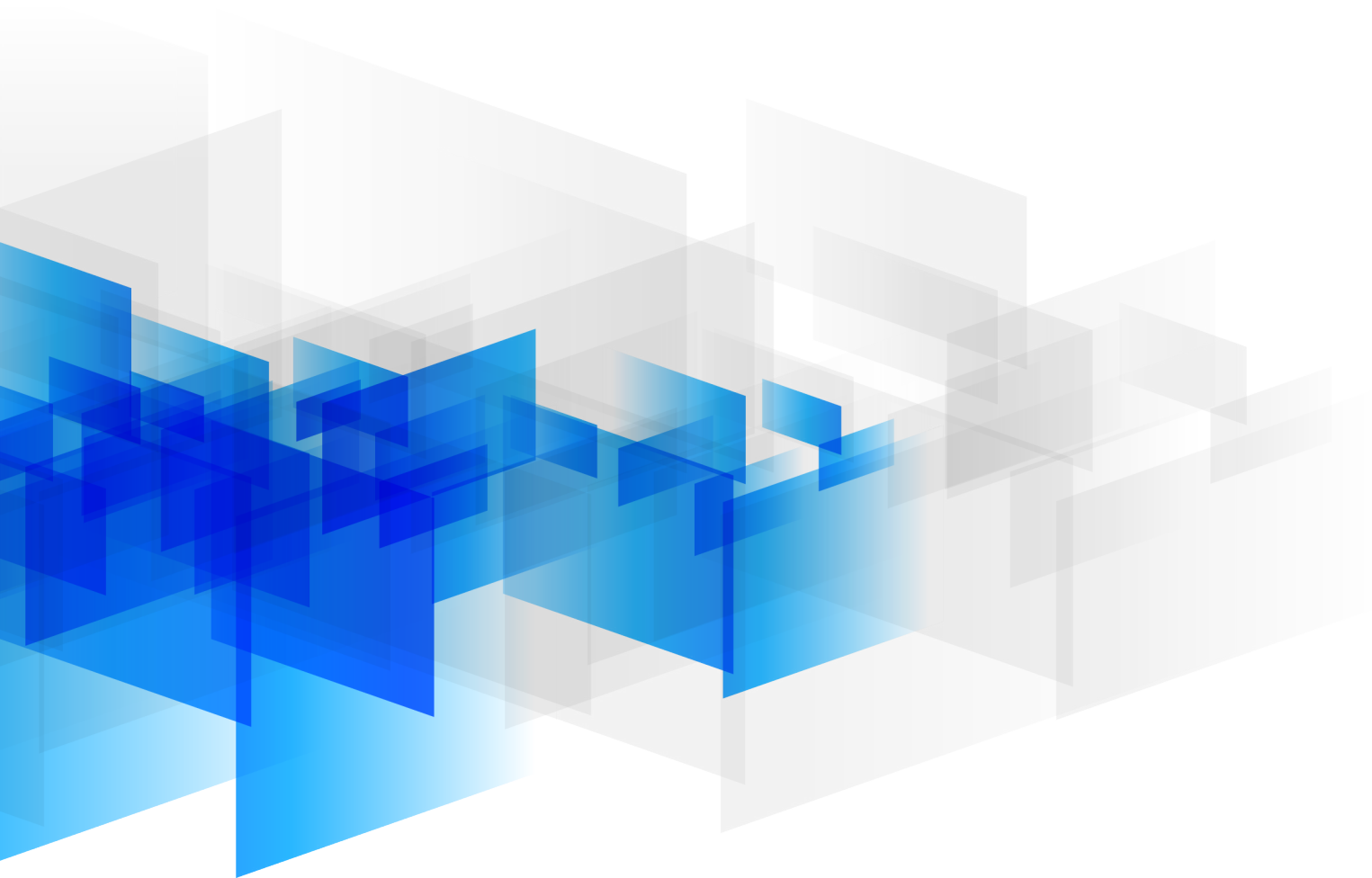





Annual Report on Japan's ODA Evaluation 2021



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

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What is ODA Evaluation?

Japan promotes development cooperation in order to contribute to securing the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community. Official Development Assistance (ODA) is public funding for this purpose, and ODA evaluation is the task of assessing and analysing the implementation status and effects of ODA.

ODA evaluation has two objectives. The first is to improve ODA management and make ODA more effective and efficient by investigating its implementation status and effects. The second is to ensure public accountability as well as to gain public understanding and support by publishing the evaluation results.

Japan has steadily conducted ODA evaluations since 1975, prior to the enforcement of the Government Policy Evaluations Act (GPEA) in 2002. It has developed its evaluation methodologies based on not only actual practices but also the evaluation criteria of international institutions engaged in ODA, including the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC).

This annual report gives an overview of the ODA evaluations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan conducted separately from evaluations based on the GPEA.

Implementation Framework

In Japan, ODA policies are planned and formulated by MOFA, while the implementation of individual ODA projects is primarily the responsibility of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). ODA evaluation is conducted through mutual collaboration between MOFA and JICA with different roles.

Currently, MOFA primarily evaluates ODA policies by commissioning third parties such as external experts and consultants. JICA, on the other hand, mainly evaluates the individual projects that it is responsible for implementing.

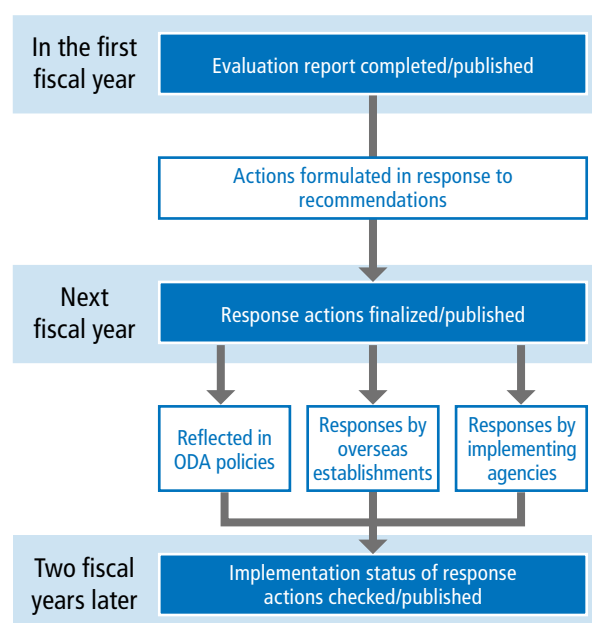
MOFA also assists partner countries in enhancing their evaluation capabilities.

Utilization of ODA Evaluation Results

It is important that the results and recommendations obtained from ODA evaluations be taken seriously by relevant parties such as MOFA, which is responsible for planning and formulating ODA policies, and JICA, which is responsible for implementing individual projects, and that they be utilized for formulating ODA policies and implementing ODA projects.

Accordingly, once the evaluation is completed, evaluators report the results and their recommendations directly to MOFA officials. In the next fiscal year, MOFA and JICA work together to formulate specific actions in response to the recommendations. Then, two fiscal years after the evaluation, MOFA checks the implementation status of these response actions and publishes the results in its annual evaluation report.

It is through this process that MOFA promotes ODA management and ensures public accountability, which are the objectives of ODA evaluation.



Evaluation Targets

ODA evaluations conducted by MOFA are classified according to the evaluation target. Country/Regional Assistance Evaluations target ODA policies for specific countries or regions, and Thematic/Schematic Evaluations target specific themes such as education, health, or the environment, as well as specific aid modalities (schemes) such as technical cooperation or grant aid.

Since FY2017, MOFA has also been conducting third-party evaluations of individual grant aid projects in which the maximum amount of aid offered is one billion yen or more. Internal evaluations are conducted for individual projects in which the maximum amount of aid offered is at least 200 million yen but less than one billion yen.

ODA individual evaluation reports (internal evaluations)

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ms/oda/page24_000056.html

Evaluation Viewpoints/Criteria

MOFA conducts ODA evaluations (third-party evaluations) from two different viewpoints: the extent to which Japan's ODA contributes to development in partner countries (Development Viewpoints), and the effects that the evaluated ODA policies have on Japan's national interests (Diplomatic Viewpoints). MOFA's ODA Evaluation Criteria are described below.

1 Evaluation from Development Viewpoints

MOFA has set the evaluation criteria described below as suitable for evaluating Japan's ODA policies based on the six internationally recognized Evaluation Criteria presented by the OECD-DAC (Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency, and Sustainability). Under each criterion, specific evaluation questions are provided.

Relevance of Policies

How relevant is the ODA policy to Japan's high-level policies, the needs of partner countries, and global priority issues? How outstanding is Japan's ODA compared to that of other donors?

Effectiveness of Results

To what extent are the initial targets and objectives achieved in line with plans? What were the specific outputs, outcomes, and impacts?

Appropriateness of Processes

How appropriate is the policymaking and implementation process and system? Has effective coordination with other donors, international organizations, NGOs, and other actors been undertaken?

2 Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints

Diplomatic Importance

How has Japan's ODA been important in solving global priority issues, strengthening bilateral relations, and promoting Japan's security and prosperity?

Diplomatic Impact

How has Japan's ODA contributed to enhancing Japan's presence in the international community, strengthening its bilateral relations, and promoting Japan's security and prosperity?

ODA Evaluation Guidelines & Handbook

MOFA has set out "ODA Evaluation Guidelines," which state the basic principles of MOFA's ODA evaluations, and an "ODA Evaluation Handbook," which describes the specific evaluation methodologies and procedures. Although these are prepared mainly to be applied in practical ODA evaluation work, they offer useful information for anyone interested in ODA and its evaluation.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/basic_documents/index.html

Summary of MOFA ODA Evaluations in FY2020

A total of five third-party evaluations were conducted in FY2020, consisting of three evaluations of Japan's ODA to Brazil, Mongolia, and Rwanda, as well as two evaluations of individual grant aid projects implemented by MOFA, namely, the Economic and Social Development Program in Jordan in FY2015 and the Economic and Social Development Program in Mozambique in FY2017. Two studies on evaluation methodologies and frameworks were also conducted.

