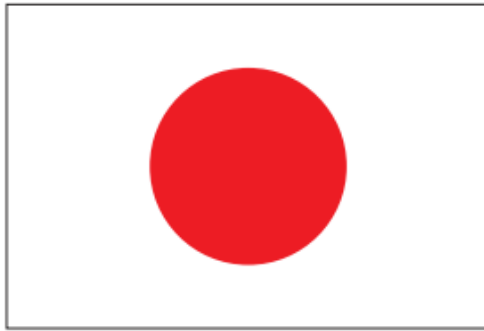


Guideline for Application
**Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human
Security Projects (GGP)**

[Revised in March, 2025]



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1. Introduction

As part of its Official Development Assistance (ODA), the Government of Japan has offered financial aid particularly for development projects initiated by local communities in order to meet a diversity of basic human needs at the grassroots level. Known as the “Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)”, this aid scheme provides funds for organizations such as non-profitable and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local authorities on a project basis. Once a project proposal is submitted by an eligible organization, it is examined by the Government of Japan in various aspects, and it will be awarded only when judged as feasible, sustainable, and beneficial to the entire community. We believe that the GGP, by making financial support more open to the grassroots level, will directly empower people, especially those in marginalized or any other disadvantaged groups, and contribute to immediate improvement of their living conditions.

This guideline explains application steps of the GGP as well as its scope, rules, and requirements, designed to make our limited funds most available to those in need among hundreds of applications. We hope that through the guideline, all prospective applicants will get a grasp of GGP priorities, eligible organizations, criteria for selecting projects, regulations on items to be supplied, and other basic information useful in developing proposals.

2. Objective

The "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)" first aims to better ensure “human security” through implementing projects to empower people and communities and address basic human needs in such fields as health, basic education, water supply, poverty alleviation, and any other fields related to basic human needs.

The GGP also aims to foster peace-building from the bottom by assisting local organizations, including local councils, in establishing social and economic infrastructure at the community level. Such bottom-up approach is complementary to the efforts exerted by the central government towards establishing a viable Palestinian state.

3. Eligible Organizations

An organization must meet **all** of the following conditions to be eligible for GGP application:

1. Officially recognized as a non-profit organization (non-governmental organization, village/local/municipal council, educational institution, medical institution, cooperatives, etc.)
 - **Neither** individuals **nor** for-profit organizations are eligible.

- It is possible for a non-profit organization to work together with for-profit organizations (including Japanese companies) as far as the project aims to realize the public benefit at the grassroots level. Even in such case, however, it is still a non-profit organization who can become an applicant (with for-profit organizations as merely “partners”).
2. working for socio-economic development at the grassroots level
 3. operating for more than two years in the field of the proposed project
 4. having sound finances

4. Target Areas of Projects

Based on the GGP general objective of meeting basic human needs and better ensuing human security at the grassroots level, a particular focus is put on the projects which will benefit people in need most directly and significantly. Especially, taking the Palestinian context into account, the following areas are prioritized:

- a) Healthcare, such as:
 - establishing or extending a healthcare center
 - providing a (regional) medical center with essential equipment, etc.
- b) Basic Education, such as:
 - building new classrooms for the 1st- to 10th-grade students
 - improving basic school facilities such as renovation and adding sanitary units, etc.
- c) Water and Sanitation, such as:
 - extending or replacing main water pipes
 - building water cisterns for the common use of the community
 - building common septic tanks for wastewater treatment, etc.
- d) Electricity, such as:
 - extending or replacing main electric cables
 - setting up an electric generator for the common use of the community, etc.
- e) Support for Disadvantaged People, such as:
 - improving rehabilitation facilities for the disabled
 - giving women agricultural training such as beekeeping and food processing for poverty reduction
 - establishing a plant of cheap agricultural compost for poor farmers
 - extending main irrigation pipes or building agricultural cisterns for deprived farmers, etc.

