

A Study on the Effects of Operating JICA Advisory Committee for Environmental and Social Considerations

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1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the effects for JICA to improve quality of examination of environmental and social considerations by operating the Advisory Committee, by focusing on the contents of the advice, which were summarized into advisory documents as a result of discussions held at the Advisory Committee.

2. Overview of JICA Advisory Committee for Environmental and Social Considerations

One of the characteristics of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (proclaimed in April 2010, hereinafter referred to as “the Guidelines”) is the establishment of the Advisory Committee for Environmental and Social Considerations (hereinafter referred to as “the Advisory Committee”). The Advisory Committee is a permanent third-party institution that gives advice to JICA in regards to the support for and examination of environmental and social considerations of cooperation projects. Comprised of external experts possessed with necessary knowledge, the Advisory Committee receives report from JICA at each stage of a cooperation project from project formulation stage to monitoring stage and gives advice to JICA.¹⁾ (see Fig.1)

This committee system concerning environmental and social considerations is unique to JICA, as this type of committee has never been established or operated by any other development aid organizations.²⁾

3. Operation of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee operates by holding monthly plenary meetings (chaired by the Chairperson) participated by all committee members, as well as by organizing meetings for a smaller Working Group (hereinafter abbreviated as WG) composed of four or so members.

The workflow of the Advisory Committee starts at a plenary meeting, where JICA gives a briefing on a project subject to advice, following which the members and schedule of the WG for the project are decided. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report, resettlement plan, and other materials pertinent to discussion are distributed to each WG member two weeks prior to the WG meeting, and the WG members are requested to send questions and comments to JICA before the WG meeting. On the day of WG meeting, a discussion is held between JICA's

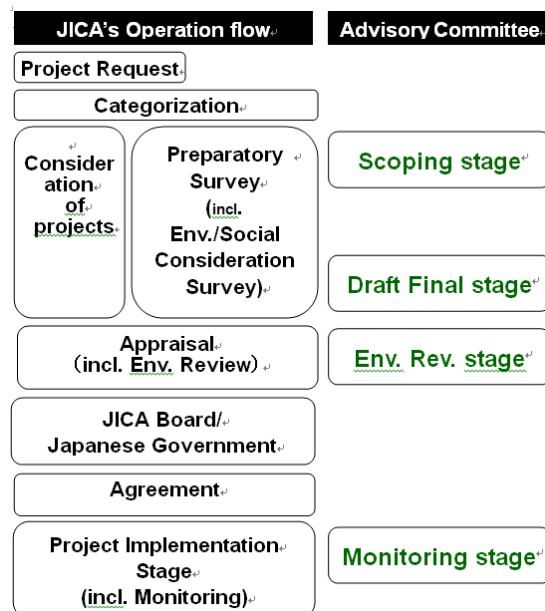


Fig.1: “JICA’s operational Flow and timing of Advisory Committee”

department in charge of the project and the WG members, who then compile advice to JICA in a document. The advisory document is presented at the next nearest plenary meeting to be confirmed by all committee members in attendance and finalized in the name of the Chairperson.

At each plenary and WG meeting, a minutes of meeting is prepared and made available for viewing on JICA’s website along with reference materials used in the discussions.³⁾

4. Committee Members

The Advisory Committee comprises 24 members, who elect among themselves one Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons. Of the 24 members, 17 are academics, 4 are NGO-related persons, and 3 belong to Non Profit Organizations. Their expertise covers diverse fields, including environmental legislation, urban planning, sociology, social environment (resettlement, etc.), pollution control, and ecology. In some cases, where deemed necessary due to unique characteristics of projects, ad-hoc members are commissioned to examine the projects from their expert and technical viewpoints.

5. Projects Subjected to the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee discusses mainly Category-A projects (i.e., projects that are likely to have a significantly adverse impact on the environment and society). Since July 2010, 40 projects have been subjected to discussion (as of January

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2012). By type of cooperation, the Advisory Committee has given advice to 26 ODA loan projects, 5 grant aid projects, 8 master plan studies (to which strategic assessment was applied), and 1 technical cooperation project. The breakdown by sector is as follows (note: the figures in parentheses represent the numbers of projects to which strategic assessment was applied): 19 (2) roads and railways projects, 4 thermal power generation projects, 4 (3) hydro power generation projects, 3 (1) airport projects, 3 (1) ports and harbors projects, 2 river projects, 2 (1) industrial development projects, 1 power transmission project, 1 agricultural development project, and 1 waste management project.

Of these projects, 27 were issued an advisory document in the scoping phase, 17 in the final report drafting phase, and 10 in the environmental review phase (some projects received an advisory document multiple times in more than one of these phases). In total, 1,123 advices were provided in the 54 advisory documents.