Evaluation from Development Viewpoints

For **"Relevance of Policies/Project,"** for the most part, high ratings were given based on confirmation that Japan's assistance was consistent with high-level policies such as the Development Cooperation Charter as well as international priority issues including the SDGs and was implemented in line with the needs of recipient countries. The evaluations also revealed that Japan is demonstrating comparative advantages in areas such as the environment and education.

Overall, for **"Effectiveness of Results,"** high ratings were also given. Some of the evaluations pointed out that it was difficult to precisely measure the effects of policy implementation, due to the fact that indicators for measuring the degree of achievement of the political objectives had not been set in advance. However, the results of study and analysis confirmed that Japan's assistance has contributed toward resolving development issues faced by recipient countries.

With regard to **"Appropriateness of Processes,"** none of the evaluations identified any problems with the assessment of development issues or communication with stakeholders within the implementation process, and all confirmed that the needs of the recipient country had been assessed appropriately. However, some of the evaluations pointed out room for improvement in monitoring and recordkeeping after delivery of the procured product as well as public relations, along with the necessity of promoting disclosure of information regarding the details of assistance.

Evaluation	Evaluation Ratings from Development Viewpoints		
	Relevance of Policies/Project	Effectiveness of Results	Appropriateness of Processes
Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Brazil	Highly Satisfactory = A	Satisfactory = B	Satisfactory = B
Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Mongolia	Highly Satisfactory = A	Satisfactory = B	Highly Satisfactory = A
Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Rwanda	Highly Satisfactory = A	Satisfactory = B	Satisfactory = B
Economic and Social Development Program in Jordan in FY2015	Satisfactory = B	Satisfactory = B	Satisfactory = B
Economic and Social Development Program in Mozambique in FY2017	Satisfactory = B	Satisfactory = B	Partially Unsatisfactory = C

Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints

Since FY2015, all of MOFA's ODA evaluations have included evaluation from diplomatic viewpoints, which assesses the effects of ODA on Japan's national interests. The evaluation criteria consist of **"Diplomatic Importance"** (why the ODA is important to Japan's national interests) and **"Diplomatic Impact"** (how the ODA contributed to Japan's national interests).

Each of the evaluations conducted in FY2020 confirmed the **diplomatic importance** of implementing ODA for the relevant country and concluded that the implementation of ODA had positive **diplomatic impacts** that served Japan's national interests, including stronger bilateral confidence, a greater presence in the international community, enhanced bilateral economic relations, and a deeper understanding of Japan.

For example, the Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Brazil confirmed that Japan's ODA to Brazil is diplomatically important in terms of strengthening deep political, economic, and cultural ties between the two countries as well as promoting collaboration on many shared international issues such as climate change, nuclear disarmament, and United Nations Security Council reforms. Diplomatic impacts were also confirmed, including many actual cases in which Japan's support has contributed to the promotion of amicable relations between the two countries, as well as the fact that the number of offices of Japanese enterprises advancing into Brazil is on an upward trend, which may have been facilitated by ODA.

Recommendations

Although the five ODA evaluations conducted in FY2020 make recommendations based on their respective individual circumstances, there are some recommendations common to multiple evaluations or applicable to other cases.

Recommendations Common to Multiple Evaluations

● Further Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships

Investment by private enterprises is playing an increasingly greater role in the economic growth of developing countries. Promoting public-private partnerships in ODA is also one of the policies of the Government of Japan. The evaluations of Japan's ODA to Brazil and Rwanda point out that cases of fruitful coordination and collaboration with private enterprises already exist and suggest that such partnerships ought to be promoted further.

● Promotion of Effective Public Relations and More Active Disclosure of Information

Three of the five ODA evaluations conducted in FY2020 make recommendations regarding the promotion of effective public relations and disclosure of information. The two individual grant aid project evaluations suggest the importance of devising more effective and memorable publicized content for individual projects, including their connections with the overall picture of bilateral relations and support as well as concrete explanations of the significance and nature of the respective assistance. Also, the evaluation of Japan's ODA to Rwanda recommends that Japan should strive to explain the background to its policy formulation from a broader perspective and in a more comprehensible manner.

● (For Individual Grant Aid Projects) Improvement of Monitoring after Delivery of the Procured Product

In the individual grant aid projects implemented by MOFA, the implementation statuses of the projects were monitored by Embassies of Japan based on reports submitted by the procuring agent*. However, the evaluations recommend that monitoring systems be strengthened, as there were not sufficient systems in place to assess the usage conditions of the procured product and achievement of the anticipated results after delivery.

* The agent that handles all of the procurement procedures in an ODA project, including the bidding process, sales contract, and payment, based on a contract with the government of the recipient country

Recommendations from Individual Evaluations with Possible Applicability to Other Cases

● Enhanced Dialogue among Countries Involved in Triangular Cooperation*

The Development Cooperation Charter declares that Japan will continue to promote triangular cooperation. The evaluation of Japan's ODA to Brazil recommends close communication among countries involved in triangular cooperation and the continuous development of monitoring systems. These recommendations may serve as a reference for triangular cooperation in other regions.

* A form of cooperation in which a donor country and recipient country effectively leverage their resources and expertise and work together to assist a third country

● Measures for Countries with Frequent Personnel Reassignment and Government Reorganization

The evaluation of Japan's ODA to Mongolia recommends enhanced measures to reduce risks posed by frequent personnel reassignment and government reorganization, such as introducing information-sharing mechanisms within the implementing organizations as well as gathering information and preparing countermeasures ahead of government reorganization. As similar conditions are likely to be found in other developing countries, these lessons should be considered in such countries as well.

► Actions in Response to Recommendations

MOFA has formulated specific actions in response to the respective recommendations made in each ODA evaluation. The following are examples of actions in response to the five ODA evaluations conducted in FY2020.

The Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Brazil recommends enhanced dialogue among countries involved in triangular cooperation. MOFA will continue to engage in regular consultations with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and hold discussions on overall policy. It will also consider establishing a joint system for regular monitoring among the three countries in order to respond flexibly to changes in the circumstances of projects currently underway.

The Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Mongolia recommends the enhancement of measures to reduce risks posed by frequent personnel reassignment. MOFA will hold discussions with officials on the Mongolian side in order to develop a mechanism by which the results and knowledge already obtained can be accurately passed on in the event that personnel are reassigned while a project is in progress, as well as devising means of transferring technologies.

The Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Rwanda recommends that Japan should facilitate collaboration with various actors, including Japanese companies. In response, MOFA will continue to promote the ABE Initiative* and technical cooperation projects in the ICT sector in order to nurture pro-Japanese experts in Rwanda and facilitate the establishment of networks between enterprises in the two countries.

* The African Business Education Initiative for Youth is an industrial human-resource development initiative for young people in Africa. The program provides opportunities for young Africans to pursue master's degrees at Japanese universities and take part in internships at Japanese enterprises.

The Evaluation of the Economic and Social Development Program in Jordan in FY2015 recommends the implementation of effective public relations. For similar future projects, MOFA will strive to create publications that explain the diplomatic significance of the project in an easily understandable manner incorporating regional diplomacy and global development issues and that go beyond describing that particular project to showcase the state of Japan's refugee relief and humanitarian assistance as a responsible member of the international community.

The Evaluation of the Economic and Social Development Program in Mozambique in FY2017 recommends the improvement of monitoring after delivery of the procured product. Recognizing the difficulty of post-project verification of the effects of using expendable or consumable items, in similar future projects, MOFA will strive to confirm the usage conditions of the procured product and achievement of results by making advance requests for submission of reports from the recipient country's government.

► Studies of Evaluation Methodologies/Frameworks

In addition to the five ODA evaluations, a "Review of Past ODA Evaluations (Country Assistance Evaluations) and Study of Country Assistance Evaluation Methodologies" and "Analysis of Third-Party Evaluations of MOFA's Individual Bilateral Grant Aid Projects and Proposal of Evaluation Methods" were also conducted in FY2020. These were aimed at examining better ways of conducting future Country Assistance Evaluations and evaluations of individual grant aid projects, respectively, based on past results.

● Review of Past ODA Evaluations (Country Assistance Evaluations) and Study of Country Assistance Evaluation Methodologies

This study recommended that the timing of implementation of Country Assistance Evaluations be adjusted so that it is easier to reflect their results in policies. It also proposed that since alphabetical or numeric ratings improve the ease of understandability but can also prevent the subjects of evaluation from perceiving the evaluation results in a constructive manner, in light of the goal of ratings, the presentation format of evaluation results should be determined with consideration for both of these factors. In response to these recommendations, when selecting target countries for Country Assistance Evaluations in FY2021, priority was given to countries whose Country Development Cooperation Policy will be revised in the following fiscal year. Also, the decision was made to stop using alphabetical ratings and present evaluation results in the form of comments only starting in FY2021.

● Analysis of Third-Party Evaluations of Bilateral Grant Aid Projects Conducted by MOFA and Proposal of Evaluation Methods

In light of the characteristics of individual bilateral grant aid projects, the report proposed that "Development Viewpoints" and "Diplomatic Viewpoints" be merged; that only two evaluation criteria, "Relevance of Plans" and "Effectiveness of Implementation and Results," be used; that evaluation teams create an "Evaluation Outline" summarizing basic information on the project instead of requiring the objective framework used for policy-level evaluations; and that ratings be kept to four levels as before but not use an alphabetical format. Based on these proposals, the decision was made to adopt the new evaluation criteria and methodology for evaluations implemented in FY2021 and later.

Column

The COVID-19 Pandemic and ODA Evaluation

The COVID-19 pandemic has had massive impacts across the globe, with many things previously taken for granted no longer being the case.

This means that ODA evaluations in FY2020 also required new innovations. Previously, in ODA evaluations (third-party evaluations) implemented by MOFA, evaluation teams composed of external third-party experts and consultants visited the target countries and gathered information directly by inspecting project sites and interviewing government officials as well as people living near project sites. However, it was not possible to conduct field surveys in FY2020.

