

### 3. Central Asia and Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus are geopolitically important areas, since they are surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, and the stability and development of these regions has significant meaning for those of the Eurasian region as a whole. As these regions include countries with a large abundance of energy and mineral resources such as oil, natural gas, uranium, and rare metals, they are also strategically important to Japan, which has been promoting resource and energy diplomacy

#### <Japan's Efforts>

In order to support the efforts of each country towards the transition from planned economies to market economies as well as economic development, Japan has conducted a diverse range of assistance activities in such areas as the improvement of infrastructure for economic development (socio-economic infrastructure), and human resources development for the transition to a market economy, the rebuilding of health and medical care and other social systems.

For example, Japan has supported the development of electricity infrastructure in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia and transportation infrastructure in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz, Tajikistan, and Georgia. In the field of human resources development, Japan has supported the development of human resources for business through Japan Centers\* in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz, Kazakhstan, and has implemented the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship, a study program in Japan for young officials from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz, and Tajikistan. In addition to this, by 2014 Japan accepted 10,878 trainees from countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus and dispatched 2,603 experts to those countries.

In 2015, Japan provided electronic equipment for automation of the voter identification process in the election in Kyrgyz, which is advancing democratization, and implemented support for the related human resources development. In the same year the parliamentary election utilizing this equipment was successfully conducted; therefore this cooperation of Japan has been highly appreciated for greatly contributing to the establishment of democracy in Kyrgyz.

In October 2015 Prime Minister Abe became the first prime minister of Japan to visit all five countries in Central Asia and he stated the three pillars of Japan's diplomacy in Central Asia: fundamental strengthening of bilateral ties with each country, involvement in the issues common to the whole region, and cooperation in the global arena. On this visit, Japan declared it would implement cooperation to address the development issues

aiming to diversify resource supply countries. From this perspective, Japan has provided support for nation-building conducive to long-term stability and sustainable development in these regions, with a view to making universal values take root in the countries in these regions, including human rights, democracy, market economy, and the rule of law, while taking into consideration a broader regional perspective which covers Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other regions neighboring Central Asia.

in each country, such as continued implementation of assistance for the development of infrastructure such as electricity, roads, airports, medical care, etc. and support for the development of advanced industrial human resources utilizing technical colleges and other institutions of Japanese education in engineering.

Moreover, Japan established the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue in 2004 to strengthen collaboration with the countries in Central Asia and promote regional cooperation. It has conducted dialogues and facilitated cooperation at a variety of levels, including foreign ministers' meetings and senior officials' meetings.

In the important fields of regional cooperation in Central Asia, including border control and anti-drug measures, disaster risk reduction, and agriculture, Japan promotes cross-regional cooperation for Central Asia by cooperating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), etc.



Women working at a shop that sells handmade silk products in the Ichan Kala Museum in the city of Khiva, a world heritage site in the Khorezm Region in the west of Uzbekistan, receive production instructions from a local NGO Business Women's Association of Uzbekistan. (Photo: Yukiko Tokunaga / Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology)

**\*The Japan Center**

There are ten Japan Centers in nine countries, which aim to develop human resources to support the transition to market-oriented economies in countries with transition economies in Central Asia and the Indochina region. Japan Centers serve as a venue to facilitate personal contacts between Japan and these countries, and provide a fine example of "Visible Japanese Assistance." At present eight centers in seven countries are ongoing as JICA projects (two centers completed as JICA projects are also continuing their operations). Their main activities include the provision of business courses and Japanese language courses, and the promotion of mutual understanding.

**Tajikistan****The Project for Construction of Secondary School No. 29 in Saadi Sherozi Village, Rudaki Jamoat, Vakhsh District**

Grant assistance for grassroots human security projects (April 2014 – December 2015)

In Tajikistan primary education is widely spread, and the school attendance rate in primary education and adult literacy rate are nearly 99% for both men and women.<sup>1</sup> In the Soviet era schools were constructed even in regions far away from the capital and most of the children of Tajikistan are studying in schools constructed in the Soviet era even today.

However, the learning environment is not necessarily good, facing problems such as a shortage of schools for the increasing number of children, inadequate refurbishment of dilapidated school buildings and procurement of equipment for education due to shortages of funds on the administration side.

