

Aiming for the Improvement of ODA through Evaluation

In addition to the White Paper on Development Cooperation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) publishes the Annual Report on Japan's ODA Evaluation, which provides an overview of ODA evaluation every year. The 2016 edition is the 34th version since the first report was published in 1982.

To begin with, why is ODA evaluation carried out? We have two objectives for the evaluations: 1) To contribute to the improvement of Japan's ODA management; and 2) To ensure accountability to the people of Japan for whether Japan's ODA has been implemented appropriately.

To pursue the first objective, which is to improve Japan's ODA management, it is necessary to use evaluation, a part of the feedback mechanism, the so-called PDCA cycle (project formation (Plan), implementation (Do), evaluation (Check), and follow-up activities (Act)) to examine whether Japan's ODA towards regions in the world has been implemented effectively and whether such ODA is truly contributing to the development of the recipient countries. If any room for improvement is identified, it will have to be addressed and reflected in Japan's future ODA activities.

To meet these objectives, MOFA annually selects about eight ODA evaluation targets on the basis of factors such as priority themes and sectors of Japan's development policy, as well as the countries where Japan has implemented many ODA projects, and entrusts external experts to conduct third-party evaluations. The results of these evaluation studies and the corresponding recommendations for future improvements of Japan's ODA activities are published as evaluation reports.

Turning to the question of how Japan's ODA is seen from overseas, in an Opinion Poll on Japan (2015) in ASEAN (ten countries) more than 80% of the respondents replied to the question on Japan's ODA that "Japan's ODA is contributing to the development of my country" and also in an Opinion Poll on Japan (2016) implemented in five countries in the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia), 80% of respondents replied that "Japan's economic and technical cooperation is beneficial for the development of the Middle East region."

MOFA then publishes an annual report in pursuit of the second objective of ODA evaluation, which is to secure public support and understanding on Japan's ODA. The annual ODA Evaluation Report contains results of ODA evaluations conducted during the past year, as well as a brief description of how the Government should respond to past recommendations by external experts.

Based on the idea that evaluation should be carried out from an objective standpoint, the third-party ODA evaluation and the annual ODA Evaluation Report are managed and prepared by an office that is independent from the department in charge of ODA and specially designated for ODA evaluation in MOFA.

Reports of each evaluation and the Annual Reports are available to the public on the MOFA website. For further information on the evaluations, please visit the following link.
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/kaikaku/hyoka.html>