Accordingly, evaluation teams conducted their evaluations by interviewing local stakeholders using an online conferencing system and having local consultants conduct site inspections and interviews as alternatives to field surveys, in order to gather the most credible information possible. Some evaluation teams gave feedback that it was not feasible to gather enough information for evaluation without visiting target countries, for reasons such as poor internet access among local stakeholders or the difficulty of candidly exchanging views when compared to in-person interviews, and that it was difficult to produce evaluations at the same level as when field surveys are conducted.

Needless to say, it is better for evaluation teams to gather information directly from field surveys, and there is no perfect substitute for actual surveys on the ground. At the same time, this experience proved that it is possible to gather a certain level of information even from surveys conducted via online interviews and by forwarding written questionnaires. Nonetheless, widely gathering the necessary information through field surveys implementing such alternate methods will require further trial and error, starting with the effective utilization of reliable local consultants.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, countries that were possible to visit in the past had to be evaluated without field surveys in FY2020. However, if this type of approach becomes established so that somewhat credible information can be gathered, and a certain degree of evaluation produced based on that information, it will open up the possibility of implementing ODA evaluations for countries whose evaluations were deferred in the past because evaluation teams could not conduct field surveys due to security reasons.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had no small effect on the ODA projects that Japan is implementing around the world. Despite this situation, Japan is still making efforts to continue its support and has enhanced various types of assistance aimed at fighting the pandemic in developing countries, especially in the areas of health and medical care. At the same time, Japan will also continue to conduct ODA evaluations in new ways based on lessons learned from this experience in order to assess the implementation status and effects of ODA so that it can be implemented more effectively and efficiently in the future.

FY2020 MOFA ODA Evaluation Results

The following are summaries of three country assistance evaluations, two individual grant-aid project evaluations, and two studies on evaluation methodologies and frameworks conducted in FY2020. They were compiled by the ODA Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) based on the evaluation reports prepared by the evaluation teams. [The full reports can be viewed on the following page.](#)

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Brazil

Chief Evaluator	SATO Kan Hiroshi Chief Senior Researcher, Research Operations Department, IDE-JETRO
Advisor	KONTA Ryohei Area Studies Center Deputy Director, Latin American Studies Group, IDE-JETRO
Consultant	Japan Techno Co., Ltd.
Evaluation Period	FY2009 to FY2019
Period of the Evaluation Study	August 2020 to March 2021
Field Survey Country	Brazil (remote survey conducted online)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

There is a longstanding relationship of close friendship between Brazil and Japan, with 2020 marking 125 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations. Cooperation has developed in a wide range of fields since the Japan-Brazil bilateral relationship was positioned as a strategic global partnership in 2014. Since the start of ODA to Brazil in 1959, Japan has closely engaged with issues faced by the country and supported its sustainable growth in a variety of fields including natural resources, medical care, public safety, and infrastructure, making Brazil one of Japan's major ODA partner countries in Latin America. With the objectives of ODA evaluation—improving ODA management and ensuring public accountability—in mind, this evaluation is aimed at assessing Japan's assistance policies toward Brazil since FY2009, with a particular focus on the last five years, and producing recommendations as well as drawing lessons for the formulation and implementation of assistance policies toward Brazil in the future.

Summary of Evaluation Results

● Development Viewpoints

(1) Relevance of Policies

Japan's policy of cooperation in Brazil is in line with its high-level ODA policies, namely, the ODA Charter (2003) and Development Cooperation Charter (2015), as well as with the

national multiyear development plan of Brazil (Plano Plurianual or "PPA"). There is also consistency with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are international priority issues, and with the directionality of support from other donors in Brazil. Furthermore, policies are formulated primarily in areas where Japan has a comparative advantage, namely, (1) disaster prevention, (2) governance (cooperation with local police), (3) environmental conservation, (4) water resources (non-revenue water management), and (5) healthcare (maternal and child healthcare).

(Evaluation Result: Highly Satisfactory = **A**)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

The amount of Japan's ODA to Brazil is on a downward trend due to Brazil's classification as an uppermost-middle-income country. However, in this huge country with diverse assistance needs, support is being provided with the appropriate quality and timing to projects in three priority areas: 1) urban issues and management of environmental and disaster risks, 2) improvement of the investment environment, and 3) triangular cooperation. Results have been achieved through support centered on the establishment of eco-friendly cities, environmental conservation, and disaster prevention in the field of urban issues and management of environmental and disaster risks; by taking on the role of a bridge for private partnerships in improvement of the investment environment; and by continuing unique forms of cooperation in the field of triangular cooperation.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy for Brazil was formulated based on appropriate consultations between officials from both countries, and the Rolling Plan is updated every year. In terms of the implementation process, the establishment of implementation structures, the assessment of needs, the implementation of individual projects based on priority areas of support for Brazil, monitoring, and publicity are all conducted appropriately.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

* Ratings: Highly Satisfactory = **A**; Satisfactory = **B**; Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**; Unsatisfactory = **D**

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

There have been continual visits by key figures from both Japan and Brazil since 2009. Japan has also made efforts to strengthen economic relations with Latin America due to the region's potential as a production/export base, major resource supply area, and promising market in the global economy. Japan has been pursuing stronger ties in line with the three guiding principles for policy toward Latin America—Joint Progress (strengthening of economic relations), Joint Leadership (coordination in the international community), and Joint Inspiration (promotion of human interaction and cultural/athletic exchanges)—since 2014 and with the three “Enhanced Connectivities” with Latin America (economy, values, and wisdom) since 2019. Japan and Brazil have also coordinated and cooperated on many shared international issues including the environment and climate change, disarmament and nonproliferation, UN Security Council reforms, North Korea, and the South China Sea and East China Sea. For these reasons, ODA to Brazil is diplomatically important.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

Japan and Brazil have a record of continuous and active exchange, and there are many cases in which Japan's support has contributed to the promotion of amicable relations between the two countries. Brazil has also become remarkably active in the international community through involvement in areas such as UN Security Council reforms, trade, the environment, and disarmament and nonproliferation. Japan is therefore endeavoring to build cooperative ties with Brazil. In terms of the UN Security Council reforms in particular, close cooperative ties between the two countries are crucial for realizing the reforms due to their shared position as candidates for permanent membership on the Council. Furthermore, as an indicator of stronger economic relations, the number of offices of Japanese enterprises advancing into Brazil is on an upward trend, and ODA is thought to have assisted this advancement.

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Results

(1) Enhancing the Strategic Nature of Development Cooperation

The priority areas for development set out in Japan's

Country Development Cooperation Policy for Brazil are fields in which Japan can make use of its high-level capabilities and expertise, while also leveraging its past track record of cooperation. In terms of policymaking, the relevance of cooperation needs to be assessed from long-term, strategic, and global perspectives in response to policies on the Brazilian side. It is also important to render this policymaking process more visible to the Japanese people. At the same time, Japan should more strategically utilize existing cooperation in areas such as the implementation of ODA loans appropriate for a high-income country, scientific and technical cooperation, vocational training to meet the needs of the digital society, coordination with the “Nikkei” community (Brazilians of Japanese origin), and collaboration with the Brazilian community on initiatives that will benefit both Japan and Brazil, with a focus on inbound tourism and regional development.

(2) Strengthening Partnerships through Support for Brazil's Transition from a Recipient to a Donor Based on Triangular Cooperation

Brazil believes that its geopolitical role in the Latin American region and its ability to cooperate with less developed countries will allow it to play a unique role among developed-country donors and strengthen equal partnerships. In the future, Japan should position triangular cooperation at the core of its assistance to Brazil and seek out as well as build new forms of cooperation aimed at strengthening partnerships through support for Brazil's transition from a recipient country to a donor country in Latin America.

(3) Enhanced Dialogue among Countries Involved in Triangular Cooperation

In order to make more effective use of the triangular cooperation framework as a priority area for Japan's ODA, an overall policy for the program should be formulated and a mechanism considered for incorporating it into individual projects. Also, a system should be established for regular and continuous monitoring and evaluation among the three countries, including the beneficiary country.

(4) Promotion of the Resolution of Social Issues through Public-Private Partnerships

Japan should pursue active and crosscutting involvement in existing frameworks for government-private sector dialogue and cooperation between Japan and Brazil and apply new Brazilian technologies that do not exist in Japan to needs in Brazil. This can be expected to promote human resource development, efficiency improvements at manufacturing sites, the construction and improvement of infrastructure, and the elimination of disparities, as well as to contribute greatly to the resolution of social issues and development of business in areas covered by the SDGs.



Urban area in Brazil
(Courtesy of JICA)

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Mongolia

Chief Evaluator	Prof. HAYASHI Kaoru Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University
Advisor	Prof. MINATO Kunio Faculty of Regional Collaboration, Kochi University
Consultant	Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development
Evaluation Period	FY2010 to FY2019
Period of the Evaluation Study	August 2020 to March 2021
Field Survey Country	Mongolia (remote survey conducted online)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

Mongolia is a geopolitically important country located between two superpowers—China and Russia. Its stable growth and development are important not only in contributing to the stability and prosperity of the region, but also in enhancing relations with Japan.

This evaluation assesses Japan's ODA policies toward Mongolia over the past ten years (FY2010-2019) with the main objectives of obtaining recommendations and learning lessons for the formulation and implementation of future Japanese ODA policies toward Mongolia, as well as ensuring public accountability by publishing the evaluation results.

Summary of Evaluation Results

● Development Viewpoints

(1) Relevance of Policies

The evaluation team confirmed that Japan's ODA policies toward Mongolia are consistent with development policies and needs in Mongolia, Japan's high-level policies, and international priority issues, and that they mutually complement the assistance policies of other donors. It also confirmed that while there were examples of Japan making effective use of its comparative advantages, such as its support for air-pollution control, Japan's assistance to Mongolia was determined with comprehensive consideration of differentiation from other donors and development needs and implementation structures in Mongolia.

