Third Party Evaluation Report 2012 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Evaluation of Japan's Assistance for Policies and Institutions that Promote Gender Equality

- Summary -

March 2013

Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development

Preface

This report is a summary of the "Evaluation of the Assistance for Policies and Institutions that Promote Gender Equality" undertaken by the Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development entrusted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan in FY2012.

Since its commencement in 1954, Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) has contributed to the development of partner countries and finding solutions to international issues since vary with the times. Recently, more effective and efficient implementation of ODA has been required not only in Japan but also in the international community. MOFA has been conducting ODA evaluations mainly at the policy level with two main objectives: to improve management of ODA; and to ensure its accountability. These evaluations are conducted by third parties to enhance their transparency and objectivity.

This evaluation study was conducted with the objective of reviewing Japan's Assistance for Policies and Institutions that Promote Gender Equality under the Initiative on Gender and Development (GAD) (2005), in order to extract lessons and recommendations on policy formulation for future assistance to GAD.

Prof. Yoriko Meguro, Chair of Gender Action Platform, a chief evaluator, made an enormous contribution to this report. Also, MOFA, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the ODA Task Force as well as government institutions in the Kingdom of Cambodia, donors and NGOs made invaluable contributions. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all those who were involved in this study.

Finally, the Evaluation Team wishes to note that the opinions expressed in this report do not reflect the views or positions of the Government of Japan.

March 2013 Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development

Evaluation of Japan's Assistance for Policies and Institutions that Promote Gender Equality

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2. Period of Evaluation Study:
September 2012 – March 2013
3. Case Study Country:



Interview with the Beneficiaries of the Pilot Project

- 4. Outlines of Evaluation Results and Recommendations:
- (1) Evaluation Results
- (a) Relevance of Policies

Kingdom of Cambodia

The Initiative on Gender and Development (GAD) which includes the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" is in accordance with the international conventions ratified by partner countries, the basic guidelines for gender equality in development assistance stated in the ODA Charter, and the Basic Law for Gender-Equal Society of Japan. In fact, Japan had already implemented assistance for policies and institutions to promote gender equality even before the announcement of the Initiative on GAD. However, it can be said that, the announcement of the Initiative to those concerned in Japan and overseas has enhanced the environment to further promote such assistance.

(b) Effectiveness of Results

As four of the six projects subjected to the evaluation were still ongoing and the field study was made for only two projects in Cambodia, it was difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of results of the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" for the goal of gender mainstreaming. However, these individual projects are showing effects, although their levels vary. As seen from the point of "whether the programs for gender equality and empowerment of women set about by partner countries were strengthened," the projects under the Assistance are making progress.

As for diplomatic impact, the implementation of the six projects triggered international exchange in which the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office of Japan was involved. Moreover, the formulation of the Initiative on GAD played a role in highlighting Japan's efforts regarding GAD at home and abroad.

(c) Appropriateness of Process

On the process of formulating the Initiative on GAD, including the approach of "Assistance for Policies and Institutions," intensive discussions were repeatedly made with participation of ODA implementing agencies and experts. Therefore, the process was evaluated appropriate on the whole.

As for the implementation of the Initiative on GAD, the process of adopting the approach of "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" was considered to be appropriate. In the four countries where the six projects were located, the policies and institutions for gender equality had been already established. However, in the actual implementation of these policies and operation of institutions, there were many issues associated with social customs and systems unique to the individual countries. Therefore, these countries needed Japan's support to implement these gender policies. The needs for support in those individual countries were assessed through the dispatch of experts and by various types of surveys, prior to the implementation of the six projects.

On the other hand, the assistance systems of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) have some implementation issues. While the system to appoint the ODA gender focal points at Embassies of Japan was started in 2005, surveys in the four countries showed that this system is not fully functioning as originally expected.

- (2) Main Recommendations
- (a) Diversification of the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" Approach

For the direct assistance to gender policy planning and coordination agencies of partner countries, such as the Ministry of Women's Affairs (so-called "national machineries"), it is recommended to incorporate mechanisms to promote participation of other ministries and agencies.

It is further recommended to strengthen the programs which directly support gender mainstreaming conducted by other project-implementing ministries and agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Labor, in addition to national machineries.

