

The United Mexican States

Ex-post Evaluation of Japanese ODA Technical Cooperation Project
Project to Support the Women's Empowerment in the Mayan Region
in the State of Quintana Roo

External Evaluator: Jun TOTSUKAWA, Earth and Human Corporation

0. Summary

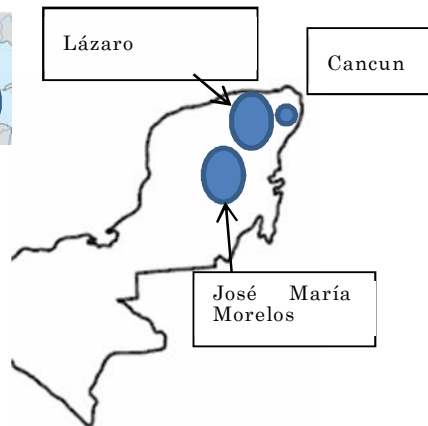
The Project aimed for the Institute of the Women in the State of Quintana Roo (hereafter referred to as IQM), Department of Training and Economic Development to strengthen its institutional capacity, then, to establish a supporting program for women's groups. The objective was to meet the needs of the IQM which sought more effective and efficient means of supporting women's groups. In addition, the Project sought to support the Mayan region which has been facing difficult economic times, with a particular focus on supporting women in regions where a large number of husbands are absent due to migrant work etc. This focus is relevant to the needs of the target area and the development policies of the central and state government. On the other hand, it was observed in the Project design that involvement of necessary related organizations outside of the IQM was limited, and moreover, there were insufficient verification opportunities of the Program implementation. From these points, the relevance of the Project is considered to be fair.

The series of the activities of the Project were implemented as planned and the Project period was within schedule. However, since the Project cost exceeded the plan, the efficiency was fair. In regards to the effectiveness, the Project purpose "Support Program for women's groups" was created during the Project period and the outputs and indicators were mostly achieved. However, following Project completion, ongoing manifestation of the effects of these outputs has been limited. In addition, although income growth, part of the overall goal, can be seen in about 30-40% of women's groups, the handicraft brand supported by the Project currently remains mostly incomplete and there is a state of relapse in which old handicrafts are still being produced and sold. From the above, the effectiveness and impact achievement is low.

Regarding sustainability in the future, the IQM's limited budget and shortage of manpower will possibly become constraints on support activities which require regular follow ups. For this reason, the sustainability at the time of ex-post evaluation is low.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be unsatisfactory.

1. Project Description



(Project Location)



(Women supporting group)

1.1 Background of the Project

The Mexican state of Quintana Roo, located in the Yucatan Peninsula, faces onto the Caribbean Sea and has many international tourist spots such as Cancun, Riviera Maya, and Playa del Carmen. These destinations attract up to 10 million tourists per year and thus economic development associated with the expansion of the tourism industry here is significant. On the other hand, there are Mayan region in inner Quintana Roo where the poverty level is significantly higher than other areas in the region.

In the Mayan region, residents cultivate corn for self-subsistence primarily through slash-and-burn agriculture. However, almost the entire region is karst with low soil fertility and recently the productivity of agriculture in the Mayan region is very low which is about 1/10 of the unit yield in northern Sinaloa where is adopting modernized agriculture. In addition, in recent years there have been repeated droughts and hurricanes which frequently damage crops. These act as large geographical constraints on achieving revenue improvement through agriculture. Therefore, residents are dependent on revenue from migrant work and government subsidies in order to attain adequate monetary incomes.

The IQM was established in 1998 for the purpose of empowering the women of Quintana Roo. It aims to improve the economic participation and living standards of women and provides support for the women in the state, including those residing in the Mayan region. Support of handicrafts creation is one form of IQM's tasks. However, the handicrafts created through the support are of a low quality/design and there is little that can be sold at the market in the state's tourist areas. Since the self-sufficient form of agricultural production, that was the foundation of life for so many years, is no longer adequate, residents in the prime working ages between 20-40 work as hotel employees or manual labor at construction sites for tourist locations and mainly have to leave their villages to be engaged in employment. With such

changes, the cultural and traditional life of the Maya is becoming gradually obsolete.

Under such circumstances, the Quintana Roo state government requested a technical cooperation project to Japan which aimed to increase the sales and income-generation of handicrafts produced by women's groups in the Mayan region as one method of poverty reduction for the Maya. To achieve this, the Project's aim was for institutional strengthening of the IQM and improvement in the quality of handicrafts through establishing a system for development support of new product design and continued product improvement. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) decided to start the technical cooperation project scheduled for about three years starting from March 2007 with the IQM as the implementing agency.

1.2 Project Outline

Overall Goal		Income of the members of women's groups who have received support through the Program of the Production Development of the Female Artisans (hereafter referred to as "the Support Program") is increased
Project Purpose		The Support Program for women's groups by the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM is established.
Outputs	Output 1	Enhancement of investigative function: Necessary information is collected and organized to understand the actual situation of the communities and to conduct activities.
	Output 2	Enhancement of administrative operation and management function: Capacity of administrative operation and management of the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM is improved by elaborating the operation manual for applying the Support Program.
	Output 3	Enhancement of coordinating and cooperation function: System to coordinate and cooperate between the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM and other relevant institutions is established for implementation of the Support Program.
	Output 4	Elaboration of the Support Program: The training guide for development of handicrafts is elaborated through the results of the pilot project for the targeted women's groups by the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM and the branches.
	Output 5	Enhancement of information management: Information about the operation to support women's groups is properly managed and utilized.
Inputs		<p>Japanese side:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dispatch of Experts: 12 Short-term experts only 2. Acceptance of Trainees: 0 3. Trainees for Third Country training programs: 4 4. Provision of Equipment: 94 types 5. Local cost: 32 million yen <p>Mexico side:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Counterpart (CP) allocation 2. Provision of land and facilities, project office, electricity and water fees. 3. Local costs, counterpart salaries, car insurance, vehicle maintenance costs

Project Cost	290 million yen
Cooperation period	March 2007 - March 2010
Implementing Agency	Institute for the Women of the State of Quintana Roo (IQM)
Cooperation Agencies in Japan	None
Related Project	None

1.3 Outline of the Terminal Evaluation

1.3.1 Achievement of Overall Goal

At terminal evaluation, it was determined that “the achievement of Overall Goal is expected in near future.” Due to the fact that during the Project period the indicators of the Overall Goal, i.e. the numbers of newly developed products, their sales and the resultant incomes have all increased respectively, the outlook is that it will be achieved.

