

Third Party Evaluation Report FY2022
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Tajikistan

February 2023

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Preface

This report is Evaluation of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Tajikistan, and was commissioned to Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd. by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) in fiscal 2022.

Since its commencement in 1954, Japan's ODA has contributed to the development of partner countries while tackling global issues. Today, the international community acknowledges the necessity to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of ODA. MOFA regularly conducts ODA evaluations, of which most are conducted at the policy-level with two main objectives: to improve the management of ODA, and to ensure its accountability. These evaluations are commissioned to external third parties to enhance transparency and objectivity.

The objective of this Evaluation was to review Japan's ODA policies on assistance to Tajikistan and implementation from FY 2017 to 2021, and to produce recommendations based on the review to improve policy planning for the effective and efficient implementation of future assistance by the Government of Japan. For accountability purposes, the results in their entirety are available to the general public.

The Evaluation Team in charge of this study consisted of a chief evaluator, Mr. SATO Hiroshi, Chief Senior Researcher, Research Operations Department, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and an advisor, Mr. TSUKADA Shunso, Visiting Professor, College of Asia Pacific Studies, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, and Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd. Mr. SATO supervised the entire evaluation process, and Mr. TSUKADA provided advice and input on analytical and evaluation processes. In addition, to complete this study, we have received support from MOFA, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and local ODA Task Force, as well as government agencies, project implementation agencies, other donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private companies in Japan and Tajikistan. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all those who supported this study.

Finally, the Evaluation Team wishes to note that the opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Government of Japan.

February 2023

Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd.

Note: This English version is a translation of the Japanese ODA Evaluation Report to the Republic of Tajikistan.

Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Tajikistan (Brief Summary)

Evaluators (Evaluation Team)

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- Consultant: Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd.

Evaluation Period: FY2017 to FY2021

Period of the Evaluation Study: May 2022 to February 2023

Field Survey Country: Tajikistan



At Kushoniyon Central District
Hospital in Khatlon Region
(Photo by the Evaluation Team)

Background, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

Tajikistan is a geopolitically important country since it borders China, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and is located halfway between east and west connecting Europe and China, and halfway between north and south connecting Russia and Pakistan. The stable growth and development of Tajikistan is not only conducive to regional stability and prosperity, but is also important for world peace and development. The main objectives of this Evaluation are to assess Japan's ODA Policy toward Tajikistan for the past five years (FY2017 to FY2021), to obtain recommendations and lessons learned for the formulation and implementation of future ODA Policy toward Tajikistan, and to fulfill accountability to the public by disclosing the evaluation results.

Brief Summary of the Evaluation Results

Japan's ODA to Tajikistan has been efficiently utilized, as efforts have been made to maximize results through various innovations, such as addressing development issues by combining grant aid and technical cooperation, despite the limited ODA budget and available assistance schemes.

● **Development Viewpoints**

(1) Relevance of Policies

High relevance was confirmed for almost all verification items, indicating a high level of relevance with policy.

(Rating: Satisfactory)

(2) Effectiveness of Results

Outputs can be seen for most of the projects with confirmed completion, however in some projects in the transport and health sectors, outcomes did not appear as expected. In addition, for the Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations, there were cases where outputs could not be confirmed or outcomes were not described in the reports, therefore the effectiveness of some of the results remains an issue.

(Rating: Partially Satisfactory)

(3) Appropriateness of Processes

Appropriate aid policies were formulated in the policy formulation process. In terms of the aid implementation process, there is room for improvement in monitoring through reports on Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations. In Tajikistan, inter-donor communication is conducted on a regular basis, and Japan is active in this area. The slow decision-making and approval process of the Government of Tajikistan is affecting project formation and implementation, however preliminary steps are being taken by the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and JICA Tajikistan Office. Therefore, the appropriateness of the aid implementation process is high.

(Rating: Satisfactory)

* Note: Ratings: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Partially Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory

● Diplomatic Viewpoints

(1) Diplomatic Importance

A. Significance and Importance of Supporting Tajikistan

Although Tajikistan has little direct interaction with Japan, its stabilization will contribute to world peace and security in the Central Asian region and, by extension, Japan, since Tajikistan borders Afghanistan, a destabilizing factor in the security of the international community. While Central Asia is hugely affected by Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine, the political and economic stability of Tajikistan, which is seeking its own foreign policy, is important from the perspective of security in Asia and Eurasia. Therefore, it is diplomatically important for Japan, which aspires to a "free and open Central Asia", to promote political, economic, and social stability in Tajikistan through Japanese ODA.

B. Importance of ODA to Tajikistan in Strengthening Bilateral Relations

Through the implementation of projects especially for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP), awareness of Japanese ODA in Tajikistan is high and the impression of Japanese assistance is good. In addition, ODA has become an important tool in strengthening bilateral relations between Japan and Tajikistan, as President Rahmon expressed his gratitude for the Japanese assistance provided within the framework of ODA in a joint statement signed during his visit to Japan in 2018.

(2) Diplomatic Impact

A. Contribution to Peace and Security in the World Including Japan

Through the implementation of Grant Aid Projects through United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), drug trafficking on the Afghanistan-Tajikistan border has been intercepted, contributing to peace and stability in Tajikistan and neighboring countries, which in turn has contributed to peace and stability to Japan.

B. Contribution to Maintain Good Relations between Japan and Tajikistan

It is expected that good relations between Japan and Tajikistan will be maintained as young administrative officers who participated in the grant aid "The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)" will play a central role in nation-building and become bridges between the two countries. Some JDS graduates are promoted as advisors in the Presidential Office, the center of national politics, and to Minister of Labor, Migration and Employment.

C. Contribution to Strengthen Japan's Presence in the International Community

Japan has expressed its support for Tajikistan's water sector and to work with Tajikistan at international conferences for water sector hosted by Tajikistan, which is expected to strengthen Japan's presence in the international community.

Recommendations

(1) Strengthen Monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations

The Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, JICA Tajikistan Office, and responsible Japanese departments, which are in a position to verify the International Organizations' monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations, are recommended to improve the timely receipt and management framework of reports. There are many Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations in Tajikistan, and the implementing agencies are diverse. As a donor, Japan should standardize the minimum required contents to be included in the report through discussions with implementing agencies. Clarification of the reporting contents will not only facilitate monitoring of projects, but also enables objective comparisons with similar projects. Therefore, it is recommended to improve the content of the reports submitted from Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations.