(b) Strengthening of Further Effort for Gender Mainstreaming

It is recommended to continue to focus on reviews of the processes of appraisal, planning, implementation and evaluation of development assistance projects from the perspective of gender. Even for those projects that may seem to have little to do with gender equality, gender equality viewpoints should be integrated and adopted.

(c) Review of the Content of Approaches under the Initiative on GAD

When the Initiative on GAD is revised, there is a need to reconsider the basic approaches to gender mainstreaming. Also, sub-approaches of the Initiative should be re-examined, and approaches other than "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" should be explicitly stated.

(d) Improvement of the Internal Support System

For strengthening the functions of the ODA gender focal point system at Embassies of Japan, it is recommended to provide those focal points (officials in charge of promoting gender equality) with technical assistance from MOFA so that they can assess projects and review Country Assistance Policies from the gender viewpoint.

1. Objectives and Policies of Evaluation

1-1. Background of Evaluation

Japan supports international efforts of achieving gender equality such as the "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)" and promotes equal participation of men and women, sharing equal benefits of development, and the improvement of the status of women. The importance of gender considerations in development assistance is stated in the ODA Charter (2003) and in the Medium-Term Policy on ODA (2005). In 2005, the Initiative on Gender and Development (GAD) was announced to further strengthen Japan's assistance for gender equality.

Focusing on the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach, this evaluation was conducted in order to obtain recommendations for further planning and implementing such assistance. Although the entire Initiative on GAD was not a subject of the evaluation, recommendations on the Initiative were also obtained, where it was possible from the evaluation results, in order to contribute to the future formulation of gender-related policies. The evaluation results should be made public for accountability to the Japanese citizens and to feed back the results to the governments of the partner countries and other donors.

1-2. Subject of Evaluation

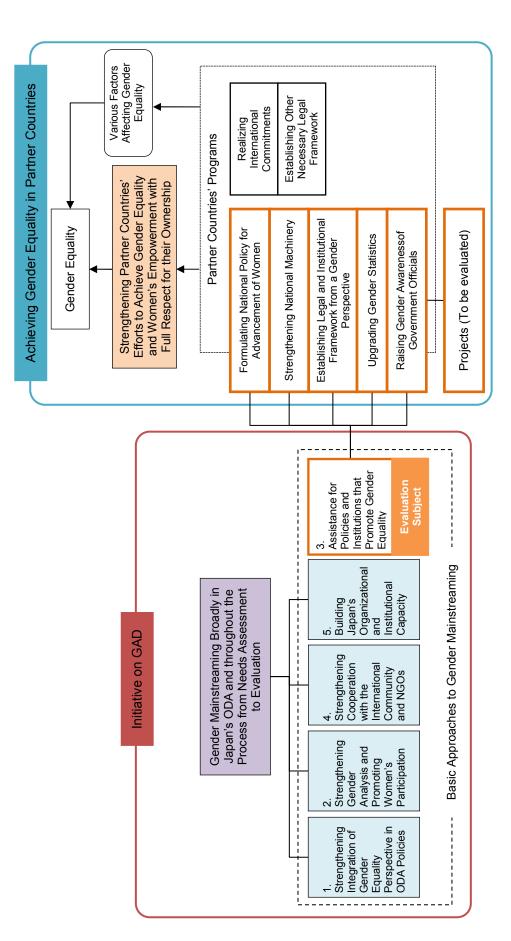
The subject of this evaluation is the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions that Promote Gender Equality" under the Initiative on GAD¹ (See Figure 1). This is one of the basic approaches to gender mainstreaming in Japan's ODA, which is intended to support programs of the partner countries aiming at gender equality. This assistance is provided to support efforts in such areas as: (i) formulating national policy for advancement of women; (ii) strengthening national machinery; (iii) establishing legal and institutional framework from a gender perspective; (iv) upgrading gender statistics; and (v) raising gender awareness of government officials.

The subjects of this evaluation were six technical cooperation projects which have been implemented with the "Assistance for Gender Equality Policies and Institutions" approach. The list of the projects is as follows.

