

FY2024 Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation Report of Japanese ODA Loan Project

External Evaluator: Toshihisa Iida, OPMAC Corporation

Duration of the Study: October 2024 – February 2026

Duration of the Field Study: March 31, 2025 – April 11, 2025

Country Name
Republic of the Philippines

<COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan Phase 2>



Location of the Project site (Source: the Evaluator)

Thermal packaging system provided by JICA (Source: the Evaluator)

I. Project Outline

Background

Following the confirmation of the first case of the novel coronavirus (hereinafter referred to as “COVID-19”) in January 2020, the Philippines had the second highest case numbers in Southeast Asia after Indonesia. As of March 14, 2022, approximately 3.67 million people had been infected, and around 50,000 people had died. The real GDP growth rate for 2020 fell to -9.6%, marking the largest decline since statistics were first recorded in 1947. In response to this situation, the Philippine government announced a crisis response package totaling about PHP 1.7 trillion, aimed at employment creation and sustaining economic growth. Financial support was provided by institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank (hereinafter referred to as “ADB”) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (hereinafter referred to as “JICA”). Despite these measures, COVID variants in early 2021 delayed economic recovery. The fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio expanded from 7.6% in 2020 to 8.6%, due to decreased revenue and increased spending related to COVID-19 countermeasures. The 2022 budget estimated a fiscal deficit of 7.5% of GDP. To cover this deficit, the Philippine government planned to raise PHP 2.5 trillion, including PHP 100 billion, from program loans provided by donors.

Objectives of the Project

To support the Government’s emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis to promote infection prevention measures by providing budget support in the Philippines, where COVID-19 had been spreading, thereby contributing to promotion of the economic stabilization and development efforts of the Government of the Philippines.

Contents of the Project

1. Project Site: nationwide across the Republic of the Philippines
2. Japanese side: general budget support loan: JPY 30,000 million
3. Philippine side: implementing the policy actions

Implementation Schedule

E/N Date	April 18, 2022	Completion Date of Disbursement	June 30, 2022
L/A Date	April 25, 2022	Completion Date	June 30, 2022 (Completion Date of Disbursement)

Project Cost

E/N Loan Limit / L/A Loan Limit: 30,000 million yen, Actual Loan Amount: 30,000 million yen

Executing Agency

Department of Finance

Conditions (Loan only)

Interest rate: 0.01%, Repayment Period: 15 years (Grace Period: 4 years), Conditions for Procurement: General untied

Borrower (Loan only)

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines

Contracted Agencies

Main Contractor(s):NA

Main Consultant(s):NA

Agent: NA

II. Results of the Evaluation

Summary

The Project provided emergency budget support to the Philippines, where COVID-19 infections were spreading, with the aim of promoting policies, such as infectious disease prevention measures against COVID-19 implemented by the Philippine government. Thus, the Project was consistent with the Philippines’ development policies and needs. Regarding internal

coherence, a JICA grant aid project and technical cooperation projects were incorporated into the Policy Matrix as policy actions. The progress of the policy actions was tracked through the Policy Matrix progress monitoring activities, both within and outside the relevant agencies, which served as an incentive to advance these support activities. Regarding external coherence, coordination and collaboration among relevant donors in the support areas were achieved through coordination efforts and regular donor meetings during the implementation of Phase I of this Project. Based on the above, it is clear that the relevance and coherence are high. Regarding the effectiveness, all policy actions in the Project's Policy Matrix had been achieved by the target date, October 2024. All operation and effect indicators were also 100% achieved by the target year. The funds provided through the Project were utilized as part of the financing for the increased fiscal deficit mainly resulting from the Philippine government's implementation of COVID-19 countermeasures, and are considered to have played a certain role in facilitating smooth fiscal management. As for the project impact, the government measures to combat COVID-19 helped curb worsening unemployment and poverty rates, while efforts to strengthen the country's capacity to respond to infectious disease are underway. Therefore, effectiveness and impact are high. Since the Project is a budget support loan, the analysis of efficiency was excluded from the ex-post evaluation. In addition, regarding project sustainability, the ex-post evaluation covered only the analyzable portion. Based on the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts are underway to strengthen the logistics system for transporting medical supplies and other goods, and to enhance the infectious disease testing network, which were areas supported by the Policy Matrix of the Project.

