

An Overview of the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Regarding The Adverse Effects Considered in Its Revisions

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Received: 24 February 2022; Revised: 26 April 2022; Accepted: 3 May 2022

Abstract

If the adverse impacts brought by the development projects could be reversed to “all great historic facts”, the tragedy is in whose hands and the farce is in whose interests? And which “personages” can be interpreted as “tragedy” or as “farce” in the history of the development? This paper aims to look over the history of the Japanese development assistant projects by focusing on the important accidents as tragedy and the important changes as “farce”. In January 2022, the implementing agency of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) called JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) revised its Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations. The Guidelines aim to avoid or minimize the adverse environmental and social impacts caused by JICA-assisted projects in developing countries. Though JICA’s Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations were highly evaluated and JICA received the Institutional Award from the International Association for Impact Assessment in 2019 (JICA, 2019a), and the positive reputation from the international academic society for its Guidelines continues, it has also faced harsh criticism for its negative consequences. This paper examines the chronological changes in the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations of JICA from JICA’s establishment to the latest reforms. The Japanese government has changed its policies on environmental and social impacts of international development projects several times, as Project Affected Peoples (PAPs) and civil society have brought attention to resultant adverse effects. This paper shows each reform’s features and their outcomes.

Keywords Japan International Cooperation Agency, Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations, Adverse Impacts, Official Development Assistance, Objections

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“Hegel says somewhere that all great historic facts and personages recur twice. He forgot to add: “Once as tragedy, and again as farce.”

——Karl Marx (1898)

1. The pitfalls in Japanese national law that left PAPs behind (1990-)

In the mid-1950s, Japan established public organizations called the Japan Federation of Overseas Associations and the Japan Asian Association, which were founded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Emigration Promotion corporation in order to expand economic activities and immigration overseas after WWII (JICA, 2010a). In the 1960s, the Japanese government promulgated a law which permitted the creation of official loan projects for industrial development and economic activities in Southeast Asian countries and developing countries, which was called the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund Act (OECF Act). In March 1961, OECF was established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and started their development projects overseas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). Later, the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA), the Overseas Agricultural Development Association (OADA), and the Japan Emigration Service (JEMIS) were established. These three organizations formed the core of today’s Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). In May 1974, the Japan International Cooperation Agency Act (JICA Act) was promulgated, establishing JICA (JICA, 2019b) in August. Since basic laws to rule Japanese overseas aid had never been made, these two laws were essential to regulate Japan’s international cooperation.

As the explanation above shows, Japanese overseas cooperation activities for the sake of national interest became systematically broader by not only reforming national law (see Table 1), but also by integrating several organizations including not only those under control of the government but also public cooperation organizations. As Table 1 shows, there were several changes from the OECF Act to the JICA Act, such as justifying a wider range of operation activities in accordance with additional definitions regarding development (e.g. development of society, agriculture, forestry, and the mineral industry). Following the expanded purpose of overseas cooperation activities (e.g. the implementation of technical cooperation and the promotion of overseas cooperation activities by young people), various operations as well as ODA-associated personnel increased, including core management staff and operation outsourcing staff. While the reform of the OECF Act to the JICA Act developed points regarding the variety and volume of Japanese ODA, there were some unique points which were not developed.

The main features of both laws are (a) justifying overseas activities in developing countries; (b) evaluating international cooperation for further economic, industrial and technological promotions; (c) requiring investigations before starting

projects; (d) monitoring under the responsibility of a selected leader; and (e) fines as penalties whenever the associated Japanese entity violates the Act.

Table 1: Laws ruling international development projects until 2003

	OECF Act (Law No.173, 1960)	JICA Act (Law No.62, 1974)
Objectives from general rules	To contribute to the development of industries in Southeast Asia and other developing regions overseas. To promote overseas economic cooperation.	To implement technical cooperation and promote overseas cooperation activities by young people in developing countries from the viewpoint of cooperating for the development of society, agriculture, forestry, and the mineral industry in developing regions. To contribute to the economic and social development of these regions and to promote international cooperation.
Officers and Staff	1 President, 2 Directors, 1 Auditor.	1 President, 2 Vice Presidents, 12 or fewer Directors, and 3 or fewer Auditors.
Management of Council	Members are fewer than 15.	Committee Members are fewer than 40 with knowledge and experience.
Operations	(i) Projects that contribute to the development of industries in Southeast Asia and other regions and are deemed urgently needed to promote economic exchange with Japan as development projects. (ii) Making capital contributions in lieu of lending funds pursuant to the provision of the preceding item, where such contributions are particularly necessary for the execution of development projects. (iii) Lending funds necessary for studies for the preparation of development projects or for the experimental implementation of development projects.	(i) The following business necessary for the implementation of technical cooperation based on a treaty or other international commitments. (a) To provide technical training (b) To dispatch personnel for technical cooperation (c) To provide equipment for technical cooperation (d) To dispatch necessary personnel, procure machinery and equipment (e) To conduct basic research on public development plans in developing regions. (ii) To promote and facilitate the activities of youths abroad for the purpose of cooperating with the

	OECF Act (Law No.173, 1960)	JICA Act (Law No.62, 1974)
	Necessary Investigations for (iii) are required.	<p>residents of developing regions for the economic and social development of said regions</p> <p>(iii) To cooperate in the development of society, agriculture, forestry, and the mineral industry in developing regions, etc.</p> <p>(a) To lend funds necessary for the development of related facilities</p> <p>(b) To lend funds or guarantee debt</p> <p>(c) Pursuant to treaties or other international agreements, to accept entrustment agreements from governments, local governments or other public entities of developing regions to carry out projects for the development of facilities, etc.</p> <p>(d) To conduct surveys and provide technical guidance necessary for projects subject to loans, guarantees of debts, or capital contributions pursuant to the provisions of (a) or (b), and projects conducted by business corporations pursuant to the provisions of (c).</p> <p>(e) To provide guidance on research and technology necessary for projects conducted by Japanese corporations</p> <p>(iv) To perform the following services in order to consistently provide assistance and guidance, etc. to emigrants, both within and outside the State</p> <p>(a) To conduct research and disseminate knowledge on overseas migration, provide consultation, and offer mediation.</p> <p>(b) To provide migrants with training and courses, etc.</p>