- Project on Gender Mainstreaming and Policy Development through Upgrading Information and Research Capacity (Country: Cambodia; Implementation Period: 2003-2008)
- Project on Gender Mainstreaming (Phase 2) (Cambodia; 2010-2015)
- Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Project (Nepal; 2009-2014)
- Project on Poverty Reduction for Chronically Poor Women (Afghanistan; 2009-2013)
- Project for Activation of Women Development Centers to Improve Women's Livelihood (Phase 1) (Nigeria; 2007-2010)
- Project for Activation of Women Development Centers to Improve Women's Livelihood (Phase 2) (Nigeria; 2011-2015)

¹ The Initiative on GAD can be accessed at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/category/wid/gad.html

Figure 1. Relation between the Basic Approaches to Gender Mainstreaming and Partner Countries' Efforts in Achieving Gender Equality



Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team.

1-3. Framework of Evaluation

This evaluation was conducted using three criteria: relevance of policies, effectiveness of results, and appropriateness of processes, in accordance with the 7th edition of ODA Evaluation Guidelines (2012) issued by MOFA. The evaluation criterion for each is described below.

(1) Relevance of Policies

The relevance of the approach of "Assistance for Gender Equality Policies and Institutions" was evaluated from three perspectives: its conformity with (i) international priority issues and trends regarding GAD, (ii) Japan's ODA policies related to GAD, and (iii) Japan's actual assistance regarding GAD.

(2) Effectiveness of Results

The effectiveness of results was evaluated by examining what changes the six projects brought about. This evaluation examined not only the achievement of the project objectives, but also other direct and indirect changes, such as capacity development of project-implementing ministries, empowerment of farmers in the pilot projects, and impacts at the policy level, etc. After the effects of the individual projects were compared and analyzed, the effectiveness of the approach was verified as a whole.

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

Regarding the appropriateness of processes, the formulation process of the Initiative on GAD and the implementation process of the six projects were evaluated. For the formulation process, the entire Initiative on GAD was verified. Appropriateness of organizations and personnel involved in the formulation process was also examined. The implementations of the six projects were analyzed in terms of monitoring and evaluation, internal support system, and donor coordination.

1-4. Evaluation Procedure and Methodology

This study was conducted from September 2012 to March 2013. First, discussions were made with relevant sections of MOFA and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to define the objectives and framework of the evaluation. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with relevant sections of MOFA and JICA, those concerned with the six projects, and experts in gender and development. Literature survey was conducted as well on the six projects and on the discussion on GAD in international aid community.

The field survey was made in December 2012 in Cambodia as a case study. In Cambodia, interviews were made with officials of the relevant ministries, the Embassy of Japan, JICA Cambodia Office, those concerned with the projects, international organizations, and a NGO. At the pilot project site, interviews were conducted with the beneficiaries.

The final report was prepared after receiving opinions and comments from the concerned people on the draft report².

² The full evaluation report is available in the Japanese language only.

2. Japan's Assistance under Initiative on GAD

2-1. Japan's Gender Equality Projects by Bilateral Cooperation

As for Japan's bilateral cooperation, the projects aiming at gender equality doubled in monetary terms in FY2005 just after the Initiative on GAD was announced. After that initial increase, the monetary amount of the projects fluctuated, but a slight increase has continued to the present.

2-2. Assistance through JICA

JICA's gender-related projects are categorized into: (i) "gender equality projects³"; (ii) "projects targeting women"; and (iii) "gender integrated projects." As for category (ii), the main beneficiaries are intended to be women, while in category (iii), efforts for gender equality and empowerment of women are integrated as part of the projects. The number of gender-related technical cooperation projects is shown in Figure 2. Between FY2001 and FY2011, the "projects targeting women" doubled and the "gender integrated projects" increased by 10%. In contrast, the number of "gender equality projects" has remained very small.

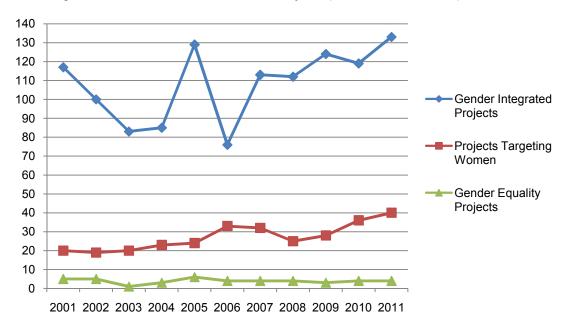


Figure 2. Number of Gender Related Projects (Technical Assistance)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on JICA-provided data.

