

# **JICA PCM and PDM Methodology Guidance (seed summary)**

## **Purpose**

This seed reference supports retrieval for JICA PCM/PDM-based proposal drafting in GrantFlow evaluation runs.

Not an official JICA document. Replace with official JICA PCM guidelines for production use.

## **JICA Project Cycle Management (PCM) overview**

JICA uses PCM methodology as its core project design and management framework.

PCM applies throughout the project cycle: identification, formulation, appraisal, implementation, evaluation.

The primary design tool is the Project Design Matrix (PDM).

## **Project Design Matrix (PDM) structure**

### **The PDM has four levels (top to bottom):**

- Overall Goal (■■■■): the higher-level development goal the project contributes to.

Not directly attributable to the project; requires complementary interventions.

- Project Purpose (■■■■■■■■): the primary change the project is responsible for.

Expressed as a change in condition, status, or behaviour at beneficiary level.

- Outputs (■■): tangible goods and services delivered by project activities.

Each output should be measurable and directly within project control.

- Activities (■■): specific tasks producing outputs.

### **Each PDM row requires:**

- Performance indicators (■■): objectively verifiable indicators.

- Means of verification (■■■■): data source and collection method.

- Important Assumptions (■■■■■■■■): external conditions required for causality to hold.

## **Important Assumptions — critical JICA requirement**

### **JICA PCM requires explicit Important Assumptions at every causal link:**

- From Activities to Outputs: what must be true for activities to produce outputs?

- From Outputs to Project Purpose: what must be true for outputs to achieve project purpose?

- From Project Purpose to Overall Goal: what must be true for project purpose to contribute to overall goal?

Assumptions that become risks require mitigation plans.

## **Japan's ODA rationale**

### **Every JICA proposal must include Japan's ODA rationale:**

- Alignment with Japan's Country Assistance Policy for the recipient country.
- Japan's comparative advantage in the relevant sector (technology, expertise, historical cooperation).
- Added value of Japanese cooperation versus other donors or alternative approaches.
- Consistency with Japan's SDG Promotion Policy and diplomatic priorities.

## **Technology transfer and capacity development**

### **JICA strongly emphasises:**

- Transfer of Japanese technology, methodology, or management systems.
- Counterpart capacity development as a core project output.
- Train-the-trainer approaches for sustainability beyond project period.
- Documentation of transferred knowledge in local languages.

### **JICA evaluation criteria (5 criteria)**

- Relevance: is the project appropriate for the country's needs and Japan's ODA policy?
- **Effectiveness: does the project achieve the Project Purpose?**
- **Efficiency: are inputs converted to outputs at appropriate rate?**
- **Impact: does the project contribute to the Overall Goal?**
- **Sustainability: will benefits continue after project completion?**

## **Key drafting checklist**

1. PDM is complete at all four levels.
2. Important Assumptions are stated at every causal link.
3. Japan's ODA rationale is specific and credible.
4. Technology or knowledge transfer plan is concrete.
5. Counterpart capacity development is addressed.

6. Indicators are objectively verifiable with clear means of verification.
7. Sustainability is addressed across institutional, financial, and technical dimensions.