(2) Complementarity between Japanese Projects and Health System Reform in the Health Sector

The Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and the JICA Tajikistan Office are recommended to coordinate with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population of Tajikistan and other donors to always confirm the position of the Japan's assistance, support and approaches for referral system, within the health system reform in Tajikistan from the complementarity perspective.

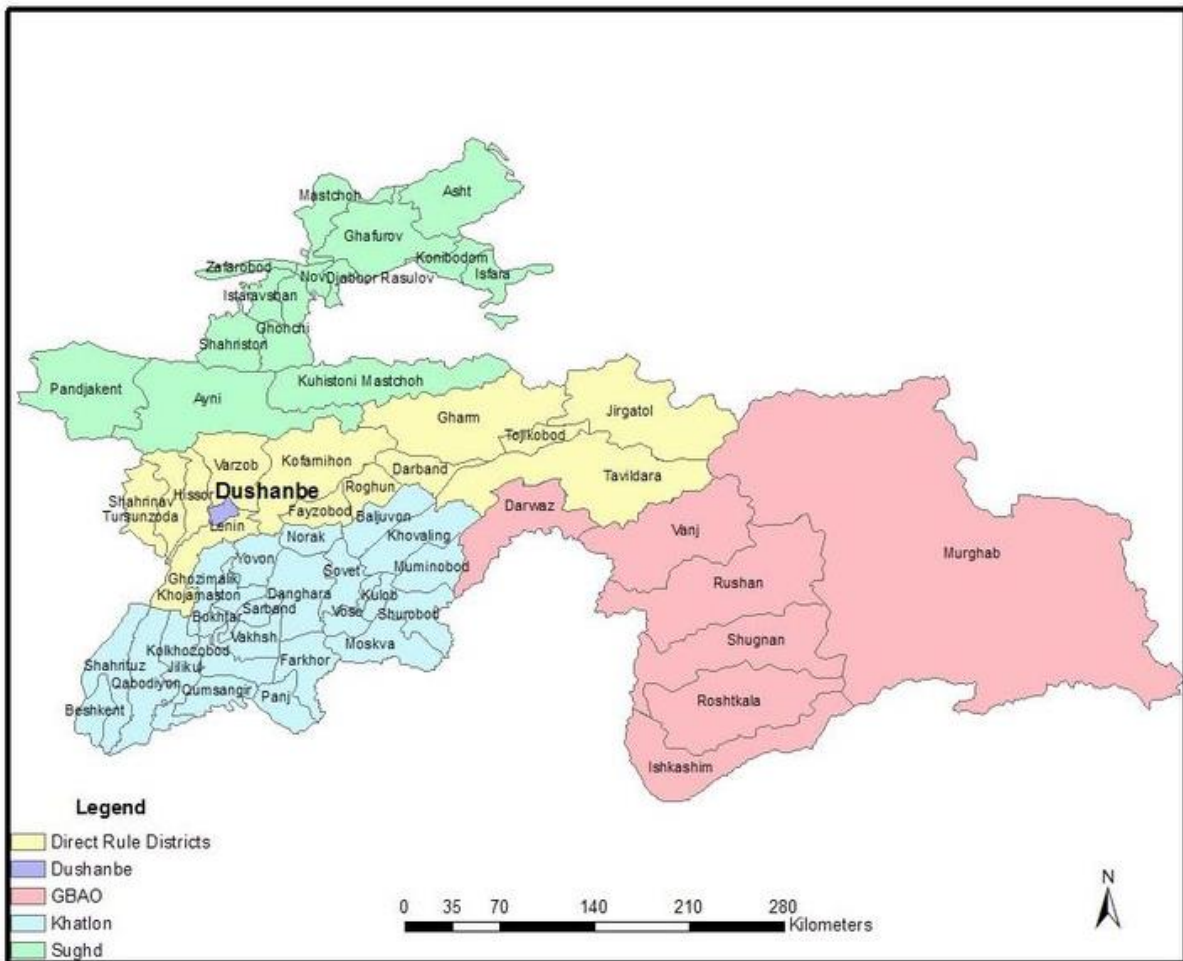
Evaluation of Japan's ODA to the Republic of Tajikistan

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Map of Tajikistan



Source: Researchgate, "Map of Tajikistan showing the District administrative", https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-Tajikistan-showing-the-District-administrative-boundaries-for-the-five-Oblasts_fig1_239785685,

(Accessed on Jan10, 2023)

Chapter 1 Background, Objectives and Evaluation Framework

1-1 Evaluation Background and Objectives

1-1-1 Purpose of MOFA ODA Evaluation

The purpose of the MOFA ODA evaluation is to support the management and improve the quality of ODA by giving feedbacks on recommendations and lessons learned from reviewing ODA activities to ODA policy formulation and implementation processes, to fulfill accountability to the public and increase transparency of ODA by publicizing the evaluation results, and also to enhance public understanding and participation in ODA.

1-1-2 Background and Objectives of Evaluation

Tajikistan is located in a geopolitically important region linking East and South Asia, Europe and Russia, and the Middle East. Economic development slowed down due to the civil war (1992-1997) that broke out immediately after independence from the former Soviet Union, and per capita income is marked the lowest among Central Asian countries. Aging transportation and energy infrastructures, not being able to achieve international standards in the aviation sector, and an underdeveloped investment business environment are factors hindering the economic development. Essential social services including water supply and health care services are also inadequate, and lack of employment opportunities is a major challenge. Furthermore, the country's long border with Afghanistan plays an important role as a barrier against the influx of drugs, terrorism, and violent extremism for Central Asian countries and the rest of Europe and Asia, therefore it is essential to improve security measures, including strengthening of border controls.

Third party evaluation on Japan's assistance to Tajikistan has not been conducted to date. The purpose of this Evaluation is to assess Japan's assistance policy and assistance based on priority areas toward Tajikistan in recent years, to prepare recommendations and lessons learned for the formulation and implementation of future assistance policy toward Tajikistan, and to publicize the evaluation results to ensure accountability to the public.

1-2 Scope of Evaluation

This Evaluation covers the period from FY 2017 to FY 2021, targeting the assistance policy for Tajikistan in "the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan (December 2012)", "Rolling Plan (April 2014)", "the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan (September 2018)", and the "Rolling Plan (April 2020)", and projects implemented during the period covered by the evaluation. The evaluation covers 43 grant aid and technical cooperation projects total amounting to 28.684 billion yen¹. In chapter 3-1-2, Effectiveness of Results was evaluated by priority areas of Japan's ODA policies.