Overall Rating¹	-	Relevance & Coherence	③ ²	Effectiveness & Impacts	③	Efficiency	-	Sustainability	-
-----------------------------------	---	----------------------------------	----------------	------------------------------------	---	-------------------	---	-----------------------	---

<Special Perspectives Considered in the Ex-Post Evaluation/Constraints of the Ex-post Evaluation>

Since the Project was an ODA loan project intended for budget support, which made it difficult to conduct a quantitative comparison of inputs and output, the efficiency of the Project was not evaluated. Thus, the analysis focused on "relevance," "coherence," "effectiveness," and "impact." Additionally, "sustainability" was examined only for items that could be analyzed from the perspective of the continued effects of each policy action. Therefore, sub-ratings were assigned only for "relevance/coherence" and "effectiveness/impact," and no overall rating was provided.

1 Relevance/Coherence

<Relevance>

- Consistency with the Development Policy of the Philippines at the Time of the Ex-Ante Evaluation

At the time of ex-ante evaluation, the Government of the Philippines had formulated the *Philippines National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines (hereinafter referred to as "NDVP")* in January 2021 as part of its COVID-19 response. An inter-agency National Coordination Committee for NDVP implementation and coordination was established, demonstrating the government's strong commitment to strengthening the institutional framework for COVID-19 prevention.

- Consistency with the Development Needs of the Philippines at the Time of Ex-Ante the Evaluation

The Project was consistent with the funding needs of the Government of the Philippines to address a part of the fiscal deficit in the proposed 2022 national budget, caused by the reduced revenue due to the impact of COVID-19 and increased expenditures for COVID-19 countermeasures, including infection prevention. Additionally, urgent tasks included: (i) the prioritization of individuals for vaccination based on factors such as the risk of severe symptoms, disability status, and the capacity of the healthcare delivery system, and the identification of target groups based on the latest data and development, including the expansion of vaccination to younger age groups in the formulation and implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination inoculation plan; (ii) the establishment of cold chain equipment and a logistics system to carry and store vaccines appropriately across the country and administer them effectively and safely; (iii) strengthening of infectious disease testing capacity and early warning systems. These tasks were consistent with the Policy Matrix of the Project.

- Appropriateness of Project Design/Approach

The Project's design and approach were appropriate. To ensure the smooth implementation of COVID-19 countermeasures by the Government of the Philippines, it was necessary to urgently provide funding to fill the fiscal gap and to offer flexible financial resources for implementing the required measures. Therefore, support through a general budget support program loan was deemed appropriate. The Policy Matrix of the Project was developed with the involvement of the implementing and related agencies. Relevant activities from JICA's technical cooperation projects and grant aid projects were incorporated into the Policy Matrix as policy actions to be monitored after the JICA disbursement. This inclusion placed pressure on the responsible departments to implement the policy actions, thereby contributing to their advancement. Meanwhile, regarding the content of the Policy Matrix, the policy actions in the support areas of "Establishment of the surrounding environment for vaccination" and "Strengthening the infectious disease testing networks" were limited to activities under JICA's grant aid and technical cooperation projects. In order to advance the institutional strengthening of these areas, it is considered that JICA's contribution could have been further enhanced by incorporating policy actions beyond its own activities and through policy dialogue, including the provision of advice at opportunities such as during monitoring.