	OECF Act (Law No.173, 1960)	JICA Act (Law No.62, 1974)
		<p>(v) To train and secure the personnel necessary for the performance of the duties set forth in item (i) and items (iii)(d) and (e)</p> <p>(vi) To perform duties incidental to the duties listed in the preceding items</p> <p>(vii) In addition to what is listed in each of the preceding items, to perform duties necessary to achieve the purpose of this Act.</p>
Operation Procedures	<p>At the time of commencement of operations, the Fund shall prepare a statement of operation procedures and obtain the approval of the Director-General of the Economic Planning Agency. The same shall apply when the Fund intends to change it.</p> <p>The statement of operation procedures shall describe the method of loaning funds, interest rate and due date, method of investment, method of collection of principal and interest, and procedures for entrusting affairs.</p>	<p>At the time of commencement of its operations, the business corporation shall prepare a statement of operation procedures and obtain the approval of the competent minister. The same shall apply when it intends to change the same.</p> <p>The matters to be described in the statement of operation procedures shall be prescribed by the Ordinance of the competent ministry.</p>
Operation Outsourcing	<p>The Fund may entrust part of its affairs to the Export-Import Bank of Japan, as specified in the Operational Procedures without competition with general financial institutions.</p>	<p>With regard to the businesses listed in each of the following items, the business corporation may entrust a part of said businesses to a person specified in each of said items only when it has obtained approval from the competent minister.</p>
Monitoring	<p>The Fund shall be supervised by the Director-General of the Economic Planning Agency and they can give orders and submit reports/inspect when it is necessary.</p>	<p>The Business Corporation shall be supervised by the competent minister and they can give (...).</p>
Penal Regulations	<p>Punished by a fine when the staff makes false reports, refuse inspection, engages in business</p>	<p>Punished by a fine when officers or employees of the business corporation or entrusted financial</p>

	OECF Act (Law No.173, 1960)	JICA Act (Law No.62, 1974)
	other than that for which they are responsible, and manages surplus funds from operations.	institution make false reports (...), fail to register, violation of the provisions of this Act, violate the order of the competent minister, engage in business other than that for which they are responsible,(...).

While the Japanese government was attempting to improve its ODA policies from the late 1980s to the early 2000s, the changes in fact created a gap in accountability in which many PAPs were consequently trapped. This was highlighted in a case at the Tokyo District Court over the alleged environmental and social damages caused by the Japanese ODA project in Indonesia at the Kotapanjang Dam, against which PAPs filed a lawsuit in 2002.

Kamiyama (2018) reported that the Japanese government once refused to compensate Project Affected Families (PAFs) in the construction of the Kotapanjang Dam. They had been forced to resettle, but the Japanese government interpreted the JICA Act (See the Table 1, Operations, Operation Procedures, Operation Outsourcing, and Monitoring of the JICA Act) to mean that the Japanese government was not responsible for the resettlement of PAFs who were not Japanese. In this case, the content of the Revised Environmental Impact Assessment Report, the Environmental Management Plan and the Environmental Monitoring Plan can be summarized into the following two points:

(1) There are no serious adverse biogeophysical and environmental effects, but there are many points that require attention during the construction and operation phases;

(2) In terms of cultural aspects, i.e., livelihoods and human rights, there is a need to compensate and provide information to residents who are anxious about being forced to resettle, especially those who live in the proposed reservoir area, and to improve the environment in and around the resettlement area.

The risk of disintegration of the indigenous Minangkabau society was clearly pointed out, and JICA also reported on and implemented their Guidelines following the Recommendations from OECD, but the project was carried out and threatened the PAFs (ibid., pp. 38-42). As Kamiyama (2018) says, there were several disputed points regarding human rights, especially on how to interpret and apply various international conventions to Japanese law, which were notable and key factors in determining whether PAFs should be compensated. These conventions include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Treaty of Indigenous People, the World Bank's associated Environmental Guidelines, the Recommendations from OECD, and the World Heritage Convention. However, the judges at the Tokyo District Court concluded

those all criteria did not provide clear evidence to justify punishing and requiring compensation from the Japanese government for the PAFs resettled by force and in fear.

This event stimulated discussion in civil society, and a movement based on “do no harm” rather than “do more good” has since monitored Japanese ODA and pursued related legal responsibilities.

2. JICA’s reorganization as an incorporated administrative agency with legally binding Guidelines from the 1990s to 2010

To date, Japan’s ODA can be categorized into three major schemes: yen loans, which require repayment; grant aid, which does not require repayment; and technical cooperation. Of these, yen loans were provided by the OECF until 1998 and then by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) until 2008. Grant aid was provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and technical cooperation by JICA until 2008. In the meantime, guidelines for environmental and social considerations were formulated to take into account the impact of development cooperation on the natural environment, involuntary resettlement, respect for the human rights including indigenous peoples, and other impacts on society (JICA, 2004, p. 1). The contents and methods of these guidelines have been revised several times (See Table 2).

Table 2: Changes in Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations in Japan’s ODA

Year	Yen Loan	Grant Aid	Technical Cooperation
1995	OECF Guidelines for Environmental Considerations, 2nd Edition	Overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Environmental Guidelines for JICA Development Studies
2002	JBIC Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations		Guidelines for Project Assessment for Japan’s Grant Aid
2004			
2006			
2008	[Almost all operations integrated into JICA]		
2010	2010 JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations		

Note: Tamamura (2021) referring to Matsumoto (2014)

In response to the Kotapangjam Dam’s trial, a major change occurred in 2002 when the JBIC Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations were formulated through a transparent process in which various stakeholders, including JBIC, government officials, NGOs, and experts, gathered to set up an

open study group and published their recommendations. JICA also revised its Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (see Table 2) in 2004. According to Matsumoto (2014), who participated in committees to revise JBIC and JICA guidelines, said JICA reviewed its old guidelines through an open committee, and these guidelines were used as internal documents because they were not legally binding. The new JICA Guidelines established in 2004 included two systems that were not included in the 2002 JBIC guidelines. One was the Environmental and Social Considerations Review Committee, where experts independent from JICA discussed proposed projects in public at the appraisal stage. The other was an objection system to ensure compliance with the guidelines, which will be discussed later.