(Evaluation Result: Highly Satisfactory = **A**)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

Japan's ODA accounted for 47.7% of the total bilateral assistance to Mongolia over the nine-year period from 2010 to 2018. Japan has therefore contributed significantly to development in Mongolia as a top donor.

The evaluation team confirmed that results were produced with regard to improvement of Mongolia's fiscal capabilities, establishment of a foundation for industrial diversification, efforts to address urban environmental issues, and promotion of the social participation of individuals with disabilities through

assistance targeting each development issue in Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy for Mongolia. Although some of the initial objectives have not yet been achieved, overall, Japan's assistance to Mongolia had a large impact.
(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

Japan's ODA policies toward Mongolia are formulated appropriately by MOFA with adequate reflection of Mongolia's development needs and in conformity with the prescribed procedure. In terms of the implementation of assistance, the evaluation team confirmed that there was close communication with Mongolian government agencies and international organizations on a regular basis and that approaches were adopted that enhanced the effectiveness of assistance, such as coordination with other donors on technical cooperation projects and coordination among multiple projects or between schemes. Furthermore, the Embassy of Japan in Mongolia and the JICA Mongolia Office followed through swiftly and attentively when any problems arose during project implementation.

(Evaluation Result: Highly Satisfactory = **A**)

* Ratings: Highly Satisfactory = **A**; Satisfactory = **B**; Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**; Unsatisfactory = **D**

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

Japan's ODA to Mongolia has the potential to contribute to the improvement of the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region, the strengthening of an international order based on universal values and rules, the improvement of global security, and therefore the construction of a peaceful, stable, and prosperous international community. Maintaining a long-term, stable cooperative relationship with Mongolia is also important from the perspective of Japan's resource security. Thus, ODA to Mongolia is of great significance.

At nearly all past bilateral summit meetings and foreign ministerial conferences, the government of Mongolia has expressed gratitude for Japan's ODA. This shows that Japan's ODA to Mongolia is an important tool for strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

It is fair to say that Japan's ODA to Mongolia has had

a level of impact on Mongolia's support for Japan's position in the international community, the strengthening of Japan's presence in Mongolia, the advancement of Japanese enterprises into Mongolia and strengthening of economic relations, the promotion of friendly ties, and a better understanding of Japan by Mongolian people.

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Results

(1) Formulation of Clearer Regional Development Strategies and Rolling Plans for Sustainable Economic Growth and Stable Social Development in Mongolia

In the next revision of Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy, more explicit regional development strategies and Rolling Plans should be formulated for the five-year policymaking span in order to enhance the effectiveness of assistance to achieve sustainable economic growth and stable social development in Mongolia.

(2) Enhancement of Measures to Reduce Risks Posed by Frequent Personnel Reassignment

During project implementation, the evaluation team observed cases in which frequent personnel reassignment and career changes among Mongolian staff had adverse effects on the progress of the project or the institutionalization of outcomes, such as by delaying the project, necessitating fresh personnel training, or leading to the loss of transferred technologies. Before implementing ODA projects, information-sharing mechanisms should be introduced within the implementing organizations on the Mongolian side.

(3) Enhancement of Measures for Countries with Frequent Government Reorganization

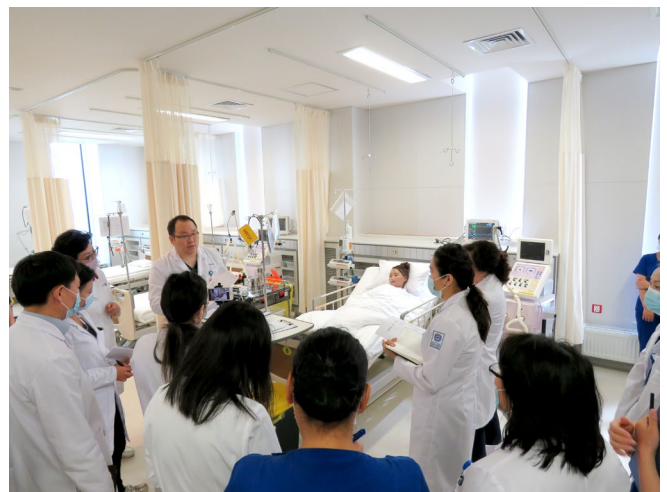
When implementing ODA projects in Mongolia, it is important to be fully aware of the country's tendency toward frequent government reorganization. It would be useful to gather information regarding possible effects on counterpart organizations and prepare multiple countermeasures ahead of elections. It would also be more effective to obtain information and advice from experts who have experienced past post-election government reorganizations.

(4) Clarification of the Division of Roles in Projects Involving Multiple Government Ministries/Agencies

Before implementing projects involving multiple government ministries or agencies, it is desirable to understand the roles of the relevant ministries and agencies, confirm that the necessary budget and personnel can be secured, and set aside opportunities for all parties involved to exchange views and share information. It would be useful to clarify the responsibilities of each ministry or agency in the project while considering the conventions of Mongolia and the administrative jurisdictions of the ministries/agencies.



New Ulaanbaatar International Airport Operating Project: automated check-in training (Courtesy of NUBIA LLC)



Simulation at Mongolia-Japan Teaching Hospital (MJTH) before opening of the ICU



Medical-internal-led training session at Orkhon Province's Regional Diagnostic and Treatment Center (RDTC)

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Rwanda

Chief Evaluator	Prof. INADA Juichi School of Economics, Senshu University
Advisor	Prof. TAKEUCHI Shinichi Professor, Graduate School of Global Studies / Director, African Studies Center, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
Consultant	NTC International Co., Ltd.
Evaluation Period	FY2010 to FY2019
Period of the Evaluation Study	August 2020 to February 2021
Field Survey Country	Rwanda (remote survey conducted online)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

Rwanda is actively pursuing development centered on economic growth, poverty reduction, and job creation and has achieved remarkable economic growth. Japan's support for Rwanda, which can be considered a model country for recovery from civil conflict and economic growth, is of great significance to the consolidation of peace and the stabilization of the African Great Lakes region. This evaluation assesses Japan's ODA policies toward Rwanda and assistance provided on that basis over the past ten years (FY2010-2019), with the main objectives of obtaining recommendations and lessons learned for the formulation and implementation of future Japanese ODA policies toward Rwanda and ensuring Japan's public accountability by publishing the evaluation results.

Summary of Evaluation Results

● Development Viewpoints

(1) Relevance of Policies

Japan's ODA policies for Rwanda are consistent with Rwanda's development needs, with Japan's high-level development policies including declarations adopted at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), and with international priority issues such as the SDGs. Japan's assistance also mutually complements that of other donors. The evaluation team found that Japan has demonstrated comparative advantages in the areas of transportation and trade facilitation through the synergistic combination of three different aid modalities and in the areas of technical/vocational training and information and communication technology (ICT) through practical cooperation adapted to actual local conditions. (Evaluation Result: Highly Satisfactory = **A**)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

Although the amount of Japan's ODA to Rwanda was on a somewhat smaller scale than that of other donors, each project contributed significantly to the achievement of the objectives established at the outset. Japan steadily implemented assistance and made contributions for each development issue in the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Rwanda. In priority areas of ODA, Japan also achieved a certain level of

contribution despite the ratio of the amount of its ODA being on a smaller scale than that of other donors. (Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy for Rwanda was generally formulated through an appropriate process. In terms of the ODA implementation process, the evaluation team also found that the provision and management of basic implementation structures, assessment of needs, implementation of individual projects based on priority areas, monitoring/evaluation, collaboration and coordination with other development actors, and consideration of social, ethnic, and environmental factors were generally appropriate. On the other hand, there were areas where improvement would be desirable. For example, there was insufficient disclosure of information regarding some projects, and the ways in which the situation in the African Great Lakes region was considered in the formulation and implementation of ODA policies was not always clear.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

* Ratings: Highly Satisfactory = **A**; Satisfactory = **B**; Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**; Unsatisfactory = **D**

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

Japan's ODA efforts toward Rwanda are in line with its National Security Strategy (NSS). Rwanda, which shares the basic principles of TICAD and has deepened its bilateral ties with Japan, is a diplomatically important country to Japan. Japan's ODA to Rwanda is also diplomatically significant from the perspectives of the stabilization of the African Great Lakes region, the consolidation of peace in Rwanda, and the promotion of economic ties between Japan and Rwanda.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

Japan's ODA to Rwanda has had verifiable diplomatic impacts including the fostering of Japanophiles and pro-Japanese groups, as well as the promotion of economic ties and amicable relations. It can also be expected to contribute to regional development through support for trade facilitation, as well as to the consolidation of peace in Rwanda and stability in the region through assistance to refugees within Rwanda and individuals with disabilities including ex-combatants.

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Results

(1) Continued Promotion of Development That Will Benefit the Poor

In Rwanda, there are some regions and social classes for which escaping from poverty is difficult on a non-negligible scale. In addition to support for basic social services that will benefit the poor as well as for the agricultural sector, Japan should also continue to emphasize assistance for income generation and job creation for people including those living in poverty from the viewpoint of creating a safety net.

(2) Supporting Rwanda in Becoming an ICT Knowledge Hub in Africa

Rwanda has expressed appreciation for Japan's dispatch of experts in technical/vocational training and ICT as well as its practical cooperation adapted to actual local conditions through technical cooperation projects. Japan should leverage its experience in cooperation and consider expanding the effects of its assistance across Africa in coordination and cooperation with the private sector.

(3) Facilitation of Collaboration with Diverse Actors Including Japanese Enterprises

By inviting Rwandans to study at Japanese universities and take part in internships at Japanese enterprises, the ABE Initiative has not only contributed to human resource development in Rwanda but also led to the facilitation of Japanese business with Rwanda. Furthermore, Japan's assistance in the ICT sector has created opportunities for collaboration between enterprises in the two countries. On the Rwandan side, there are high hopes for opportunities to learn from Japanese enterprises and network with Japanese enterprises that could become future business partners. It is vital that Japan continue to emphasize this kind of facilitation of collaboration with diverse actors, including Japanese enterprises.