6. Framework of Analysis

In this study, we captured the objectives of the 1,123 advice in the advisory documents and organized them according to the environmental checklist items provided in the appendix of the Guidelines (see Table 1).⁴⁾ Suggestions that could not be classified into any of the items in Table 1 were placed under the category of “Others.” We then focused on the items, including “Others”, which received relatively large numbers of suggestions, and compiled them as points to note in contemplating environmental and social considerations. In addition, based on the findings of the above analysis, we studied the points that have been strengthened for JICA in examining environmental and social considerations through the operation of the Advisory Committee.

7. Points to Note in Environmental and Social Considerations

We sorted out the content of each suggestion according to the “Framework of Analysis” in Section 6 above. Items that received a lot of advice from the Advisory Committee were (in the order of quantity): “Living and livelihood (141),” “Explanations to local stakeholders (131),” “Resettlement (95),” “Ecosystem (95),” “Monitoring (78),” and “Examination of alternatives (75)”. Advice which cannot be categorized into checklist items are 187 (see Table 2).

The above indicates that the Advisory Committee tends to give a greater number of advices in regards to: ① procedures during

Table-1: “Environmental Items” on the Guidelines’ Checklist

| |
|----------------------------------------------|
| 1.1 EIA & environmental permits |
| 1.2 Explanations to local stakeholders |
| 1.3 Examination of alternatives |
| 2.1 Air quality |
| 2.2 Water quality |
| 2.3 Waste |
| 2.4 Soil contamination |
| 2.5 Noise and vibration |
| 2.6 Subsidence |
| 2.7 Odor |
| 2.8 Sediment |
| 3.1 Sanctuary |
| 3.2 Ecosystem |
| 3.3 Hydrometeor |
| 3.4 Topography and geology |
| 3.5 Management of abandoned sites |
| 4.1 Resettlement |
| 4.2 Living and livelihood |
| 4.3 Heritage |
| 4.4 Landscape |
| 4.5 Ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples |
| 4.6 Work environment |
| 5.1 Impacts during construction |
| 5.2 Accident prevention measures |
| 5.3 Monitoring |
| Others |

the project development phase (examination of alternatives, explanations to local stakeholders), ② social and environmental aspects (resettlement, living and livelihood), ③ considerations for the natural environment (ecosystem), and ④ monitoring. By contrast, items related to pollution control tend to receive fewer advices.

Main points of the advice made for each checklist item, excluding “Others,” are as follows:

Living and Livelihood: The Advisory Committee advised that considerations should be given to the living and livelihood of residents who may be affected by the project by, for instance, ① linear planning to mitigate the impact of construction of roads, railways, etc. that may divide a local community or change the use of resources, ② designing a project that shows consideration for the poor and other socially vulnerable groups, and ③ incorporating in the project measures to ensure employment or restoration of livelihood for the resettled residents.

Explanations to Local Stakeholders: The Advisory Committee’s advice included the following: ① Involve diverse stakeholders in the planning process through wide publicity, and ② Reflect the residents’ views and interests on the project design.

Table-2: Tabulation by Environmental Checklist Item

| Checklist items | No. of suggestions |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 4.2 Living and livelihood | 141 |
| 1.2 Explanations to the local stakeholders | 131 |
| 4.1 Resettlement | 95 |
| 3.2 Ecosystem | 95 |
| 5.3 Monitoring | 78 |
| 1.3 Examination of alternatives | 75 |
| 2.1 Air quality | 58 |
| 2.2 Water quality | 58 |
| 2.3 Waste | 48 |
| 5.1 Impacts during construction | 40 |
| 3.3 Hydrometeor | 26 |
| 1.1 EIA and environmental permits | 16 |
| 4.4 Landscape | 11 |
| 4.3 Heritage | 11 |
| 2.5 Noise and vibration | 9 |
| 3.4 Topography and geology | 9 |
| 3.1 Sanctuary | 7 |
| 2.6 Subsidence | 7 |
| 2.4 Soil contamination | 7 |
| 5.2 Accident prevention measures | 6 |
| 2.7 Odor | 3 |
| 3.5 Management of abandoned sites | 3 |
| 4.5 Ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples | 2 |
| 6 Others | 187 |
| Total | 1,123 |

Resettlement: The Committee's advice included the following: ① Ensure that farmers, especially those not owing land, and other vulnerable groups are also covered by compensation, ② Conduct surveys on the compensation standards for farmers, ③ Give ample explanation of the resettlement process to residents, farmers, business owners, etc., and ④ Clearly define the organization and operation of a grievance redress mechanism.

