

2.4 Operations Evaluations by JICA

Overview

JICA evaluates individual projects of technical cooperation, ODA loans, and grant aid (implemented by JICA) using a common framework (project-level evaluation). In addition to individual project-level evaluation, JICA evaluates and analyzes multiple projects from comprehensive and cross-sectoral perspectives (thematic evaluation).

In conducting evaluations, JICA not only promotes the utilization of evaluation results (feedback), but also makes efforts to ensure accountability by increasing the objectivity and transparency of evaluations and disclosing evaluation results.

Common Framework

JICA aims to conduct monitoring and evaluation based on coherent methodologies and to utilize the evaluation results. Considering the characteristics of each ODA scheme (technical cooperation, ODA loans, and grant aid) as well as the implementation period and the timeframe for expected results, JICA monitors and evaluates each stage of the individual projects (pre-implementation, implementation, post-implementation, and feedback) in line with the PDCA cycle, adopting a standard evaluation framework.

In addition, JICA is committed to releasing clear and coherent evaluation results by using the five DAC Criteria that the OECD-DAC has established (Chapter 1, p. 7), and adopting a rating system for external ex-post evaluation.

Ensuring Objectivity and Transparency

For verifying project outcomes from an objective perspective, JICA's ex-post evaluation includes evaluation by third-party evaluators (external evaluation) according to project size.

To improve the quality of evaluations, enhance feedback, and ensure accountability related to evaluation,

JICA established the Advisory Committee on Evaluation, consisting of external experts, in order to receive advice on the evaluation system, structure, and methodology.

Furthermore, JICA makes its evaluation results available on its website. This has provided the public with easier access to evaluation information, and has promoted the smooth feedback of evaluation information to those engaged in project design, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

(JICA's evaluation page: http://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/index.html)

Emphasizing Use of Evaluation Results

JICA's operations evaluations have a feedback function to reflect the results in the planning and implementation of similar projects in order to improve the quality of these projects. Specifically, in conducting an ex-ante evaluation prior to the commencement of a new project, the division in charge of the project refers to and utilizes the lessons learned from the ex-post evaluations of similar past projects and other sources.



Ship maneuvering simulator from the Maritime Education and Training Improvement Project, Indonesia (external ex-post evaluation)

Evaluation and Monitoring at Each Stage of the PDCA Cycle

PLAN	DO	CHECK	ACT
Ex-ante evaluation	Promotion of project progress (Monitoring)	Ex-post evaluation	Feedback
Prior to project implementation, the relevance, details, and expected outcomes of the project are examined, along with evaluation indicators.	Promotion of project progress through regular monitoring based on the plan formulated at the project planning phase and examination of cooperation outcomes upon completion of the project.	Upon completion of the project, its effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability are examined. Ex-post monitoring examines measures and actions taken based on lessons learned and recommendations offered at ex-post evaluation.	Evaluation results are reflected in the present project for improvement and also utilized as a reference to plan and implement similar projects.

*May not apply depending on the scheme and size of the cooperation.

In order to process lessons learned information into knowledge that can be easily applied to similar projects, a thematic evaluation in FY2014 identified and systematized practical and generalized “knowledge lessons (important lessons)” in four sectors.

In addition, Standard Indicator References are developed sequentially in key sectors and issues, in order to indicate project outputs and outcomes in an objective, quantitative, and clear manner.

The use of the above-mentioned measures is expected to improve quality at the project planning and implementation stages.

Ex-Post Evaluation for Verifying Outcomes after Project Completion

In FY2013, following on from the previous fiscal year, JICA conducted 76 external evaluations (in principle, ex-post evaluations of projects costing over 1 billion yen) based on a standard evaluation framework, and summarized its results in FY2014. In the external evaluation, a rating is given on a four-level scale to represent the evaluation result. The overall ratings results in FY2014 were as follows: 20 projects (26%) were A (highly satisfactory); 36 projects (48%) were B (satisfactory); 17 projects (22%) were C (partially satisfactory); and 3 projects (4%) were D (unsatisfactory). A and B together comprise 74% of all projects, which determines that the expected results have generally been achieved.

Although rating is useful as a means of indicating an overview of the evaluation results, it does not take into account factors such as project difficulty. Thus, it does not reflect every aspect of development projects.

Additionally, JICA conducted 50 internal evaluations (ex-post evaluations of projects over 200 million yen and under 1 billion yen) whereby JICA's overseas offices are the primary evaluators, and summarized its results in FY2014. The overall evaluation of the above 50 projects indicates that generally over half of the projects achieved their expected results.



Field survey from the Development of the Faculty of Economics and Management of National University of Laos, Lao PDR (internal ex-post evaluation)

The results of all of these ex-post evaluations were provided as feedback for JICA staff and stakeholders in developing countries, and are available on JICA's website. (Results of ex-post evaluations: http://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/tech_and_grant/project/ex_post/about.html)

Thematic Evaluation: Cross-Sectoral and Comprehensive Evaluation

JICA conducts thematic evaluations to assess and analyze multiple projects from comprehensive and cross-sectoral perspectives, or to evaluate projects based on a specific development issue or assistance scheme. Thematic evaluation is conducted by selecting projects according to a specified theme and analyzing them from perspectives that differ from individual project evaluations, with the aim of deriving recommendations and lessons learned which can be used across projects. The thematic evaluation in FY2014, “Extraction of “Knowledge Lessons” (A Cross-Sectoral Analysis of Evaluation Results),” aimed to identify and systematize practical and universal lessons by reviewing previous cooperation projects in the following four sectors: nature conservation; irrigation, drainage, and water management; fisheries; and disaster management.

Furthermore, JICA conducts evaluations of “Cooperation Programs,” which are strategic frameworks designed to support developing countries in achieving their specific mid- to long-term development goals. In FY2014, JICA performed the thematic evaluation “Analysis for Enhancing the Evaluability of JICA's Cooperation Programs.”

In recent years, JICA also carries out impact evaluation, which is currently being promoted internationally. It is an evaluation approach which makes use of statistical and econometric methods to assess the changes brought about in the targeted society by specific measures, projects, or development models in order to improve and solve development issues.



Water level measurement demonstration of the Local Governance and Rural Empowerment Project for Davao Region, Philippines (external ex-post evaluation)