On the other hand, the following areas **CANNOT** be funded under the GGP scheme:

- a) Project that does not directly benefit people at the grassroots level, such as:
 - Academic research
 - Capacity building of the applicant organization (staff training, equipping the office, etc.) have to be implemented with physical projects.
- b) Project that benefits not an entire community but rather specific individuals, such as:
 - Investment in private property
 - Commercial activity or job creation without a future plan to expand the beneficiaries
- c) Project that is not directly related to socio-economic development, such as:
 - Cultural, sports, and art activities
 - Multi-purpose hall

The projects related to the cultural activity may be funded by **Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects** scheme- Contact address / info@tl.mofa.go.jp

- d) Project that could include any political or religious intention

Note

- Non-compulsory education (11th grade or over, university, and preschool) is out of the GGP priority.
- While above is the principle, the Representative Office of Japan to the Palestine is willing to discuss a new innovative idea as far as it is correspondent with the GGP objective. Thus, a prospective applicant, if unsure whether her/his project is applicable or not, is highly encouraged to consult with the Representative Office of Japan about her/his idea.
- Even if a proposal is in one of the six priority areas, some of the items requested in the proposal might not be covered by the GGP grant. In this case, the applicant will be requested to pay for these items. For details, please look at *5. Available Funds*.

5. Available Funds (Grant Amount/ Restrictions of Supportable Items)

The ceiling amount of the grant for each project is **20,000,000 Japanese yen** in principle. Because the grant is given in US dollars in Palestine, the Japanese Government sets the maximum amount in US dollars every year at the beginning of the fiscal year (April), depending on the exchange rate between Japanese yen and US dollars. For the fiscal year of 2025, for instance, the exchange rate is 1 US Dollar to 150 YEN, so that the ceiling amount is 133,333 US Dollars.

An applicant may propose a project exceeding 20,000,000 Japanese yen. However, such a project must be worthwhile, having a special importance from human security perspective, helping a large number of people emerge from socioeconomic hardship, or

eliminating a danger to human lives. Also, an applicant is required to have very strong administrative, financial, and technical ability.

Pro forma estimates (quotations) must be given for each budget item to ensure value for money. Whenever possible, estimates from three different suppliers should be submitted to finalize the application. In certain circumstances (e.g., in emergency situations or when there are only a limited number of suppliers), the Representative Office of Japan may accept less than three separate estimates.

Most importantly, the GGP is not a donation but a project funding. Therefore, the recipient is obliged to utilize the entire grant exclusively for the approved project in the approved way. In other words, the recipient must implement its project in accordance with the list of items and the procurement/service contract approved by the Government of Japan. Any change in the project implementation can be made only when the Representative Office of Japan judges it unavoidable or appropriate.

Restrictions of Supportable Items

Even if the proposal itself is along with the GGP objective and priority areas, some of the items requested in the proposal might not be covered by the GGP grant. In this case, the applicant will be requested to pay for these items while the rest of the items will be borne by the GGP.

< Items that can **NEVER Be Covered** by the GGP >

- a) Expenses that are not directly related to the project's implementation, such as:
 - running costs of the applicant organization (salaries, administrative costs, etc.) etc.
- b) Cost of maintaining the granted items, such as:
 - spare parts of machines or devices
 - maintenance service and insurance fees
 - rents for the building in which new classrooms will be established with the GGP support, etc.
- c) Capital to begin a business activity aiming to increase earnings of individuals or companies *(except an activity initiated by a cooperative for the benefit of the entire community)*
- d) Items to be used by specific individuals, such as:
 - scholarships, houses, or clothes that are simply given to specific individuals *(except in the case of urgent humanitarian aid)*
 - water pipes and electric cables to connect each household with the network
 - establishing a greenhouse in someone's private land, etc.
- e) Cost of purchasing land, such as:
 - Cost of purchasing the land on which a new school building will be built, etc. *(The land must be secured BEFORE applying for the grant.)*
- f) Expenses whose benefit to the grassroots level is not clear, such as:

- research fees
- g) Any taxes or service fees paid to governmental organizations (VAT, etc.)

<Items that can **NOT Be Covered** by the GGP in Principle>

Either because of the difficulty in ensuring the proper utilization or because of the idea that the limited funds, to fulfill various needs among the Palestinians, should be used for truly essential components in each project, the GGP in principle does not pay for the following items. If any of these items are indispensable for the project's implementation, the applicant should consult the Representative Office of Japan before filling in the application form.