Ecosystem: The Committee's advice included the following:

① Examine the project by taking into consideration the impact on the areas surrounding the project site, and ② Design the hydropower project by taking into account possible water reduction and other impacts on the ecosystem.

Monitoring: The Committee's advice included the following:

① Formulate a plan to monitor the project after the start of operation and make recommendations to the executing agency, ② Place the emphasis of monitoring on the concerns of residents (noise, etc.), ③ Conduct a spot survey of the ecosystem (corals) on a continuous basis, and ④ Monitor the impact on ecosystem of future increases of environmental loads (increase of traffic,

Table-3: Suggestions for "Others"

| Checklist items | No. of suggestions |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 6 Others | 187 |
| State the rationale for the evaluation of scoping items. | 48 |
| Consistency with and relation to overall plan. | 31 |
| Describe the study/prediction/evaluation methods. | 25 |
| Evaluate cumulative impacts. | 18 |
| Modify expressions/descriptions in the report. | 8 |
| Capacity building of executing agency. | 8 |
| Evaluate environmental loads. | 7 |
| Coping with climate change. | 5 |
| Examine mitigation measures. | 5 |
| Understand the economic state of the region | 5 |
| Comply with the Guidelines | 5 |
| Understand current status of land uses | 4 |
| Clarify the target area | 3 |
| Learn from past experience | 3 |
| Scope of impact | 3 |
| Evaluation in consideration of seasonal variation | 3 |
| Quantitative grasp of effects | 3 |
| Operation and management system | 2 |
| Profitability of the project | 1 |

etc.).

Examination of Alternatives: The Committee's advice included the following: ① In the feasibility study report, state the result of examining alternatives based on environmental and social considerations along with other factors, and ② State in the report the criteria used in examining alternatives.

Advice was also given for "Others" that do not fall under any of the items on the Checklist (see Table 3). Some of these advices apply across the board to other items, including the advice to state the appropriateness of the proposed project on its feasibility study report. The main points of the 187 advice can be classified into the following types:

- ① State on EIA report the rationale for evaluation in regards to the result of scoping.
- ② State on the feasibility study report the consistency with the master plan study and the mid- to long-term plan.
- ③ Describe the study/prediction/evaluation methods in the EIA report.
- ④ For airports/ports/harbors projects, evaluate cumulative impacts on the development of surrounding areas (urban sprawl, connecting roads, etc.) to the extent possible.

Other advice included stating in the report the economic state of the region and status of land uses, incorporating in the project the capacity building of the executing agency, and defining the

scope of impact by clarifying the target area of the project.

8. Conclusion and challenges in future

8.1 Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, the contributions made by the Advisory Committee for improving JICA's quality of examination of environmental and social considerations can be sorted out into the following:

- ① Checking of procedure-related matters in the project formation phase, such as examination of alternatives and explanations to local stakeholders, was enhanced.
- ② More residents' views were reflected on the project design as a result of advice made with respect to resettlement, living and livelihood, explanations to local stakeholders, monitoring of residents' concerns, etc.
- ③ Quality of JICA's feasibility studies was enhanced as a result of cross-sectional and multilateral examination of items other than those on the Checklist, such as appropriateness of the project, rationale for the evaluation of scoping items, study/prediction/evaluation methods, and possibility of cumulative impacts.

8.2 Challenges in future

JICA's Evaluation Department is staffed with 20 or so personnel in charge of environmental and social considerations. Although the manpower is limited compared to that of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and other development financial institutions; the department is fortifying environmental and social considerations through the operation of the Advisory Committee, a third-party institution composed of outside experts, as described in Section 8.1.

The Advisory Committee's advice is to show JICA where issues exist in contemplating environmental and social considerations, thereby facilitating JICA to support the executing agency of each recipient country in reducing and controlling these risks. Also, verification of the results of monitoring during the construction and operation of project facilities will ensure that environmental and social considerations are being implemented by the executing agencies of the recipient countries, and, as a result, negative impacts are expected to be reduced.

However, there are points to be improved for the future activities of JICA and the Advisory Committee. While JICA needs to make efforts to incorporate the main points discussed in "7 Points to Note in Environmental and Social Considerations" in its future project development, the Advisory Committee is expected to give professional advice to JICA upon measures to be applied for projects by the executing agencies of the recipient countries.

References

- 1) Japan International Cooperation Agency (2010): Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations, p.10.
- 2) Sachihiko Harashina (2009): The Challenge of the JICA Guideline of Environmental and Social Consideration in Official Development Assistance (in Japanese), paper session of 2009 annual meeting of Japan Society for Impact Assessment, pp.119-122.
- 3) Japan International Cooperation Agency (2011): JICA annual report 2011. pp.160.
- 4) Japan International Cooperation Agency (2010): Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations, p.38.