In addition, members of women's groups expressed improvements in their own assertiveness as a positive impact and this demonstrates a real impact on empowerment.

1.3.2 Achievement of Project Purpose

It was evaluated that the Project Purpose “is likely to be achieved by the end of Project period”. However, the evaluation also stated that “More close cooperation with relevant organizations is necessary in order that various training courses and projects are implemented based on the Support Program established by the Project “.

1.3.3 Recommendations

At terminal evaluation, recommendations were made with respect to the two points: “establishment of the Program of the Production Development/Improvement of the Female Artisans (= the Support Program) “ and “ensuring the sustainability of targeted women's groups’ activities.”

As for the first point of “establishment of the Support Program”, it was recommended that in the future, the Project’s outputs such as the Support Program and operation manual should be carefully examined through individual consultation with relevant organizations while examining the amount of feasible cooperation for Production Development. In addition to this, it was also recommended that information sharing seminars and presentations be held concerning these outputs of the Project.

As for the “sustainability of targeted women’s’ groups,” the terminal evaluation stated that it was important to ensure the implementation of incomplete union applications from targeted women's groups, and to continue local training for these groups.

2. Outline of the Evaluation Study

2.1 External Evaluator

Jun TOTSUKAWA, Earth and Human Corporation

2.2 Period of Evaluation Study

The External Evaluator performed an evaluation study as follows in the course of this ex-post evaluation:

Period of the Study: September 2012 - February 2014

Period of the Field Study: November 7–22, 2012 and April 11–19, 2013

3. Results of the Evaluation (Overall Rating: D¹)

3.1 Relevance (Rating: ②²)

3.1.1 Relevance to the Development Plan of Mexico

(1) At Project start

The National Development Plan of Mexico (2001-2006) places great importance to overcoming poverty and reducing disparities. It regards overcoming poverty in the South and South Eastern states, which have particularly high degrees of poverty, as the most important task. Therefore, this plan calls for expanding opportunities for creating and implementing production projects that directly benefit indigenous communities that are in need of comprehensive development and have historically been marginalized from the benefits of such development.

The development plan of the State of Quintana Roo (2005- 2011) expressed the importance of gender equality, the welfare of indigenous people, and the promotion of overall human development. Specific strategies to achieve this include the involvement of women in production activities, combatting the poverty and alienation of women, promoting indigenous people's participation in production activities, reducing indigenous poverty and capacity building.

It can be said from the above points that the support activities for women in the Mayan region of this Project are relevant to the policy objectives of the country.

(2) At Project completion

The National Development Plan of Mexico (2007-2012) places a great deal of importance on poverty reduction in the south and southeast regions. This includes the target area and calls for the development of capacities that contribute to poverty reduction, promotion of employment opportunities and support for production activities. Also, as support for

¹ A: Highly satisfactory, B: Satisfactory, C: Partially satisfactory, D: Unsatisfactory

² ③: High, ②: Fair, ①: Low

indigenous residents was set as one important challenge, it stated the need to implement capacity building to support socio-economic development that also protects indigenous culture.

In addition, the development plan of the State of Quintana Roo (2011-2016) was updated after Project completion and laid out four development concepts. These include “promotion of understanding and cooperation” which outlined the importance of support for indigenous people and the promotion of gender equality. As a strategy of support for indigenous residents, assistance for socio-economic development in poverty regions, while protecting their environment and indigenous culture was emphasized. More specifically, it intends to carry out training and entrepreneurial support for capacity building and livelihood improvement of indigenous people. The plan emphasizes the participation of women in promoting production and economic activities as well.

From the above points, the support for indigenous Mayan that this Project aims for is relevant to the policy objectives of Mexico and the target state not only at the time of the Project completion but also at the time of ex-post evaluation.

3.1.2 Relevance to the Development Needs of Mexico

Regarding the category of “relevance to development needs,” the Project has numerous aspects to be verified, therefore, this category is divided into smaller items and evaluated separately.

(1) The existence of needs and the consistency with needs

a. Needs on support Mayan

From the time of the Project start until the present ex-post evaluation, the poverty situation in the Mayan regions has been continuing and the need for support is still high. The human development index of region is 15% lower than in non-indigenous areas of Quintana Roo (2010). Apart from the economic conditions, the general living conditions also require assistance. In addition, it is observed that there are still many households where husbands do migrant work and there is a wide range of expected roles for women in the home, including the securing of additional income. It can be said from the above that the Mayan women's needs for assistance were high from the start of the Project right through to the present ex-post evaluation and that the direction of the Project's aims has met with these needs.

b. Needs for institutional strengthening of the IQM

From Project planning, the IQM was looking for more effective and efficient ways for supporting women. In particular, it sought to strengthen relationships with federal and state government organizations who are involved in supporting women. Also, research capacity

building in order to grasp the current situation, and improved communication within the organization were mentioned as specific needs for institutional strengthening. From the above, the contents of this Project were relevant to the needs of the IQM.

(2) Selection of the target areas

The target area of the Project, Quintana Roo, is the state with the second highest number of Mayan residents in the nation and evidence of its high poverty index can be seen throughout the state. One characteristic of this state is, as the global tourist spot of Cancun is located there, the state's GDP tends to be very high and thus the poverty in the region outside Cancun is readily hidden. As a result, while external support can be seen in similar Mayan areas in Campeche and Yucatan, very little assistance from outside donors was received in Quintana Roo. It is believed that in light of the circumstances described above, the selection of Quintana Roo and the focus on areas with a high poverty index was appropriate.

(3) Appropriateness of the Project Design

a. Selection and involvement of counterpart organizations and other players

As the goal of the Project was strengthening capacity of the IQM, selecting the IQM as the counterpart was the most appropriate course of actions.

The principal roles of the IQM and its Department of Training and Economic Development are as follows.