- a) Consumable Goods, such as:
 - medicines/ vaccines
 - stationery
 - fuels, etc.
- b) Simple Articles, such as:
 - Kitchenware, etc.
- c) Books
- d) Vehicles for General Use (*Special Vehicles such as garbage trucks, fire trucks, and ambulances can be supported.*)
- e) Computers and Other Electronic Devices
- f) Bank Charges

<Additional Notes>

- If the implementation of a project requires some special knowledge or skill which the applicant organization does not have, the applicant may hire an external specialist solely for the project's implementation and include such cost in the requested items. However, the wage and period must be specified.
**Examples: building engineer (\$500/month*4months), electric engineer (\$600/month*5months), water engineer (\$500/month*4months), agricultural specialist (\$30/hour*200 hours) etc.*
- It is OBLIGATORY for every GGP recipient to have an external audit exclusively of the project upon its completion. Therefore, the cost of an external audit must be included in the project budget, either in the GGP's share or in the recipient's share.
- Although not obligatory, it would be highly appreciated if the recipient could set a memorial plaque that shows the Japanese support for the project. The cost can be borne by either the GGP or the recipient though the recipient's contribution is highly appreciated.
- Again, the GGP grant is not a donation but a project funding. Therefore, the recipient is obliged to utilize the entire grant exclusively for the approved project in the approved way. If it is deemed necessary to make any change, the recipient should consult the Representative Office of Japan in advance to get its approval.

In case any unapproved deviation from the agreed project plan is detected, the Representative Office of Japan may demand a refund of the grant.

6. Project Period:

The project must be completed **within one year** after the grant contract is signed.

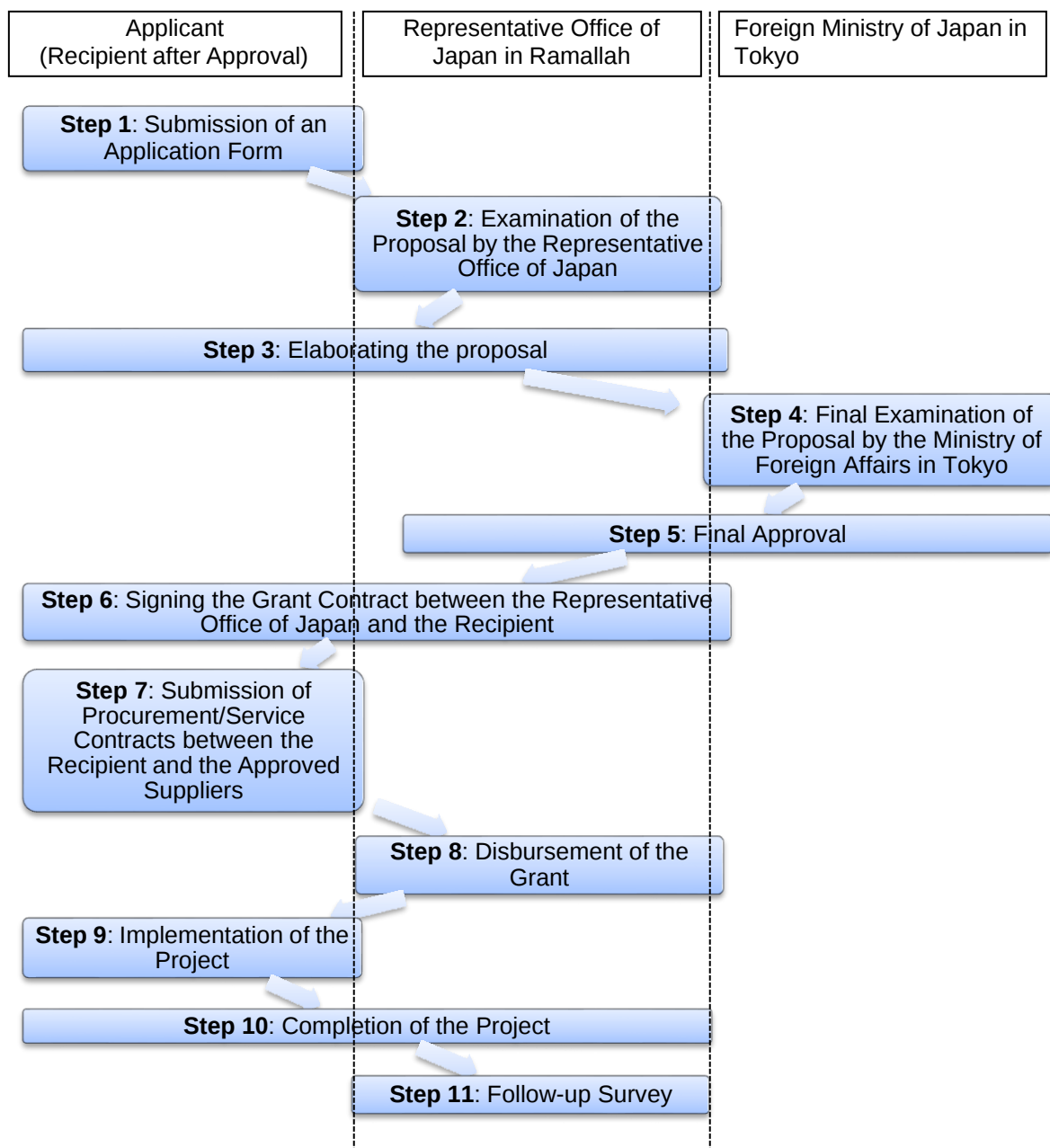
7. Application Deadline:

