



ROOM DOCUMENT 10b

DAC Network on Development Evaluation

**EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING -
RECENT INITIATIVES**

Item V: iii

MAJOR ISSUES SURROUNDING ECD
~Observation from Training Program by JICA~

This document has been prepared by Japan International Cooperation Agency for information at the meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2 – 3 June 2005.

3rd meeting
2 – 3 June 2005

Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) Initiatives of JAPAN
Major Issues Surrounding ECD
~Observation from Training Program by JICA~

Office of Evaluation
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

1. Background

Partnership in evaluation among developing countries and donors is essential for achieving more effective cooperation. To enhance partnership, the Japanese Government has supported evaluation capacity development (ECD) in developing countries through such initiatives as ‘Seminar/Workshop on ODA Evaluation’ which has been held annually for the past four years.

In addition to these Seminars/Workshops, the Japanese Government has decided to further strengthen its support by introducing a systematic training program on development evaluation as JICA’s technical cooperation. This program is composed of three courses: (1) evaluation of ODA loans (implemented in collaboration with JBIC); (2) evaluation of a technical cooperation project (jointly conducted by JICA and the World Bank Institute using distance-learning methods); and (3) the institutionalization of an evaluation system (implemented in collaboration with the Japan Evaluation Society). The first two courses focus on enhancing evaluation capabilities and the last one focuses on building the evaluation system. Unlike the first two, the last one ‘The Forum on Institutionalization of Evaluation System’ targets senior-level officials responsible for creating the system and relevant policies, and highlights the major issues surrounding ECD in developing countries. (See ANNEX for general information on ECD trainings.)

2. Outline of ‘The Forum on Institutionalization of Evaluation System’

The forum was held in Tokyo from March 21 to April 2, 2005. 14 officials from 14 countries, mainly directors responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluating the system and relevant policies were in attendance. It aimed at enhancing evaluation capacity of partner countries through joint learning and knowledge sharing among participants, and focused on facilitating developing countries’ own efforts for ECD. (See ANNEX for details.)

Overall, the forum received full recognition for its usefulness and effectiveness in terms of ECD, since it emphasized sharing realities and country needs, and facilitated action plans for institutionalizing and mainstreaming an evaluation system. Specific contents included; (i) the concept and ideas of institutionalizing evaluation system, (ii) overall picture of evaluation system of donors and (iii) updated evaluation techniques.

3. Issues Surrounding ECD

During the forum, the issues of evaluation capacity and system have been shared and discussed among participants as follows:

1) Institutionalization

The institutionalization of evaluation system is one of the critical issues affecting ECD. The evaluation system is not clearly authorized or situated under the legislation in some countries whereas the system itself is institutionalized in other countries but lacks feedback system and a link to policy and budget cycle. Without defining institutionalization of evaluation in the policy cycle, it is difficult to utilize evaluation as an accountability and learning tool.

2) Organizational setup

The organizational setup including its related function is another issue which deeply affects the coordination and harmonization of the evaluation. In many countries, the evaluations are implemented at different levels (national, provincial, municipal etc.) and lines (by-ministry). Their demarcation is not clearly depicted, and the common evaluation framework or methodology is not often developed. Under this circumstances, the coordination between evaluations conducted by different agencies is seldom emphasized, thus the efficiency of evaluation is significantly limited.

3) Technical aspect

The lack of human resources is a fundamental factor that inhibits the effectiveness and utilization of the evaluations. Evaluation specialties are very scarce in developing countries, should they exist, they are not always connected to governmental organizations. Capacity building for different levels of stakeholders is needed to implement effectively the evaluation of which results are well analyzed and worth feedback. Leadership and partnership with a wide evaluation community are also important for ECD.

4) Accountability and involvement of the civil society

Accountability is one of the most important functions of the evaluation, yet developing countries are far from being ready to fulfill accountability by properly publishing their evaluation results. When it comes to effective disclosure and publicity of evaluation, information technology (IT) will be a major way for developing countries to build accountability system, as Japan and other donors did already. In addition to accountability, the involvement of the civil society during the process of evaluation is another issue being acknowledged during the forum. Accountability and involvement of the civil society greatly relates to the change in mindset of both providers and receivers of public services, i.e. government and civil society. It is important for ECD to include this aspect.

4. Toward effective ECD

The above mentioned issues have demonstrated the necessity to recognize ECD from various perspectives, not just from so-called technical capacity, but rather from a system, organizational and institutional aspect. Following a recent trend among the donor community, the introduction of Results Based Management (RBM) has been promoted. It affects not only the methodology of evaluation but also the structure and strategy of the whole organization by reflecting country-specific circumstances. In this regard, the process of ECD should be based upon the recognition that evaluation capacity must be developed with initiatives of developing countries while addressing the specific circumstances and needs of the country. When providing 'effective ECD', it is important to have a broad perspective on ECD regarding developing countries, and to facilitate their own efforts vis-à-vis ECD.

ANNEX

General Information of ECD Trainings provided by JICA

1. Forum on Institutionalization of Evaluation System

(1) Duration

2 weeks a year since 2005.

(2) Target Countries of 2005 (number of participants a year) * Different target countries every year

Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam (14)

(3) Target Group

Senior level officials at multi-sector coordinating ministries (such as planning ministries) who are responsible for evaluation systems and policies

(4) Course Outcome

Evaluation capacity of participants is enhanced through acquiring knowledge and ideas of effective evaluation system.

(5) Course Output

Final Reports are completed which clarify issues and possible countermeasures to establish evaluation systems in respective countries.

2. Seminar on Evaluation of Japan's Loan Projects

(1) Duration

2 weeks a year since 2000.

(2) Target Countries (number of participants a year) * Different target countries every year

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, and Vietnam (17)

(3) Target Group

Senior officials (above the division chief level) of aid coordinating agencies or implementing agencies, who are responsible for evaluation of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects, especially ODA loan projects financed by Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

(4) Course Outcome

Evaluation capacity of participants is enhanced, and thereby evaluation capacity of the organizations is improved.

(5) Course Output

1) Action plans which clarify measures to improve the evaluation system of participants' organization regarding Japan's ODA loan projects are formulated.

2) Logical frameworks of an infrastructure project of participants' organizations are formulated.

3. JICA/WBI Joint Distance Learning Course on M&E

(1) Period of delivery

Several times a year since 2003

(2) Target Countries * Different target countries every year

Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam

(3) Target group

Officials at aid coordinating or line ministries in partner countries (including JICA and WBI counterparts) who are responsible for evaluation of programs/projects

(4) Course Outcome

Evaluation capacity of participants is enhanced, and thereby evaluation capacity of the organizations is improved.

(5) Course Output

Practical skills and knowledge on monitoring and evaluation is acquired.

