

# Chairman's Summary

## by Prof. Hirono, Chairman of "The Tokyo Workshop on ODA Evaluation"

13-14 November 2002

Japan hosted "The Tokyo Workshop on ODA Evaluation" on 13-14 November 2002 at the United Nations University. This was the second Workshop on ODA Evaluation following last year's one.

Fifty representatives, including many senior government officials from seventeen Asian countries, staffs in evaluation departments of multilateral development agencies (WB, ADB and UNDP) participated in this Workshop. From Japan, members of the Diet, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, staffs of Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan Bank for International Cooperation and other government agencies also participated.

With the emergence of new development modality which aims at the effective and efficient implementation of ODA and lessening the administrative burden of partner countries, participants of the Workshop actively discussed and exchanged views on the role of evaluation in the new development modality and the importance of collaboration between donor and partner countries.

Since various efforts are being made in the international community to deal with development issues, public interest towards international development has increased in Japan. It has become more important to implement ODA effectively and efficiently as well as to fulfil its accountability to the public. Under these circumstances, the Japanese public was provided with a meaningful opportunity to hear the discussion of the Workshop.

Asian participants were able to share their knowledge and experience among themselves as well as with participants from multilateral development agencies regarding international trends of ODA and its evaluation. During the Workshop, participants also discussed the role of evaluation in the international development assistance, major characteristics of the ODA and the role of evaluation in Asian countries as well as the role of partner countries in the evaluation process. The discussion of the Workshop certainly facilitated in taking common approaches to effective ODA evaluation and institutional framework of development evaluation, taking into account a broad shift of evaluation from mechanistic and technical to synergetic approach in the larger macro-economic and overall development context.

All participants from the Asian partner countries appreciated Japan's initiatives to organize the second Workshop. They also welcomed Japan's strong commitment to assisting Asian partners' self-help efforts for development through the enhanced role of ODA.

Some highlights of their discussions included among others:

Participants reached a common understanding that in implementing ODA effectively, a transparent ODA system which allows both the participation of all concerned parties, including the beneficiaries in partner countries and the maximizing of development outcome, is required, and that the role of monitoring and evaluation becomes increasingly important to achieve the common international development goals. In this connection, recently, monitoring and evaluation, as seen in the sector wide approaches, are incorporated in the system of bilateral and multilateral ODA. The importance of the collaboration between donor and partner countries for evaluation including participatory joint evaluation as well as harmonization of evaluation criteria and procedures among donors was also recognized.

Many participants shared that, in addition to the project-level evaluation, the importance of program- or policy-level evaluation was rising and ex-ante evaluation (appraisal), monitoring and continuous evaluation would also be meaningful. They agreed to discuss on further improvement of evaluation implementation. They reached common recognition for the necessity of sharing information related to development evaluation between and within donor and partner countries.

The real value of evaluation should be assessed by the impact of the feedback of the evaluation for improvement of present programs and formulation of future aid policies. They shared that partner countries should be involved in the process of the feedback of ODA evaluation, and the feedback of evaluation should be utilized in the process of policy-making, strategy formulation and monitoring of ODA. The need for capacity building in partner countries was also found crucial. These efforts will enhance the usefulness of the ODA as well as the accountability to the people not only in donor countries but also in partner countries. The necessity of introducing appropriate quantitative indices in ODA planning was also emphasized.

Participants of the Workshop agreed on the necessity of establishing National Evaluation Association in partner countries in order to promote their evaluation capacity development. It is also agreed that international donor community should render support in the process of establishing such Associations.

Many Asian partners suggested that similar workshops should be held next year. In this connection, Japan expressed her willingness to organize a similar ODA Evaluation Workshop in Tokyo next year.

It is scheduled to publish the summary proceedings of the second ODA Evaluation Workshop in Tokyo. It is expected that participants from Asian partner countries will take home the results of the Workshop and carry out whatever they can to improve their involvement in the ODA evaluation process.