting University:
 - Hiroshima University, Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering (2 slots)
- 4) Component 2-2 : Economic Policy on Investment / Export Promotion
Accepting University:
 - Ritsumeikan University, Graduate School of International Relations (3 slots)
- 5) Component 3-1 : Agriculture and Rural Development
Accepting University:
 - Kyushu University, Graduate School of Bio resource and Bioenvironmental Sciences (2 slots)
- 6) Component 3-2 : Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction
Accepting University:
 - University of Tsukuba, Graduate School of Science and Technology (2 slots)
- 7) Sub-program 4 : Improvement of Educational Policy
Accepting University:
 - Hiroshima University, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (2 slots)

8) Sub-program 5 : Improvement of Health Policy

Accepting University:

- Nagasaki University, Graduate School of Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Department of Global Health (2 slots)

7. Basic Plan for Each Component

The Team explained a format of JDS Basic Plan for the target priority area (ANNEX 4), which included the background, project objectives, summary of the activities of the project and other, would be prepared for mutual understanding of both parties during the Preparatory Survey.

The Committee confirmed necessary meeting arrangement would be taken for preparation of the Basic Plan for each component.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

It was agreed that monitoring and evaluation of JDS returning Fellows should be done actively by Government of Lao P.D.R.

IV. Undertakings of the Project

Both parties confirmed the undertakings of the Project as described in ANNEX 5.

V. Important Matters Discussed

(1) Selection and Follow-up of JDS Fellows

Both parties confirmed the importance of recruitment and selection of the appropriate candidates, and agreed that promotion of JDS and recruitment of the competent candidates should be done actively by Lao side.

(2) Preparatory Language training to JDS Fellows

Both parties confirmed the necessity of English language training in order to enhance preparedness of JDS Fellows before their arrival in Japan continuously. Specific measures will be proposed by both parties based on the result of the Preparatory Survey.

(3) Office Space of Consultant/Agent

It was agreed that Government of Lao P.D.R. would provide the existing office space continuously for the consultant during the survey and for an agent which implements JDS Project.

ANNEX 1: Flowchart of the Preparatory Survey

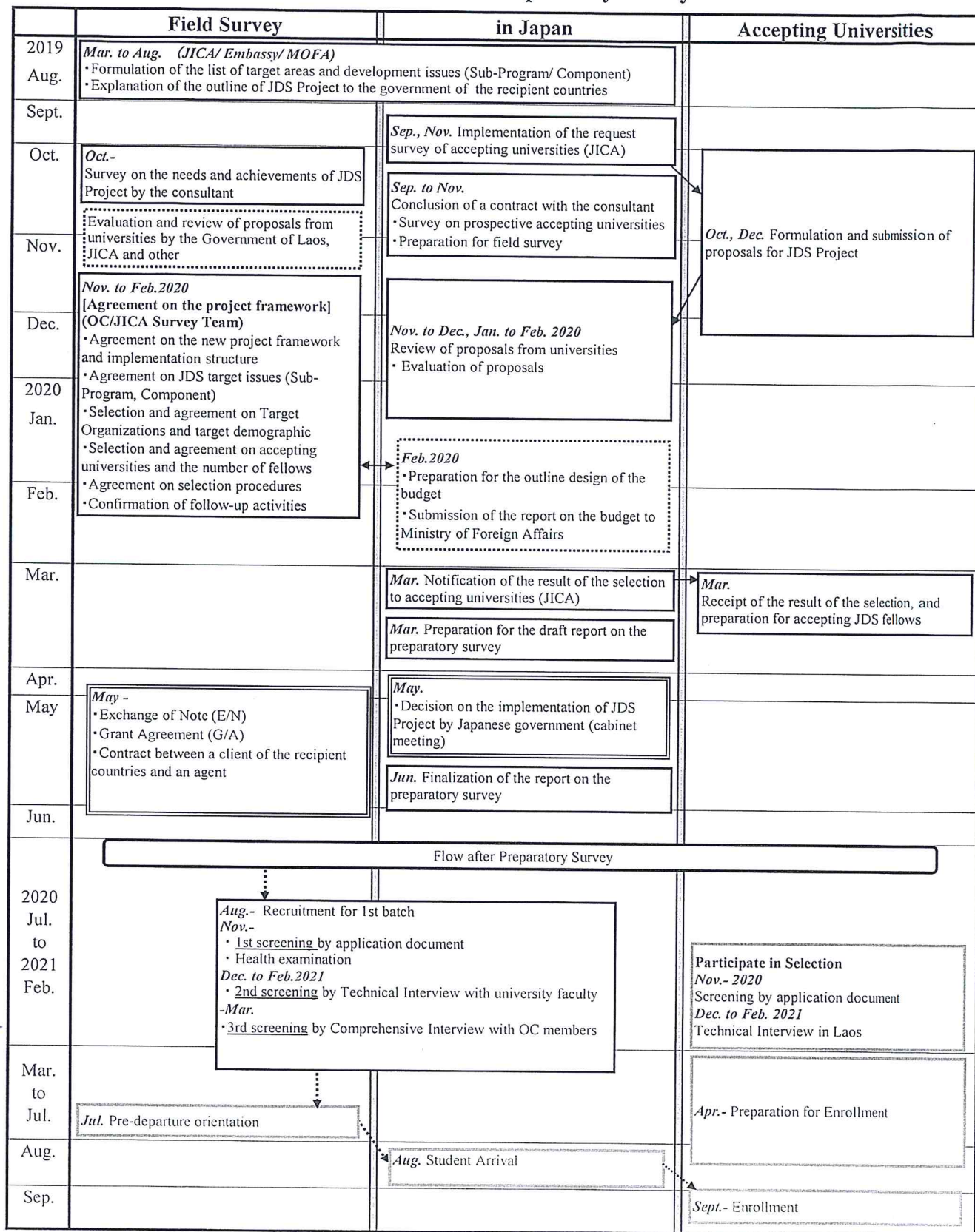
ANNEX 2: Flowchart of JDS Project for the Succeeding Four Batches