School No. 29 in the Vakhsh District, the Khatlon Region, southern Tajikistan is one of the schools that were facing these kinds of problems. School No. 29, which was established in 1959, had approximately 120 children from the first grade to the fourth grade, but more than 50 years have passed since the school buildings were constructed, so they had become dangerous with the floor boards missing in some places. Furthermore, there were only two small classrooms in the school, and due to the classroom shortage, children enrolled in fifth or higher grade had to go to another school approximately seven kilometers away, and in addition there were unstable suspension bridges on the road to that school, thus some children gave up on continuing their education for safety reasons. In particular, in 2011 an accident occurred in which two

girls on their way to school fell off the suspension bridge and died. After that, many guardians began to oppose letting girls go to school, so the school faced the major problem of a decrease in the promotion rate of girls to the higher grade.

Under such circumstances, Vakhsh District called on Japan for a project to construct a new school building for School No. 29 through grant assistance for grassroots human security projects. The new school building consisting of six classrooms, a staff room, and a principal's office was constructed and now the guardians are able to send their children to school with peace of mind. Currently, approximately 320 children and pupils from the first grade to the eighth grade are studying hard in the comfortable environment.

\*1 2016 World Bank data

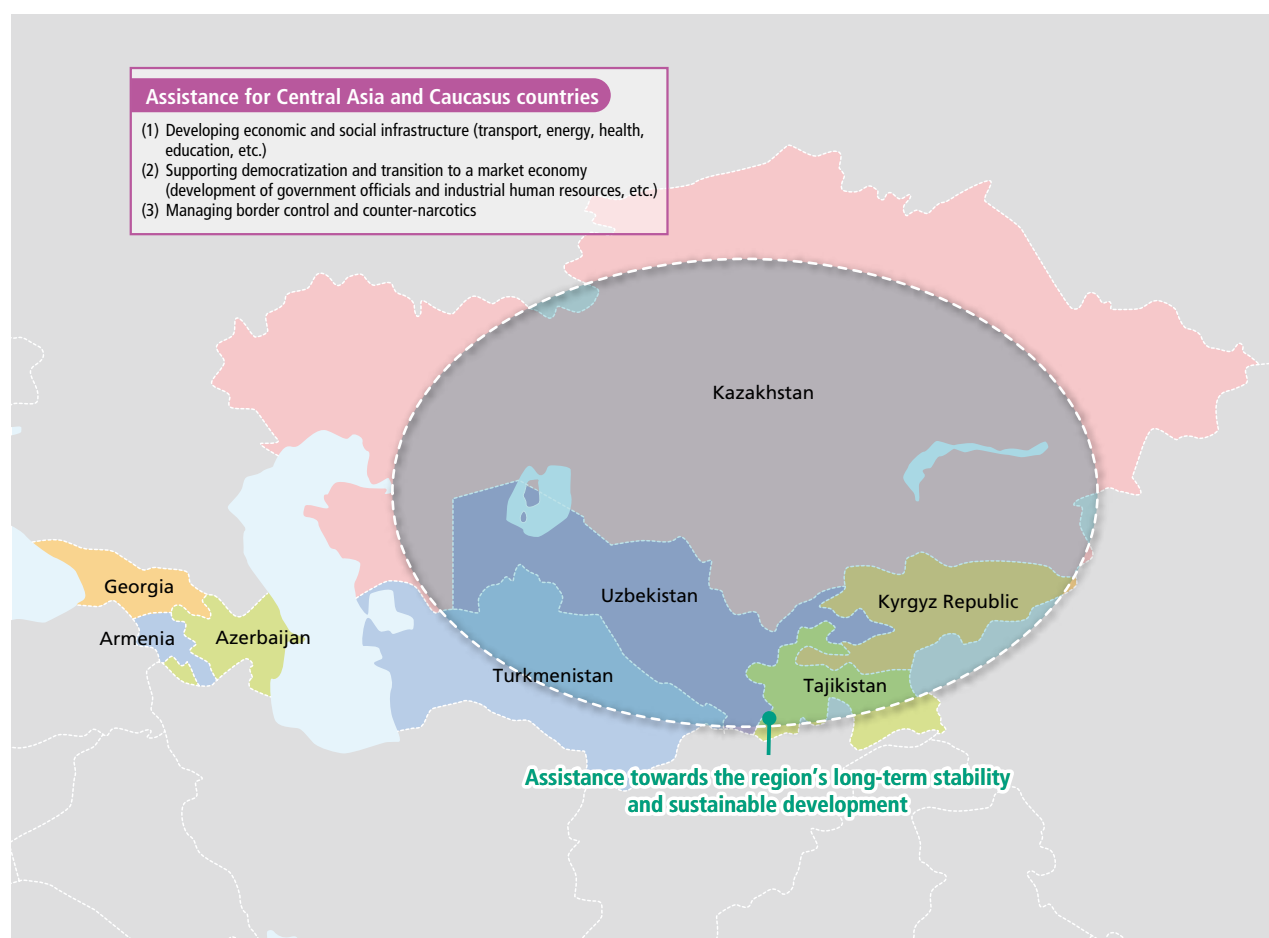


Children and students celebrate the opening of the new Secondary School No.29. (Photo: Hikari Dateyama)



Staff members from IWATA CHIZAKI Inc. and Central Consultant Inc. in front of the completed Kok-Art Bridge in Kyrgyz of which they were in charge of its design and construction. Japan provided grant aid for the Project for Reconstruction of Kok-Art River Bridge on the Bishkek-Osh Road. (Photo: Gulnara Temirova / Embassy of Japan in the Kyrgyz Republic)

## Japan's international cooperation policy in Central Asia and Caucasus Region



**Chart II-10 Japan's Assistance in the Central Asia and Caucasus Region**

Calendar year: 2015

(US\$ million)

| Rank                                              | Country or region                                   | Grants       |                                                   |                       | Total        | Loan aid             |                      |               | Total (Net disbursement) | Total (Gross disbursement) |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                     | Grant aid    | Grants provided through multilateral institutions | Technical cooperation |              | Amount disbursed (A) | Amount recovered (B) | (A)-(B)       |                          |                            |
| 1                                                 | Uzbekistan                                          | 6.50         | —                                                 | 6.19                  | 12.68        | 141.46               | 27.48                | 113.98        | 126.66                   | 154.15                     |