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

² ④ : Very High ③: High, ②: Moderately low, ①: Low

<Coherence>

• Consistency with Japan's ODA Policy at the Time of the Ex-Ante Evaluation

The Project was consistent with Japan's ODA policy toward the Philippines at the time of the ex-ante evaluation. Japan's *Country Development Cooperation Policy for the Republic of the Philippines (April 2018)* identified two priority areas for assistance: "strengthening a foundation for sustainable economic growth" and "ensuring human security for inclusive growth." It emphasized support for strengthening the foundations necessary for sustainable economic growth and overcoming vulnerabilities to various risks, such as infectious diseases that disproportionately affect the poor, as well as stabilizing and fortifying people's livelihoods. In addition, the *JICA Country Analysis Paper for the Philippines (July 2020)* stated that timely assistance was necessary to support the country's fiscal and health sector in order to fully support the Philippines government's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Furthermore, JICA's "Initiative for Global Health and Medicine" and "Global Agenda (Health and Medicine)" promoted the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in coordination with the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (hereinafter referred to as "COVAX") Facility, which is an international framework to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines to boost protection.

• Internal Coherence

In the Policy Matrix of the Project, under the support area "C. Establishment of the surrounding environment for vaccination (Cold chain, supply, Last-one-mile delivery and Waste management)," the activities of the technical cooperation project titled "Support to the Philippines COVID-19 Vaccination Cold Chain and Logistics Project (2022)" and the grant aid project "The Program for COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support (2021-23)" were incorporated as either triggers for fund disbursement or as policy actions to be monitored after post-disbursement. Similarly, under the support area "D. Strengthening the infectious disease testing networks," the activities of the technical cooperation project titled "Project for Strengthening the Philippines National health Laboratory Network for Infectious Diseases (2022-2026 (plan))" were embedded in the Policy Matrix as policy actions. The progress of these policy actions was tracked both within and outside the related Departments through Policy Matrix monitoring activities, which served as an incentive to accelerate the implementation of the activities. Furthermore, the inclusion within the Policy Matrix of the technical cooperation project in the broad area of strengthening infectious disease testing networks has led to the formulation of support activities through policy-level discussions that take into account the overall perspective of infectious disease control. This approach has ensured that the content of technical cooperation is better aligned with the evolving trends and needs of the entire support sector. Furthermore, through the inclusion into the Policy Matrix of the technical cooperation project in the broad area of strengthening the infectious disease testing network, the content of support was determined through policy discussions from the perspective of the infectious disease control sector as a whole, thereby better aligning the contents of the technical cooperation project with overall trends in the sector.

• External Coherence

As the Project was a budget support-type project with a Policy Matrix formulated independently by JICA, no consultations or coordination with other donors regarding the Policy Matrix were conducted. However, JICA coordinated and collaborated with relevant donors during the implementation phase of Phase 1 of this Project. Furthermore, the coordination and collaboration with relevant donors in the areas of support were conducted through participation in regular donor meetings. Thus, while no clear synergistic effects from such coordination were confirmed, the coordination among donors in the support area was observed.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the relevance and coherence of the project are high³.

2 Efficiency

The efficiency of the Project was not evaluated. The planned project period was from January 2021 to September 2022 (21 months) (with project completion defined as the completion of loan disbursement). The actual project period was from January 2021 to June 2022 (18 months) since the final loan disbursement occurred in June 2022.

3 Effectiveness/Impacts⁴

<Effectiveness>

The Project objective was almost achieved. As shown in the Annex, the achievement of each policy action set as a trigger for loan disbursement under the Policy Matrix of this Project was confirmed at the meeting held in June 2022, and the fund disbursement was executed accordingly. In addition, all the policy actions to be achieved by October 2024 were achieved within the deadline.

<Quantitative Effect>

(1) Operation and Effect Indicator

The indicators corresponding to the Policy Matrix of the Project, as shown in Table 1, were all achieved by the target date of October 2024. Regarding Indicator 1, which measures the rate of completion of the two-dose COVID-19 vaccination to the population, the overall vaccination completion rate, including those who completed vaccinations requiring only one dose for completion, had exceeded the target of 60% as of December 2022, reaching 71% by March 2024. Regarding Indicator 2, which

³ Relevance: ③, Coherence: ③

⁴ When providing the sub-rating, Effectiveness and Impacts are to be considered together.