ANNEX 3: Design of JDS Project for the Succeeding Four Batches

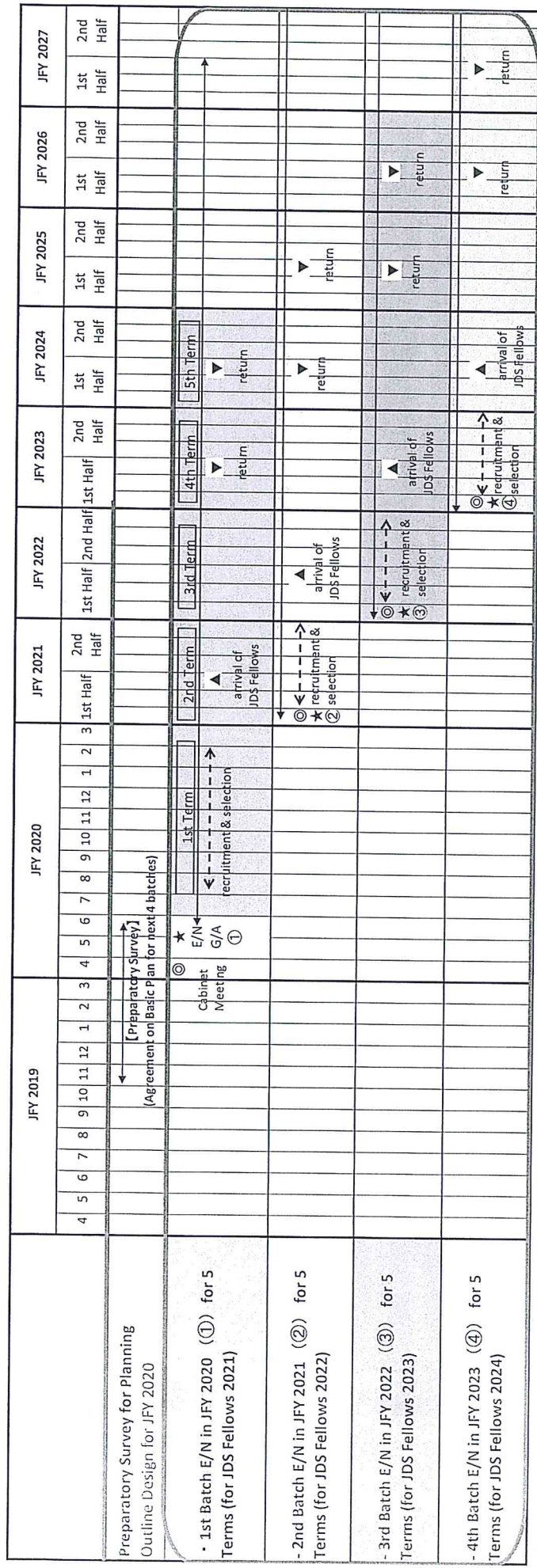
ANNEX 4: JDS Basic Plan for the Target Priority Area (Format)