2-3. Other Assistance

Assistance other than from JICA for promoting gender equality includes Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects implemented by Embassies of Japan in developing countries and Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects. The grant aid projects are operated by local governments and NGOs of the partner countries

³ JICA terminology for projects under the approach of "Assistance for Policies and Institutions."

and Japan. In FY2010, 113 Grassroots Human Security Projects and 20 Grant Assistance projects of Japanese NGOs were implemented.

As for multilateral cooperation, Japan has contributed to various organizations such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). In addition, loans were provided to some international organizations.

3. Results of Evaluation

3-1. Evaluation of Relevance of Policies

Many countries have made efforts in attaining gender equality through gender mainstreaming under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach under the Initiative on GAD is in line with this declaration.

As to the accordance with ODA policies in Japan, the Initiative on GAD is intended to embody gender equality in development assistance stated in the ODA Charter and in the Medium-Term Policy on ODA. It also conforms with the Basic Law for Gender-Equal Society of Japan (1999). Part of the Initiative on GAD is reflected on the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality (2005) and on the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality (2010).

Japan had already implemented technical cooperation to assist policies and institutions to promote gender equality even before the announcement of the Initiative on GAD. However, it can be said that, the announcement of the Initiative to those concerned in Japan and overseas has enhanced the environment to further promote such assistance.

Therefore, the relevance of the approach of "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" that promote gender equality is high.

3-2. Evaluation of Effectiveness of Results

As four of the six projects were still ongoing and the field study was made for only two projects in Cambodia, it was difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of results of the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" for the goal of gender mainstreaming. However, these individual projects are showing effects, although their levels vary. As seen from the point of "whether the programs for gender equality and empowerment of women set about by partner countries were strengthened," the projects under the Assistance are making progress.

For instance, in "the Project on Gender Mainstreaming and Policy Development through Upgrading Information and Research Capacity" and "the Project on Gender Mainstreaming (Phase 2)" in Cambodia, the following outcome was confirmed: capacity development of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA), Provincial Departments of Women's Affairs, and project-implementing ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MLVT), etc.). The projects contributed to empowerment of both male and female farmers who participated in the pilot projects. In addition, as a result of the pilot projects, gender mainstreaming was strengthened in the project-implementing ministries, and some ministries have even implemented gender equality programs. However, these changes were not brought about only by these two projects. These positive changes were also the result of other JICA assistance prior to these projects, other donors' assistance, and the programs of the Cambodian government.

"The Projects for Activation of Women Development Centers to Improve Women's Livelihood (Phase 1 and 2)" in Nigeria tried to enhance capacity of the government officials so that they could activate Women Development Centers in the entire country, based on the hands-on experience of managing the pilot centers.

"The Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Project" in Nepal is also aiming at promoting gender equality and social inclusion on a national scale, through the government program for regional development, by utilizing the knowledge and experience obtained from the pilot projects.

"The Project on Poverty Reduction for Chronically Poor Women" in Afghanistan was largely limited in its scope for security reasons, but the project contributed to the empowerment of poor women in the pilot project sited and capacity development of some officials of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. However, it would take substantial time before the project can lead to gender equality and women's empowerment even if Afghan government builds on this small project.

As for diplomatic impact, the implementation of the six projects triggered international exchange in which the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office of Japan was involved. Moreover, the formulation of the Initiative on GAD played a role in highlighting Japan's efforts regarding GAD at home and abroad.

3-3. Evaluation of Appropriateness of Processes

3-3-1. Appropriateness of Formulating Process

The process of developing "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" could not be verified because some records were no longer available. The Initiative on GAD was formulated through intensive discussions among ODA implementing agencies and experts. Therefore, the formulation process was appropriate on the whole. However, since not only MOFA but also 11 other ministries are involved in ODA, it would have been better if the main ministries and agencies, at least the Gender Equality Bureau under the Cabinet Office, had joined the consultation group set up for formulation of the Initiative on GAD. Their participation could have contributed to smoother implementation of the Initiative.