(4) Strengthening of Support for Economic Partnerships across the EAC Region

Since Rwanda is geographically a small, landlocked country, it is important to consider its development in terms of not only a single country but also the entire region. In order to facilitate trade, Japan has assisted the development of roads, an international bridge, and One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) facilities as well as the enhancement of customs and border control capabilities for the five countries of the East African Community (EAC). It should therefore further promote these kinds of projects that contribute to regional development.

(5) More Active Consideration and Disclosure of Regional Circumstances in the EAC and African Great Lakes Region

Rwanda has complex political and historical relationships with its neighbors. This makes it essential for Japan to consider regional perspectives when planning its approach to assisting Rwanda. Japan's Country Development Cooperation Policy for Rwanda states in the purpose of development cooperation that assistance to Rwanda is highly significant from the perspectives of the stabilization of the Great Lakes region and the consolidation of peace. However, when deliberating ODA policies or projects, the means by which the situation in the Great Lakes region is considered is not always clearly indicated. These kinds of regional circumstances should be more actively taken into account when deliberating ODA policies or projects and disclosed to the public whenever possible.

(6) Promotion of Information Disclosure on Contributions to International Organizations and Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects

Information on contributions to international organizations such as project titles, executing agencies, monetary amounts, and details of assistance as well as details of grant assistance for grassroots human security projects are not disclosed in an easily understandable format. This information should be posted on the websites of MOFA and the Embassy of Japan in Rwanda in order to better publicize Japan's ODA.



Educational support using ICT: lesson using math software from SAKURA-SHA K.K., a Japanese enterprise (Courtesy of SAKURA-SHA K.K.)



Evaluation of Economic and Social Development Program in Jordan in FY2015

Chief Evaluator	SATO Kan Hiroshi Chief Senior Researcher, Research Operations Department, IDE-JETRO
Consultant	Japan Techno Co., Ltd.
Period of the Evaluation Study	September 2020 to March 2021
Field Survey Country	Jordan (remote survey conducted online)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

MOFA implemented a grant aid project (Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Program) in 2016 aimed at improving waste management and water-supply conditions in the host communities of Syrian refugees by providing equipment and products manufactured in Japan in order to contribute to economic and social development in Jordan. This evaluation assesses the results of the grant aid project implemented by MOFA, with the main objectives of obtaining recommendations and learning lessons for future ODA planning and implementation as well as ensuring public accountability.

Summary of Evaluation Results

● Development Viewpoints

(1) Relevance of Project

The project contributed to alleviating the weakening of socioeconomic infrastructure caused by a large influx of Syrian refugees, as well as to easing tensions with refugees in host communities, and was consistent with Japan's high-level policies, development needs in Jordan, and international priority issues. Relationships with other donors were also maintained through participation in the donor community and the framework of the Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis in order to address the Syrian refugee issue. Japan's comparative advantages are evident in the high quality of the provided equipment and products.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

The provided equipment and products were procured and delivered as planned in terms of both specifications and quantities. The procured equipment and products were handed over as planned to the end users—municipalities, water supply entities, and waste management entities nationwide—under the responsibility of the Jordanian side, and data obtained from the project survey suggest that the operating condition after delivery was good. Results were therefore achieved as envisioned by the program. Furthermore, based on the

Jordanian side's awareness of the issue, the sites targeted for provision of equipment were selected on the assumption that refugee host communities exist not only in certain regions but rather throughout the entire country. Equipment and products were broadly distributed to over 60 local municipalities and entities scattered across 12 governorates nationwide.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

The project was planned and implemented to realize the requests of the Government of Jordan to the fullest extent. The implementation structure of the relevant agencies and the assistance implementation process was also adequate and conformed to the Exchange of Notes (E/N) between the two countries as well as to the guidelines of MOFA.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

* Ratings: Highly Satisfactory = **A**; Satisfactory = **B**; Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**; Unsatisfactory = **D**

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

Since Japan depends on the Middle East for many of its energy resources, peace and stability in the Middle East are directly linked to its national interests, and Jordan holds a key position in that region. Cooperating in the political/social stability and economic development of Jordan is therefore important for ensuring Japan's energy security through peace and stability in the Middle East and for maintaining and advancing friendly bilateral relations, making development cooperation highly significant. In supporting host communities affected by the influx of Syrian refugees, this project contributed to the stabilization of the region and played a part in Japan's cooperation toward the stabilization of the Middle East and Jordan.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

The project's timely implementation in response to the requests of the Government of Jordan helped to strengthen bilateral relations. Its implementation is also an example of Japan's proactive contributions to refugee issues, which Japan is making strong efforts to showcase to the international community as an advocate of "human security." Like other similar cooperation related to refugee relief, it can therefore be expected to help demonstrate Japan's stance to the rest of the world.

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Results

(1) Necessity of More Detailed Project Explanations

In this project, equipment and products were distributed to governorates in the southern region, where the influx of registered refugees is relatively small, in greater amounts proportionally to the registered refugee population when compared to other regions. It is difficult to understand the rationale behind this allocation merely by referring to the published information. The evaluation team found that the project achieved the results envisioned by the program and did not have any objections to the assignment of the target group. However, it is difficult to immediately understand the details of how the entire country of Jordan was assigned as the target group for the project based on problem setting on the Jordanian side simply by referring to the information published by MOFA. The appropriateness of the decision-making process should have been explained in greater depth. This is an area where improvement is needed in future project explanations.

(2) Performance Management through the Introduction of an Objective Framework

Clear articulation of outcomes and impacts, rationalization of how outputs efficiently and effectively lead to outcomes, and clarification of results through the setting and measurement of indicators are effective for project implementation. It would therefore be worthwhile to consider the introduction of implementation management that clarifies the theoretical nature of input-output-outcomes/impacts by creating and sharing an objective framework that simplifies the logical framework starting from the stage of verifying the details of the request for assistance from the recipient country's government, as well as performance management through the setting and measurement of indicators.

(3) Implementation of Effective Public Relations

For this project, it would have been desirable to create effective, appealing publicity with a clear narrative in connection with the overall picture, such as the framework of Middle Eastern diplomacy, initiatives relating to human security including refugee relief and humanitarian assistance, and the history of bilateral relations with Jordan. It is crucial for Japan to actively showcase through appropriate means both at home and abroad how it is taking on international responsibilities as well as its presence in the Middle East, a region that is extremely important to Japan, in terms of the Syrian crisis, refugee issues, and humanitarian assistance, in order to increase public understanding.

(4) Monitoring and Measurement of Effectiveness for the Operation and Maintenance of Equipment/Products

There is a need to devise means of grasping the operating conditions of the equipment and products provided through the project beyond the existing monitoring systems of implementing agencies. For example, implementing agencies have regular accounting and project reporting obligations, and it is assumed that asset management is part of this, meaning that they have a grasp of the ownership and operating conditions of equipment and products. Setting up a system to monitor the operating conditions of equipment and products provided through the project by utilizing this existing system for management of equipment and products would be effective when implementing similar projects in the future. Also, the Embassy of Japan in Jordan intends to monitor the usage of the equipment through on-site inspections (suspended at the time of this survey due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic), which would be a meaningful endeavor.



Equipment handover ceremony related to assistance in the waste sector



Delivery of key at equipment handover ceremony

Evaluation of Economic and Social Development Program in Mozambique in FY2017

Chief Evaluator	SATO Kan Hiroshi Chief Senior Researcher, Research Operations Department, IDE-JETRO
Consultant	Japan Techno Co., Ltd.
Period of the Evaluation Study	September 2020 to March 2021
Field Survey Country	Mozambique (remote survey conducted online)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

MOFA implemented a grant aid project (Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Program) in 2017 aimed at alleviating power shortages in the country and ensuring a stable supply of electricity by providing fuel for power generation in order to contribute to economic and social development in Mozambique. This evaluation assesses the results of the grant aid project "Economic and Social Development Program in Mozambique in FY2017 (Fuel for Power Generation)" (grant amount: 1.5 billion JPY) implemented by MOFA, with the main objectives of obtaining recommendations and learning lessons for future ODA planning and implementation as well as ensuring public accountability.

Summary of Evaluation Results

● Development Viewpoints

(1) Relevance of Project

The project supported the improvement of the power supply and resulting economic and social development in the northern part of Mozambique, which is located in the Nacala Corridor, through the procurement of fuel oil for power generation. Although the project was not aimed at increasing or expanding the power generation capacity, it was connected to the stabilization of the power supply in the Nacala Corridor. In that sense, it shows consistency with Japan's high-level policies such as support for infrastructure development and the development of the Nacala Corridor; with development needs in Mozambique, where improved access to electricity is a high priority due to its necessity for the promotion of industrialization; with the need for stabilization of the power supply in the target region; and with targets relating to energy access in the SDGs. On the other hand, appraisal of the project request should have considered the appropriateness of using heavy fuel oil for power generation from the perspective of ensuring environmental sustainability along with the financial sustainability of the state-owned energy company of Mozambique (*Electricidade de Moçambique* or "EDM"), as well as reducing disparities in access to electricity within the target region.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

From a long-term perspective, large-scale power plant construction is needed to improve the power supply in northern Mozambique. However, while waiting for this to materialize, the existing grid will continue to be pressed due to increased power demand. The cooperation approach, which assisted the procurement of fuel oil for power generation to maintain the supply of power from a power ship as an emergency measure to stabilize and ensure the quality of the power supply and to prevent large-scale power outages, was therefore adequate. The fuel procured through the project was used to supply power from the power ship for about one year, and EDM was able to secure 100% of the electricity it needed as agreed in the contract with the independent power producer that operated the power ship. In terms of outcomes and impacts, the project helped to sustain production activities in the target region by ensuring the quality of electricity and stabilizing the power supply.