concerns the strengthening of end-to-end supply chain logistics management for vaccination programs through JICA projects, the planned provision of cold chain equipment and training for the maintenance of the equipment provided had been carried out by the target year through JICA's technical cooperation project ("Support to the Philippines COVID-19 Vaccination Cold Chain and Logistics Project") and grant aid project ("The Program for COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support"). Although there was no longer a need to transport COVID-19 vaccines at the time of the ex-post evaluation, the cold storage containers and vehicles provided are being utilized for the storage and transportation of other temperature-sensitive vaccines and pharmaceuticals, such as those for measles, influenza, and BCG. Additionally, the vehicles are being used to monitor the storage conditions of vaccines and pharmaceuticals by Local Government Units (hereinafter referred to as "LGUs").

Table 1 Quantitative Effects

Indicators	Baseline June 2021	Target October 2024	Actual December 2021	Actual December 2022	Actual December 2023	Actual March 2024
Indicator 1: Vaccination for the target population according to the priority vaccination plan of the NDVP	1.0%	60%	45%	66%	71%	71%
Indicator 2: Strengthening the end-to-end supply chain logistics management for vaccination programs through the achievement of cold chain equipment Project	N/A	Cold Chain Material and Equipment Arrangement Program Plan (note) 100%	JICA Technical Cooperation Project ("Support to the Philippines COVID-19 Vaccination Cold Chain and Logistics Project"): 100% Achieved (Project Completion: July 2022) - Equipment and Vehicles (600 thermal packaging systems, 2 refrigerated vans, 2 pickup trucks) - Training (Web-based Seminar on the Fundamentals of Medical Equipment Maintenance and Management) JICA Grant Aid Project ("The Program for COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support"): 100% achieved (Project Completion: December 2023) - Equipment and Vehicles (500 thermal packaging systems, 140 ice pack freezers, 8 refrigerated vans, 17 pickup trucks, 17 delivery vans, and 18 wing vans) - Training (Maintenance and management training for equipment and vehicles provided)			

Note: A plan for arranging cold chain material and equipment provided through JICA technical cooperation and grant-aid programs

Source: documents provided by Department of Health

(2) Financing Effect

The loan amount of this Project, totaling JPY 30 billion (approximately PHP 12 billion, converted at the average exchange rate at the time of disbursement⁵), accounted for 0.6% of the Philippine government's total financing for FY 2022, 2.3% of its external borrowing, and 8.8% of its program loan financing. It was utilized as part of the financial resources to address the increased fiscal deficit due mainly to the implementation of COVID-19 countermeasures by the Philippine government, and is considered to have played a certain role in facilitating smooth fiscal management.

Table 2 Philippines' national government revenue, expenditure and financing (Unit: PHP 100 million)

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
(a) Total Revenue	28,560	30,055	35,455	58,241
(b) Total Expenditure	42,274	46,756	51,596	53,362
(c) National government overall balance (% of GDP)	-13,714 (-7.4%)	-16,701 (-8.3%)	-16,141 (-7.2%)	-15,121 (-5.7%)
(d) Amortization	5,821	2,906	7,465	9,106
(e) Financing needs (c+d)	19,535	19,607	23,607	24,227
(f) Financing	26,525	25,792	21,635	21,933
(g) Domestic borrowing	19,101	20,106	16,434	16,342
(h) External borrowing	7,424	5,687	5,201	5,590
Program loans	3,752	1,661	1,366	2,043
Project Loans	491	1,102	1,267	1,359
Bonds and other Inflows	3,181	2,923	2,628	2,189
(i) Financing gap (e-f)	-6,990	6,185	-1,972	-2,294

Source: Department of Budget and Management Annual Reports, "Budget of Expenditure and Source of Financing"

<Qualitative Effect>

In the Philippines, following the peak of new COVID-19 cases in January 2022, the number of new infections declined. Although the staff of the Department of Health (hereinafter referred to as "DOH") indicated that no statistical analysis has been conducted to demonstrate a correlation between vaccination and the number of infections or deaths, they commented that vaccination is essential for controlling the spread of COVID-19, and that it played a critical role in the Philippines' COVID-19

⁵ Average foreign exchange rate at the time of disbursement in June 2022: PHP 1 = JPY 2.49765 (Source: International Monetary Fund, "International Financial Statistics")

containment strategy, which included suppressing the pandemic, reducing infection rates, preventing severe cases and deaths, and ultimately achieving herd immunity. Vaccination also contributed significantly to the easing of restrictions on movement and the early recovery of socio-economic activities. Therefore, the promotion of vaccination and the strengthening of cold chain logistics supported through the Policy Matrix of this Project are considered to have made a certain contribution to the containment of COVID-19.