3. Promulgation of the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations in 2010

In 2008, JICA and the yen loan operations of JBIC were merged to form a new JICA. Many of the project-based grant aid projects that had been implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were transferred to the new JICA, and it became the agency that implements most of Japan's ODA. In 2010, JICA formulated a new set of guidelines, entitled Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (hereinafter, 2010 JICA GL), the pillars of which are respect for fundamental human rights, stakeholder participation, transparency of information, accountability, and efficiency. Under the 2010 JICA GL, the former JICA's Environmental and Social Considerations Review Committee was continued as the Environmental and Social Considerations Advisory Committee, and the objection system to ensure compliance with the 2010 JICA GL was applied to both yen loans and grant aid.

The past decade in which the 2010 JICA GL were used could be called a golden age for JICA's guidelines. In 2019, JICA received the International Association for Impact Assessment award in recognition of its effective guideline operations, especially for the Environmental and Social Considerations Advisory Committee which "promotes neutrality, transparency, and public participation." (JICA, 2019a)

4. Key features of the 2010 JICA GL as seen in the official dismissal of two grievances

Although the 2010 JICA GL enjoyed a golden age, there were two key categories of people criticizing or advocating reform of its management and monitoring system. The first category consisted of those from academia such as researchers, JICA staff, and committee members of the 2010 JICA GL. More importantly, the second category was comprised of PAPs who filed grievances through the 2010 JICA GL objection procedures.

4.1 Insights regarding management of the 2010 JICA GL from academia

A report from JICA staff outlines key points for improving implementation of the 2010 JICA GL. Nakamura et al. (2011) concluded that a wide range of stakeholder participation, information disclosure, and comparison of alternatives are essential for appropriate environmental and social considerations. Since other previous studies have also discussed the importance of these three issues, this section will summarize the previous studies accordingly.

The first issue is stakeholder consultation. Stakeholders include local residents, local governments, and JICA officials. Even before the 2010 JICA GL were enacted, it was pointed out that stakeholder consultations were time-consuming and costly (Urago et al., 2008; Ninomiya, 2015). After the 2010 JICA GL were enacted, Nakamura et al. (2011) cited the time and effort required for stakeholder consultations as an issue. Ninomiya (2015), who served as a member of the Advisory Committee on Environmental and Social Considerations, pointed out that there were limits to the number and location of consultations, and it can be said that there is a common understanding that the time and cost required for stakeholder consultations is an issue in the operation of the GL.

The second issue is information disclosure. Ninomiya (2010) points out that a transparent process and participation mechanism will improve the accuracy of information. Nakamura et al. (2011) also states that information disclosure is essential for building relationships with stakeholders.

The third issue is the consideration of alternatives. Usui (2008), who specializes in environmental impact assessment and has worked for JICA, found issues with the former JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations in regard to considering alternatives and mitigation measures. Kamijyo (2012), a researcher at JICA's Sadako Ogata Institute for Peace and Development Studies, found through quantitative research that the consideration of alternatives is in line with local conditions. Even before the current GL were revised, there had been discussions that emphasized the importance of considering alternatives.

In this way, researchers have analyzed the 2010 JICA GL's operations, and advocated for stakeholder consultation, information disclosure, and consideration of alternatives, which were the key issues of the relevant literature review with this theme. However, it is still not clear that these perspectives are fully complementing the vulnerability of the management of the 2010 JICA GL. Hence, the voice from the project affected peoples is to be handed in the next section.

4.2 The position of Project Affected Peoples as expressed through the objection procedures

Even after researchers critiqued the GL, JICA received 6 requests from PAPs via the objection procedures outlined in the 2010 JICA GL (JICA, n.d.). Two were finally officially accepted and investigated by experts independent from but

hired by JICA. These Review Officers concluded that there were no instances of non-compliance with the 2010 JICA GL.

Before looking at the two accepted objection cases, the objection procedures and its features should be explained. The unique feature of the objection procedure is that it connects the possibility of damage caused by JICA-supported development projects with the assurance of 2010 JICA GL compliance. Objection Review Officers have two roles. One is to investigate facts related to GL compliance or non-compliance and to report the results to the JICA President. The second is to promote dialogue among the parties concerned in order to quickly resolve environmental and social issues arising from non-compliance. For this reason, the Reviewers report directly to the JICA President and are independent of JICA's project departments and the Environmental and Social Considerations Review Department.

Not everyone can file a complaint. The complaint must be filed by two or more residents of the country who have suffered actual damage from the project as a result of non-compliance with the 2010 JICA GL, or who are considered to have a substantial probability of suffering damage in the future.

The objection procedure involves a number of steps and only those who are found to be qualified to object are allowed to proceed to the main investigation. Specifically, the following steps are taken in this order: submission of the complaint; receipt of the complaint and notification to the complainant, the borrower states, etc.; preliminary investigation of the complaint; decision to initiate the main investigation procedure; investigation of the facts related to 2010 JICA GL compliance; and facilitation of dialogue for dispute resolution.

As mentioned in the first paragraph of this section, only two among the six submitted objections passed the preliminary process and reached the main investigation procedure. These two cases will show the valuable lessons to consider the history of the Japanese development assistance.

Below, the author summarizes the two accepted objection cases focusing on the context of the projects, actual adverse impacts asserted by the PAPs, and how those discussions were investigated and judged via the objection procedures.

4.3 Case 1. Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Development Project

The Thilawa Special Economic Zone (hereinafter referred to as "SEZ") development project involved the construction of a 2,400-hectare SEZ in the Thilawa region, which is located about 23 km southeast of Yangon, Myanmar's largest city. Of the 2,400 hectares, 400 hectares were designated as an early development zone (hereinafter referred to as the Thilawa Phase 1 project), and ODA was provided. The project was supposed to contribute to the sustainable economic development of Myanmar through industrial development and job creation (Mekong Watch, 2017).

In the Thilawa Phase 1 project, a Japan-Myanmar joint venture development entity started construction in November 2013. The project is being implemented by

the Myanmar-Japan Thilawa Development Company (MJTD), in which nine private Myanmar companies, the Myanmar government, three private Japanese companies, and JICA invest. The Japanese government not only invested in the Thilawa Phase 1 project through JICA, but also supported various surveys and infrastructure development around the SEZ before the project was implemented.