(Evaluation Result: Satisfactory = **B**)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

The project was implemented appropriately according to the procedures for the aid modality of the Economic and Social Development Program (procuring agent system), including assessment of development issues, appraisal of the content of requests, and determination of the details of cooperation. On the other hand, the evaluation team found that the usage conditions and power supply performance of the procured fuel were not adequately monitored or recorded after delivery. Furthermore, information disclosed about the project was not sufficiently concrete in terms of clearly publicizing the details of the project and expected development outcomes.

(Evaluation Result: Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**)

* Ratings: Highly Satisfactory = **A**; Satisfactory = **B**; Partially Unsatisfactory = **C**; Unsatisfactory = **D**

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

Mozambique contains gateways to the sea for landlocked countries such as Zambia and Malawi, and peace and stability in the Nacala Corridor, which links the Indian Ocean with the interior of Africa, are important to development in Mozambique along with the entire African continent, as well as to the realization of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" promoted

by Japan. Mozambique is also a pro-Japanese country that cooperates with Japan in the international community. The two countries celebrated the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2017. Furthermore, Mozambique is rich in mineral and energy resources, and about 30 Japanese companies have established operations there. The program was expected to contribute to the promotion of social and economic activities in the Nacala Corridor centered on northern Mozambique, and its implementation can therefore be considered highly significant.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

The project was urgently requested in order to sustain the generation of electricity necessary to stabilize the supply of power to the central and northern grids amid the deterioration of the financial situation in Mozambique due to the problem of undisclosed debts. In responding promptly to that request and maintaining the supply of electricity, the project is thought to have contributed to the strengthening of trust in bilateral relations.

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Results

(1) Assignment and Management of Project Outcomes Based on Analysis of Development Needs

When managing the progress of the project and explaining and disclosing information to the public for similar projects in the future, outcomes and impacts of sustaining the operation of the power-generating facilities should be analyzed in line with the power-supply situation in the recipient country, and indicators for measuring effectiveness should be set so that the project objectives, nature of cooperation, and outcomes are clearly understood by relevant stakeholders and third parties. Press releases should also explicitly describe the expected outcomes of the project.

(2) Improvement of Monitoring after Delivery of the Procured Product

The implementation status of the project was monitored by MOFA and the Embassy of Japan, based on the quarterly reports and completion report submitted

by the procuring agent. However, no records were kept about the achievement of the anticipated results of the project, such as the amount of electricity supplied by the power ship or the status of power supply to the target region. Since the product procured through the project (fuel) was expendable, it was difficult to verify the usage conditions and achievement of the anticipated results after delivery without written records. Accordingly, one idea might have been to request that EDM submit monitoring reports on the usage of the fuel after delivery and consequent achievement of results in contrast with the predetermined outcomes and impacts, depending on the usage conditions of the fuel.

(3) Promotion of Domestic Publicity Efforts in Japan and Mozambique

MOFA's domestic press release on the signing of an Exchange of Notes (E/N) for the project does not explain the specific target region, the background to the implementation of the project, or the concrete significance and importance of implementation. Similarly, the press release by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique only states that an E/N for Japanese grant aid to implement the Economic and Social Development Program was signed. To obtain adequate understanding and support for the significance and development outcomes of Japan's ODA projects, publicity efforts in both Japan and Mozambique should convey specific details of the project such as the nature of cooperation, target regions, beneficiaries, background, and significance/importance of implementation. In this case, since the procured product was fuel oil for power generation, it would have been difficult to publicize the usage conditions in a visible manner. However, one option might have been to have EDM include the details and outcomes of Japan's cooperation in its customer communication materials or annual business report.



E/N signing ceremony held in the presence of foreign ministers from both countries

Review of Past ODA Evaluations (Country Assistance Evaluations) and Study of Country Assistance Evaluation Methodologies

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	Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University
Consultant	Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development
Study Target Period	FY2005 to FY2019
Study Implementation Period	October 2020 to March 2021

Background, Objectives, and Scope of Study

MOFA implements ODA evaluations mainly focused on the policy level every year in order to improve ODA management and ensure public accountability. Externally commissioned third-party evaluations are implemented for further transparency and objectivity. This study examines Country Assistance Evaluations implemented over the past 15 years from the perspective of applying their evaluation results to future ODA policymaking, with the objectives of (1) organizing repeatedly recommended items and recommendations common to certain regions or attributes such as small (in size) and/or island countries so that they can be compiled into useful lessons also applicable to other countries, and (2) obtaining proposals for evaluation methodologies better suited to Country Assistance Evaluations while keeping in mind the evaluation methodologies prescribed in the current ODA Evaluation Guidelines, as well as recommendations for a standard evaluation framework that can be used for all Country Assistance Evaluations.

Summary of Study Results

(1) Review of Recommendations and Lessons

The reports on Country Assistance Evaluations implemented from FY2005 to FY2019 (56 reports) contained a total of 442 recommendations and lessons. Comparing the number of recommendations and lessons in five-year increments, the number of recommendations decreased starting in 2015, and the content of the recommendations indicated in the reports became more concise and easily understandable. Starting in FY2015, more and more evaluations extracted "Lessons Learned." However, many of these lessons were rewordings of the recommendations, and information was not organized in line with the definition of "Lessons."

(2) Pattern Classification of Recommendations/Lessons

The recommendations and lessons contained in Country Assistance Evaluation Reports from FY2014 to FY2019 (122) were classified into five categories and then into 24 subcategories and compared in terms of the implementation period of the evaluation. Although the category comparison did not show any differences between the implementation periods (FY2003-2013 and FY2014-2019), the subcategory comparison revealed differences such as changes in recommendations relating to "strategies/priorities."

(3) Useful Lessons for ODA Policies

Based on the results of the analysis in (2), recommendations and lessons that were not limited to a specific country or region but rather applicable to other countries and regions were extracted into a compilation of lessons. In evaluations from FY2014 to FY2019, subcategories containing numerous recommendations

and lessons were analyzed with a focus on four aspects, namely, (1) concrete recommendations/countermeasures, (2) factors and events that contributed to the recommendations, (3) objectives of recommendations/countermeasures, and (4) content of items "that could serve as a reference for other countries/regions." From this analysis, seven themes that provided lessons were identified and compiled.

(4) Evaluation Framework and Rating Results

Thirteen Country Assistance Evaluations that implemented ratings were analyzed in terms of the verification items, verification content, and derivation of ratings for each of the three evaluation criteria (Relevance of Policies, Effectiveness of Results, and Appropriateness of Processes). The results of the analysis revealed the following points.

- In many cases, the same evaluator adopted the same assignment pattern of verification items in multiple evaluations. Instead of setting verification items according to the situation of the target country or region, there was a tendency for item assignments to be determined based on the mindset of the evaluator (commissioned consultant) regardless of the target country.
- Although several of the Country Assistance Evaluations implemented sub-ratings, the method of sub-rating varies by evaluation, and the criteria for the sub-ratings are unclear.
- Of the five verification items indicated by the ODA Evaluation Guidelines for "Relevance of Policies," three were set as verification items for all of the evaluations. However, in some of the evaluations, the remaining

two were not set as verification items, or two to three verification items were condensed into one.

- For “Effectiveness of Results,” the verification method varied more by evaluator than for other evaluation criteria. Furthermore, when it came to verification beyond the level of outcomes, there were cases in which the objectives stated by assistance policy documents were not described clearly, and none of the evaluations was found to have verified the achievement of the results of Japan's assistance against the “Objectives.”
- For “Appropriateness of Processes,” the number of verification items set varied greatly by evaluation, from two to nine. The number of items set as verification items was also large, totaling 22 items.

- In some evaluation reports, the actual verification items did not match the verification items indicated in the “Evaluation Framework” established at the start of evaluation with the agreement of stakeholders.

(5) Timing of Evaluation Implementation and Reflection in ODA Policies

Of the nine Country Assistance Evaluations whose results have been effectively utilized in assistance policies, a Country Development Cooperation Policy (formerly Country Assistance Policy) was formulated within two years of implementation of the Country Assistance Evaluation for four of them. Closer timing of the two would be expected to make it easier to reflect the results of Country Assistance Evaluations in assistance policies.

Recommendations Based on Study Results

(1) Recommendations for Further Utilization of Country Assistance Evaluations in ODA Policymaking

(a) Extraction of Useful Lessons for ODA Policymaking

Information applicable to other countries or regions should be organized and indicated in the evaluation reports as “Lessons Learned.” Accordingly, it would be desirable for the ODA Evaluation Guidelines to explain the sorts of items that should be included as lessons, just as they do for “Recommendations.”

(b) Country Assistance Evaluation Implementation Planning (Timing of Implementation of Evaluations and Selection of Targets)

Making the scope of implementation of Country Assistance Evaluations more explicit by instituting a policy of incorporating Country Assistance Evaluations into part of the revision process for Country Development Cooperation Policies would be desirable for both evaluators and evaluation users from the perspective of facilitating shared understanding. The timing of the Country Assistance Evaluation and revision of the Country Development Cooperation Policy should also be considered when selecting target countries from the viewpoint of enhancing the PDCA cycle.

(2) Recommendations for More Effective Implementation of Country Assistance Evaluations

(a) Reconsideration of Sub-Ratings

The criteria for sub-ratings need to be defined in order to make the evaluations more convincing to readers with clearer evidence.

(b) Clarification of Verification Items

In parallel with (a) above, the items to be verified in Country Assistance Evaluations should be organized, and standard verification items should be proposed in the Guidelines. Clarifying the verification items and indicating them in the Guidelines would make it possible to prevent variances in verification items according to the evaluator.

(c) Clarification of Objectives and Intervening Logic When Planning Evaluations

With regard to “Effectiveness of Results,” a “road map for achievement of results,” including the respective changes aimed at by the Basic Policy of Assistance (primary objective) and Priority Areas (secondary objectives) indicated in the Country Development Cooperation Policy as well as the Development Issues (tertiary objectives) indicated in the Rolling Plan, how the objectives can be accomplished, and the external factors that influence them, should be organized for the purpose of objective verification. Undergoing this process would facilitate the identification of survey items and also enable judgment of the results of information gathering and goal achievement as well as the specification of contributing and constraining factors, thereby clarifying the verification of effectiveness. In addition, proposals for realignment of the objectives could be expected ahead of the revision of the Development Cooperation Policy.

