

Partnerships between ODA and NGOs: for more effective international co-operation (3)

AAI and NGOs - our challenges

Till today AAI has been engaged in technical assistance and development study commissioned by Japan's ODA. Since its early days AAI has been aware of the importance of collaboration between ODA's development activities and NGOs, and we have tried working together with NGOs on various occasions, as detailed below:

Development of appropriate technologies (1986 -) ☒	AAI assisted development projects in arid and semi-arid regions by helping to introduce appropriate technologies such as the Japanese traditional well digging technology of "Kazusabori", water pumping techniques using wind power (zephaturbin), water hammer pump etc. AAI conducted well-boring training in cooperation with NGOs such as 'Kaze no gakkoh' (School of the Wind) and 'Sahel no kai' (Association SAHEL). ☒
Assistance to JVC: Japan Volunteer Centre (1987 -) ☒	AAI provided back-up support for JVC's activities in Somalia and Ethiopia. Within Japan AAI also helped JVC's efforts to cultivate manpower for their field projects by securing a training farm in Togane City (Chiba Prefecture) for hands-on farming practice. ☒
Assistance to Association SAHEL (1989 -) ☒	AAI has been working with the registered Non-Profit Organization, Association SAHEL, since its inception, and we have directly participated in their activities both within and outside Japan. Especially in the field of tree plantation in arid land, AAI has assisted in such areas as the selection of appropriate tree species, seed supply, technology development for seedling production, and tree planting. ☒
Environmental monitoring in Tana Delta, Kenya (1990 -) ☒	AAI conducted environmental monitoring for an irrigation development project in the Tana Delta, Kenya. AAI took part in organizing a team of local NGO staff to carry out periodical monitoring. ☒
Research into the activities of nature conservation NGOs (1995 -) ☒	AAI conducted research on the overseas activities of Japanese nature conservation NGOs, government agencies and research institutions concerned with biodiversity conservation, in order to understand their current activities and thus to classify them by activity type and region. Also AAI studied the current activities of major international organizations including NGOs, in order to analyze international trends in development aid activities. ☒
AAI's own investigation into the possibility of project formulation in Zimbabwe (1997 -) ☒	In Zimbabwe AAI is planning a development project which embraces the key focal concepts of community participation, appropriate technologies, 'small-scale'(or "appropriate scale") approach and sustainability. This is expected to be implemented under the initiative of local NGOs. ☒
Development of a database on funding agencies (1999 -) ☒	AAI is developing a database on funding bodies in Japan which fund NGOs working in the fields of agriculture and the environment.
Application for the 'Partnership Program with NGOs / Local Governments / Institutes' (1999 - 2000) ☒	AAI has submitted a proposal for a community-based river basin management project in Pakistan, for consideration by JICA's 'Partnership Program with NGOs / Local Governments / Institutes.' ☒

We will discuss in more detail about the above project in Zimbabwe, which AAI has initiated on its own (i.e. independent from ODA), and for which AAI has carried out three field trips already since 1997 as part of preliminary research and preparation. From now on, in cooperation with local NGOs, AAI is planning to implement a development project which would meet the local community's needs as much as possible. In this process we hope to make sure that the project is sustainable and participatory (community-based), taking into consideration the importance of environmental conservation, appropriate scale and appropriate technologies. In the future we hope that this kind of project will be implemented by ODA as well. Through this project we also aim to reflect upon, and try to improve, the current system and working of ODA, while studying further and actually implementing assistance for grassroots local communities. Therefore, we see it as a good sign that Japan's development aid agencies have started schemes which involve grassroots NGOs/NPOs. These include the 'Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects' and 'Subsidiary System for NGO Projects' of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and 'Community Empowerment Program' and 'Partnership Program with NGOs / Local Governments / Institutes'.

AAI has extensively networked with Japanese NGOs as well, while at the same time we have a fairly good amount of information on NGOs operating in aid-recipient countries. Therefore, AAI hopes to actively take part in JICA projects involving NGOs such as the above 'Partnership Program'. Our ideal form of development aid is to work in collaboration not only with JICA but also with local NGOs, however small they may appear, in order to ensure that our aid activities are genuinely serving the interests of local communities