ANNEX 5: Undertakings of the Project (Draft)

Flowchart of the Preparatory Survey



Flowchart of JDS Project for the Succeeding Four Batches



Project Period for 8 years

- ◎ : Cabinet Meeting (Japan)
 ★ : Exchange of Notes (E/N), Grant Agreement (G/A)
 → : Period covered by Grant Agreement (G/A)
 ▲ : Arrival
 ▼ : Return to the country

Design of JDS project for the Succeeding Four Batches

| Sub-program (JDS Target Priority Area) | Component (JDS Target Development Issue) | slots | Expected Theme of the Research/Possible Fields of Study* (tentative) | Supposed Target Organization* (tentative) | Accepting University |
|---|---|-------|---|---|--|
| 1 Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building | Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System 1-1 | 5 | -Public Policy -Good Governance -Strategy of Human Resource Development -Commercial Law and Civil Law for Economic Development -Legal System for Promoting Trade and Investment -Legal Policy and Legal Stability for Solving Economic Conflicts | -Prime Minister's Office -Ministry of Foreign Affairs -Ministry of Home Affairs -Ministry of Planning and Investment -Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare -National Committee for Organization and Personnel -National Academy of Politics and Public Administration -Ministry of Justice -People's Supreme Court -The Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor -Lao National Assembly | International University of Japan (IUI) Graduate School of International Relations (3 slots) Kyushu University Graduate School of Law (2 slots) |
| | Enhancement of Public Finance 1-2 | 2 | -Fiscal Policy -Financial Policy -Management of Public Revenue/Expenditures, Local Finance | -Ministry of Finance -Ministry of Planning and Investment -Bank of the Lao P.D.R. (including Lao Development Bank) | Yamaguchi University Graduate School of Economics |
| | Improvement of Economic Infrastructure 2-1 | 2 | -Transportation Planning and Road Management -Urban Planning/Urban Transportation Planning -Waste Management -Water Supply Management -Energy Policy and Planning -Public Private Partnership(PPP) | -Ministry of Planning and Investment -Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment -Ministry of Energy and Mines -Ministry of Public Works and Transport -Ministry of Science and Technology -Vientiane Capital | Hiroshima University Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering |
| 2 Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth | Economic Policy on Investment/Export Promotion 2-2 | 3 | -Promoting Investment/Export -Establishment of Regulation on Business Environment -SMEs Development -Tourism Promotion | -Ministry of Planning and Investment -Ministry of Finance -Ministry of Energy and Mines -Ministry of Public Works and Transport -Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment -Vientiane Capital -Bank of the Lao P.D.R. (including Lao Development Bank) -Ministry of Industry and Commerce -Ministry of Foreign Affairs -Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism | Ritsumeikan University Graduate School of International Relations |
| | Agriculture and Rural Development 3-1 | 2 | -Development of Food Value Chain -Food Security -Plant Techniques -Development of Local Industry -Improvement of Livelihoods of Local Residents -Improvement of Basic Facilities and Living Environment in Rural Inhabitants | -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Industry and Commerce -Ministry of Science and Technology | Kyushu University Graduate School of Bio resource and Bioenvironmental Sciences |
| 3 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation | Natural Environment Conservation and Disaster Risk Reduction 3-2 | 2 | -Forest Preservation (incl. REDD+) -Effective Usage and Conservation of Water Resources -Environmental Impact Assessment -Natural Protect Area -Payment for Ecosystem (Environmental) Services -Disaster Risk Reduction | -Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Home Affairs -Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare -Ministry of Energy and Mines -Ministry of Public Works and Transport -Ministry of Education and Sports -Ministry of Health -Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare | University of Tsukuba Graduate School of Science and Technology |
| | Improvement of Educational Policy 4 | 2 | -Strategy of Human Resource Development in Education Sector -Quality of Education -Regional Policy of Education -Technology/Vocational Education | -Ministry of Education and Sports -Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare | Hiroshima University Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences |
| 5 Improvement of Health Policy | Improvement of Health Policy 5 | 2 | -Improvement of Health Policy -Hospital Management -Human Resource in the Field of Health Care -Regional Health Care -Health Care Finance -Social Security System | -Ministry of Health | Nagasaki University Graduate School of Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Department of Global Health |
| | Maximum Number per year | 20 | | | |

*Allocation of number of participants per each component, expected theme of research and target organization will be finalized in the Preparatory Survey.