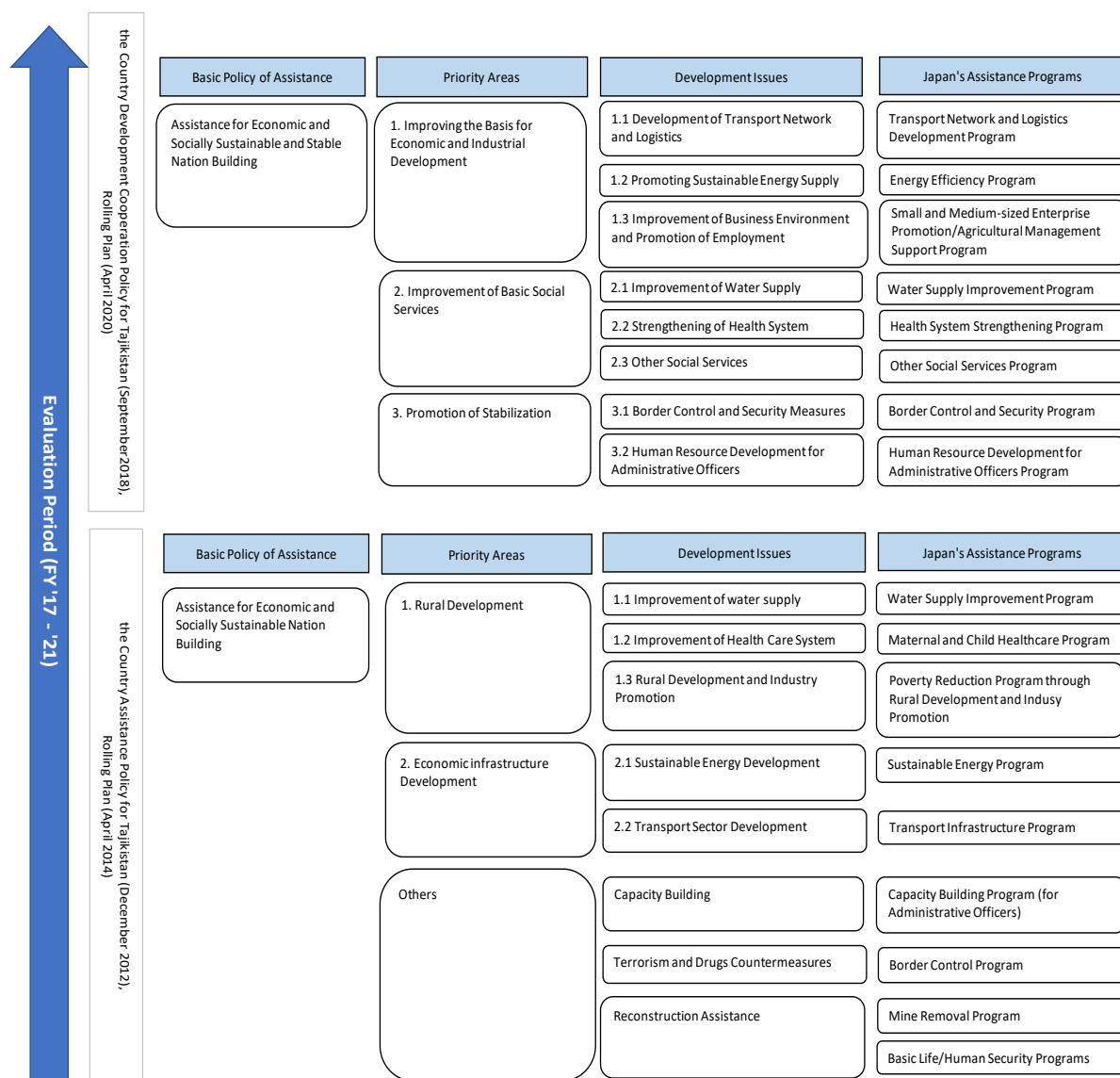
¹ The number of projects includes projects that partially overlap in the targeted period. In Grant Aid Projects, GGP, Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects, and Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects are excluded. The amount for Grant Aid is the amount already spent (or planned) per project, regardless of the actual year of expenditure, and for

1-3 Evaluation Methodology

1-3-1 Evaluation Framework

(1) Objective Framework of Aid Policies

Figure 1-1 shows the Objective Framework of Japan's aid policy to Tajikistan within the targeted evaluation period.



Source: Based on the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan (2012), Rolling Plan (2014, 2020), the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan (2018), prepared by the evaluation team

Figure 1-1 Objective Framework of Tajikistan's Aid Policy

projects that span multiple countries which the budget allocation per country cannot be specified, the total amount for the project was calculated.

(2) Perspective of Evaluation

This Evaluation was conducted in accordance with the ODA Evaluation Guidelines (June 2021 edition) and the ODA Evaluation Handbook (April 2022 edition) by MOFA, from the perspective of how much Japanese ODA contributes to the development of the recipient country Tajikistan (Development Viewpoints), and how it affects Japan's national interests (Diplomatic Viewpoints).

A. Evaluation from Development Viewpoints

The evaluation from development viewpoints were rated on the following four-level scale on the three criteria of "Relevance of Policies", "Effectiveness of Results" and "Appropriateness of Processes".

- The rating scale for "Relevance of Policies" are listed below.
 - Highly Satisfactory: All verification items have highly satisfactory relevance.
 - Satisfactory: Most verification items have highly satisfactory relevance.
 - Partially Satisfactory: Some verification items have highly satisfactory relevance, although there are some issues to be resolved.
 - Unsatisfactory: Most verification items do not have satisfactory relevance .
- The rating scale for "Effectiveness of Results" are listed below.
 - Highly Satisfactory: Highly satisfactory effects are found for all verification items.
 - Satisfactory: Highly satisfactory effects are found for most verification items.
 - Partially Satisfactory: Satisfactory effects are found for some verification items, although there are some issues to be resolved.
 - Unsatisfactory: No satisfactory effects are found for most verification items
- The rating scale for "Appropriateness of Processes" are listed below.
 - Highly Satisfactory: Highly satisfactory processes are found for all verification items
 - Satisfactory: Highly satisfactory processes are found for most verification items.
 - Partially Satisfactory: Highly satisfactory processes are found for some verification items, although there are some issues to be resolved.
 - Unsatisfactory: No satisfactory processes are found for most verification items.

(A) Relevance of Policies

The relevance of the policies (the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy) was assessed in terms of (i) consistency with Japan's high-level policies, (ii) consistency with Tajikistan's development needs, (iii) consistency with international priority areas, (iv) consistency with other donors' assistance, and (v) comparative advantage for Japan.