Table 3 COVID-19-related number of infections and deaths, fully vaccinated persons, and the vaccination rate in the Philippines

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Number of infections (annual)	458,119	2,325,588	1,211,729	140,089	40,159
Number of deaths (annual)	12,066	46,879	7,410	489	459
Number of fully vaccinated persons (cumulative total)	-	49,765,213	73,764,411	79,690,431	79,697,226 (2024/3)
Number of completed vaccinations (cumulative) as a percentage of the population (%)	-	45%	66%	71%	71%

Source: documents provided by DOH

<Impacts>

(1) Social and economic recovery

After the Philippines recorded an average annual economic growth rate of 6.4% between 2010 and 2019, it experienced a negative growth (-9.5%) in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. Similarly, the unemployment rate rose significantly from 5.1% in 2019 to 10.4% in 2020, and the poverty rate increased from 16.7% in 2018 to 18.1% in 2021. The various measures implemented by the Philippine government to stabilize economic and social activities are considered to have contributed to the subsequent recovery of economic activity and to the prevention of further deterioration in the unemployment and poverty rates⁶. Although this Program was a general budget support type loan and was not directly linked to specific measures implemented by the Philippine government such as employment protection, it is considered to have played a certain role in the country's social and economic recovery, given that the funds provided by this Program were used as part of the financial resources to address the fiscal deficit that had increased due to the implementation of COVID-19 countermeasures.

Table 4 Key economic indicators of the Philippines

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Real economic growth rate (%)	6.1	-9.5	5.7	7.6	5.5	5.8
Unemployment rate (%)	5.1	10.4	7.8	5.4	4.4	4.0
Poverty rate (%) (note)	-	-	18.1	-	15.5	-

Note: The poverty line, as defined by the Philippine Statistics Authority, was set at 79 pesos per day (approximately USD 1.5) as of 2022.

Source: IMF (2024) Article IV Report, Philippine Statistics Authority "Labor Force Survey, June 2025," "Official Poverty Statistics of the Philippines, August 2023"

(2) Promotion of sustainable development

In this ex-post evaluation, the promotion of sustainable development was defined as "strengthening the country's capacity to respond to infectious diseases in general," and an analysis was conducted on the status of improvements in the vaccination environment and the enhancement of the infectious disease testing network, both of which were included in the support areas of the Project's Policy Matrix. Regarding the improvement in the vaccination environment, efforts have been made to improve the efficiency and mobility of transporting vaccines and pharmaceuticals through the construction of regional hub warehouses,⁷ the introduction of inventory management information systems that enable efficient stock control of medical supplies, and the use of private logistics companies for vaccine delivery to remote areas. These initiatives aim to enhance the efficiency and robustness of transportation and inventory management systems. As for strengthening the infectious disease testing network, measures are being implemented through JICA's technical cooperation, including the establishment of testing laboratories at the regional level and training for personnel, to reinforce the testing infrastructure. Although this Project is a general budget support-type loan and therefore not directly linked to these specific capacity-building measures, they were included in the Project's Policy Matrix and are being advanced in coordination with the related JICA technical cooperation project.

(3) Impacts on the Environment

The Project was classified as Category C based on the *JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations* (promulgated in April 2010) since the Project would have minimal adverse environmental impacts. In practice, no undesirable impacts on the environment were observed.