As a result of the Thilawa Phase 1 project, 68 households were evicted and forced to live at relocation sites. They claimed that they lost their farmland, access to farmland, means of livelihood, access to sufficient water, educational opportunities, etc., and were provided with only poor housing and infrastructure. Then, in June 2014, representatives of the residents' organizations filed an objection based on JICA's GL.

The complainants claimed that their livelihoods had deteriorated as a consequence of non-compliance with nine 2010 JICA GL provisions. In response, the Review Officers, after preliminary investigation, decided to conduct the main investigation for the first time since the establishment of this system, and conducted the investigation including field visits over a period of five months. As mentioned above, the Review Officers concluded no non-compliance with the GL. They did, however, show some understanding of the complaints and mentioned some issues regarding environmental and social considerations (See Table 3, right column).

Table 3: Discussion points over Thilawa's objections

Relevant items in the 2010 JICA GL	Claims made by PAPs (JICA, 2014a)	Compliance Judgment from Review Officers' investigation report (JICA, 2014b)
1. JICA's Responsibility to Answer Stakeholders' Questions	Several of the meetings requested in complainants' letters did not materialize.	JICA responded by phone. It could not be deemed to be non-compliance. Considering the fact that there were residents who perceived it as such, however, a more polite response in writing would have been desirable.
2. JICA's responsibility to support and verify environmental and social considerations implemented by the project proponent.	No justification for the level or form of compensation. No consideration of land-based compensation or restoration. No analysis of resources and options for post-relocation livelihood.	There was not enough time to review the relocation plan with the participation of residents, but this does not mean non-compliance.

Relevant items in the 2010 JICA GL	Claims made by PAPs (JICA, 2014a)	Compliance Judgment from Review Officers' investigation report (JICA, 2014b)
3. Status of stakeholder engagement	The relocation agreements were signed under conditions in which they did not feel free to voice their opinions.	The minutes of the consultation meeting do not confirm any coercion or intimidation by the government, and it is assumed that the meeting was conducive to the expression of opinions, but it is possible that the residents did feel intimidated.
4. JICA's obligation to ensure that PAPs receive assistance in a timely manner	Hastily developed and poor infrastructure; relocation at a time when facilities were not fully prepared; inadequate and delayed compensation.	Although there is a debate on the appropriateness of starting relocation despite the fact that the infrastructure of the relocation site was not ready, we could not confirm any fact of non-compliance with the 2010 JICA GL.
5. JICA's responsibility to facilitate the participation of affected populations in the development, implementation and monitoring of relocation action plans, and to ensure that stakeholders participating in consultations are fully informed in advance.	Most of the affected residents could not read the consent form and did not understand it well. Only a few of them received a copy of the consent form. Failure to ensure that the affected residents themselves can properly participate in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of the relocation plan is non-compliant.	It is thought that negotiations should be conducted on the premise that the documents cannot be read. A request should have been made that a copy of the agreed document be delivered immediately after it was signed. From the minutes, it can be said that proper participation took place and that there was non-compliance. Important factors that the affected residents consider not to have been meaningfully discussed include the fact that it took only two months for the residents to participate in the study and the lack of communication.
6. JICA's responsibility to ensure that living standards, income opportunities and production levels of affected populations are improved or	The government refused to compensate for the loss of land and did not provide alternative land for agriculture, amounting to a form of aid with no choice.	The relocation plan was based on the assumption that the farmers would leave their farms, and it cannot be said that there was any non-compliance. It takes a certain amount of time for people to get used to

Relevant items in the 2010 JICA GL	Claims made by PAPs (JICA, 2014a)	Compliance Judgment from Review Officers' investigation report (JICA, 2014b)
restored, including support for sustainable alternative livelihoods.		the new employment environment, to be motivated to take up stable employment opportunities, and to restore their livelihoods. Increasing the number of successful cases that maintain a high level of work ethic will calm the concerns of the entire community.

The key elements that both the PAPs and the Review Officers agreed on in the Thilawa SEZ objection case were (1) lack of polite response with consensus from PAPs; (2) lack of consideration regarding sufficient time for preparation for resettlement; (3) disregard for the possibility that the PAPs felt fear or intimidation during stakeholder engagement; (4) low quality of the infrastructure at the resettlement site; (5) lack of meaningful discussion, including insufficient communication and time; and (6) lifestyle change requires more time than was provided. Yet keep in mind that although the Review Officers admitted some adverse impacts, JICA was not required to compensate the PAPs because the judgement was that JICA was “not non-compliant.”

4.4 Case 2. Support Project for the Formulation of Master Plan for Agricultural Development in the Nacala Corridor, Mozambique

This project (hereafter referred to as PD project, using its common name) started in 2012 in the districts of Nampula, Niassa, and Zambezia provinces in Mozambique. The objective was to prepare a master plan for agricultural development that would contribute to socio-economic development to promote sustainable agricultural production systems through private investment and to achieve poverty reduction among small-scale farmers, which is classified as a technical cooperation project.

The larger framework that includes the PD project is the “ProSAVANA-JBM (Japan-Brazil-Mozambique Triangular Cooperation Program for Agricultural Development in the Tropical Savannas).” The PD project was adopted because it was in line with the Japanese government’s aid policy toward Mozambique at the time (JICA, 2003).

Local protests against the project began around 2012, criticizing the lack of information disclosure. Then after obtaining internal government documents, more serious concerns emerged about forced evictions and land banking. Land banks have been criticized for making it difficult for young farmers to secure land, as they register existing farmland and accumulate surplus land for investment. In 2017,

some of the affected residents filed objections against JICA, claiming psychological damage, violation of freedom of expression and right to know, and social damage (JICA, 2017a).

The objectors pointed out non-compliance with many 2010 JICA GL provisions. Review Officers, however, judged that there was no non-compliance by JICA, though they did point out some problems (See Table 4).