(B) Effectiveness of Results

Target projects were categorized by development issues and the results of each project were verified based on the flow from input to output, outcome and impact.

Evaluation was made for each development issue according to the rating scale. Then, all development issues were taken together again according to the rating scale to verify the validity of the results. For the outcome and impact, quantitative evaluation was conducted for projects for which quantitative evaluation was possible, and qualitative evaluation was conducted for projects for which quantitative evaluation was difficult.

(C) Appropriateness of Processes

The appropriateness of processes was examined in the following five areas: (i) Aid Policy Formulation Process, (ii) Policy Implementation Process, (iii) Effective Collaboration with Other Donors, International Organizations and other aid entities (including private sector and NGOs), (iv) Aid Implementation Structure (aid implementation systems of relevant organizations such as local ODA task forces, including the receiving system of the partner countryside), and (v) Considerations and Efforts Given for the Characteristics and Peculiarities of the Partner Country.

B. Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints

Analysis and verification for the following two criteria regarding the context with national interests that are expected to be contributed to through ODA policies.

(A) Diplomatic Importance

The importance was verified in what ways it was important for the resolution of international priorities, the strengthening of bilateral relations, and the security and prosperity of Japan.

(B) Diplomatic Impact

The impact was verified on how ODA contributed to enhancing Japan's presence in the international community, strengthening bilateral relations, and contributing to Japan's security and prosperity.

1-3-2 Evaluation Methods

The period for conducting this Evaluation was from May 2022 to February 2023. Under the supervision of the Chief Evaluator and Advisor, the evaluation study proceeded according to the following procedures, including three study meetings with relevant divisions of MOFA, as well as with JICA officials.

(1) Preparing the Evaluation Implementation Plan (May 2022)

At the first study meeting (May 30, 2022), the proposed evaluation implementation plan (objectives, targets, evaluation framework, work schedule, etc.) was explained, and the evaluation implementation plan was finalized with the agreement of all parties involved.

(2) Implementing Evaluation Survey (May 2022 - November 2022)

In accordance with the evaluation implementation plan, information was collected from documents and reports, as well as from relevant parties in Japan (MOFA, JICA, implementing consultants, etc.). Field survey was conducted from September 27 to October 7 to interview relevant parties in Tajikistan (the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, JICA Tajikistan Office, relevant Government of Tajikistan ministries and agencies, etc.), and site visits were made to collect further information. Interview records were also confirmed with interviewees to ensure accuracy.

(3) Analysis and Reporting (October 2022-February 2023)

The evaluation team analyzed the information collected in the study, verified it based on the results of the analysis, and evaluated it from development viewpoints and diplomatic viewpoints. After the discussions at the second study meeting (November 30, 2022) and the third study meeting (December 23, 2022), the report (in Japanese and English) was prepared.

1-4 Limitations of Evaluation

Although this Evaluation covers projects conducted during the evaluation period (FY 2017-2021), there was only one project in which an ex-post evaluation report was published. In addition, there were several restrictions on the investigation, for example, some areas in Tajikistan couldn't be visited due to safety concerns, and only a limited number of areas could be visited due to time restriction in the field survey. Under these conditions, the evaluation was conducted with materials obtained by the evaluation team during the survey period, information from interviews, and site visits.

1-5 Implementation Structure

This Evaluation was conducted by an evaluation team consisting of the following team members.

Chief Evaluator	SATO Hiroshi	Chief Senior Researcher, Research Operations Department, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)
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	NAGAI Miyu	Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd
	MASUDA Sayaka	Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd
	HAMROEV Aslam	Asia Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd

Chapter 2 Overview of Tajikistan and ODA to Tajikistan

2-1 Overview of Tajikistan

Tajikistan borders Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz, and China, and has been one of the transit points on the Eurasian Highlands Transcontinental Routeway through the ages. Its capital is Dushanbe. 93% of the country is mountainous and has abundant water resources such as glaciers, lakes, and rivers, and it is positioned as a water source for the Central Asia.

Within Tajikistan's population of approximately 10 million², young people under the age of 14 account for more than 1/3 of the total population. The ethnic composition is Tajik (84.3%), Uzbek (12.2%), Kyrgyz (0.8%), Russian (0.5%), and other (2.2%). Tajik is the official language in Tajikistan, but Russian is also widely spoken. By religion, Sunni Islam is the most prevalent, although there are also many followers of the Isma'ili sect, a branch of Shia Islam, in the Pamir region.³

2-2 Political System

2-2-1 Political Trends

Table 2-1 shows the political trends in Tajikistan. Tajikistan gained independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991, but immediately thereafter experienced five years of civil war. Since the end of the civil war, the government of President Rahmon has continued.

Table 2-1 Tajikistan Political Trends

September 9, 1991	Declaration of independence from the Soviet Union as the "Republic of Tajikistan"
May 1992	Outbreak of civil war
November 6, 1994	Rahmonov, then President of the Supreme Council, elected as the first President (Renamed to President "Rahmon" since November 2013)
June 27, 1997	Final peace agreement reached on civil war
September 1999	Peace process completed with constitutional referendum, presidential and parliamentary elections
March 2020	Victory of the ruling People's Democratic Party, headed by President Rahmon, in parliamentary elections for the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies
October 2020	President Rahmon re-elected with over 90% share of the vote in presidential election (6th consecutive term)

² UNFPA (2022) "World Population Dashboard Tajikistan", <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/TJ>, (Accessed November 18, 2022)

³ MOFA "Republic of Tajikistan Basic Data", <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/tajikistan/index.html>, (Accessed February 16, 2023)

2-2-2 Political System

(1) Head of State and Parliament

Tajikistan is a republic, and Emomali Rahmon serves as President. The President serves a single seven-year term, however, term limits were eliminated for President Rahmon only in 2016.

The parliament is bicameral, consisting of the National Assembly (5-year term, 33 seats) and the Chamber of Deputies (5-year term, 63 seats).