IQM:

The primary mission of the organization is monitoring to ensure that women's rights and gender equality are reflected in the policies and programs of the state government. This is done through 1) responding to domestic violence, 2) providing legal protection for women, 3) offering women educational and health sector support, and 4) supporting women's economic development.

With a mission like this, the institutional character of IQM is rather a coordinating agency. For activities 3) and 4) in particular, the IQM does not have internal field experts and so has adopted a system of working with other professional organizations in order to provide support for women in these areas.

Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM:

The department is in charge of 4), economic development. This department works together with support programs of the federal and state governments to coordinate technical training and equipment provision support (the organizations which perform technical training and equipment provision are other organizations). For example, if a certain organization that

sponsors support programs requests candidate selection of a participant group to the IQM, then, the IQM will find and specify the group. After the participants are selected, it coordinates the training for the group (the dispatch of trainers and its budget is assumed by the host organization, not IQM) and will perform required follow-ups after training finished.

In view of the above functions and mission of the IQM, along with the fact that the Project's pilot project focused on handicraft production, in order to carry out more effective and efficient support for their activities, it was necessary for the Department of Economic Development of the State of Quintana Roo (SEDE), which has extensive experiences in handicraft support, to work closely as a counterpart or as a working group.

During the Project period, the handicrafts produced by women's groups (the PRODEMAYA brand) achieved generally favorable sales outputs due to marketing activities implemented by Japanese experts and others. After Project completion, however, the IQM was not able to sufficiently provide follow up guidance from a sales perspective, and then sales activities saw a rapid downturn. This has resulted in a considerable negative impact on the overall goal of ongoing activities and the degree of income growth for women's groups. If there had been involvement of SEDE, it is assumed that more effective follow up activities had been possible both during the Project period as well as after Project completion (SEDE governs market research and handicraft development support in the state and has achieved significant results through measures such as carrying out marketing activities on its own website and organizing trade fairs). Furthermore these cooperative activities could have become an opportunity for the IQM to learn a great deal in terms of business promotion etc.

From the above, it is believed there was room for improvement regarding ways in which to involve organizations other than the counterpart who can serve as key players.

b. Lack of validation for the implementation of the Support Program

The goal of the Project was that "the Support Program for women's groups is established." However, although the Support Program itself was completed within the Project period, as described above, there is the fact that handicraft sales have experienced a rapid downturn after the Project ended. Therefore, the Project design cannot be said to have secured the "establishment of the Program" which would continue beyond Project completion and sustain the Program's effects. Due to the fact that the Support Program was completed just before Project completion, there was not adequate time to verify the Program's effectiveness. It is believed that to truly complete establishing the Program, it was necessary to utilize it at least once. By utilizing hands-on experience like this, it is believed that improvements and adjustments can be made to create a more precise program while at the same time create an opportunity for technology transfer from Japanese experts to the counterpart to take root.

Thus, a flaw within the project design is that the Project did not provide an opportunity to verify the effectiveness of the Support Program.

This section will give an overview of the Support Program.

“The Support Program for women’s groups,” establishment of which is the aim of the Project, broadly consists of: 1) an overview of the action steps required by the IQM, as well as the necessary interrelations with relevant organizations needed to support women’s groups; 2) a “training guide” organized as a training component module; and 3) an operation manual which indicates the procedures for program implementation.

Of these, 2), the training guide contains a list of the various trainings required for the development of the target handicrafts, the implementation method for each training, the required time (number of classes), as well as other considerations. In other words it acts as a teaching guide and description of the curriculum. On the other hand, 3) the manual covers a range of information on tasks, such as product development, manufacture and sales, to business evaluation and so on, necessary for implementing support.

c. Relevance of the Project Design Matrix (PDM)

The PDM was significantly altered (once) following mid-term review. As described above, at the time of Project planning, institutional strengthening of the IQM should have been a primary goal and the relevant parties were supposedly aware of this. However, in the process of creating the first PDM, institutional strengthening was left as just one of the outputs and “Production Development of the Female Artisans” became the Project Purpose. In addition, other issues such as “improvement of vocational training” and “handicraft design and product rights protection activities,” which are not included as roles for the IQM, were raised as outputs. For these reasons, not only was there a deviation in the original needs and PDM, the configuration of the PDM ultimately became an inappropriate framework. Under this framework the IQM, an organization which does not have the technical support functions necessary for handicraft creation (in other words an organization which does not have the means to achieve the goals) could not cope with the tasks. Thus there was the contradiction of assigning the task to an organization that does not have the means to achieve the goals.

Even though the PDM contents were modified in the mid-term review, until that point there was confusion amongst Japanese experts and the counterpart as to what directions the Project should be aimed at. Moreover, a substantial amount of time and effort was spent on discussing the PDM modifications. This point had an effect on the efficiency of the Project activities in the first half of the Project period.

3.1.3 Relevance to Japan's ODA Policy

Poverty reduction has been described as a key issue in the Official Development Assistance Charter for Japan's ODA policy. Also at the start of the Project, the Country Assistance Strategy to Mexico by JICA advocated measures of poverty reduction that utilize culture, technology and resources unique to the region. Therefore, the Project is relevant to the ODA policy of Japan.

There were some negative factors regarding the appropriateness of the Project design, including issues such as a lack of involvement from the necessary players and a lack of verification for the Support Program. However, the Project's initiatives were still relevant to Mexico's development policy and the support needs of the Mayans. It can be said from the above points that the relevance of the Project is fair.

3.2 Effectiveness and Impact³ (Rating: ①)

3.2.1 Effectiveness

3.2.1.1 Project Output

1) Output 1

“Enhancement of investigative function: Necessary information is collected and organized to understand the actual situation of the communities and to conduct activities”.

Information gathering and organizing for understanding the current situation has been made for the handicrafts market, support schemes, women's groups' needs etc. The indicators prescribed in the PDM were fulfilled, therefore, Output 1 is considered to have been achieved at the time of Project completion. The achievement status of each indicator is as follows.