(4) Other Positive and Negative Impacts

⁶ For example, according to a World Bank report, it is estimated that without the Philippine government's COVID-19 measures related to employment protection, the country's GDP in 2020, which declined by 9.5%, would have seen the poverty rate rising to 23.5%. (World Bank [2023], "Crisis and Recovery: Learning from COVID-19 Economic Impacts and Policy Response in East Asia")

⁷ The plan is to establish five hub warehouses nationwide and transport goods from these to nearby regional office warehouses, replacing the previous direct shipment system from the DOH's central warehouse in Metro Manila to 18 DOH's regional office warehouses across the country. This will create a more flexible and efficient transportation system.

In the omnibus guidelines for the implementation of the NDVP, which was one of the policy actions in the Policy Matrix of this Project, pregnant women, individuals in poverty, and the elderly were included in the priority groups for vaccination. As a result of the Philippine government's vaccination promotion campaigns and related initiatives, vaccination coverage among the poor and elderly was enhanced.⁸ Although this impact did not necessarily arise directly from the Project, it can be considered as part of the effect of policy promotion resulting from its inclusion in the Policy Matrix.

<Evaluation Result>

Therefore, the effectiveness and impacts of the project are high.

4 Sustainability

• Policy and System

With the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, policies related to preventive measures such as vaccination have been discontinued. However, both the *New National Development Plan (2023–2028)* and the DOH's *National Objective for Health (2023–2028)* include strategies aimed at strengthening the health system based on the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, even at the time of the ex-post evaluation, policy coherence continued to be maintained.

• Institutional/Organizational Aspect

Following the Philippine government's lifting of the public health emergency declaration in 2023, the COVID-19 vaccination unit that had been urgently established in DOH was dismantled, and the related responsibilities of the unit were transferred to other sections in the DOH. However, due to the resignation and reassignment of staff who had belonged to the former unit, as well as the broader organizational restructuring within the DOH that led to talent outflow, it has become increasingly difficult to smoothly transfer and systematically retain the knowledge gained from the COVID-19 response within the organization. This may hinder the implementation of effective and efficient responses that draw on past lessons in the event of a similar pandemic occurring in the future.

• Technical, Financial and Environmental and Social Aspect

Since the evaluations related to technical, financial, and environmental and social aspects are not suitable for a budget support-type project, no analysis and/or evaluation was conducted.

• Preventative Measures to Risks

At the time of the ex-ante evaluation, maintaining measures toward the containment of COVID-19 and the avoidance of a rapid deterioration of the situation across the world were identified as external conditions for this Project. At the time of the ex-post evaluation, COVID-19 had been contained both globally and in the Philippines, and risks identified as external conditions at the time of the ex-ante evaluation did not materialize. Furthermore, based on the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of the Philippines has been implementing measures to strengthen the logistics system for the delivery of medical supplies and other items, as well as to enhance the infectious disease testing network, both of which are areas supported by the Policy Matrix of the Project.

• Current Status of Operation and Maintenance

The evaluation concerning operational and maintenance status is not suitable for a budget support-type project. Therefore, no analysis was conducted.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

• Recommendations to the Executing Agency

Internalization of COVID-19 experiences in preparation for similar pandemics in the future

Following the conclusion of the COVID-19 pandemic, the temporary section for COVID-19 vaccination in the DOH was dismantled and the tasks and responsibilities previously handled by the unit were transferred to other sections in the DOH. However, due to the retirement and reassignment of manpower from the unit to other sections, the smooth transfer of tasks and responsibilities has become difficult, raising concerns that the knowledge and lessons learned from the COVID-19 countermeasures may not be internalized within the organization. This poses a risk that effective and efficient responses may be hindered in the event of a similar pandemic in the future. Therefore, to prepare for future similar pandemics, it is necessary that past experiences and lessons learned from the COVID-19 response are systematically internalized. To that end, it is desirable that opportunities are created to review the responses made during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Recommendations to JICA

None

• Lessons Learned

Facilitating problem-solving in the support areas through the use of a Policy Matrix.