(d) Management of Evaluation Surveys by the ODA Evaluation Division of MOFA

When the ODA Evaluation Division, which manages evaluations, checks Country Assistance Evaluation Reports, it should make sure that the actual verification items match the verification items indicated in the evaluation framework. If the verification items were changed from the evaluation framework, the reasons for the changes should be confirmed with the evaluation team and explained in the report.

(3) Presentation Format of Evaluation Results Consistent with the Objectives of Country Assistance Evaluations

The desired presentation format of evaluation results varies depending on the scope of evaluation. Thus, for Country Assistance Evaluations, the presentation format of the evaluation results (including the presence or absence of ratings) should be determined after clarifying the scope of evaluation. Although the use of alphabetical or numeric ratings improves the ease of understandability, it could also prevent the subjects of evaluation from perceiving the evaluation results in a constructive manner. Accordingly, the presentation format of the evaluation should be determined with consideration for both of these factors.

Analysis of Third-Party Evaluations of Bilateral Grant Aid Projects Conducted by MOFA and Proposal of Evaluation Methods

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Senior Advisor	Prof. INADA Juichi School of Economics, Senshu University
Consultant	International Development Center of Japan Incorporated

Background and Scope of Work

Background

In evaluating individual bilateral grant aid projects implemented by MOFA over the past three years, the same methodology has been used as when evaluating ODA policies. However, both evaluation teams and project stakeholders have pointed out numerous incongruences and issues with the use of this methodology for the evaluation of individual projects due to the following characteristics.

- Bilateral grant aid conducted by MOFA consists mainly of foreign-currency assistance for the purchase of goods or materials such as Economic and Social Development Programs and is positioned as “aid that must be implemented in close coordination with diplomatic policies and may require flexibility.” The nature of the projects is therefore different from that of those implemented by JICA.
- While bilateral grant aid projects are of great significance in terms of diplomatic strategy, there are limitations to reviewing each project’s diplomatic impact and quantitative effects.
- Some of the verification items contained in the evaluation criteria and contents of analysis are redundant.

Scope

To propose an evaluation framework and methodology fully in line with the characteristics of individual bilateral grant aid projects conducted by MOFA.

Main Points of Proposed New Evaluation Methods

Evaluation Criteria

- Projects shall have two evaluation criteria, “Relevance of Plans” and “Effectiveness of Implementation and Results.”
- “Appropriateness of Processes” shall be included within the evaluation questions for “Relevance of Plans” and “Effectiveness of Implementation and Results,” instead of as an independent evaluation criterion. Processes should also be checked for factors such as their transparency.
- “Diplomatic Viewpoints” shall be merged with “Development Viewpoints.” Verification items for “Diplomatic Importance” shall be merged with “Relevance of Plans,” and verification items for “Diplomatic Impact” with “Effectiveness of Implementation and Results.”

In the Event of an Obligation to Accumulate Counterpart Funds*

- These shall essentially be included among the targets of evaluation. However, while evaluation sub-questions shall be posed separately from “accumulation” and “application/projects,” and the actual “application/

projects” shall be subjects of study, considering that the Government of Japan does not make “immediate use” a requirement, whether to include them among the targets of evaluation and rating shall be deliberated separately for each project.

* Funds accumulated by the government of the recipient country as the proceeds from the sale of the goods or materials procured through the grant aid. These funds can be used for projects, the procurement of goods or materials, etc. that will contribute to economic and social development in the recipient country based on deliberations on their application with the Government of Japan.

Ratings

- The rating method shall encourage the explicit indication of the basis for “Lessons Learned.”
- Four-level ratings are proposed, as are used for MOFA’s policy-level ODA evaluations and JICA’s grant aid post-project evaluations. However, individual evaluation reports shall not use four-level alphabetical ratings such as “A” through “D.”

Project Documents and Materials

- The basic set of project documents shall be provided immediately after contracting with third-party evaluators under a strict obligation of confidentiality.

Column

Twenty Years of ODA Evaluation Workshops

MOFA has organized ODA Evaluation Workshops sixteen times since 2001 in the aims of facilitating understanding of ODA and ODA evaluation in the Asia-Pacific region, enhancing the evaluation capacities of developing countries in the region, improving ownership and transparency on the side of developing countries, and increasing development efficiency.

During this period, most countries have started implementing some form of evaluation of national development plans including ODA. As exemplified by the launch of the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) in 2012, awareness of the importance of evaluation is also growing, and evaluation practices are spreading in the region as well. Furthermore, reflecting changes in global policy agendas such as the 2030 Agenda, the environment and needs surrounding evaluation are shifting, and other countries and agencies are beginning to host similar evaluation-related seminars and meetings. Under these circumstances, twenty years since the launch of the workshops, MOFA reviewed the significance and role of past ODA Evaluation Workshops through surveys such as questionnaire surveys of government officials from participating countries, evaluation experts from Japan, and other donors and organizations.

The survey results indicated that the workshops are held in effective coordination with relevant Japanese and overseas organizations, which have a wealth of experience in evaluation practices, and that the themes and agenda covered in the workshops are practical and applicable for participants, as they were properly set taking into account international trends and interests as well as the needs of participating countries. The findings also revealed that Japan's pioneering efforts and continuous support at a time when interest in evaluation was not very high have greatly contributed to fostering a culture of evaluation and evaluation capacities in Asia-Pacific countries. The workshops organized by Japan on a regular basis are now recognized as an evaluation platform for the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, the establishment of APEA in this region, where the building of an evaluation network was somewhat slow compared to other regions of the world, is regarded as an impact of the ODA Evaluation Workshops through continuous indirect support even before their foundation.

The diplomatic role of the workshops was also reviewed. As a country in Asia, Japan's initiative in fostering a culture of evaluation while advocating the importance of evaluation as well as its impacts on the building of evaluation frameworks and systems in Asia-Pacific countries were regarded as having contributed to the elevation of Japan's diplomatic leadership in the region. The clear demonstration by the Government of Japan to partner countries and the international community of its emphasis on evaluation, willingness to support partner countries in enhancing their capacities, and responsible attitude toward cooperation that goes beyond merely providing ODA was also regarded as significant.

On the other hand, some future challenges were identified. There is room to make information on Japan's ODA Workshops more accessible and appealing to the general public. In addition, participation by Pacific Island countries, which have a great need to improve their evaluation capacities, remains limited.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to maintain the previous in-person modality of the workshops. Nonetheless, MOFA will examine how to hold the workshops going forward in light of the findings and challenges identified from this review.

Other ODA Evaluations

Evaluations Based on the Government Policy Evaluations Act (GPEA)

Since the enforcement of the Government Policy Evaluations Act (GPEA) in 2002, each ministry or agency of the Government of Japan is required to conduct self-evaluations of the policies under its jurisdiction.

MOFA conducts ex-post evaluations of its overall economic cooperation policies, ex-post evaluations of pending and unfinished projects¹, and ex-ante evaluations of projects exceeding a certain monetary value² based on the GPEA and its Order for Enforcement.

MOFA Website

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/index_hyouka05.html

¹ "Pending projects" are projects for which the Loan Agreement has not yet been signed or loan disbursement has not yet begun five years after the policy was determined. "Unfinished projects" are projects for which loan disbursement has not yet been completed ten years after the policy was determined.

² Grant aid projects in which the maximum amount of aid offered through an Exchange of Notes (E/N) is one billion yen or more and ODA loans in which the maximum amount offered through an E/N is 15 billion yen or more

Evaluations by Other Ministries and Agencies

Ministries and agencies besides MOFA also conduct ODA-related evaluations as part of evaluations of policymaking, policy enforcement, and project implementation in areas under their jurisdiction based on the GPEA. For details, please refer to the website of each respective ministry or agency linked below.

Financial Services Agency (FSA)

Training program for financial officials in developing countries (supervisory seminars)

https://www.fsa.go.jp/common/budget/kourituka/03_R3/saisyuu/21_0022.pdf

(See Program 1.)

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)

Promotion of global strategy in the ICT sector

https://www.soumu.go.jp/menu_seisakuhyouka/kekka.html

(See the preliminary analysis table for evaluation of main policies implemented in FY2020 and the evaluation report for main policies implemented in FY2020; policies include non-ODA projects.)

Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

Promotion of international cooperation on legal affairs and administration

https://www.moj.go.jp/hisho/seisakuhyouka/kanbou_hyouka_hyouka01-03.html

(See p. 192-228 of the Report on FY2019 MOJ Ex-Post Evaluation Results.)

Ministry of Finance (MOF)

Promotion of a wide variety of international cooperation, including financial support and intellectual assistance, to help developing countries stably develop their economies and societies

https://www.mof.go.jp/about_mof/policy_evaluation/mof/fy2020/evaluation/index.html

(See p. 232-249; policies include non-ODA projects.)

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

Promotion of international exchange and cooperation to contribute to the development of a prosperous international community

https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kouritsu/detail/block30_00028.htm

(See project name "Policy 13-1: Promotion of International Exchange" in the MEXT-relevant portion of the FY2019 Project Review Sheet; policies include non-ODA projects.)

▶ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)

Participation in and contribution to the international community

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/wp/seisaku/hyouka/keikaku-kekka.html#hyouka>

(See the preliminary analysis table for policy evaluation.)

▶ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

Establishment of comprehensive food security compatible with various risks

<https://www.maff.go.jp/j/assess/hanei/sougo/h30/h30.html>

(Policies include non-ODA projects.)

▶ Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)

Support for development of overseas markets and inward investment

https://www.meti.go.jp/policy/policy_management/seisaku_hyoka/2020/index.html

(See Ex-Post Evaluation 4-2 in the FY2020 policy evaluation report; policies include non-ODA projects.)

▶ Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Promotion of international cooperation and coordination

https://www.mlit.go.jp/page/kanbo05_hy_002146.html

(Policies include non-ODA projects.)