Table 1: Achievement of Output 1 indicators

Indicator details	Achievement
1-1. Surveys on the status of the handicrafts market in Quintana Roo are conducted and the information is summarized in a report and then updated	A market survey was conducted in 2007 and 2008, followed by a supplemental survey and the results were compiled in the “Handicrafts Market Survey Report”. During the Project, information updates were made by use of the IQM website.
1-2. Surveys on the current status of villages in the Project area are conducted and the information is summarized in a report and updated	Training for Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) was conducted for the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM and the staff of three target area pilot activity branches. After this six field surveys were conducted, the findings were compiled in a report. In addition, the C/P alone conducted additional investigations on two villages in 2008 and 2009 respectively, and updated the information.

³ Effectiveness should be judged in consideration of impact to determine a rating.

As for the handicrafts market surveys, the IQM itself did not take a role in their implementation but rather they were mainly carried out by experts and others⁴. In addition, information updates were compiled by experts utilizing market information provided by women's groups.

2) Output 2

“Enhancement of administrative operational function: Capacity of administrative operation of the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM is improved by elaborating the operation manual for applying the Support Program.”

While formulating the operation matrix and basic strategy of the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM, an operation manual for the Support Program was created. In addition, along with training in the PCM method, technology transfer related to methods of Project management was carried out. The indicators in the PDM were fulfilled, therefore, Output 2 is considered to have been achieved at the time of Project completion.

Table 2: Achievement of Output 2 indicators

Indicator details	Achievement
2-1. Operating procedures manual for the Department of Training and Economic Development is created	In order to clarify the duties of the IQM's Department of Training and Economic Development, an operation matrix on its duties was compiled based on discussions at workshops. Following this, after a review of state IQM regulations and internal conditions, a business flow diagram and operating procedure manual was created.
2-2. Operation manual and assistance program is created	After receiving feedback from relevant organizations, an operation manual for the effective implementation of the Support Program was completed by the final stage of the Project in 2010.

3) Output 3

“Enhancement of coordinating and cooperation function: System to coordinate and cooperate between the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM and other relevant institutions is established for implementation of the Support Program”.

Meetings with related organizations such as the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) and Technical Committee (TC) were held on a regular basis. In addition, events that connect the handicrafts dealers and handicrafts production groups were held on a regular basis as well. Thus, cooperation and coordination with the relevant organizations became strengthened. The indicators in the PDM were fulfilled, therefore, Output 3 is considered to have been achieved at the time of Project completion.

⁴ SEDE is responsible for works related to market information. Since these activities were already being implemented before the PDM modification, it was left as an indicator for measuring the activity results even after modification of PDM.

Table 3: Achievement of Output 3 indicators

Indicator details	Achievement
3-1. An assistance scheme utilization guide (consultation window, event flyers etc.) proposal is created	Information on the support scheme was collected, and a support scheme utilization guide was completed (by electronic version). A brochure on the support scheme was also created and distributed to women's groups.
3-2. Meetings are held with relevant organizations that have support schemes for women's groups creating handicrafts.	Meetings with organizations providing support schemes were carried out through two modes: bilateral (IQM had meetings with relevant agencies individually) and general conferences (meetings where all relevant organizations including IQM participated). The former was carried out in the form of individual visit meetings, where information exchange was carried out on activities and issues shared between the target organization and IQM. The latter general conferences were carried out four times during the Project time in the form of TC and JCC. In this way, meetings with outside organizations providing support schemes had continued.
3-3. Opportunities to match collaborators / handicrafts dealers with crafts producers (such as product fairs or introduction events) were created more than twice a year	Matching events were conducted by a total of eight times; twice in the second year, five times in the third year, and once in the fourth year.

4) Output 4

“Elaboration of the Support Program: The training guide for development of handicrafts is elaborated through the results of the pilot project for the targeted women’s groups by the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM”.

Pilot projects for the target women's groups were carried out and a training guide for handicrafts production was created based on lessons learned and experiences gained. The indicators in the PDM were fulfilled, therefore, output 4 is considered to have been achieved at the time of Project completion.

Table 4: Achievement of Output 4 indicators

Indicator details	Achievement
4-1. The types of improved and developed handicrafts increase	At the end of the Project, a 42 type product line-up was shown. If consideration includes the different sizes and colors of the products, more than 164 products have been developed, and thus, the types of handicrafts have greatly increased.
4-2. The evaluation of the quality of improved and developed handicrafts is enhanced	The point that determines the level of the quality is whether the dealer will buy or not. With this assumption in mind, as there were more than 10 stores continuing transactions up until the Project completion, it is said that the quality of the handicrafts were highly evaluated.
4-3. The sales of improved and developed handicrafts are increased	Sales of handicrafts improved and developed through the support of the Project increased and reached about 250 thousand pesos (about 1.8 million yen).

4-4. The capabilities of women's groups supported through the Projects are improved (awareness, knowledge, etc.)	A self-assessment survey was conducted by target women's groups through the Project. In this survey, they recognized that their handicrafts production capabilities (production techniques and design), organizational capabilities, production management capacity, as well as distribution capabilities were greatly improved compared to before the Project. Amongst the members of these groups, more than a few developed skills to a level where they were recognized as instructors. Three of these individuals have already provided guidance to other groups.
4-5. A Training guide for handicrafts production is created	A training guide for handicrafts production was created and distributed to the interested parties at the TC meetings.

5) Output 5

“Enhancement of information management: Information about the operation to support women’s groups is properly managed and utilized”.

A new mechanism for the Project information management was introduced and utilized for the purpose of information sharing between the parties. Compared to before the Project, major advances were observed but the initial planned transfer of information systems to IQM's server was not completed during the Project period. Therefore, because some indicators were not met, achievement of output 5 is fair.

Table 5: Achievement of Output 5 indicators

Indicator details	Achievement
5-1. Mechanism of the Project information management is established	A mechanism of information management was created through an information sharing tool, “base camp,” and began operation in 2008. Utilizing this system, information on training and the current status of the handicrafts development at the pilot projects was shared between the relevant parties.
5-2. C / P staff are updating useful information using the information system	Since the introduction of the “base camp,” information updates by experts on a weekly or theme basis have continued. Use of the system has been increased gradually by the C / P throughout the Project period. In addition, information updates were carried out by the staff of the Department of Training and Economic Development.
5-3. The information system utilized in the Project is introduced into the IQM's information systems	Transfer of the website and information system to the IQM server was approved by the Director General of IQM. However, the transfer of the website and information system to IQM’s server was not finished by the Project completion.