There is **no deadline** for application; application forms can be submitted anytime throughout the year.

Nevertheless, screening for each year's grant usually closes in December (the Japanese fiscal year begins in April).

8. General Procedures: Application ~ Selection ~ Implementation

Overall, an application is processed in the following steps.



Step 1: Submission of an Application Form

Any organization interested in applying for the GGP grant must submit the following documents to the Representative Office of Japan to Palestine by email, postal mail, or by hand (though email is much preferred). Please keep in mind that a manner of documentation is also one of the important criteria for screening.

1. Application Form
 - It should be filled out in English.
 - The format will be available in the website of the Representative Office (www.ps.emb-japan.go.jp), or please send an email to the contact written in 9. *Contact* of this guideline.
2. Quotation of the Requested Items
 - One set of quotation of goods and services that will be purchased with the grant should be attached to the application form.
 - The above quotation should be written in English and in US dollars. If only Arabic one is available, we appreciate that important points would be summarized in English.
3. The Latest Annual Financial Reports
 - It should include details of revenues and expenditures during at least two previous years.
 - If written in Arabic, we appreciate that important points would be summarized in English.
4. Project Design
 - If the project involves any engineering work (construction works, water/electricity networks, etc) or installation of equipment, then a detailed design or layout of pre- and post-implementation of the project should be submitted.
5. Brochure or Leaflet of the Applicant Organization (if available)
6. Photos of Project Sites, or Replaced and Requested Items (if available)

Step 2: Examination of the Proposal by the Representative Office of Japan

The submitted application is first examined by GGP local coordinators in the Representative Office of Japan in Ramallah. They review all of the submitted materials, contact the applicant if additional information is necessary, make a site visit, and evaluate the application according to the following major criteria:

- ✓ Applicant's Management Skill
 - Good documentation of the application
 - Prompt and sincere response to inquiries from the Representative Office
 - Detailed cost estimation
 - Sound finance
 - Qualified staff
- ✓ Fulfillment of Basic GGP Requirements (objective, eligibility, target areas, budget breakdown, supportable items, project period, etc.)
- ✓ Significance of the Needs of the Project's Beneficiaries
 - Statistical evidence
 - Description of the existing conditions and problems
 - Comparison with other regions
- ✓ Adequacy and Concreteness of the Project for the Needs
 - Concrete plan with clear goals

- Technical and Financial Feasibility for Implementation
- Cost Effectiveness
- ✓ Sustainability of the Benefit
 - Potential for the future expansion of beneficiaries
 - Solid plan and Capability for Maintenance
- ✓ Partnership
 - Agreement of the organizations concerned (relevant ministries, local authorities, etc.)
 - Relationship with Donors in General
 - Cooperation of community members

Thereafter, if the evaluation by local coordinators is positive, an assessment based on the same criteria as well as a site visit are made by a Japanese diplomat.

Step 3: Elaborating the proposal

The proposal judged as worthwhile both by local coordinators and a Japanese diplomat is further elaborated by the Representative Office in cooperation with the applicant in order to get ready for the final examination by the Foreign Ministry of Japan in Tokyo.

In general, the proposal elaborated in this step becomes the very final application form for the GGP grant. Therefore, the applicant should be sincere and cooperative in answering all inquiries from the Representative Office and also be attentive to any suggestion or modification made in this phase.