Four areas were identified as support areas in the Policy Matrix of this Project. Among these, in two support areas, only the activities from JICA's technical cooperation projects and grant aid project were listed as triggers for disbursements or as policy

⁸ As of the end of 2023, the vaccination rates among the poor and the elderly were 74% and 90% respectively, exceeding the overall vaccination rate.

actions to be monitored after disbursement. While these activities played an important role in strengthening the institutional framework in the respective support areas, there were also other crucial activities being implemented in each area. Therefore, for JICA to make an even more significant contribution in these support areas, it is desirable that, the following actions are taken for each support area in a Policy Matrix, in consultation with an executing agency and other related agencies: in the project formulation phase, (i) the setting of a clear goal for each support area in the Policy Matrix, (ii) the incorporation of step-by step policy actions, including those supported by JICA, in the Policy Matrix to achieve these goals, and in the project implementation phase, (iii) the promotion of problem-solving in each support area through policy dialogue opportunities such as progressive monitoring of the Policy Matrix as well as other JICA project activities,

Recommendation for the participation of key officials from relevant ministries in Policy Matrix formulation and monitoring meetings

The Policy Matrix for this Project was formulated through consultations among JICA, the executing agencies, and relevant departments. However, implementing the Policy Matrix proved challenging as multiple sections within the executing agency and related departments were involved, which made it difficult to ensure smooth implementation of policy actions at the organizational level. Therefore, it was necessary to establish inter- and intra-organizational structures that enable centralized feedback to the core sections within the executing agency and related departments. Thus, to ensure the smooth implementation of policy actions in programs involving multiple departments/sections within relevant agencies, it is desirable that an organizational mechanism is established that enables centralized feedback both between and within organizations. This can be achieved by actively encouraging the participation of decision-makers from these agencies throughout the process, from the formulation of a Policy Matrix during project formulation to the monitoring of policy action implementation.

Ensuring an organizational framework to utilize accumulated experience and expertise obtained from emergency response

A temporary unit was established within the relevant agency to coordinate COVID-19 response efforts. While the unit functioned effectively during the pandemic, the unit was dissolved as the pandemic subsided, and tasks and responsibilities were transferred to other sections in the agency. However, due to the retirement and reassignment of staff who worked in the unit, the smooth transfer of responsibilities and systematic inheritance of knowledge gained through COVID-19 response efforts have become difficult. This poses a risk that, in the event of a future pandemic, the implementation of effective and efficient countermeasures utilizing past lessons could be constrained. Therefore, it is desirable that relevant agencies develop methods to functionally absorb and embed the lessons, practices, procedures, protocols and so on developed during emergency responses into the regular operations of their respective sections even after the emergency ends. It is also desirable that JICA support such mainstreaming efforts within each organization and actively encourages this from the project formulation stage through the implantation period.

IV. Non-Score Criteria

- Performance
None
- Additionality

As the Philippines' largest bilateral donor, JICA participated in policy dialogue and coordination with the Philippine government and other donors through multiple financial support programs⁹ from the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak. This contributed to donor coordination in support areas and other collaborative efforts. It can be considered that JICA also contributed financially to part of the increased fiscal expenditures resulting from the Philippine government's implementation of COVID-19 countermeasures.



Picture 1: Wing-van provided by JICA grand aid project
(source: the Evaluator)



Picture 2: Warehouse of DOH regional office IV-A
(source: the Evaluator)

(end)

⁹ In addition to this project, JICA's COVID-19 related general budget support projects for the Philippines include the 'COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan (2020–2021)' and the 'Post Disaster Stand-by Loan (Phase 2) (2020–2023)'.