3.2.1.2 Achievement of Project Objectives

The Project purpose:

“The Support Program for women’s groups by the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM is established”.

“The Support Program for women’s groups”, which is the Project purpose’s major output,

shows the necessary operations, processes and approaches that IQM should take for supporting women's groups. The details are contained in the "operation manual for applying the Program" and the "training guide for handicrafts products." The operation manual and training guide were created during the Project based on the experiences gained in the pilot project. As described below each indicator in the PDM was fulfilled, and it can be evaluated that the Project purpose was achieved by the time of Project completion.

1) Indicator 1: A support program is created.

(Achievement)

A conceptual diagram organizing the basic components of the program was compiled in 2009. Based on the conceptual diagram, experts along with the head of the Department of Training and Economic Development conducted presentations to the Director General of IQM and received consent for each direction the program took. After this the Support Program was created through the production of the operation manual and the training guide.

2) Indicator 2: A training guide for handicrafts production is created through activities conducted in the target communities

(Achievement)

Revision and editing of the Support Program training guide was carried out while demonstration activities were undertaken based on the training guide for handicrafts production. The guide was completed in January 2010 and distributed to interested parties through the Technical Committee.

3) Indicator 3: An operation manual is created for implementation of the Support Program.

(Achievement)

The operation manual was created based on the activities at pilot project and focused on four areas: 1) basic definitions and procedures outlined in the program conceptual diagram, 2) a scenario based on experiences in the field, 3) realistic business processes reflecting this scenario, and 4) presentations on the challenges confronted during activities, their solutions and success stories.

3.2.2 Impact

3.2.2.1 Continuity of Outputs until the ex-post evaluation

The Project aimed for multi-faceted capacity development in the organization of the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM. As mentioned above, at the time of Project completion there was a generally high level of achievement, however, the sustainability of the output results are described in the following Impact section.

Table 6: sustainability of output effects

Outputs	Evaluation at the Project completion	Continuation following Project completion
Output 1 : Enhancement of investigative function	Achieved	<p>⇒ Sustainability of the effects is limited</p> <p>During the Project period, the methods for village surveys and ascertaining of the needs of women’s groups were implemented by the IQM itself and can be said to have been acquired. However, after the Project completion, the village survey methods which were the subject of the Project’s technology transfer have not been adopted (Stakeholders meetings etc. for understanding needs have been held, however, the kinds of village surveys and workshops that were carried out during the Project period have not been implemented).</p> <p>As market research for handicrafts was originally the role of SEDE, following Project completion the IQM has not been involved.</p>
Output 2: Enhancement of administrative operation and management function	Achieved	<p>⇒ Sustainability of the effects is limited</p> <p>The PDM method was introduced and its technology transferred in order to contribute to enhancement of the administrative operational function. However, following the Project completion it has not been underutilized within the organization.</p> <p>Utilization of the operation manual was limited. Although there arose a need to revise the manual due to a few changes in the internal regulations of the IQM after the Project completion, necessary revisions had not been made at the time of the ex-post evaluation.</p>
Output 3: Enhancement of coordination and cooperation function	Achieved	<p>⇒ Sustainability of the effects is limited</p> <p>The Project had strived for establishment of the Technical Committee (TC), and proposed its continuation even after the Project completion. However, any meeting of TC has not been held since the Project completion and is judged to be essentially dissolved.</p> <p>In regards to mechanisms of coordination and cooperation with other institutions, some parts are being maintained through individual networks and annual gender meeting. However, it has to be said that sustainability of the effects brought about by the Project is limited (gender conferences were being held since before the Project).</p>
Output 4: Elaboration of the Support Program	Achieved	<p>By the time of the Project completion a training guide had been established. However, after the Project completion, utilization of the Support Program that includes the training guide by stakeholders has remained at a limited level.</p>
Output 5: Enhancement of information management function	Fair	<p>At the time of the ex-post evaluation, tools to share information on day-to-day operations, such as summaries of and the state of progress in individual operations like training and seminars etc., were already introduced. Also, the personnel from the Project period have almost entirely been renewed. Therefore, despite the fact that from the viewpoint of sustaining the Project’s effects relations are a little insufficient, it can be judged that the information management capacity of the organization itself has been enhanced by a new personnel structure.</p>

In this way, the desired output indicators have been achieved in the Project period. However, verifying the effects of various outputs at the time of the ex-post evaluation, limited sustainability is observed.

3.2.2.2 Achievement of the Overall Goal

The Overall Goal:

“Income of the women’s groups who receive supports through the Program* of the Production Development of the Female Artisans is increased.”

* The Support Program for women’s groups

The situation of the women’s groups that has been confirmed at the time of the ex-post evaluation is as follows.

Positive points

- 1) Through the intervention of the Project, organizational unity was established within women’s groups, and some groups have continued group activities even after the Project completion.
- 2) New products are being developed through spontaneous activities devised by the groups themselves.
- 3) Some groups have seen a revenue increase due to unexpected opportunities such as student visits for community eco-tourism and orders related to election campaigns.
- 4) Through the technical guidance of the Project, sewing techniques have improved significantly and the quality of products currently being produced has improved.

Negative points

- 1) In regions which have not been blessed with the kinds of opportunities described above in 3), although the groups themselves still exist, their economic activity has stagnated. Basically, as groups cannot carry out marketing activities independently, the majority are in a situation where they rely on incidental opportunities.
- 2) Although IQM branches are continuing personal exchanges with women’s groups, it is still not completely capable of providing enough supports for market activities and sales promotion.

3) The Project adopted a marketing strategy to focus on luxury/high-quality market for selling the products of target groups. The Project pinpointed the sales venue at luxury hotels and boutiques etc., while sustaining the PRODEMAYA brand's value and stability. However, because the frequency and volume of the sales are not so brisk as long as on this strategy's character, the momentum of the groups has begun to wane and activities have stagnated following completion of the Project.

Therefore, the majority of products that continue to be made by women's groups are not those of the PRODEMAYA brand but rather products created through their own ideas or those that they had been accustomed to making even prior to the Project's implementation.

