

JICA Quality Standards and Sustainability Framework (seed)

Purpose

Quality and sustainability reference for JICA proposal design. Not an official document.

JICA quality management philosophy

JICA applies Japanese quality standards (monozukuri — manufacturing excellence) to development cooperation.

Key quality principles:

- Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle embedded in project management.
- Kaizen (continuous improvement) introduced to partner institutions.
- 5S methodology (Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardise, Sustain) for operational efficiency.
- Zero-defect orientation in technical outputs.

Infrastructure quality requirements

JICA-funded infrastructure must meet:

- Japanese Industrial Standards (JIS) or equivalent where applicable.
- Seismic and flood-resistant design standards.
- Climate-resilient specifications for long-term asset life.
- Comprehensive commissioning and handover procedures.
- O&M; manuals prepared in local language before handover.

Counterpart training framework

JICA distinguishes three types of knowledge transfer:

1. On-the-job training (OJT): JICA experts work alongside counterpart staff.
2. Study tours to Japan: counterparts observe Japanese systems and practices firsthand.
3. Third-country training: JICA-funded training in regional hub countries.

All training activities must be documented with competency assessments.

Sustainability framework

JICA's sustainability analysis covers five dimensions:

1. Policy/institutional: Is the project embedded in government policy and institutional mandate?

2. Organisational/administrative: Does the counterpart have administrative capacity to continue?

3. Financial: Is recurrent budget secured? Are cost-recovery mechanisms viable?

4. Technological: Can local staff operate and maintain the technology transferred?

5. Environmental and social: Are there risks of negative environmental or social impact post-project?

Exit strategy requirements

All JICA technical cooperation projects must include an exit strategy:

- Clear handover plan with timelines.
- Identification of who takes responsibility for each output after completion.
- Plan for sustaining financial resources (government budget, user fees, other donors).
- Documentation of lessons learned for future similar projects.

Monitoring during implementation

JICA uses Joint Coordination Committees (JCC) for oversight:

- JCC meets semi-annually with JICA and counterpart representatives.
- Progress reviewed against PDM indicators.
- Important Assumptions monitored; risk escalation procedures in place.
- Mid-term and terminal evaluations by independent evaluators.