The objectors' allegations highlighted non-compliance with many 2010 JICA GL items. The damage and violation of rights in (1) to (3) in the left column of Table 4 include the principles of stakeholder participation and accountability set forth in the 2010 JICA GL; the obligation to support and confirm environmental and social considerations with the partner country; the obligation to consult with local stakeholders; the obligation to consider human rights; and the obligation to refer to laws and international standards. Since the objections pointed out non-compliance with the 2010 JICA GL, the discussion points were categorized into three perspectives: physical and psychological damage, violation of freedom of expression and the right to know, and damage to society.

Table 4: Discussion points over objections to PD projects

Damage and compliance with the 2010 JICA GL		Claims made by PAPs (JICA, 2017a)	Compliance Judgment from the Review Officers' investigation report (JICA, 2017b)
Physical and psychological damage	JICA must ensure and confirm that the Mozambican government makes the appropriate considerations	Intimidation, oppression, and persecution by Mozambican government authorities against those who show dissent or dissenting opinions.	The facts claimed by the complainant could not be confirmed, except for the public hearing in the initial stage and the words and actions of the government officials. JICA was not in a position to influence the statements of the minister who was said to have made threats, so no violation was recognized. JICA made efforts to hear opinions and did not leave the problem unattended, and took adequate measures. However, before and after the public hearing, a tense situation arose between the parties concerned, and the words and actions of the government may have been perceived as being coercive in nature.

Damage and compliance with the 2010 JICA GL		Claims made by PAPs (JICA, 2017a)	Compliance Judgment from the Review Officers' investigation report (JICA, 2017b)
Violation of freedom of ex-expression and right to know	JICA must ensure and confirm that the Mozambican government makes the appropriate considerations	Concealment of information pertaining to the content of the master plan and related contractual agreements.	In the case where the location of the public hearing was far from the community, the fact that some of the participants were not notified when the location was changed was acknowledged, but it was not acknowledged that there was a clear deficiency in the procedure. Efforts to prepare for the participation of local residents, such as the preparation of materials in Portuguese, were confirmed and therefore no violation was found.
The damage to society	Considerations by JICA	Commissioning of a communication strategy document.	From the specifications of the contract, it is clear that the entire pro-Savannah project, including the project subject to the petition, is not a contract intended for social intervention and speech manipulation. Although the consultant's final report included interventionist recommendations such as suggesting the weakening of organizations opposed to the project and encouraging the establishment of cooperative networks, there is no illegality in JICA's acceptance of the report. As far as the contract for the communication strategy and the specifications are concerned, the purpose of the contract was to collaborate with the government and to disseminate information about the project through the media. It cannot be said that social intervention was intended.

Note: Tamamura (2021) referring to public JICA documents

Table 4 makes it evident that both the objectors and the Review Officers found management failures. This was in regard to 1) how JICA could both attain

the "understanding of the partner government" and satisfy "special considerations"; 2) providing information such as whether notifications of public hearing locations are included in active provision of information as defined by the GL; and 3) whether JICA should refuse to accept or request changes to commissioned reports if they contain inappropriate content in light of the 2010 JICA GL.

In conclusion, the "not non-compliance" judgements of Thilawa and PD objections have serious implications in light of the agreement between objectors and Review Officers on certain issues regarding mismanagement of the 2010 JICA GL. The following need to be examined and addressed in future revisions of ODA policy.

(A) What does it mean to respond to stakeholders' questions in a polite way?

(B) How much time do PAPs need to prepare for resettlement?

(C) How can possibility that residents feel threatened or intimidated be addressed?

(D) Is it possible to restore or improve living standards at a relocation site with undeveloped infrastructure necessary for daily life?

(E) How should the lack of time and communication during local consultations be handled?

(F) To what extent should social considerations, including psychological effects, be taken into account when people have to change their means of livelihood from agriculture to other occupations?

(G) How can both "understanding of the other country's government" and "special consideration in accordance with actual circumstances" be satisfied?

(H) Does proactive provision of information include access to the locations of public hearings and ensuring that everyone is notified?

(I) In cases in which commissioned reports contain inappropriate content in light of the GL, should JICA refuse to accept the report or request that it be changed?

5. The process and outcomes of the latest reforms to the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations

5.1 Process of the revision of the 2010 JICA GL

The 2010 JICA GL provision 2.10.2. states that "JICA verifies the status of the implementation of the guidelines, and will re-examine its way of procedures within five years of their enforcement by hearing the opinions of concerned people. In addition, JICA will create a comprehensive review of the guidelines within ten years of their enforcement on the basis of its findings." (JICA, 2010b, p. 18)

In accordance with this, JICA conducted a review from February 2018, including the changes in the surrounding international environment, such as the operational status of the 2010 JICA GL and the international framework for climate change countermeasures. It proposed key issues for revision as a result.

Based on the results of consultations with the Advisory Committee on Environmental and Social Considerations and external stakeholders, a final report was compiled in January 2020. The review was a survey of a total of 100 out of the 1,800 projects to which the 2010 JICA GL were applied and for which agreements were concluded with counterpart governments or organizations by the end of 2016. Fifty-nine of the projects were chosen according to scheme, sector, or region. Schemes include yen loans, grant aid, and technical cooperation projects. Sectors include infrastructure, health, and education. Forty-one projects were Category A projects, expecting large adverse impacts.

JICA conducted a comprehensive review of the issues identified for discussion in this review from January 2020 while listening to the opinions of the Advisory Committee on Environmental and Social Considerations. Furthermore, JICA accepted public comments twice by opening the report of their reviews and their ideas for revision from October 2019 to November 2019 (JICA, 2020) and July 2021 to August 2021 (JICA, 2022a). After recording the discussion by the Advisory Committee and also accepting public comments, JICA published reports by responding to all questions and comments from both Committee members and the public. JICA held regular general meetings of the Advisory Committee. There, the committee chairperson shared discussions held by the Revision Committee with all members of the Advisory Committee. This chairperson is selected by the Advisory Committee members. Of course, all general meetings were recorded including the Q&A from the Committee members to JICA, and the recordings were released as reports on the website.