Annex

Support Areas	Policy Actions	Achievement Status at the time of ex-post evaluation
A. Development of National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines	<u>Actions completed by June 2021</u> ● Formulation of National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) A-1: Development of NDVP ● Established multi-sectoral national organizational structure for the COVID-19 response based on WHO VIRAT 2.0 A-2: Designation of National Coordination Committee A-3: Designation of Technical Working Group and Sub-Technical Working Committee <u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> ● Formulation of NDVP A1: Release “Omnibus Guideline on the Philippine National Development and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines (Target: December 2021) <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> None	<u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> ● Formulation of NDVP A1: Release <i>Omnibus Guideline on the NDVP for COVID-19 Vaccine</i> on March 9, 2022 (Administrative Order No.2022-0005) <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> None <u>Policy Action to be completed by October 2024</u> None
B. Vaccine Procurement and Inoculation	<u>Actions completed by June 2021</u> ● Vaccine Procurement B-1: Signing of a contract with vaccine manufactures to secure vaccines for 70 million people in FY 2021 based on the original NDVP <u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche:</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche:</u> ● Promotion of administering the eligible vaccines B1: Complete inoculation with the eligible COVID-19 vaccine equivalent to 12.5% of national population (completed second doses) (note 1) (Target: March 2022) <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Promotion of vaccination B2: Complete inoculation with the COVID-19 vaccine equivalent to 60.0% of national population (completed second doses) (note 2)	<u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> ● Promotion of administering the eligible vaccines B1: The completion rate of two doses of the target vaccine was equivalent to 45.0% and 45.4 % of the national population at the end of September 2022 and at the end of December 2022 respectively. <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Promotion of vaccination B2: 71% of national population had completed second doses as of March 2024 (Note that the government’s statistical compilation of vaccination data concluded in March 2024).
C. Establishment of the surrounding environment for vaccination (Cold Chain Supply, Last-one-mile delivery, and Waste Management)	<u>Action completed by June 2021</u> ● Preparation for cold chain management and logistics to the end C-1: Signing the contract with private companies that provide cold chain management and logistics ● Preparation for waste management of COVID-19 vaccine C-2: Preparation of A Health Care Waste Management Framework and Updating health care waste management manual C-3: Signing the contract with providers to offer Treatment, Storage, and Disposal of medical wastes ● Vaccination C-4: Formulation of vaccination priority plan <u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> None <u>Policy Action to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Improvement of transportation and the cold chain C1: Strengthen the end-to-end supply chain and cold chain logistics management for vaccination program through the achievement of cold chain equipment projects by JICA	<u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Improvement of transportation and the cold chain C1: As described in the aforementioned operation and effect indicators, through JICA grant aid and technical cooperation projects, the provision of cold chain equipment and vehicles, as well as training related to the maintenance and management of the provided equipment, was implemented.
D. Strengthening the infectious disease testing networks	<u>Actions completed by June 2021</u> ● Strengthening of the capacity of laboratory-based surveillance system for responding to infectious diseases D-1: Agreement on Technical cooperation between GOP and GOJ was concluded <u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> ● Strengthening of the infectious disease testing network D1: Formulate the basic plan for “Project for Strengthening the Philippine National Health Laboratory Network for Infectious Disease” (Target: February 2022) <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Enhancement of the medical care system for treating infection D2: Gap analysis of vulnerabilities and formulation of countermeasures through the detailed planning survey for “Project for Strengthening the Philippine National Health Laboratory Network for	<u>Policy Actions for 1st tranche</u> None <u>Policy Actions for 2nd tranche</u> ● Strengthening of the infectious disease testing network D1: Record of Discussion for the basic plan of JICA technical cooperation project was signed in May 2022, the Policy Design Matrix (PDM) was approved in June 2022 and a revised PDM was approved in June 2023. <u>Policy Actions to be completed by October 2024</u> ● Enhancement of the medical care system for treating infection D2: Gap analysis through a detailed planning survey Survey on the current status of the laboratory network, genome sequencing and laboratory data analysis was conducted, and the specimen referral systems of laboratories at the central, regional, and local levels were evaluated.

	Infectious Disease” D3: Implement the training and workshops for strengthening biosafety	Based on the results of this survey, the formulation of the detailed plan for the JICA technical cooperation project was completed in March 2023. D3: Conducted training on biosafety and biosecurity Training workshops on biosafety and biosecurity were held in three regions aimed at enhancing the capacity of biosafety and biosecurity officers, who were responsible for managing laboratory risks from January to November 2024. The participants in the training workshop were biosafety officers, quality managers and heads of laboratory/laboratory managers.
--	--	---