In addition and importantly, at the end of this phase, the applicant is requested to obtain **three proper quotations of each requested item** and submit them to the Representative Office. Then, one of the three is selected as the final quotation, and when the project is approved, the applicant MUST contract with the supplier of this final quotation to purchase **exactly** the items in it (except *unavoidable* cases). Therefore, in case the applicant has any plan to collect bids after approval, the applicant must inform the Representative Office of Japan at the very beginning of the screening process (perhaps when the first inquiry is sent).

**Any change in the project plan or items after Step 3 is done will complicate and delay the process.*

Step 4: Final Examination of the Proposal by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo

The proposal finalized in Step 3 is further examined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, which usually takes about a month.

Step 5: Final Approval

Step 6: Signing the Grant Contract between the Representative Office of Japan and the Recipient

Once approval is given for the project by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, the Grant Contract is made between the Recipient and the Representative Office of Japan.

Step 7: Submission of Procurement/Service Contracts between the Recipient and the Approved Suppliers

Step 8: Disbursement of the Grant

In order to actually receive the grant, the recipient must work on the following things:

- ✓ Make procurement/service contracts with the approved suppliers
- ✓ Make an audit contract with the approved external auditor)
- ✓ Open a new bank account or sub-account exclusively for the approved project
- ✓ Submit to the Representative Office of Japan copies of what is mentioned above

After all of the materials relevant to above are submitted, the entire grant is disbursed to the project account either by check or by money transfer. Any withdrawal from the project account, however, is subject to the consent of the Representative Office; that is, every time the recipient needs to withdraw money from the project account, written approval from the Representative Office must be given.

Note

- At the present moment, the Representative Office of Japan has its bank account only in Tel Aviv in the name of the Embassy of Japan. Therefore, the recipient is responsible to make sure that the bank where the recipient has an account can deal with Israeli checks or money transfer from Israeli banks.

Step 9: Implementation of the Project

The recipient is obligated to implement the project exactly in the approved way. Any change from the approved plan, no matter how small it is, should be known and approved by the Representative Office **BEFORE** the actual change.

During the implementation, the recipient must get written approval of the Representative Office every time before a money withdrawal from the project account takes place. In particular, the following documents are to be submitted each time:

- ✓ Official Request Letter
- ✓ Zero-tax Invoices from the Contractors
- ✓ Progress Report

In the middle of the implementation, the recipient is obliged to submit an interim report.

GGP local coordinators will keep in touch with the recipient throughout the implementation for any advice and make periodic site visits to ensure the smooth implementation. The recipient is highly encouraged to consult with local coordinators first if any problem is found.

Note

- Taking the recent economic fluctuation into consideration, the Government of Japan may accept the recipient's request for additional funds to cover the increase in the costs caused by a sharp change in the exchange rate or in commodity prices. In such a case, the recipient should consult the Representative Office of Japan without delay.

Step 10: Completion of the Project

The project must be completed within the agreed project's period or at latest one year after the grant contract is signed.

Soon after the implementation phase is finished, the recipient is obliged to submit the following reports according to the Grant Contract:

- ✓ Comprehensive Completion Report
- ✓ External Audit Report (*by the contracted auditor in Step 7*)

Step 11: Follow-up Survey

About 2 years after the completion of the project, a follow-up survey on whether the granted items are still utilized and maintained properly is conducted by the Representative Office. The recipient's cooperation for the survey is an absolute necessity.

On the other hand, the Representative Office of Japan demands the recipient to put all of the materials and correspondence that occur between Step 1 and Step 11 in the recipient's keeping for **at least 5 years** after the completion.

9. Contact

For submission of applications and also for further inquiries about the GGP scheme, please contact the following:

West Bank
Mr. Ekrema Rayan West Bank Field Coordinator Representative Office of Japan to Palestine 15 Abraj House, 8th Floor, Tokyo Street Ramallah, Ein Monjed Quarter (Close to Mahmoud Darwish Museum & Ramallah Cultural Palace) Tel: 02-2983370/1 - Fax: 02-2983313 Email: ekrema@rm.mofa.go.jp
Gaza Strip
Mr. Mohannad Matar Gaza Field Coordinator Email: matar.ggpgaza@gmail.com