The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)
Basic Plan for the Target Priority Area (format)

Basic Information of Target Priority Area (Sub-Program)

1. Country: Lao P.D.R
2. Target Priority Area(Sub-Program):
3. Operating Committee:
 Laos Side: Ministry of Education and Sports (Chair), Ministry of Planning and Investment,
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Central Committee for Organization and Personnel,
 Ministry of Home Affairs
 Japanese Side: Embassy of Japan (Vice Chair), JICA Laos Office

Itemized Table 1-1

1. Outline of Sub-Program / Component

(1) Basic Information

1. Target Priority Area (Sub-Program):
2. Target Development Issue (Component):
3. Implementing Organization:
4. Target Organization:

(2) Background and Needs (Position of JDS in Development Plan)

(3) Japan's ODA Policy and Achievement (including the JDS Project)

2. Cooperation Framework

(1) Project Objective

The objective is to strengthen the government's administrative capacities in the country, through providing opportunities to obtain the Master's degree and Doctoral degree to the young capable government officials who are expected to play leadership roles to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. It also aims to build a human network, and eventually strengthen the bilateral relationship / partnership between Lao P.D.R and Japan.

(2) Project Design

- 1) Overall goal
- 2) Project purpose

(3) Verifiable Indicators

- 1) Ratio of JDS fellows who obtain Master's degree and Doctoral degree
- 2) Enhancement of the capacity of JDS returned fellows on research, analysis, policy making and project operation/ management after their return.
- 3) Policy formulation and implementation by utilizing the study outcomes of JDS returned fellows.

(4) Number of JDS Fellows and Accepting University

XXX University, Graduate School of XX: X fellows / year total X fellows / 4 years

(5) Activity (Example)

XXX University, Graduate School of XXXXX

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------|
| Target | Contents/ Programs to achieve target |
|--------|--------------------------------------|

| | |
|---|--|
| 1) Before arrival in Japan | |
| Pre-departure preparation in Laos in order for the smooth study/research in Japan | |
| 2) During study in Japan | |
| | |
| 3) After return | |
| Utilization of outcome of research | |

(6)-1 Inputs from the Japanese Side

- 1) Expenses for activities of Special Program provided by the accepting university before, during, and after studying in Japan (e.g. preparatory instructions including local activities, special lectures and workshops, follow-up activities after returning home)
- 2) Expenses for studying in Japan (e.g. travel expenses, scholarships during stay in Japan, examination fees, tuition fees, etc.)
- 3) Expenses for supports during stay in Japan (e.g. monitoring, daily life support, etc.)

(6)-2 Input Duration and the Number of JDS Fellows

1 batch X fellows × 4 years = X fellows
 From the year 2019 (Until 2021) : X fellows, From the year 2020 (Until 2022) : X fellows
 From the year 2021 (Until 2023) : X fellows, From the year 2022 (Until 2024) : X fellows

(7) Inputs from the Laos Side

- 1) Dispatch of JDS fellows
- 2) Follow - up activities (e.g. providing opportunities for JDS returned fellows to share/disseminate the knowledge they acquired in Japan at their organizations/ other priority organizations)

(8) Qualifications

- 1) Nationality: Citizens of Lao P.D.R.
- 2) Age Between 22 and 39 as of April 1st of the year of dispatch
- 3) Academic Background: Possess a Bachelor Degree from universities authorized by the Government of Lao P.D.R. or other countries.
- 4) Work Experience: Currently employed in the Target Organization with permanent status; Have at least 2 (two) years of work experience in the Target Organization, particularly in work relevant to the selected Component, at the time of application.
- 5) English Proficiency: Have a good command of both written and spoken English.
- 6) Health Condition: In good mental and physical health
- 7) Ineligibility: A person who falls under the following category is NOT eligible to apply:
 - Has been awarded or scheduled to receive other scholarship.
 - Has obtained a master's degree in a foreign country under any kind of scholarship.
 - Has studied abroad for more than 1 year under any scholarship and had returned to Lao P.D.R. within the past 2 years
 - Military personnel registered on the active list or person on alternative military service.
- 8) Other conditions:
 - Successful Candidates are required to submit a pledge on the conditions deemed necessary as scholarship participants under the JDS Project.
 - JDS Fellows are obliged to return and work and serve in their organization at least 4 years (2 times of the studied period) in order to make a contribution to the development of Lao P.D.R. through their work in the Target Organizations, complying with the Act of Pledge required by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

Undertakings of the Project (Draft)