Finally, in January 2022, JICA promulgated the “JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations” (hereinafter referred to as the 2022 JICA GL) and the “JICA Objection Procedures based on the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations.” They will be implemented on April 1, 2022 (JICA, 2022b). According to its website, JICA emphasizes specific revisions as “[t]he main changes have been made taking into account the environmental and social policies of multilateral development agencies such as the World Bank, and include: efforts to estimate and disclose the amount of total greenhouse gas emissions as a response to climate change; changes to disclosure of environmental assessment reports for the purpose of early dissemination to stakeholders and early achievement of positive development impacts; strengthening of efforts related to local stakeholder consultations.” (JICA, 2022b).

Since some critiques and actual adverse impacts had been highlighted during the 2010 JICA GL’s golden age, the next two sections analyze the outcome of the latest revision by checking whether JICA improved their management in meaningful and polite ways, considering the opinions expressed by PAPs and the Reviewers.

5.2 *How researchers' concerns are reflected in the revision*

First, the responses in the 2022 JICA GL to the research reviewed in the previous section of this paper are analyzed (See Table 5). It concluded that the focal areas for the academics and researchers are stakeholder consultations, information disclosure, and consideration of alternatives. Table 5 shows the comparison between the 2010 and 2022 GL in these three areas with the author analyze. The bold letters indicate the changes.

Table 5: Comparison of the 2010 JICA GL and the 2022 JICA GL regarding opinions from academia during the former GL's period.

2010 JICA GL (JICA, 2010b)	2022 JICA GL (JICA, 2022b)
(1) Stakeholder consultation	
2.4.1. In principle, project proponents etc. consult with local stakeholders through means that induce broad public participation to a reasonable extent, in order to take into consideration the environmental and social factors in a way that is most suitable to local situations, and in order to reach an appropriate consensus. JICA assists project proponents etc. by implementing cooperation projects as needed.	2.4.1. In principle, project proponents take the initiative to consult with local stakeholders through means that induce broad public participation to a reasonable extent, in accordance with Appendix 5 ² of the JICA Guidelines. This is for realizing the environmental and social considerations that are most suitable to local situations, and for reaching an appropriate consensus. JICA assists project proponents by implementing cooperation projects as needed.
2.4.2. In the early stage of cooperation projects, JICA holds discussions with project proponents etc. and the two parties reach a consensus on frameworks for consultation with local stakeholders.	2.4.2. In the early stage of cooperation projects, JICA discusses and agrees with project proponents on frameworks for consultations with local stakeholders.
2.4.3. In order to have meaningful meetings, JICA encourages project proponents etc. to publicize in advance that they plan to consult with local stakeholders, with particular attention to directly affected people.	2.4.3. No significant changes

² “**Appendix 5. Consultation with Local Stakeholders**” defines its **basic principles** as follows: “The process of consultations with local stakeholders includes: (i) Identification and analysis of local stakeholders (ii) Plan for meaningful consultations with local stakeholders (iii) Information disclosure (iv) Consultations with local stakeholders and feedback, including reporting (v) Receiving and responding to concerns and grievances.” “**Identification of Local Stakeholders**,” and “**Meaningful Consultation**” are also defined (JICA, 2022b, p. 42).

2010 JICA GL (JICA, 2010b)	2022 JICA GL (JICA, 2022b)
<p>2.4.4. In the case of Category A projects, JICA encourages project proponents etc. to consult with local stakeholders about their understanding of development needs, the likely adverse impacts on the environment and society, and the analysis of alternatives at an early stage of the project, and assists project proponents as needed.</p> <p>2.4.5. In the case of Category B projects, JICA encourages project proponents etc. to consult with local stakeholders when necessary.</p> <p>2.4.6. JICA encourages project proponents etc. to prepare minutes of their meetings after such consultations occur.</p>	<p>2.4.4. No significant changes</p> <p>2.4.5. No significant changes</p> <p>2.4.6. No significant changes</p>
(2) Information disclosure	
<p>2.1.1 In principle, project proponents etc. disclose information about the environmental and social considerations of their projects. JICA assists project proponents etc. by implementing cooperation projects as needed.</p> <p>2.1.2. JICA itself discloses important information about environmental and social considerations in the main stages of cooperation projects, in a manner in accordance with the guidelines.</p> <p>2.1.3. JICA discusses frameworks with project proponents etc. in order to ensure information disclosure, and comes to an agreement in an early stage of cooperation projects.</p> <p>2.1.4. The information to be disclosed includes that of environmental and social considerations and of the cooperation projects themselves.</p> <p>2.1.5. Besides the information to be disclosed publicly by JICA, JICA provides information about environmental and social considerations to third parties to the extent possible in response to requests.</p> <p>2.1.6. JICA encourages project proponents etc. to disclose and present information</p>	<p>2.1.1. No significant changes</p> <p>2.1.2. JICA discloses important information about environmental and social considerations at the key stages of cooperation projects, in an appropriate manner in accordance with the JICA Guidelines.</p> <p>2.1.3. JICA discusses and agrees with project proponents on the frameworks that ensure information disclosure at the early stage of cooperation projects.</p> <p>2.1.4. The information to be disclosed has to include environmental and social considerations, as well as the project information.</p> <p>2.1.5. No significant changes</p> <p>2.1.6. JICA actively encourages project proponents to disclose and present</p>

2010 JICA GL (JICA, 2010b)	2022 JICA GL (JICA, 2022b)
<p>about environmental and social considerations to local stakeholders.</p> <p>2.1.7. Project proponents etc. disclose information well in advance when they have meetings with local stakeholders in cooperation with JICA. On these occasions, JICA supports project proponents etc. in the preparation of documents in an official or widely used language and in a form understood by local people.</p> <p>2.1.8. JICA discloses information on its website in Japanese, English, and/or local languages, and provides related reports for public reading at its library and at related overseas offices.</p> <p>2.1.9. JICA pays due consideration to the confidentiality of commercial and other matters of Project proponents etc., taking into account their competitive relationships, and encourages them to exclude such confidential information from any documents on environmental considerations that they submit which may later be subject to public disclosure. JICA takes into account information control in Project proponents etc.. and discloses their documents subject to their approval. Any information that is prohibited from public disclosure in the agreement between JICA and Project proponents etc.. may be disclosed only through the agreement of Project proponents etc.. or in accordance with legal requirements.</p> <p>2.6.5. JICA discloses information with reference to the relevant laws of project proponents etc. and of the government of Japan.</p>	<p>information about environmental and social considerations of their projects to local stakeholders.</p> <p>2.1.7. (...) JICA supports project proponents in preparation of documents in an official or widely used language(s) and in a form understood by local people.</p> <p>2.1.8. JICA discloses information on its website in Japanese, English, official language(s) and/or language(s) widely used in the host countries. It also provides relevant reports for public reading at the JICA library and at related overseas offices.</p> <p>2.1.9. (...) JICA takes into account the management of information of project proponents, and discloses their documents subject to their approval (...).</p> <p>2.6.5. JICA discloses information in accordance with relevant laws of the host country government and of the government of Japan.</p>
(3) Consideration of alternatives	
2.3.1. The impacts to be assessed with regard to environmental and social	2.3.1. The impacts to be assessed with regard to (...) climate change,

