

# Terminal Evaluation

## Asia

### I. Outline of the Project

- Country : Thailand
- Project title : Project on Local Management Cooperation
- Issue/Sector : Governance
- Cooperation scheme : Project-type Technical Cooperation
- Division in charge: Indochina Division, Asia Department 1
- Period of Cooperation

(R/D):

September, 2003

(Implementation):

18 Sep. 2003 – 17 Sep. 2004

(F/U):

- Partner Country's Implementing Organization : Department of Local Administration (DLA), Ministry of Interior (MOI)
- Supporting Organization in Japan :Nagano Prefecture, Mie Prefecture, Kyoto University
- Related Cooperation :

1. The Technical Cooperation Project on Capacity Building for Planning Management of Local Authorities
2. Thailand Japan Joint Research Project on Capacity Building of Thai Local Authorities

#### 1-1 Background of the Project

The local authorities, excluding special local administrations such as Bangkok and Pattaya, do not have adequate administrative and financial capacity to carry out the responsibilities transferred to them from the central government while meeting the needs of local communities and residents, which are becoming increasingly diversified along with economic development. The fact that the scale of local authorities is not adequate to perform the required functions is a major issue hindering the promotion of local administration in Thailand. The "Thailand Japan Joint Research Project on Capacity Building of Thai Local Authorities" which was conducted from August 2000 to August 2002 by twelve academics in the field of budget and administration of local government from both Thailand and Japan, addressed this issue by examining the amalgamation of local authorities and the potential of local management cooperation (LMC). The amalgamation of local authorities is a long-term issue as it is necessary for the central government to make and implement policy to promote the amalgamation and obtain the consensus of concerned stakeholders.

Nevertheless, it was confirmed that LMC is an effective tool to improve the capacity of local authorities with the prospect of strengthening functions under the present organization by taking diverse cooperation styles.

However, there is no case of establishing a union of multiple local authorities, namely "Sahakarn", aiming at the joint-implementation of specific operation thus far. Most of the existing LMC is formulated in an informal way and the cooperation fields are quite limited. The members of the Joint Research Project prepared recommendations on the promotion of LMC based on the analysis of Japan's experience in LMC and identification of hindering factors for LMC in Thailand.

The main recommendations were the concretization of the central government's policy for the promotion of LMC and the formulation of guidelines specifying the preparatory work and procedures for the materialization of LMC. The request for the project to Japan by the Thai government was made based on these recommendations.

#### 1-2 Project Overview

In order to promote LMC in Thailand, the project was implemented to prepare guidelines indicating concrete procedures for LMC and to promote understanding of local authorities for it.

## (1) Overall Goal

---

Local authorities can implement LMC projects, which enable them to perform enlarging areas of required functions for the benefit of local people.

## (2) Project Purpose

---

The detailed guidelines and procedure for the management of cooperation among local authorities will be established, which DLA can provide to local authorities.

## (3) Outputs

---

- 1) Detailed guidelines for practice of LMC are formulated.
- 2) Local authority's awareness and understanding for establishment and operation of LMC is promoted.
- 3) DLA's supporting system of promoting LMC is established.

## (4) Input

---

### Japanese side:

---

Long-term Expert:	1	Equipment	nil
Short-term Expert:	4	Local Cost	2,328,582.95 baht (approx. 6,290,000 yen)
Trainees received:	8	Others	nil

### Thailand's Side:

---

Counterpart:	3		
Land and Facilities:		Room for Japanese Experts and counterpart personnel	
Local Cost:		845,480 baht (approx. 2,280,000 yen)	

## II. Evaluation team

### Members of Evaluation Team:

Team Leader:

Norio ISHIJIMA, Kokusai Kogyo Co., Ltd.

Technical Evaluation:

Precha Chuntakorn, Kokusai Kogyo (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

Evaluation Analysis:

Nuengnam Navabooniyom, Foundation for DAPA

### Period of Evaluation:

23 August 2004 - 30 September 2004

### Type of Evaluation:

Terminal Evaluation

## III. Results of Evaluation

### 1 Summary of Evaluation Results

#### (1) Relevance

---

1) Although decentralization activities have been active since promulgation of constitution in 1997, almost all local authorities in Thailand, excluding special local administration such as Bangkok and Pataya, do not have adequate administrative and financial capacity to carry out the responsibilities transferred to them from the central government while meeting the needs of local communities and residents, which are becoming increasingly diversified along with economic development. The Decentralization to Local Government Organization Committee (DC), which is designated to make policy for decentralization,

has been dealing with specifying the roles and functions of local authority for future devolution. Also, DLA supports the cooperation of multiple local authorities by way of promoting LMC.