The achievement of the overall goal indicators is analyzed based on the situation of women's groups confirmed above.

1) Indicator 1: Income of women who received support by the Project increases.

The increase or decrease in income of women's groups in each community in the Project is shown in the table below. As described above, there exist both groups who have shown an increase and groups that have shown a decrease in income.

Table 7: The increase/decrease in women's group's incomes after the Project

(number of responses)

Municipality	Community	Increase	About the same	Slight decrease	Significant decrease	Don't know	Total
José María Morelos	Huay Max	10					10
	Sacalaca	2	5				7
	San Felipe	3	6				9
	Tabasco	1				14	15
	La Presumida	2	4				6
	Adolfo López Mateos	2	5	5			12
Lázaro Cárdenas	Nuevo Durango	11					11
	Ignacio Zaragoza	10					10
	San Francisco			6			6
	Nuevo Valladolid			6	3	1	10
	Agua Azul			7		2	9
Total		41	20	24	3	17	105
		39%	19%	23%	3%	16%	100%

Source: Results of beneficiaries surveys

The number of respondents who are still producing the PRODEMAYA brand through the Project was 14 (out of 105). On the other hand, the number of respondents who are making

handicrafts other than those of PRODEMAYA was 93 (out of 105). From this, it can be assumed that presently there are many cases where handicrafts other than those of PRODEMAYA are contributing to income increase.

The primary reason for no longer manufacturing the PRODEMAYA brand was that “selling was difficult/the brand wouldn’t really sell”. The respondents as such reached 55 respondents, more than 60% of all the respondents. In addition, other corresponding answers are essentially related to sales issues, i.e. “promotional activities are not being carried out” and “there is still leftover stock”. On the other hand, reasons such as domestic opposition or difficulties in obtaining raw materials were hardly seen.

Conversely, the reasons given for continuing the production of Non PRODEMAYA products were: 1) They were individually producing the handicrafts themselves even prior to the Project’s implementation, 2) through the Project they found advantage to work as a group, and 3) many of such products are essentially inexpensive, therefore, sales frequency has been maintained to some extent. From these reasons it can be considered easy to sustain the motivation for making handicrafts.

2) Indicator 2: The types of improved and developed handicrafts increase through the program

In Ignacio Zaragoza, women’s groups created new bag designs based on ideas of their own and, if small variations are included, about 5 new types were newly created. In addition, in Nuevo Durango there was one addition to the types of woodwork products.

It should be noted that these products are not being sold as part of the PRODEMAYA brand.

3) Indicator 3: The number of women’s groups applied the program increases

There are no women’s groups that can be said to have started receiving support through the Support Program.

4) Indicator 4: The number of handicrafts delivered to luxury boutiques and handicrafts stores increases

The luxury hotels and boutiques that received deliveries during the Project period are no longer stocking PRODEMAYA products and continuous delivery is not being performed. The communities have already lost communication with the persons responsible for being sales representatives and for handling a range of sales activities.

In regards to the overall goal of “income increase”, around 40% of respondents reported that they had an increase. When viewed as communities, there were only three communities out of 11 where more than half of respondents reported an increased income. In addition, creation of the PRODEMAYA, the focus of the Project, had stagnated at the time of the ex-post evaluation. Although there have been some positive impacts stated previously, from the above points, the overall goal is evaluated to be low as of the ex-post evaluation.

3.2.2.3 Other Impacts

1) Improvements in technical capabilities

The majority of targeted women recognized that their technical capabilities in sewing etc. have improved through the guidance of experts in the Project. Even now, these improved capabilities have become a great asset in the production of handicrafts, even if those handicrafts are different from those created during the Project.

Table 8: Recognition of technical capability improvements for handicrafts

	Improved	Slightly improved	Worsened	Can't compare	Don't know	Total
No of responses	74	1	0	12	18	105

Source: Results of beneficiaries surveys

2) Improved business capacity

Trainings were carried out in areas such methods for keeping account books along with technical training in the Project. Of the 105 respondents, 81 stated that they had learned how to keep an account book which had enabled them to keep track of their profit and loss. With 1) stated above, it has become an important intellectual asset in supporting their current activities.

3) Other effects

Other effects recognized through the Project were: improvements in Spanish ability (61 people), an increased understanding of the merits of organizational activity (53 people), and the enabling of active participation in the other groups' activities (34 people). These kinds of group activities can be said to have created the effects of raising women's awareness and empowerment.

Regarding the sustainability of the products developed by the Project, it has not proceeded as expected due to misreading of the marketing strategy (the difficulties encountered in selling under luxurious/high quality products marketing strategy; the decline in motivation

due to limited sales frequency etc.). However, as described above, the advantages of group activities have been realized and there are now multiple groups still continuing group activities, which can be cited as a positive impact produced through the Project.

Looking at the effectiveness and impact of the Project on the whole, the effectiveness at the time of the Project completion was high, and positive impacts can be seen here and there in targeted women's groups as well. However, it is pointed out that the capacity development of IQM has been limited. Also, with regard to the overall goal, as the PRODEMAYA brand supported by the Project is currently being stagnated, its achievement level is evaluated low at the time of the ex-post evaluation.

From the above, the Project has achieved its objectives at a limited level, therefore its effectiveness and impact is low.

3.3 Efficiency (Rating: ②)

3.3.1 Inputs

Table 9: Project Inputs

Inputs	Plan	Actual Performance (as of the end)
(1) Experts	Short-term: About 5 / year · Organization strengthening · Handicrafts improvement and development · Market research · Research methods (Rapid Rural Appraisal, etc.)	Short-term: 12 people (total) · Organization strengthening · Handicrafts improvement and development · Market research · Research methods / organization of women · Work coordination
(2) Trainees received	4 people / year * 3 years	-
(3) Third-Country Training Programs	-	4 people (total) · 2 people * twice (New York)
(4) Equipment	2 vehicles, other necessary equipment (sewing machines, simple equipment sets, silk screens, office equipment, etc.)	The 94 types shown on the left
Total Project cost	Total 198 million yen	Total 290 million yen
Recipient government's input amount	Total 12 million yen	Total 12 million yen

3.3.1.1 Elements of Inputs

The introduction of facilities and equipment was carried out as planned and it was evaluated a relevant input for achieving the Projects expected outputs. The majority of the

materials and equipment were vehicles and tools necessary for women's groups support activities and they had been used effectively throughout the Project period.