2010 JICA GL (JICA, 2010b)	2022 JICA GL (JICA, 2022b)
<p>considerations include impacts on human health and safety, as well as on the natural environment that are transmitted through air, water, soil, waste, accidents, water usage, climate change, ecosystems, fauna and flora, including trans-boundary or global scale impacts. These also include social impacts, including migration of population and involuntary resettlement, local economy such as employment and livelihood, utilization of land and local resources, social institutions such as social capital and local decision-making institutions, existing social infrastructures and services, vulnerable social groups such as poor and indigenous peoples, equality of benefits and losses and equality in the development process, gender, children's rights, cultural heritage, local conflicts of interest, infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and working conditions including occupational safety. Items to be addressed in the specific project are narrowed down to the needed ones through the scoping process.</p> <p>2.3.2. In addition to the direct and immediate impacts of projects, the derivative, secondary, and cumulative impacts as well as impacts associated with indivisible projects will also be assessed with regard to environmental and social considerations, so far as it is rational. The life cycle impact of a project period is also considered.</p> <p>2.3.3. Various kinds of relevant information is needed in order to assess impacts on the environment and local communities. There are, however, uncertainties in predicting such impacts caused by the incomplete understanding of impact mechanisms and the limited information available. Therefore, if the scale of uncertainty is considered to be large, project proponents etc. provide</p>	<p>biodiversity, and ecosystem services, including trans-boundary or global scale impacts. These also include environmental and social impacts such as: (...) and services, vulnerable social groups such as peoples in poverty and indigenous peoples (...). Items to be addressed in a specific project are narrowed down to relevant items through the scoping process.</p> <p>2.3.2. In addition to the direct and immediate impacts of projects, (...) are also to be examined and assessed, so far as it is rational. The impacts through a project life cycle are also considered.</p> <p>2.3.3. Various kinds of relevant information is needed in order to assess impacts on the environment and society (...).</p>

2010 JICA GL (JICA, 2010b)	2022 JICA GL (JICA, 2022b)
environmental and social considerations that include preventive measures as much as possible.	

Regarding the three focal issues raised by researchers—stakeholder consultation, information disclosure, and consideration of alternatives—a major revision is found in the section of 2.4.1. in stakeholder consultation with the new appendix (Appendix 5). It expands the points to be considered and depicts the range of what meaningful consultation is more clearly. In comparison, Table 5 shows other relatively minor changes and clarifications.

5.3 How the concerns raised by the Objections are reflected in the GL revision

The second analysis is of the responses to the positions expressed by PAPs from two objection cases discussed in the conclusion of the section “Key features of the 2010 JICA GL as seen in the official dismissal of two grievances” of this paper. The author concludes from the document analysis of the two cases that there are nine points (A to I) that the objectors and Review Officers agreed were mismanagement of the 2010 JICA GL, although the Review Officers did not go so far as to say they violated the GL. The following is an analysis of the 2022 JICA GL and whether the nine points are reflected in the revision.

(A) What does it mean to respond to stakeholders’ questions in a polite way?

In terms of more polite responses, as mentioned by the Reviewers of the Thilawa case, it should be noted that Appendix 1 (Environmental and Social Considerations Required for Projects) of the 2022 JICA GL has a new “Grievance Redress Mechanism” section. It includes the following sentence: “Project proponents should make efforts to respond promptly to the grievances they receive, taking into account the concerns and needs of the project affected people and communities.” (JICA, 2022b, p. 30) Although the meaning of “prompt” is not clear enough, the inclusion of the promptness can be a significant change, and may improve the degree of respect shown to PAPs.

(B) How much time do PAPs need to prepare for resettlement?

The author could not find any regulations related to this concern. The time required for consultation with PAPs and for their resettlement preparations was not reflected in the revision although it was an urgent topic in the objections.

(C) How can possibility that residents feel threatened or intimidated be addressed?

The newly added Appendix 5. Consultation with Local Stakeholders stipulates that project proponents implement measures so that vulnerable social groups can actively express their opinions and that these opinions are treated fairly. This clause can in part ensure the PAPs ability to speak out without fear. At the same time, the 2022 JICA GL adds the role of JICA in this aspect. Provision 2.5.3.

states that “JICA checks that such personnel (author’s note: i.e. security guards) will not use any force to provide security except for preventive and defensive purposes.” These new articles can be effective to respond to the concerns raised by objectors.

(D) Is it possible to restore or improve living standards at a relocation site with undeveloped infrastructure necessary for daily life?

There is no change between the 2010 and the 2022 GL. Restoration or improvement of living standards should be ensured (Appendix 1. 8.2.), and even the 2022 GL do not mention any obligation to develop adequate infrastructure before relocation.

(E) How should the lack of time and communication during local consultations be handled?

While this point is relevant to (B), more specific concerns over local consultations have been expressed. As explained in the section “How researchers’ concerns are reflected in the revision” of this paper, many articles related to local consultations were added in the 2022 GL. They elaborate on who the local stakeholders to be consulted are and how they can access information, but they do not stipulate any concrete measures to secure enough time for consultation or to address the lack of communication. One significant change was added in the 2022 GL for indigenous people. Appendix 1. 9.2. states that “When projects may have adverse impacts on indigenous peoples, all of their rights in relation to land and resources must be respected in accordance with the spirit of the relevant international declarations and treaties, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Efforts must be made to obtain the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of the affected indigenous peoples.” This replaced the 2010 GL’s statement, “the Free, Prior, and Informed Consultation” (*italics for emphasis by the author*).