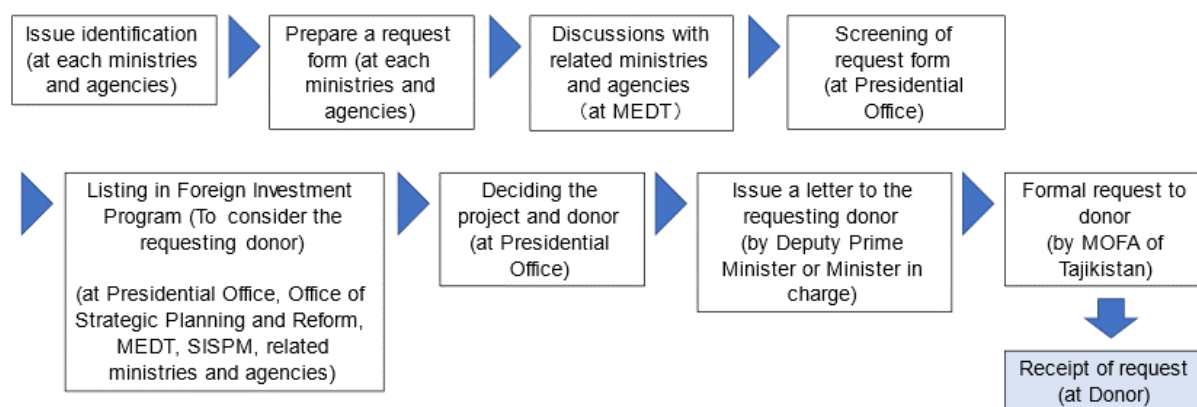
(2) Administrative Divisions

Administratively, the country is divided into three regions and one autonomous region, consisting of the Districts of Republican Subordination, including the capital Dushanbe, Khatlon Region (capital Bokhtar) in the south, Sughd Region (capital Khujand) toward the Fergana Basin in the north, and Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (capital Khorugh) in the Pamir Mountains.⁴

(3) Presidential Office

The Presidential Office has been established under the direct control of the President⁵ and is responsible for assisting the President in matters related to foreign affairs, economy, human resources, social development, law, and parliament.

The Presidential Office has strong authority, thus the decisions regarding formal requests to donors for ODA projects are made here, not by the ministries. In addition, decision-making within the government is extremely time-consuming, as the approval of the Presidential Office is required for everything from the approval of draft official documents to signing dates.



Source: Based on interview from State Committee on Investments and State Property Management (SISPM), Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT), and the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, prepared by the evaluation team

Figure 2-1 Flow of Tajikistan's ODA Request

⁴ Statistical Agency to the President (2012), "Demographic Yearbook", Table, p. 20 (retrieved 2014-02-27)

⁵ Official Publishing House of the Republic of Tajikistan "Jumhuriyat", http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=12598, (Accessed December 26, 2022)

2-2-3 Diplomacy

Tajikistan is seeking an all-round diplomacy, striking a balance between other influential neighboring countries such as Russia. However, Tajikistan is heavily dependent on Russia in economic and military affairs, including overseas remittances from labor migrants to Russia and the stationing of Russian troops in the country⁶. Tajikistan has also deepened its relationship with China, with which it has received infrastructure development assistance through substantial loans. Afghanistan shares approximately 1,400km of border with Tajikistan⁷ and two countries have deep relations with large number of Tajiks living inside Afghanistan. However, following the seizing of power by the Islamist Taliban in August 2021, Tajikistan have been increasing the wary of the interim Taliban government. With Uzbekistan, Tajikistan has had a complicated relationship, as both countries having ethnic groups within their own countries and both sides repeatedly accusing each other of sheltering antigovernment forces. However, relations are currently improving, with air routes and borders with Uzbekistan reopened in March 2017 following the establishment of President Mirziyoyev's administration in Uzbekistan, which has started initiatives to strengthen ties within Central Asia.⁸

2-3 Economic Status

Tajikistan's gross national income (GNI) per capita has increased year by year currently reaching US\$1,150, which is still the lowest level compared to other Central Asian countries⁹. The main industries in Tajikistan are aluminum production, hydropower, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, which account for about 60% of the country's total. Table 2-2 shows key macroeconomic indicators for recent years.

Table 2-2 Key Macroeconomic Indicators in Recent Years (2017-2021)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (projected)
Nominal GDP (million USD)	7,535	7,762	8,301	8,194	8,512
Real GDP growth (%)	7.1	7.6	7.4	4.4	9.2
GNI per capita (USD)	1,030	1,030	1,070	1,050	1,150
Consumer price inflation (%)	7.3	3.8	7.8	8.6	9.0
Unemployment rate (%)	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.6	7.8
Overseas worker remittances (million USD)	2,237	2,183	2,322	2,187	2,627

⁶ MOFA "Republic of Tajikistan Basic Data", <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/tajikistan/index.html>, (Accessed February 16, 2023)

⁷ MOFA of Tajikistan, "Tajikistan and Afghanistan State Boundary", <https://mfa.tj/en/main/view/149/tajik-afghan-state-border>, (Accessed December 26, 2022)

⁸ MOFA "Republic of Tajikistan Basic Data", <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/tajikistan/index.html>, (Accessed February 16, 2023)

⁹ The World Bank Indicator "GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$) – Tajikistan", <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD?locations=TJ>, (Accessed December 26, 2022)

Source: Based on IMF Staff Country Reports (2021)¹⁰, World Bank Tajikistan Economic Update (2021)¹¹, IMF World Economic Outlook Report (2022)¹², prepared by the evaluation team

As for employment, the number of people working overseas is approximately 1.2 million¹³, and remittances from abroad account for about 30% of the gross domestic product (GDP), as the economy is supported by workers from abroad. On the other hand, the lack of domestic industries that could generate employment and an economic structure that relies on overseas labor have been challenges. The unemployment rate for the country as a whole is about 8%, but for youth (15-24 years old) it is more than twice as high at about 17%. As of 2021, more than one-third of the population is under 14 years old.

2-4 Social Status

2-4-1 Social Indicators

The 2017 and 2021 values of the Human Development Index published by UNDP, an index used to measure a country's level of development and wealth in terms of health, education, and income, are shown in Table 2-3. A country's human development stage based on the Human Development Index is classified into four categories: very high human development, high human development, medium human development, and low human development, and Tajikistan is positioned as a moderately developed country.