In regards to trainees, training was not carried out in Japan, but rather was carried out as third-country training through visits to the United States. There they observed the current status of handicrafts markets and visited handicraft producing sites. It was an effective opportunity to provide the trainees with ideas on how to broaden support activities for women's groups.

In relation to the input of experts, the inputs were based on each item outcome and the dispatch periods and human input fields were relevant.

3.3.1.2 Project Cost

The Project cost was higher than the planned amount (146% of the plan).

The difference between the actual amount and the planned amount is due to the expenses required for the dispatch of experts.

3.3.1.3 Period of Cooperation

The Project was carried out from March 2007 until March 2010 and was completed as planned.

From the above, the cooperation period of this Project was as planned.

The inputs were appropriate for producing outputs and achieving the project objective. Although the period of cooperation was within the plan, the project cost was beyond the plan, therefore efficiency of the project is fair.

3.4 Sustainability (Rating: ①)

3.4.1 Related Policy towards the Project

The current Quintana Roo development plan (2011-2016) places an importance on supporting the indigenous Maya and has focused closely on the previous development plan. It is believed that Quintana Roo which has the second largest Mayan resident population in Mexico is highly likely to continue supporting the Maya in the future.

At the same time, one major support theme of Mayan assistance is livelihood improvement. However, in the current situation there are still many cases where men are performing migrant work and therefore livelihood support through production activities for women is particularly important.

It is believed from these points that support activities for Mayan women's groups is consistent with the state's policies and thus will be fully able to receive support from a policy viewpoint in the future.

3.4.2 Institutional and Operational Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The framework of the Department of Training and Economic Development of IQM consists of the Director, under which there is one person in the Training Section, two people in the Economic Development Section and one person who serves in both divisions. This framework of 5 people is responsible for a wide range of activities such as coordinating operations with other organizations, arranging training, and specifying the women's groups to be targeted for assistance. Considering this large workload, it is believed that the personnel numbers are fewer than necessary⁵.

On the other hand, the IQM's framework composed of IQM branches in each city is a huge advantage. In Quintana Roo, there are very few organizations apart from IQM which have branches in every city, owing to its branches, the IQM is able to quickly respond to on site needs. Looking at personnel, a branch head, training and economic development representatives, and Mayan interpreters etc. have been placed and the framework of the branches themselves has no particular problems. However, although these placements and personnel frameworks are retained, performance of the branches have been restricted due to financial constraints as will be described below, and have not been able to take full advantage these frameworks yet.

Overall, it cannot be said that the IQM's framework is under sustainable circumstances.

3.4.3 Technical Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The technical aspects necessary for effectively supporting Mayan women are: investigative capacity, operation and management capacity, coordination and cooperation capacity, information management capacity, all of which were raised as the Project outputs. The sustainability of each capacity is examined as follows.

1) Investigative capacity

In regards to investigative capacity, during the Project period the CP learned techniques through the implementation of activities such as village surveys, thus, a certain degree of sustainability can be confirmed. However, the investigative methods that are currently being used differ from the techniques transferred through the Project, taking on a simplified version. In order to maintain the capacity to implement these techniques within the organization in the future, it is necessary to carry out technical transfer within the organization itself with the leading role by staff who mastered the techniques during the Project.

⁵ It was pointed out by both the Department of Training and Economic development as well as other organizations that the workload was significantly large in comparison with the number of staff available. One typical example for the consideration was the fact that the "the IQM did not have enough staff to effectively monitor", the State Employment and Labor Training Bureau pointed out in its own ex-post evaluation survey regarding the training program, which was conducted cooperatively with the IQM.

On the other hand, as SEDE is responsible for collecting market information, there is no need for the IQM itself to be involved in market surveys. Rather it is the responsibility of the IQM to maintain constant contact with SEDE in order to get the appropriate information.

2) Operation and management capacity

Due to the fact that there is currently still a need for improvements in administrative operational capabilities for implementing the Support Program created in the Project, it cannot be said that sustainability is secured. This current situation can be determined from the fact that follow-ups for activities such as support group monitoring and training have been inadequate and that the operation manual has not been utilized to the extent initially expected.

3) Coordination and cooperation capacity

While coordination and cooperation capacities are currently functioning, this largely depends on personal networks of individuals such as the Director of the Department of Training and Economic Development. If the Director was to be reassigned it is assumed that maintaining these networks would be difficult within the organization and thus the sustainability is low (However, as the successor would have their own personal networks, it is probable that networks with other organizations would continue). In addition, use of the coordination and cooperation structure attempted in the Project (associations of numerous organizations and technical committees etc.) is expected to be difficult due to the fact that, as mentioned previously, the structure has been effectively dissolved.

4) Information management capacity

Regarding information management capacity, individuals have been employed from external private companies who have experiences in the field of information management, and therefore, the technical level has rather improved. These newly hired staff can respond adequately to the unique characteristics of the information field (IT field) and so from a technical standpoint there are no problems in terms of sustainability.

Technical capacities by each field were verified as abovementioned. With the exception of the area of information management, in general it can be said that these capacities and expertise have halted at the individual level and have not yet spread throughout the entire organization. If this point remains unresolved, there is the concern that personnel changes would result in the above technical knowledge being instantly lost.

3.4.4 Financial Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The budget of the IQM is shown in the following table. A similar budget has been secured over the past 4 years.

Table 10: IQM budget (Thousand pesos)

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Budget	34,240	36,400	36,240	35,336

Source: IQM

However, approximately 90% of the budget consists of labor costs with the remaining 10% mostly being made up of office rent, utility costs etc. Whatever remains of this is assigned to travelling expenses for monitoring visits etc. within the State. In other words, the fact is that in the current situation a budget for implementing the appropriate and necessary on-site advice and follow ups has not been promised.

In addition, for trips within the state, unless approval is attained from the administrative department beforehand, expenditure for gasoline is not permitted for business trips. Therefore, from a procedural viewpoint this may hamper flexibility of movement in proper timing. In reality, although it varies from year to year, the amount of times the IQM makes trips to various places within the state is severely restricted from the financial aspect and only occurs around 3-5 times a year.