(F) To what extent should social considerations, including psychological effects, be taken into account when people have to change their means of livelihood from agriculture to other occupations?

Both the 2010 and the 2022 GL stipulate the same measures for affected people to improve or at least restore their standard of living, income opportunities and production levels to pre-project levels. These measures include: providing land or monetary compensations for loss of land or assets; support for alternative sustainable livelihood; support for expenses necessary for relocation; and support for the re-establishment of communities at resettlement sites (Appendix 1. 8.2.). It is noted that psychological effects are not considered even in the 2022 GL and the perspective on job changes for the farmers in developing countries seems overly optimistic.

(G) How can both “understanding of the other country’s government” and “special consideration in accordance with actual circumstances” be satisfied?

This concern from the objection cases relates to “Provision 2.5. Concern about Social Environment and Human Rights.” It mentions that “special

consideration must be taken for cooperation projects when disclosing information and holding consultations with local stakeholders, after obtaining understanding from the host governments in countries and areas affected by conflict or where basic freedoms, including freedom of expression and the right to receive legal remedy, are restricted” (italics added by author for emphasis). This article implies that special consideration cannot be taken if the host authoritarian government does not agree with the necessity to do so. Although the 2022 JICA GL makes a slight change in the English version to, “special consideration is required for disclosing information or holding consultations with local stakeholders, with understandings of host country governments,” there is no change in the original Japanese text.

(H) Does proactive provision of information include access to the locations of public hearings and ensuring that everyone is notified?

The 2022 GL does not stipulate access to information about the location of hearings as in the 2010 GL.

(I) In cases in which commissioned reports contain inappropriate content in light of the GL, should JICA refuse to accept the report or request that it be changed?

The author could not find any substantial change in this respect. Both the 2010 and the 2022 JICA GL share the same objective. Both GL outline JICA’s responsibilities and procedures, along with its requirements for project proponents. It can be interpreted that the commissioned studies should be conducted and submitted in accordance with the GL, although the Review Officers of the Objection Mechanism of JICA denied non-compliance.

6. Conclusion

As highlighted in Table 5, the main change from the 2010 JICA GL to the 2022 JICA GL is the more detailed description and definition of “Meaningful Consultations” as seen below (JICA, 2022b, pp. 42-43):

(1) Project proponents carry out meaningful consultations by providing local stakeholders with opportunities to express their opinions regarding the potential impacts and mitigation measures of the projects, and allowing the Project proponents to consider and respond to such opinions, so that they can avoid potential conflicts or complaints.

(2) Meaningful consultation is a two-way process. Project proponents need to disclose information in advance with sufficient time in the official language(s) of the host country or in a widely used language in the country, using a format understandable to local residents.

(3) Consultations with local stakeholders are conducted in a culturally appropriate manner, and being free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation.

(4) In principle, consultations with local stakeholders are conducted in person. However, this may depend on the local situation of the host country.

The consultations are conducted in an appropriate manner that enables local stakeholders to express their opinions and enables the project proponents to consider and respond to their opinions. The technologies such as remote access and social network services may be used.

(5) When conducting consultations with local stakeholders, project proponents prepare minutes of meetings which includes the participants' attribution such as gender.

Other major changes are disclosure of environmental assessment reports such as biodiversity and ecosystem service; detailed definitions or expressions regarding the language(s) and local stakeholders (especially people in vulnerable conditions); and JICA's responsibility toward investigation, management, monitoring, and compensation.

Although we can see that additional requirements were placed on the management of stakeholder engagement in order to prevent local citizens from feeling threatened during consultations, to ensure information disclosure and FPIC of indigenous peoples, to strengthen the monitoring management, and to respect multiple ways of compensation for the sake of PAPs, there are still unclear points when it comes to issues that the Review Officers agreed were lessons to be learned from the objections elaborated upon in section "The position of Project Affected Peoples as expressed through the objection procedures" of this paper. For instance, the 2022 JICA GL does not mention nor refer to the flexibility of time management regarding stakeholder consultations, the resettlement plan, and monitoring. Moreover, the 2022 JICA GL still refrains from including the possibility of ceasing projects, as a result of investigations or resistance from project site areas. We also do not know whether JICA will refuse or request changes to commissioned reports that contain inappropriate contents in light of the GL.

In fact, the author participated in JICA's public consultation for the revision of the 2010 GL and pointed out some problems based on the past two objection cases. The final revision included considerations which seek to prevent PAPs from being threatened by associated personnel and denied fair access to information. A visit to JICA's website shows how much discussion was held by the Advisory Committee members and the public. As the analysis in "The process and outcomes of the latest reforms to the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations" of this paper makes clear, however, there are provisions and articles that remain the same, in spite of the many ideas and critiques that can be seen in the documentation of the discussions on JICA's website. If the author can identify the weaknesses in the guidelines' revisions, it means that JICA made the final decisions. Or, it could be interpreted as a limitation of imagination and public consultation.

After WWII, Japan developed and revised its policies to promote economic activities overseas several times, and the possible triggers for those changes primarily came from the negative impacts caused by the pitfall of legal binding. It seemed that JICA did great work making legally binding Guidelines for

Environmental and Social Considerations from 2004. Two objections were investigated, however, and determined in both cases that JICA was not non-compliant, though the Review Officers did acknowledge some mismanagement. In 2022, although JICA finally finished the revision and updated the content, there is still room for improvement, especially considering the amount of discussion, advocacy, and critique that JICA has received to date.

This paper explained the history of the Japanese overseas development projects after the Second World War in order to record the “great historic impacts” voiced out by the project affected peoples in the past and the “improvements” afterwards. And this is unique, and new challenge to tell the Japanese history of the official development assistance with the insights from several actors involved in the adverse impacts and the important changes of the latest revision of JICA GL in English to new readers as tips for discussion in the development studies. Regarding the previous literature related to the management of the 2010 JICA GL, the author categorized them into three key issues; information disclosure, and consideration of alternatives. The author further tried reflecting the lessons from the unforgettable adverse impacts by analyzing the changes in national law, the legally accepted requests from the project affected peoples and literature review, and by advocating to the revision process of the JICA GL.

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