| 2                                                 | Kyrgyz Republic                                     | 33.79        | 6.12                                              | 8.72                  | 42.51        | —                    | 0.39                 | -0.39         | 42.12                    | 42.51                      |
| 3                                                 | Georgia                                             | 5.18         | —                                                 | 0.41                  | 5.58         | 36.29                | 2.15                 | 34.14         | 39.72                    | 41.87                      |
| 4                                                 | Azerbaijan                                          | 1.82         | —                                                 | 1.03                  | 2.85         | 36.84                | 18.38                | 18.46         | 21.31                    | 39.69                      |
| 5                                                 | Tajikistan                                          | 14.21        | 3.87                                              | 3.61                  | 17.82        | —                    | —                    | —             | 17.82                    | 17.82                      |
| 6                                                 | Armenia                                             | 0.16         | —                                                 | 3.81                  | 3.97         | —                    | 9.28                 | -9.28         | -5.31                    | 3.97                       |
| 7                                                 | Kazakhstan                                          | 0.36         | —                                                 | 1.34                  | 1.70         | —                    | 34.93                | -34.93        | -33.23                   | 1.70                       |
| 8                                                 | Turkmenistan                                        | 0.06         | —                                                 | 0.46                  | 0.52         | —                    | 1.81                 | -1.81         | -1.29                    | 0.52                       |
|                                                   | Multiple countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus | 0.57         | 0.57                                              | 0.38                  | 0.95         | —                    | —                    | —             | 0.95                     | 0.95                       |
| <b>Central Asia and the Caucasus region total</b> |                                                     | <b>62.64</b> | <b>10.55</b>                                      | <b>25.94</b>          | <b>88.58</b> | <b>214.59</b>        | <b>94.41</b>         | <b>120.19</b> | <b>208.76</b>            | <b>303.17</b>              |

\*1 Ranking is based on gross disbursements.

\*2 Due to rounding, the total may not match the sum of each number.

\*3 [—] indicates that no assistance was provided.

\*4 Grant aid includes aid provided through multilateral institutions that can be classified by country.

\*5 Aid for multiple countries is aid in the form of seminars or survey team dispatches, etc. that spans over multiple countries within a region.

\*6 Country or region shows DAC recipients but including graduated countries in total.

\*7 Negative numbers appear when the recovered amount of loans, etc. exceeds the disbursed amount.