3-3-2. Appropriateness of Implementing Process

The process of implementing the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" to strengthen programs of the partner countries is evaluated as appropriate. In the four countries where the six projects are located, the governments had already established policies and institutions for gender equality. However, in the actual implementation of these policies and operation of institutions, there were many issues associated with social customs and systems unique to the individual countries. Therefore, these countries needed Japan's support to implement these gender policies. The needs for support in those individual countries were assessed through the dispatch of experts and by various types of surveys, prior to the implementation of the six technical cooperation projects.

The assistance systems of MOFA, on the other hand, have some implementation issues. While the system to appoint the ODA gender focal points at Embassies of Japan was started in 2005, surveys in the four countries showed that this system is not fully functioning as originally expected.

3-4. Issues related to the Initiative on GAD

3-4-1. Structural Issues of Approaches and Sub-approaches in the Initiative on GAD

(1) Structural Issues of the "Basic Approaches"

Of the five basic approaches, only the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" is a measure for supporting gender mainstreaming efforts of partner countries. Other approaches are related to mainstreaming in Japan's ODA. Therefore the basic approaches are not aligned, as the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach is not logically connected to the goal of gender mainstreaming in Japan's ODA.

(2) Structural Issues of Sub-approaches under "Assistance for Policies and Institutions"

Under the basic approach of "Assistance for Policies and Institutions," five sub-approaches are defined: (i) formulating national policies for advancement of women; (ii) strengthening national machinery; (iii) establishing legal and institutional framework from a gender perspective; (iv) upgrading gender statistics; and (v) raising gender awareness of government officials. To promote gender equality, it is important to support not only the national machinery, but also project-implementing entities of the partner countries. The latter is not clearly stated in the Initiative on GAD.

(3) No Description of Other Measures than "Assistance for Policies and Institutions"

There are no measures supporting gender mainstreaming efforts of partner countries other than the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" described in the Initiative on GAD. In addition to the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions," JICA implements gender-related projects such as "projects targeting women" and "gender integrated projects" as already mentioned. Neither of these projects is mentioned in the Initiative on GAD.

3-4-2. Issues Related to the Implementation of the Initiative on GAD

(1) No Indication of Concrete Targets or Action Plans

No concrete targets or action plans are included in the Initiative on GAD. Therefore, it is difficult to grasp what has been achieved regarding gender mainstreaming.

(2) Necessity of United Efforts with Other Ministries and Agencies

MOFA and 11 other ministries and agencies are involved in Japan's ODA. Since the Initiative on GAD was formulated, however, MOFA has not grasped how other ministries were achieving gender mainstreaming in their ODA. It will be effective if MOFA would monitor the current status of gender mainstreaming in other ministries and share its knowledge and experience with other ministries.

3-4-3. Necessity of Comprehensive Evaluation

The subject of this evaluation is the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach only. The scope of this evaluation was not sufficient to examine how MOFA could strengthen its system for further promoting the Initiative on GAD.

The study to verify the Initiative on GAD as a whole and to assess gender mainstreaming in Japan's ODA should be conducted. On that basis, the current strategies for gender equality can be reviewed and the Initiative on GAD can be renewed with an action plan to implement the strategies.

4. Recommendations

Based on the survey results, the following recommendations were made to MOFA and JICA.

(1) <u>In support of the national machinery, it is recommended to incorporate a mechanism</u> to involve other ministries in the partner countries.

In the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach, importance is attached to the assistance for the national machinery, and it has steadily shown positive effects especially in capacity development at the individual level. In case of the two projects in Cambodia, officials of MOWA, working closely with JICA experts, have acquired sufficient knowledge and techniques to conduct gender training and update gender statistics by themselves. However, it is in the next stage that capacity development at the individual level would lead to strengthen organizational capacity, and it is in another subsequent stage that the strengthened national machinery would make a difference in other project-implementing ministries.

Therefore, to support the national machinery, it is effective to adopt a twin-track approach that supports gender mainstreaming of other implementing ministries at the same time. For example, involving those ministries in pilot projects can be an effective strategy, as was shown in Cambodia. In those projects, there were successful cases in which project-implementing ministries such as the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) participated as a partner in the pilot project, resulting in promotion of gender equality in its own programs.