Table 2-3 Social Development Indicators (2017 and 2021)

	Human Development Index	Life Expectancy	Expected Years of Schooling	Average Years of Schooling
2017	0.650 (Ranked 127th out of 189 countries)	71.2 years old	11.2 years	10.4 years
2021	0.685 (Ranked 122nd out of 191 countries)	71.6 years old	11.7 years	11.3 years

Source: Based on UNDP Human Development Report (2021/2022)¹⁴, UNDP Human Development Report (2018)¹⁵, prepared by the evaluation team

¹⁰ IMF Country Report (2021), "Republic of Tajikistan: 2021 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by Executive Director for the Republic of Tajikistan", (p.25, Table 1. Tajikistan: Selected Economic Indicators, 2018–26), <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2022/02/17/Republic-of-Tajikistan-2021-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-513280>

¹¹ World Bank (2021), "Tajikistan Economic Update Summer 2021", (p.26, Annex 1. Selected Macroeconomic, and Social Indicators 2018–23), <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/publication/economic-update-summer-2021>

¹² IMF (2022), "World Economic Outlook Report October 2022", (p.130 Table A4. Emerging Market and Developing Economies: Real GDP, p.135 Table A7. Emerging Market and Developing Economies: Consumer Prices) <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2022/10/11/world-economic-outlook-october-2022>

¹³ Asia Plus, "More than 3 million Tajik citizens reportedly officially registered in Russia last year", Article of February 14, 2022, <https://asiaplus.tj.info/en/news/tajikistan/society/20220214/more-than-3-million-tajik-citizens-reportedly-officially-registered-in-russia-last-year>

¹⁴ UNDP (2022), "Human Development Report 2021/2022", (p.273), https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

¹⁵ UNDP (2018), "Human Development Indices and Indicators", (p.24), <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/2018humandevelopmentstatisticalupdatepdf.pdf>

2-4-2 Energy

Tajikistan generates its electricity from hydropower (90.1%), coal (8.2%), and natural gas (1.6%). Tajikistan has one of the world's greatest potentials for hydropower generation, taking advantage of the abundant snowmelt from the mountainous regions and rainfall throughout the basin. However, structural problems linked to seasonal factors exist in that, during the winter, reduced snowmelt and frozen rivers in the basin cause a drop in hydropower generation, resulting in an imbalance with the higher demand for electricity for heating purposes, and this leads to power shortages. In addition, many of the power distribution facilities have not been updated since the Soviet Union era, and the facilities have not been expanded to meet increased demand, resulting in frequent power outages due to the aging of the facilities as well as overloading caused by increased demand.

In order to meet the increasing demand for electricity, the world's tallest (335m high) embankment dam Roghun Hydropower Plant is under construction, and the surplus electricity that would be generated with this power plant will be exported to the countries concerned through the "Central Asia-South Asia Regional Electricity Market", which was basically agreed upon between the governments of the four countries (Kyrgyz, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan).

2-4-3 Transport

(1) Roads

Road network in Tajikistan is divided into international roads leading to neighboring countries, republican roads, which are the main roads in the country, and local roads. Within the total length of domestic roads of approximately 26,600 km, 14,339 km are managed under Ministry of Transport, including international roads (3,348 km: 23.3%), republican roads (2,127 km: 14.8%), and local roads (8,864 km: 61.9%). 70% of the total road length (89% of international roads, 77% of republican roads, and 65% of local roads) is paved¹⁶.

The Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), led by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is constructing an international trunk road connecting 11 Central Asian countries. Japan has been supporting the construction of a road on the Tajikistan side connecting Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyz, currently constructing a part of the international trunk road between Kizilkala and Bokhtar.

Most of the existing roads in Tajikistan were introduced during the former Soviet Union era, and according to the most recent data from the Ministry of Transport, 56% of all roads are in poor condition and in need of repair¹⁷. However, Tajikistan's budget for road maintenance accounts for less than 0.1% of GDP¹⁸, which is extremely low compared to the neighboring countries, which have 0.4% of GDP for the budget.

¹⁶ ADB (2021), "Tajikistan Transport Sector Assessment December 2021", (p.14, 3.2 Road Subsector, 38.), <https://www.adb.org/documents/tajikistan-transport-sector-assessment>

¹⁷ Same as above (p.18, 3.2 Road Subsector, 41. , Table 11: Estimated Road Conditions)

¹⁸ Same as above (p.22, 3.2 Road Subsector, 53.)

With the support of donors including the World Bank, the Government of Tajikistan has approved a road asset management system (RAMS) by the end of 2020 and is proceeding with system development, but the system framework is not yet functional. The data on bridges are already accumulated in the JICA Project for Capacity Development for Bridge Management, and once the approved system is built, it will be able to provide information and data on national bridges.

(2) Air Transport

Tajikistan's aviation sector underwent a reorganization in 2008 with support from the World Bank, separating the regulatory authorities into the Civil Aviation Agency (CAA) of the Ministry of Transport, which is responsible for policymaking, implementation, and regulation of the aviation sector, and Tajik Air Navigation (TAN), which is responsible for air traffic control. CAA's governing organization has changed on December 25, 2017, from Ministry of Transport to the Presidential Office.

Various donors are supporting the development of aviation infrastructure in Dushanbe International Airport to meet the growing demand for air travel, and Japan has implemented "The Project for Improvement of Dushanbe International Airport" in 2014¹⁹.

Before independence from the Soviet Union, since almost all air services comprised domestic flights, air traffic control services were operated in accordance with the Soviet system. However, after independence, most flights in Tajikistan turned to the international system, so air traffic control was required to comply with the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Japan has supported through technical cooperation to build capacity for this process. Currently, ICAO is promoting the introduction of performance-based navigation (PBN) with enhanced safety, and Japan is implementing a technical cooperation project for the introduction of PBN in Tajikistan²⁰.

2-4-4 Health and Medical Care

As shown in Figure 2-2, Tajikistan's maternal and child health indicators, including the under-five mortality rate, are very poor among Central Asian countries²¹. The reasons for this include a lack of capacity building opportunities for health care providers, aging medical facilities and equipment that were built during the Soviet Union era, unstable water and electricity supplies, and budget shortfalls. In particular, Khatlon, the most populous region, has particularly poor results for maternal and child health indicators and lacks pregnancy and maternal knowledge and medical services compared to other regions²².

