

JANES FORUM

Activities of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Ethiopia

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The government of Japan began its technical cooperation to Ethiopia in 1974 and had dispatched 251 volunteers and 65 experts by 1993. In spite of a short period of political upheaval in 1991, which disrupted the ties temporarily, the official development assistance (ODA) of the Japanese government to Ethiopia has upgraded the office of the coordinator of JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers) to the JICA Ethiopia Office in 1993, as the official organization of technical cooperation of Japanese government in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government has granted the JICA Ethiopia Office such special privileges as a tax exemption to facilitate its activities. I worked in Addis Ababa University as an JICA expert on cultural anthropology and carried out field research in South Omo from January 1993 to January 1994. I was the first expert dispatched to Ethiopia after the political change, and the JICA Ethiopia Office has expanded its activities since then.

Japan's ODA consists of three aspects, namely, Grant Aid, Loan Aid and Technical Cooperation. JICA is a governmental institution in charge, primarily, of implementing technical cooperation¹⁾. The activities of the JICA Ethiopia Office, however, cover a wider area and include the following programs²⁾.

1. Acceptance of trainees
2. Dispatch of experts
3. Dispatch of cooperation volunteers
4. Dispatch of survey teams
5. Project-type cooperation
6. Development feasibility study

7. Equipment donation
8. Grant aid program
9. Loan agreement

The following are some of the recent important activities implemented by the JICA Ethiopia Office during the Japanese fiscal year of April 1993 to March 1994.

1. Acceptance of trainees

JICA has provided training opportunities in Japan to twenty-seven Ethiopians, in fields such as radio communication engineering, irrigation water management, and agricultural machinery management.

JICA has also invited two Ethiopians to attend the "Invitation Program for African Youth" in Japan.

2. Dispatch of experts

JICA dispatched five experts to Ethiopia. Their fields of expertise were as follows.

- 1) Four cultural anthropologists and ethno-botanists were assigned to Addis Ababa University to investigate traditional knowledge systems concerning useful plants.
- 2) One construction machinery and management expert has been assigned to the Water Well Drilling Agency of the Water Resources Commission.
3. Dispatch of cooperation volunteers

Eleven Japanese volunteers have been dispatched to Ethiopia from Japan Overseas Cooperative Volunteers (JOVCV). In cooperation with the JICA Ethiopia Office, they provide give technical assistance to the organizations they have been as-

signed to. Their fields of expertise include automobile maintenance, bamboo craft and ground water development.

4. Dispatch of survey team

JICA dispatched twelve Japanese survey missions to Ethiopia in order to investigate future cooperation programs.

5. Development feasibility study

JICA conducted two development feasibility studies as follows.

1) Study on the Becho plain agricultural development project.

This concerns flood prevention, drainage improvement and other necessary measures for agricultural development in the Becho Plain catchment area.

2) Study on water supply and sanitation for eleven centers

This study covers eleven local centers in central Ethiopia, and evaluated the potential for the ground water resource of the areas.

6. Equipment donation

The government of Japan donated equipment equivalent to sixty million yen (US\$ 600,000) to the Ethiopian Tourist Trading Enterprise through JICA. The objectives of this donation are to exploit national resources, such as raw materials, as well as traditional knowledge for producing handicrafts, and to create employment for artisans through the enhancement of high quality handicraft production.

7. Grand aid program

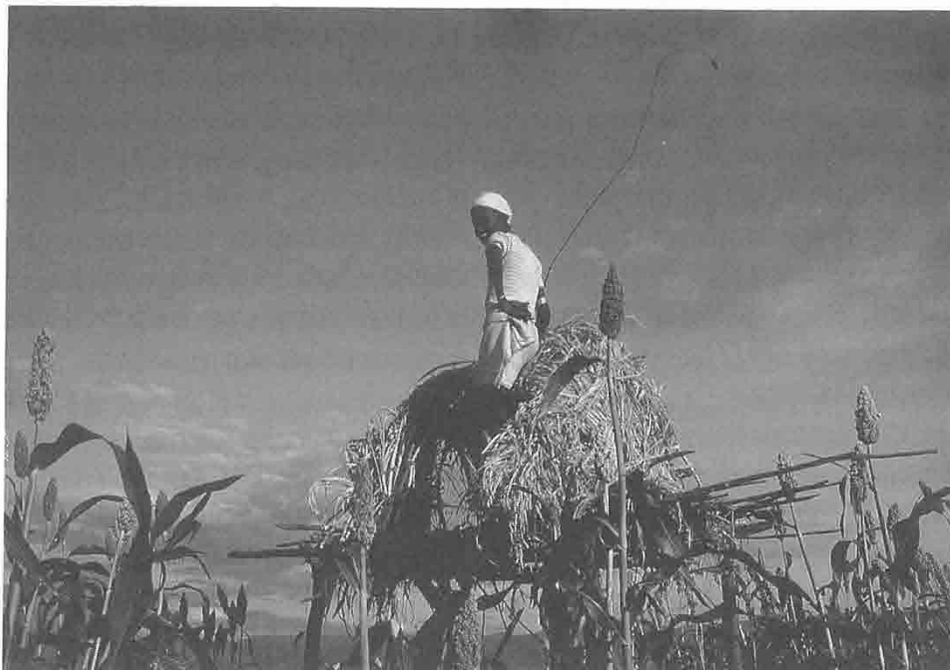
Five grant aid agreements have been signed between the governments of Japan and Ethiopia.

1) Small-scale irrigation development project

Construction machinery for small-scale irrigation development schemes will be provided to improve agricultural productivity in rural farming communities. The project areas include 51 sites, and a grant agreement for 508 million yen was signed on June 15, 1993.

2) Ground-water development project

Equipment and material for ground-water



Bird scaring in the sorghum field, southwestern Ethiopia



Harvest in an experimental field, southwestern Ethiopia

well construction will be provided to provide safe water supply in various areas in the country. A grant agreement for 697 million yen was signed on June 15, 1993.

3) Road maintenance equipment for Shashemene and Dire Dawa districts

The three administrative regions of Bale, Sidamo and Gemu-Gofa will be covered by this project. The objective is to upgrade road maintenance and reconstruction in Shashemene and Dire Dawa Districts through providing road maintenance equipment. A grant agreement for 706 million yen was signed on June 15, 1993.

4) Food Aid (KRI) and Food Production Aid (KRII)

Grant aid agreements of 45 million yen for food aid and 800 million yen for increasing food production were signed on June 15, 1993.

5) Debt relief

Two debt relief agreements of have been signed in 1993, for 143 million yen on June 15, and 140 million yen on December 3.

The activities of the JICA Ethiopia Office has come to cover a wide area, and not only in terms of the categories of the programs but also in terms of the approaches these programs take to the issues. For instance, some programs try to enhance agricultural productivity by providing machinery, and others, by investigating traditional knowledge systems of local peoples. Considering the increasing awareness for sustainability in development programs these days, I personally believe that this is the kind of multi-faceted approach that JICA's future cooperation should be based on.

References

- 1) *A Guide to Japan Aid*, Association for Promotion of International Cooperation, 1989, pp. 5-10.
- 2) The following report on the activities of the JICA Ethiopia Office is based on "Activities of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Ethiopia Office during the Japan Fiscal Year 1993," JICA Ethiopia Office, 1993