(2) In the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach, it is recommended to strengthen the cooperation which directly supports gender mainstreaming of project-implementing ministries of the partner countries.

Visible effects on gender mainstreaming of the project-implementing ministries could be expected by projects with limited time frame. In the case of Cambodia, direct assistance can be considered for gender mainstreaming of, for example, MAFF, MLVT, and MRD.

This type of assistance is difficult to find in the sub-approach to the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" under the Initiative on GAD. However, it would be easier to identify by replacing the sub-approach of "strengthening national machinery" with "strengthening national mechanism" which would encompass additional institutions (legal and legislative, etc.) related to gender issues as well as gender focal points in project-implementing ministries.

(3) It is recommended to review from the gender perspective in the processes of request, planning, implementation and evaluation of projects and to expand the gender integrated projects.

The number of JICA's "gender equality projects" is limited to a few per year. On the other hand, there were 223 "gender integrated projects" (FY2011). The latter projects can be designed fully with gender perspective by JICA and monitored as part of the project activities. By expanding "gender integrated projects," Japan can directly promote gender mainstreaming in partner countries. If outcomes of the "gender integrated projects" are fed back to the policy or institutional levels, gender mainstreaming will be further promoted.

In order to expand "gender integrated projects", the Office for Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction of JICA currently gives advice for formulation and appraisal of projects and monitors projects from gender viewpoints. It is recommended that these efforts are continued to further increase and expand "gender integrated projects." It is also recommended that the Office share good practices in gender mainstreaming by sectors and schemes within JICA.

(4) <u>In revising the Initiative on GAD, it is recommended to review the content of the basic approaches and sub-approaches.</u>

When the Initiative on GAD is revised, there is a need to reconsider the structure and content of the basic approaches and sub-approaches from the following three points.

First, the structure of the basic approaches should be reviewed. As explained in 3-4-1(1), among the five basic approaches, only the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" approach is defined as a measure that supports gender mainstreaming efforts of partner countries and is not logically connected to its goal of gender mainstreaming in Japan's ODA.

Second, the content of the sub-approaches under the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" should be reexamined. These sub-approaches do not include direct assistance to ministries which implement programs with viewpoints on gender mainstreaming, as described in recommendation (2). This should be clearly stated in the Initiative on GAD, so that the subject of assistance can be widened from the national machinery to the national mechanism for gender mainstreaming.

Third, measures other than the "Assistance for Policies and Institutions" to assist partner countries to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment should be described. At present, JICA implements not only "gender equality projects" but also "projects targeting women" and "gender integrated projects." As explained in recommendation (3), these projects have advantages in directly assisting gender mainstreaming of partner countries. These should also be concretely stated in the Initiative on GAD.

(5) It is recommended to provide technical support to ODA gender focal points at Embassies of Japan.

Functions of the ODA gender focal points include: (i) assessing gender-related issues and programs of partner countries; (ii) building the network with concerned persons and organizations; (iii) identifying projects with gender perspectives; (iv) raising gender awareness in the embassy, etc. However, surveys in the four countries showed that this system is not fully functioning as originally expected. For instance, some focal point officials have difficulty in identifying who should be contacted in the partner country regarding GAD, or what information should be collected for project formulation with gender viewpoints. It is necessary to provide these focal point officials with technical assistance from MOFA so that they can assess projects and review the Country Assistance Policies from the gender perspective.

Map of Cambodia



(Source) Website of UN Cartographic Section. http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/cambodia.pdf

Photos (Taken by the Evaluation Team)



Group Interview with the Female Beneficiaries of the Agricultural Project (Prey Chhor District, Kampong Cham Province)



Group Interview with the Male Beneficiaries of the Agricultural Project (Prey Chhor District, Kampong Cham Province)



A Woman on the Motorbike which She Bought with the Income from the Agricultural Project (Prey Chhor District, Kampong Cham Province)



A Henhouse which Farmers Constructed after They Learned from the Poultry Training (Prey Chhor District, Kampong Cham Province)



Interview with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training



Report to the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Women's Affairs on the Evaluation Study