¹⁹ JICA, Transportation "The Project for Improvement of Dushanbe International Airport",

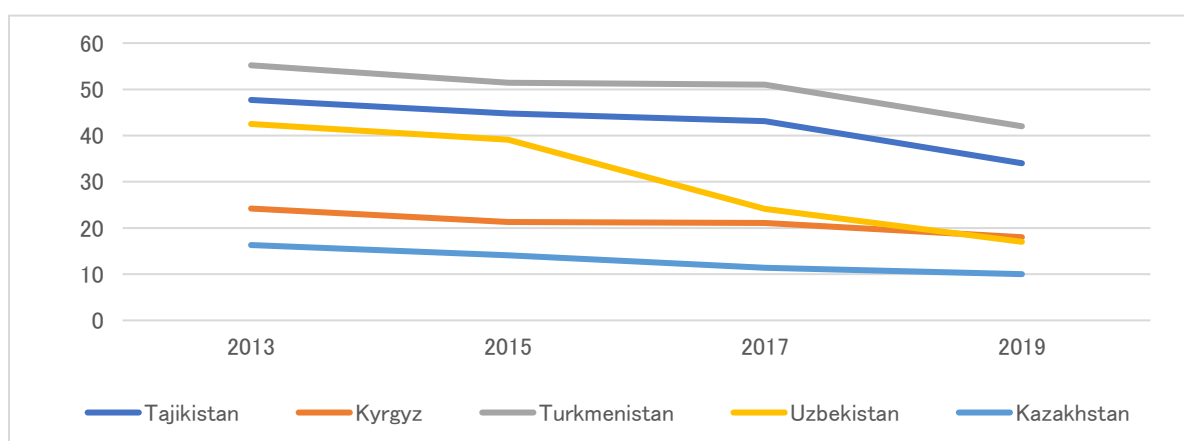
https://www.jica.go.jp/tajikistan/english/activities/transportation_02.html, (Accessed February 16, 2023)

²⁰ Based on "Report of Detailed Design Survey on Capacity Development Project for Implementation of Performance Based Navigation" and interview from project manager of the same project

²¹ WHO (2015), "World Health Statistics 2015", (p.51, 1. Life expectancy and mortality, Table 1),

<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/170250>

²² JICA, Project Pre-evaluation Sheet for "Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Care System in Khatlon Oblast Phase II"



Source: Based on WHO World Health Statistics, prepared by the evaluation team

Figure 2-2 Under-Five Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births) in Central Asian Countries

Donors are providing support in line with the priority initiatives of the health sector in the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2030, and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has received 52 million Euros in funding from the European Union (EU). The Health System Reform, jointly supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), is being implemented over the period 2021-27²³. Since 2012, Japan has been supporting capacity building in the local medical field through the implementation of a Technical Cooperation Project to improve the maternal and child health care system in Khatlon Region²⁴, to introduce a referral system between primary and secondary medical facilities^{25,26}. Procurement of medical equipment to the capital's core hospital has been done in 2005 and 2020 in addition²⁷.

2-4-5 Education

The education system in Tajikistan consists of 9 years of compulsory education (4 years of primary education and 5 years of basic secondary education) and 2 years of upper secondary education (or else; 1-3 years of primary vocational training education or 1-4 years of secondary vocational training education), after which students can enter higher education institutions. In NDS2015, one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), "Achieve universal primary education," has been mostly achieved. In NDS2030, the

²³ Based on interview from JICA Tajikistan Office

²⁴ Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Care System in Khatlon Oblast, Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Care System in Khatlon Oblast Phase II

²⁵ Primary medical facility; PHC (primary health care) facilities and prefectural hospitals called rural health center, health house. Secondary medical facility; Prefectural and city central hospitals

²⁶ JICA (2016), "Report of Detailed Design Survey on Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Care System in Khatlon Oblast Phase II", (p.45, 5-2)

²⁷ The Project for the Improvement of Medical Equipment in Diakov Hospital, The Project for the Improvement of Medical Equipment in the National Medical Center of Shifobahsh and the State Institution of Republican Scientific Center of Cardiovascular Surgery

government will continue to reform the education system to ensure that all citizens have equal access to all levels of quality education, and to reform of the education system as a priority so that the post-secondary education can meet the needs of the labor market.²⁸

Japan's support to the education sector includes the construction of facilities such as schools, mainly through the GGP, and the dispatch of teachers (short-term senior volunteers) to the Japanese language departments of the Tajik State Institute of Languages and the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University.

2-4-6 Water Supply and Sanitation

Tajikistan's access to safe water in 2020 is 96.4% in urban areas (89.9% is supplied by pipe) and 79.8% in rural areas (55.5% is supplied by pipe). Tajikistan is a country rich in water resources, with about twice as much renewable water resources per capita compared to Japan in 2018²⁹, however, water distribution facilities and water supply systems have not been updated since the Soviet Union era, and there are issues with stable water supply services, especially in rural areas³⁰.

In the water supply sector, the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources is in charge of policy formulation, and the Housing Service Corporation "Khojagii Manziliyu Kommunalii" (KMK) is in charge of implementation. Under KMK, there is the Water and Sewerage Public Corporation "Vodokanal" (VK), which is responsible for urban water supply, and the Rural Water Supply Corporation, which is responsible for village water supply. The World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and Japan are partially providing assistance to the VK. The Government of Tajikistan encourages the installation of water meters in each household and metered-rate system, but implementation has not progressed in all but a few large cities. JICA's Technical Cooperation Project, which ended in 2021, introduced metered-rate system in small and medium-sized cities, resulting in improved earnings and water services for the targeted VK.

On the other hand, Tajikistan, with its abundant water resources, is taking a leading position with the Netherlands in the UN resolution "International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" (International Decade for Action on Water). Tajikistan also plays a leading role in the international community in the water sector, hosting the "Second High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" (June 2022), and a preparatory process for the UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action on Water for

²⁸ JICA (2018), "Tajikistan JICA Country Analysis Paper" (p.37)

²⁹ Calculated from; World bank Indicator, "Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita (cubic meters)" <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ER.H2O.INTR.PC>

³⁰ UNECE, WHO (2018), "Setting Targets and Corresponding Action Plan Within the Framework of the Protocol on Water and Health in the Republic of Tajikistan", (p.15-17), https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/water/Protocol_on_W_H/Target_set_other_states/Tajikistan/Tajikistan_Targets_Action_Plan_Eng_final_clean_1May19.pdf

Sustainable Development,” (UN 2030 Water Conference). The June 2022 meeting was attended by the then Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan, who made an appeal for the "Kumamoto Water Initiative"³¹ and expressed Japan's commitment to play a leading role in the water sector together with Tajikistan. The results of the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit (hosted by Japan in April 2022), where the "Kumamoto Water Initiative" was announced, will be input into the UN Water Conference. In addition, Japan is running for co-chair of the UN-Water Conference's "Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment" interactive dialogue, as providing assistance to Tajikistan which is playing an important role in this sector and also taking a leading role at the same time.