2) This project is part of the assistance in Social Development field which is depicted in the 'ODA country specific strategy for Thailand' of MOFA. It should be noted that the project is in line with the JICA's strategy in the assistance for strengthening effectiveness and capacity of public administration. It is also added that this project deals with the fields in which Japan has profound experience and comparative advantage, which matters as one of the most important JICA's screening items for cooperation programs/projects.

3) The knowledge and experience of Japan, which is promoting the third nationwide amalgamation of local government and wide area administration since the Meiji Period, are quite informative for the implementation of the project and Japan's human resources and expertise in this field has a comparative advantage in the world. Thus, the overall goal and project purpose have been consistent with the Thai policy of local administration and the Japanese aid policy toward Thailand. Therefore, the project has high relevancy.

## **(2) Effectiveness**

---

1) The objective of the project which was to formulate guidelines and procedures for the smooth implementation of LMC was materialized in the form of the Handbook on Local Management Cooperation. Regarding the quality and usefulness of the handbook, a questionnaire survey targeting 222 local authorities was conducted through this terminal evaluation study. The evaluation study team has received a total of 117 replies, which is equivalent to 53% of the total number of questionnaire sent. In the questionnaire survey, 93% of the respondents answered "fine or very much" regarding having a better understanding of LMC after reading the handbook and 89% expressed "good or very good" for the content of the handbook. Furthermore, 80% replied "interested or very interested" in terms of LMC and 90% found the handbook to be "helpful or very helpful" to spark an idea of LMC.

2) A workshop to promote LMC in Thailand was held in Ayutthaya, Buri Ram, and Songkhla where there is a potential need for LMC, and concrete issues for LMC were proposed. The possibility of their materialization was also examined in each workshop site. Although it is conceded that some proposed LMC have not proceeded smoothly for different reasons such as the transferring of the governor taking the leadership role in LMC and lack of technical expertise after the workshops, it is confirmed that various activities to materialize LMC for tree planting, tourism development and others have been taken in Buri Ram.

Judging from the above, the project was effectively implemented.

## **(3) Efficiency**

---

1) In consideration of the project progress, a case study tour to Nagano Prefecture was conducted in place of the short-term expert planned for February 2004. As a result, the Thai counterpart could learn firsthand about specific examples of LMC and their circumstances. The training in Nagano was highly praised by the participants and alteration of original input plan can be regarded as appropriate. The timing and schedule of other dispatched experts are considered as almost appropriate, however, it should be noted that the assignment period of short-term experts have been expected to extend, especially when the project started implementation by organizing the seminar.

2) Regarding the use of local resources such as academics who are knowledgeable with local administration in Thailand, it is efficient not only in terms of their cost performance compared with Japanese professions but also for smooth organization of workshops and enhancing communications with local authorities.

3) The assignment of counterpart staff from the Thai side was generally satisfactory and they have been supportive in order to accomplish the project purpose.

4) There were no factors that hindered the project implementation; however, it was pointed out that the timing of the project was not favorable. That is, the project commenced after the annual budget was determined so budgetary arrangement to support the project activities could not be made when necessary.

For the most part, the project was efficiently implemented, even though there are some improvements desired.

## **(4) Impact**

---

1) The change of the Thai Government's policy to promote LMC by amendment of Local Administration Code and preparation of the draft is quite significant in terms of supporting formal LMC such as formulation of union named "Sahakarn" which could not have been materialized.

2) Taking the opportunity of the workshop held, the governor in Buri Ram appointed a working committee to promote LMC in the province, assigning a vice governor to be the chairman. The working committee has selected four activities (tree planting along roads, economic tree planting, waste management, and tourism development) as LMC for the province.

## **(5) Sustainability**

1) DLA intends to distribute a handbook to all levels of local authority across the country and also hold a series of seminars and/or workshops in all 75 provinces. Furthermore, DLA brings the update of the handbook after the amendment of the Local Administration Code into view. In addition, DLA is planning to strengthen its budget and organization in order to promote its activities; sustainability of the activities is deemed to be high.

2) The Decentralization Committee has involved in amendment and/or preparatory work for amendment of concerned laws as an important factor for materialization of LMC. It is expected that their continuous activities will more effective for smooth promotion of LMC.