▶ Ministry of the Environment (MOE)

International coordination and cooperation related to global environmental conservation

<http://www.env.go.jp/guide/seisaku/index.html>

(See the FY2020 evaluation report; evaluations include non-ODA projects.)

▶ Evaluations by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

JICA evaluates individual projects (external evaluations by third-party evaluators or internal evaluations by JICA overseas offices depending on the aid amount) with the three aid schemes of technical cooperation, ODA Loans, and grant aid (under JICA's jurisdiction). It also conducts comprehensive and cross-sectoral evaluations with specific themes (e.g., by region, issue, or aid modality), impact evaluations for evidence-based project implementation, and process analyses focused on the achievement of results from projects.

When conducting evaluations, JICA aims to promote the utilization of evaluation results to further improve projects from the perspective of "learning," while also striving to ensure accountability by securing the objectivity and transparency of evaluations as well as publishing the evaluation results.

▶ JICA Website

Project evaluations

https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/index.html

▶ Evaluations by Governments and Agencies in Recipient Countries

Each year, MOFA commissions recipient governments, government agencies, private consultants, and professional evaluators in a recipient country to evaluate a development program in an area such as health, transportation, or disaster prevention. The aims of these evaluations are to enhance the recipient country's evaluation capabilities, improve ODA management, ensure accountability, and promote understanding of Japan's ODA in the recipient country.

Follow-up on FY2019 ODA Evaluation Results

MOFA formulates response actions for the recommendations obtained from third-party evaluations and checks the status of their implementation. The following are examples of the implementation status of response actions taken for the recommendations obtained from third-party evaluations in FY2019 (as of September 2021).

[The FY2019 evaluation reports can be viewed here.](#)

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to the Philippines

Recommendation:
**Enhancement of Assistance in Mindanao Enabling
the Realization of Dividends of Peace**

Based on the relations of trust built thus far with stakeholders on the Philippine side and with consideration for safety, support for the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) established in February 2019 should be enhanced while also utilizing local organizations and human resources so that relevant parties including the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), local governments, Christians, and indigenous people can realize the dividends of peace.



Implementation Status of Response Actions

In order to stabilize the society of Mindanao, Japan is implementing measures such as maintenance/enhancement of equipment in the agricultural and water-supply sectors, enhancement of health and medical services, and support for the reintegration of former soldiers into civil society starting with vocational training. In addition, JICA experts have been dispatched to strengthen the capabilities of the BTA.

Evaluation of Grant Aid for Japanese NGO Projects

Recommendation:
**Streamlining of Operations by Simplifying
Procedures, etc.**

Increases in the amount of funding and number of projects have resulted in a greater workload on the MOFA side. Thus, multi-year contracts for projects spanning multiple fiscal years, the simplification of modification procedures, and the assignment of external commissioned staff members should be considered. Measures such as analysis of areas with potential for simplification and factors that promoted or hindered projects through the review of various past reports and utilization of the results of analysis in preliminary consultations and screening should also be considered.



Implementation Status of Response Actions

In FY2020, MOFA worked to streamline operations by revising the approval and instruction processes for contracts, especially overseas ones, and shifting project selection meetings online. The FY2021 operating procedures also abolished the use of seals in nearly all situations except contracts. In the future, further efforts to streamline operations will include sharing problems within the implementation process and their solutions among relevant parties, as well as compiling and sharing issues that will benefit the NGO side.



Educational assistance project in Hlaingbwe
Township, Kayin State, Myanmar
(Evaluation of Grant Aid for Japanese NGO Projects)



"Issyk-Kul Brand" (regional branding effort) in the Kyrgyz Republic
Women working in a felt workshop
(Evaluation of ODA to Promote Women's Empowerment)

Evaluation of ODA to Promote Women's Empowerment

Recommendation: Formulation of Flagship Gender-Responsive Projects for Japan

Japan should formulate flagship gender-responsive projects that fully showcase the strengths of its ODA in order to adequately demonstrate its gender-related contributions to partner countries and the international community. Appealing achievements are useful for further coordination with other donors and can be expected to lead to stronger cooperative ties, as well as the enhancement of Japan's support for gender-related issues.



Implementation Status of Response Actions

Japan has supported initiatives from a gender-based perspective including the creation of a Gender Action Plan as part of a project to upgrade transportation in Dhaka, Bangladesh, based on Japan's experience with mass rapid transit projects in India.

As examples of public relations, Japan has used the International Conference on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) held in December 2020 in Vietnam along with MOFA-led webinars as opportunities to highlight projects such as the protection of women in conflict-affected regions; support for economic empowerment; reinforcement of the capabilities of police, military, and judicial personnel to prevent sexual violence in conflict; and support for female police officers in Afghanistan. At other international conferences and United Nations meetings, Japan frequently reports on its assistance to the judicial system and police in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a project supported by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC), as a positive example. The Government of Japan has also shared its gender-related initiatives through the JICA website on the occasions of International Day of the Girl Child and International Women's Day.

Evaluation of the SATREPS (Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development) Program

Recommendation: Establishment of a Common Understanding of "Social and Practical Impacts" and Long-Term Follow-up Mechanisms

Even though a definition and direction are provided for social impacts, even now, ten years after the establishment of the program, there is not a sufficient common understanding of targets to achieve within the duration of SATREPS projects, which makes it difficult to work out concrete measures for promotion. Going forward, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED), and JICA need to establish a common understanding of the specific social impacts targeted in their respective project materials. There is also a need for long-term follow-up that surveys the effectiveness of SATREPS projects several years after their completion and extracts high-level lessons by sector and region.



Implementation Status of Response Actions

Targets and concrete examples of social impacts are currently under discussion among the relevant agencies. These are expected to be settled within FY2021.

With regard to long-term follow-up, JST will continue to conduct follow-up evaluations (surveys) of SATREPS projects. In addition, JICA plans to conduct a review of SATREPS projects in FY2021 aimed at classification by research category and extraction of lessons from projects that were highly effective for development. The relevant agencies will continue discussions while utilizing existing frameworks in order to extract lessons for the overall SATREPS program.

Non-Project Grant Aid to Peru in FY2013

Recommendation:

Expanded Disclosure of Information on the Nature of Cooperation

The objectives and background of this project are not clearly stated in relevant materials published by MOFA and the Embassy of Japan in Peru. This makes it difficult for the Japanese public to understand why the project was necessary, what was provided where, or whether the contents of the project and amount of aid were appropriate. Information disclosure is needed to ensure public accountability, along with efforts to promote public understanding.



Implementation Status of Response Actions

A link was posted from the website of the Embassy of Japan in Peru to the relevant section of the MOFA website (evaluation reports already published). MOFA has also ensured that details such as the objectives and background of the program, nature and targets of cooperation, and monetary amounts are clearly stated in press releases when implementing Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Programs in Peru.



Provided vehicles used as official vehicles by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru

Postscript

Engaging in ODA evaluation forces us to consider on a daily basis how to accomplish its two objectives, namely, improving ODA management and fulfilling public accountability. However, finding a balance between the two is “easier said than done.”

Evaluations conducted by the ODA Evaluation Division of MOFA are external third-party evaluations. If we focus solely on the improvement of ODA management through evaluation results, internal evaluations by the parties who actually implement policies and projects can better serve this objective. That is because relevant parties familiar with the content of those policies and projects can determine what kinds of evaluations should be conducted in terms of practical utilization. Furthermore, internal evaluations have easy access to necessary information. On the other hand, internal evaluations may be viewed as too self-serving. Independent third-party evaluations are considered desirable from the perspective of accountability due to the perception of greater reliability. Another advantage is that external experts and professional evaluators can be expected to produce high-quality evaluations.

With external third-party evaluations, the issue becomes how to obtain the information necessary for evaluation, objectively verify relevance, effectiveness, and processes, and thereby derive useful recommendations and lessons to be used by those involved in ODA policies and projects despite limited access to internal information. The ODA Evaluation Division accordingly functions as a mediator between third-party evaluation teams and concerned divisions to facilitate the smooth implementation of evaluations.

The issue of the balance between the independence and utility of evaluations was also raised at the recent meeting of the OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet). The title of the session was “Balancing independence and utility of evaluations: Walking an evaluation tightrope,” which succinctly captured the challenges encountered by those engaged in evaluation. Although each evaluation division faces a different situation and there are no simple solutions, I felt somewhat relieved to learn that even leading countries in the field of evaluation face the same problem. At the meeting, multiple countries also mentioned that it is important to fully communicate with those engaged in the evaluation target during the evaluation process, because this leads to the utilization of evaluation results. These are the very issues that we always keep in mind. Thus, this experience renewed my determination to continue promoting understanding and utilization of evaluations through dialogue with the divisions in charge of ODA policies and projects.

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Related Websites

- ▶ Official Development Assistance (ODA), MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/index.html>
- ▶ ODA Evaluation, MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/index.html>
- ▶ ODA Evaluation Guidelines, MOFA
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/basic_documents/pdfs/guidelines2021.pdf
- ▶ ODA Evaluation Handbook, MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/100205690.pdf>
(in Japanese)
- ▶ Individual ODA Evaluation Reports, MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/year/>
- ▶ Annual Reports on Japan's ODA Evaluation, MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/index.html>
- ▶ Evaluations Based on the Government Policy Evaluations Act, MOFA
https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/index_hyouka05.html
(in Japanese)
- ▶ Development Cooperation Charter
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000138.html
- ▶ White Paper on Development Cooperation, MOFA
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html

- ▶ Country Development Cooperation Policies (formerly Country Assistance Policies), MOFA
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/assistance/index2.html>
- ▶ Project Evaluations, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/index.html
- ▶ Network on Development Evaluation, Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC)
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation>
- ▶ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/mdg/documents.html>
- ▶ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/sdgs/index.html>
- ▶ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/sdgs/pdf/Japans_Effort_for_Achieving_the_SDGs.pdf
- ▶ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Promotion Headquarters
https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98_abe/actions/201806/_00038.html

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