Even for branches close to sites, the amount of gasoline secured is about 3,200-3,800 pesos per month, which makes it a tight budget for carrying out frequent field visits. With this small allocation each branch needs to make trips to a large number of communities and urban areas within their jurisdiction to carry out public services. From interviews it was understood that site visits by branch staff were limited to a maximum of 5 times a month (it should be noted that the Jose Maria Morelos branch supports 50 communities while the Lazaro Cardenas branch supports 34 communities).

The role of the IQM is to provide support through the flow of selecting women's groups, arranging training, providing the subsequent monitoring and then, as necessary, follow ups. It is important for the IQM itself to have the flexibility to visit sites (the IQM essentially does not have projects implementation expenses). For this reason, the most important issue to address in regards to financial sustainability is whether a budget can be secured which allows flexible site visits or not.

With this point in mind, it must be said that at the present time the financial sustainability of the IQM is uncertain.

Major problems have been observed in the structural, technical and financial aspects of the executing agency, therefore, sustainability of the project effects is low.

4. Conclusion, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The Project aimed for the Institute of the Women in the State of Quintana Roo (hereafter referred to as IQM), Department of Training and Economic Development to strengthen its institutional capacity, then, to establish a supporting Program for women's groups. The objective was to meet the needs of the IQM which sought more effective and efficient means of supporting women's groups. In addition, the Project sought to support the Mayan region which has been facing difficult economic times, with a particular focus on supporting women in regions where a large number of husbands are absent due to migrant work etc. This focus is relevant to the needs of the target area and the development policies of the central and state government. On the other hand, it was observed in the Project design that involvement of necessary related organizations outside of the IQM was limited, and moreover, there were insufficient verification opportunities of the Program implementation. From these points, the relevance of the Project is considered to be fair.

The series of the activities of the Project were implemented as planned and the Project period was within schedule. However, since the Project cost exceeded the plan, the efficiency was fair. In regards to the effectiveness, the Project purpose "Support Program for women's groups" was created during the Project period and the outputs and indicators were mostly achieved. However, following Project completion, ongoing manifestation of the effects of these outputs has been limited. In addition, although income growth, part of the overall goal, can be seen in about 30-40% of women's groups, the handicraft brand supported by the Project currently remains mostly incomplete and there is a state of relapse in which old handicrafts are still being produced and sold. From the above, the effectiveness and impact achievement is low.

Regarding sustainability in the future, the IQM's limited budget and shortage of manpower will possibly become constraints on support activities which require regular follow ups. For this reason, the sustainability at the time of ex-post evaluation is low.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be unsatisfactory.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Executing Agency

- Strengthening cooperation with SEDE is essential. In so doing, it would be possible to re-vitalize the PRODEMAYA brand created through Project. Specifically, it is proposed that SEDE could add the PRODEMAYA brand to their own sales channels as well as list it on the Department's website. It is also recommended that a re-examination of the PRODEMAYA brand's pricing be carried out in conjunction with SEDE.
- In addition, it is noted that 6 of the Project's targeted women's groups took part in a sales

fair hosted by SEDE from February to March 2013. These newly tackled such effort for cooperation is highly evaluated. It is recommended that the IQM further strengthen cooperation with SEDE and provide support for other groups who could not take part in this sales fair.

- So far, the technical expertise and technology transferred in the Project has only permeated to a few individuals within the counterparts. If there was to be a personnel change, it is highly likely that this knowledge would be promptly forgotten. It is necessary to implement technical transfer of the Project's outputs within the organization. Moreover, efforts to further disseminate these outputs, such as creating a digest version of the manual etc. are required.
- The operation manual and training guide has not permeated into the internal workings of the IQM. Currently, the people who are knowledgeable about their contents are limited and it is necessary for the essence of this knowledge to be shared with other concerned parties. In addition, there is a necessity for revisions in certain parts of the guide due to changes made to the internal regulations of the IQM. Furthermore, it is important to encourage active use of the training guide not just by the IQM but also by SEDE and other related organizations.

4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

None.

4.3 Lessons Learned

- From a technical perspective and so on, it is occasionally very difficult for coordinating organizations such as the IQM to proactively carry out field work support. It is necessary to consider collaboration with implementing agencies which have field experts. At the moment, even if not as an equal counterpart based on the relationships with target counterpart organization, it is possible to create a system of participation in the form of working groups where they participate accordingly.
- When planning the Project's contents and activities, rather than focusing solely on the needs of the counterpart, it is necessary to carefully examine in advance whether there is an adequate personal structure in place capable of implementing activities based on these needs. It is also necessary to assess whether these activities transcend the mandate of the organization. From this point of view, at the stage of the Project planning, it was necessary to investigate in more detail the IQM's organizational structure, number of personnel and budget (ie. a budget that can be allocated to the actual activities). Furthermore, it was also necessary to investigate the program contents of other relevant organizations and the way in which they related to the IQM.

- For projects like this which aim to build programs and models targeting certain issues, it is necessary for the project design to provide adequate opportunities for verifying the validity of these programs and models. This verification, by going through a process of utilization, can be expected to enhance the effectiveness of the programs and models.
- Through the experiences of the Project it has been adequately proven that technical capabilities in handicraft manufacture can be improved through continued technical instructions. However, it also showed that, due to the fact that there are a large range of choices in the areas of marketing and sales strategies, that achieving this is not always straightforward. At the time, in view of the current situation in which inexpensive souvenirs are being produced in China and neighboring countries, it was decided that the Project would focus on producing luxury/high quality goods. While that judgment can be said to have had a degree of logic, as time passed it was ascertained that, in this approach had a high degree of difficulty terms of sustainability. To begin with, it should have been realized that it was unrealistic to expect Mayan women living in poor regions to be able to continue delivering products to luxury hotels. This is true even if there had been an approach of training union representatives. The current state of women's groups in the Project demonstrates the fact that rather than aiming for one time large profits with low sales frequency, the approach of ongoing sales activities for even small profits is much more appropriate for stimulating organizational vitalization.