(1) Specific obligations of the Recipient which will not be funded with the Grant

| NO | Items | Deadline | In charge | Estimated cost | Ref. |
|----|--|--|-----------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1 | To establish an operating committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) in order to discuss any matter that may arise from or in connection with the G/A | Within 1 month after signing on the G/A | MoES | | |
| 2 | To appoint the head of representatives of the Recipient who will be a chairperson of the Committee | Within 1 month after signing on the G/A | MoES | | |
| 3 | To open the Bank Account (Banking Arrangement (B/A)) | Within 1 month after signing on the G/A | MoES | | |
| 4 | To issue A/P to a bank in Japan (the Agent Bank) for the payment to the Agent | Within 1 month after the signing of the contract | MoF | - | |
| 5 | To bear the following commissions to a bank of Japan for the banking services based upon the B/A | | MoES | | |
| | 1) Advising commission of A/P | Within 1 month after the signing of the contract | MoES | approx. JPY6,000 | |
| | 2) Payment commission for A/P | Every payment | MoES | approx. 0.1% of the payment amount | |
| 6 | To organize the first meeting of the Committee | Within 1 month after assigning the Agent | MoES | | |
| 7 | To organize the Committee meeting | During the Project | MoES | | |
| 8 | To ensure that customs duties, internal taxes and other fiscal levies which may be imposed in the country of the Recipient with respect to the purchase of the products and/or the services be exempted. | During the Project | MoF | | |
| 9 | To accord the Japanese physical persons and/or physical persons of third countries whose services may be required in connection with the supply of the products and/or the services such facilities as may be necessary for their entry into the country of the Recipient and stay therein for the performance of their work | During the Project | MoES | | |
| 10 | To bear all the expenses, other than those covered by the Grant, necessary for the implementation of the Project | During the Project | MoES | | |
| 11 | To give due environmental and social consideration in the implementation of the Project | During the Project | MoES | | |

(MoES: Ministry of Education and Sports, MoF: Ministry of Finance, B/A: Banking Arrangement, A/P: Authorization to pay)

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(2) Other obligations of the Recipient funded with the Grant

| No | Items | Deadline | Amount (Million Japanese Yen) |
|----|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | To work on the recruitment and selection procedures of JDS candidates | During the Project | |
| 2 | To provide JDS candidates with information on study in Japan | During the Project | |
| 3 | To carry out matriculation procedures and make arrangements for trips to Japan for JDS fellows | During the Project | |
| 4 | To handle payment of tuition fees and scholarships | During the Project | |
| 5 | To provide pre-departure and after arrival orientation on JDS before/after arrival in Japan to JDS fellows | During the Project | |
| 6 | To monitor academic progress and living conditions of JDS fellows | During the Project | |
| 7 | To organize JDS fellow's returning program which consists of support for necessary procedure on JDS fellows' returning, evaluation meeting on JDS program upon the graduation, meeting for reporting the results after JDS fellow's returning to their respective countries, and | During the Project | |
| 8 | To perform other duties necessary for implementation of the Project. | During the Project | |
| | Total | | |

(Note) Progress of the obligations of the Recipient may be confirmed and updated from time to time in a written form between JICA and the Recipient.

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The Number of JDS Participants to be Accepted for Next Four Years
under the JDS Project in Lao PDR (Master's Course)

| Sub-Program | Component | University | Graduate School | Expected Number of JDS Participants | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | | | | 1st Batch | 2nd Batch | 3rd Batch | 4th Batch | Total |
| 1.Improving Administrative Ability and Institution Building | 1-1. Enhancement of Public Administration and Improvement of Legal System | International University of Japan (IUJ) | Graduate School of International Relations (GSIR) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| | | Kyushu University | Graduate School of Law | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| | 1-2. Enhancement of Public Finance | Yamaguchi University | Graduate School of Economics | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| 2.Building a Strong Base for Sustained Economic Growth | 2-1. Improvement of Economic Infrastructure | Hiroshima University | Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| | 2-2. Economic Policy on Investment / Export Promotion | Ritsumeikan University | Graduate School of International Relations | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| 3.Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development as well as Natural Environment Conservation | 3-1. Agriculture and Rural Development | Kyushu University | Graduate School of Bioresource and Bioenvironmental Sciences | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| | 3-2. Natural Environment Conservation | University of Tsukuba | Graduate School of Science and Technology | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| 4.Improvement of Educational Policy | | Hiroshima University | Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| 5.Improvement of Health Policy | | Nagasaki University | School of Tropical Medicine and Global Health | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Total | | | | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 80 |