3) The result of questionnaire survey regarding the willingness to use the handbook is that 94% of total replies expressed "they will keep for future use or they will keep surely". It is exemplified high possibility of continuous utilization of the handbook.

## **2 Factors promoting sustainability and impact**

### **(1) Factors concerning to Planning**

The new Minister of MOI has a strong policy to promote LMC and DLA also set LMC as the top priority policy. Those policies are conducive to the amendment of the code concerned.

### **(2) Factors concerning to the Implementation Process**

Organizing of workshops could contribute to motivate local authority staff to have eagerness to seek cooperation with other local authority in order to improve/expand its public services.

## **3 Factors inhibiting sustainability and impact**

### **(1) Factors concerning to Planning**

N/A

### **(2) Factors concerning to the Implementation Process**

The timing of the project was not favorable in that the project commenced after the annual budget was determined so budgetary arrangements to support the project activities could not be available.

## **4 Conclusion**

The handbook prepared by the project is the first attempt to clearly specify necessary procedure of LMC toward local authorities and the project implementation brought epoch-making results the practice of law amendment in order to realize a formal LMC in near future, which has not been materialized during last five decades. Based on the results of the five evaluation items, it is judged that the project has been implemented successfully in terms of the implementation process and output of the project.

## **5 Recommendations**

### **(1) Recommendations for Thai Side**

1) To realize LMC efficiently and effectively, it is most important that local authorities are able to take necessary action in line with DLA policies on LMC, which is to say, DLA should timely and clearly let local authorities know its policies to promote LMC in collaboration with DC. Furthermore, it is desirable to take the opportunity to exchange ideas among DC, DLA and local authority for better policy and program making and project promotion based on mutual understanding of each roles and responsibilities of the three parties.

2) Effective supports and/or incentives to promote LMC are expected even if under the present law in which only informal LMC can be materialized. For instance, they are, establishment of inter-ministerial network for smooth promotion of LMC and setting up a permanent collaborating unit in DLA, preferential treatment of subsidy depending on the progress of LMC, dispatch of technical advisory staff, establishment of technical training system for local authority staff, awarding ceremony for an excellent LMC, and so on.

3) The handbook should be timely and flexibly updated in response to legal amendment and social changes. According to the questionnaire survey regarding the necessity of updating the handbook, 38% of total replies pointed out necessity of giving a clear "explanation on the advantages-disadvantages of LMC", 37% for additional "case study in Thailand", 21% for additional "case study in foreign countries", as an improvement point. At the time of distribution, DLA should provide a questionnaire to local authorities to obtain feedback on which sections of the handbook should be improved.

## **(2) Recommendation for JICA**

---

- 1) Preparation of the handbook as output of the project is still in nascent stage for LMC so a request for a new project, namely "Capacity Building for Local Authorities through Local Public Services Standards and Local Cooperation" which will be in succession to the project and aim at materializing a model case of LMC, has been submitted to Japan. It is deemed that continuous cooperation in this sector is quite significant in respect of effective utilization of Japan's assistance resources.
- 2) It is desirable to set out proper assignment of Japanese expert in order to have enough time for discussion on implementation of the project.
- 3) Since the case study tour to Nagano has successfully brought up positive impact beyond expectation, it is anticipated that common view for LMC among concerned parties if local authorities participate in the tour. Furthermore, it may be useful to disseminate the case example to the people who do not participate in the case study tour by showing a video what is going in the field.
- 4) It is recommended that the report in local language should be prepared for the better understanding and strengthening of significance of evaluation study among the stakeholders in recipient country.

## **6 Lessons Learned**

- (1) In the initial stage of the project, it could not be denied that between the Japanese side and DLA, there were some disparities of understanding regarding policy engagement of DLA on LMC. It was necessary to clarify each role and commit to the decision of the project in order for practical promotion of LMC.
- (2) The significance of Japan's rich experience in LMC was recognized by the Thai side throughout the course of the project. However, persons engaged in local administration in Japan seldom have experience in international cooperation and/or the ability to converse in foreign languages, and it is recognized that proper input and its favorable timing is important in order to make up for the above constraint. The Nagano case study tour has contributed to smooth implementation of subsequent project activities.
- (3) Useful local resources have contributed to grasping a clear understanding of the internal situation and finding out adaptable measures in practice as well as for cost-effectiveness.
- (4) The existence of a project coordinator, who was able to keep good communication with the Thai side and was well acquainted with local administration in Japan, has contributed to ensure the success of the project.

## **7 Follow-up Situation**

N/A