2-5 Development Policy of Tajikistan

2-5-1 National Development Strategy and International Development Goals

(1) NDS2030³²

The Government of Tajikistan prepares the NDS every 15 years as a long-term strategy for national development. NDS2030 is the cornerstone of the economic and social development strategy for 2016-2030 and was put forward as the next development strategy after a review of the achievements and challenges of NDS2015. The NDS incorporates the international Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2001-2015) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2016-2030), so that achievement of the MDGs and SDGs is in sync with the socio-economic development goals of the NDS.

The long-term goals of Tajikistan's national development are to (1) raise the level of socioeconomic development to a medium level, (2) achieve sustainable development through economic diversification and increased competitiveness, and (3) expand and strengthen the middle-income class.

NDS 2030 will focus on overcoming economic vulnerabilities, increasing the value added of industries, promoting import substitution and exports, and creating jobs, especially in rural areas, by supporting entrepreneurship and SMEs in the manufacturing sector. Specifically, the report identifies the following four strategic development goals which is consistent to the SDGs goals.

- (i) Ensure energy security and efficient use of electricity use (SDG 7)
- (ii) Exit from communication dead-lock and turn country into a transit path (SDG 9)
- (iii) Ensure food security and people's access to good quality nutrition (SDG 1 and 2)
- (iv) Expand productive employment (SDG 8)

³¹ At the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit held in Kumamoto City in April 2022, Japan announced the "Kumamoto Water Initiative," which will provide approximately 500 billion yen over the next five years to developing countries to improve water supply and sanitation facilities through public-private sector collaboration, including the use of digitalization and innovation. <https://www.mlit.go.jp/mizukokudo/mizsei/content/001479358.pdf> (Accessed February 16, 2023)

³² MEDT, National Strategues Develope "National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period up to 2030", <https://medt.tj/en/strategy-and-programes/nds2030>, (Accessed December 26, 2022), *Note that this is considered a non-official English translation

The Government of Tajikistan has established a National Development Council (NDC) on June 2007 to monitor the implementation status of NDS; the NDC is chaired by the President, with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) serving as its secretariat, and has 13 working groups composed of representatives from each ministry.

To support the monitoring and evaluation of NDS 2030, JICA and UNDP have sent policy advisors to the NDC³³. The interviews confirmed that a common format will be developed by JICA's policy advisors and formally approved. This will make it possible to manage the monitoring under a common standard, since the lack of human resources and capacity for policy evaluation is an issue in managing the progress of the NDS. At the same time, capacity building for monitoring and evaluation of NDCs and related ministries and agencies is being conducted through training programs on evaluation³⁴.

(2) Results of and Responses to International Development Goals

A. MDGs

The MDGs, initiated by the United Nations, specify eight development goals to be achieved from 2001 to 2015 as well as the indicators to confirm their achievement. Tajikistan conducted a survey in 2017 on its achievement of the MDGs through a voluntary national review (VNR)³⁵ on the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"; as a result of the implementation of NDS2015, the MDG goals of reducing extreme poverty (MDG 1), disseminating primary education (MDG 2), and reducing the malaria incidence rate (MDG 6) were achieved. Among these, poverty reduction decreased significantly from 83% in 2000 to 31% in 2015, making Tajikistan one of the top 10 countries in the world with the fastest pace of poverty reduction³⁶. Indicators related to maternal and child health (MDGs 3 and 4) and water supply and sanitation (MDG 7) have shown improvement but with room for further improvement.

B. SDGs

The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", with the SDGs at its core, succeeding the MDG targets, was adopted at the UN Summit in September 2015. The SDGs comprise 17 goals and 169 indicators to be achieved from 2016 to 2030 with the aim of realizing a sustainable, diverse and inclusive society where "no one is left behind". During the VNR conducted in 2017, stakeholder discussions were held to incorporate the SDGs into Medium-Term Development Program (MtDP) 2016-2020 of NDS2030. As a result, 76 of the 169 SDG indicators were included in NDS2030.

³³ Interviews confirm that UNDP also sends issue-specific advisors to NDC.

³⁴ Based on interviews from JICA East and Central Asia Department and Policy Advisor

³⁵ UN, "Tajikistan Voluntary National Review 2017", <https://hlpf.un.org/countries/tajikistan/voluntary-national-review-2017>, (Accessed January 4, 2023)

³⁶ Same as above

2-6 Trends in ODA for Tajikistan

2-6-1 Overview

Tajikistan is ranked between low-income and lower-middle-income countries in the World Bank's GNI per capita-based classification. However, the amount of ODA received per capita as of 2020 is at the level of low-income countries, indicating that Tajikistan's ODA dependency ratio tends to be relatively high.

Table 2-4 Tajikistan's Aid Dependency (2020)

Classification	GNI per capita (USD)	Net ODA received per capita (USD)	GNI ratio in net ODA (%)
Tajikistan	1,050	79	7.9
Low-Income Countries Average	689	80	11.6
Lower-Middle-Income Countries Average	2,281	18	0.8
World Average	11,099	25	0.2

Source: Based on World Development Indicators³⁷, prepared by the evaluation team

2-6-2 Trends in Bilateral Cooperation

The major bilateral donors to Tajikistan are the United States, Japan, Germany, and Switzerland. Table 2-5 shows the change in ODA amounts from the five major donors. While there have been some fluctuations from year to year, no donor has made a significant increase or decrease.

Table 2-5 ODA Amounts of Major Bilateral Donors to Tajikistan

(Net expenditure based, Amount: million USD) *Year 2020 Standard

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
USA	33.4	38.3	37.5	34.0	32.4	175.6
Japan	32.1	25.7	39.8	23.0	26.7	147.3
Germany	26.3	26.0	33.1	28.1	19.1	132.6
Switzerland	21.5	20.8	24.9	20.2	20.7	108.1
UK	6.3	3.2	7.1	3.7	5.7	26.0

Note: The above values are rounded off

Source: Credit Reporting System, OECD Stat. (Accessed November 2022)

Tajikistan has received large amounts of development funds from Russia and China, which are not members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). China has provided loans to Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and Tajikistan has also seen an increase in public debt from China since around 2007 to finance infrastructure projects such as roads and power transmission lines. External debt accounted for 75% of Tajikistan's public debt in 2017. The

³⁷ World Bank Indicator, <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators#>, (Accessed December 26, 2022)

Export-Import Bank of China is the main creditor, with China holding 80% of Tajikistan's bilateral debt³⁸.

2-6-3 Trends in Multilateral Cooperation

Table 2-6 shows the amount of development assistance, both grant aid and loan, provided by major international organizations to Tajikistan, both grant aid and loan, from 2016 to 2020. Comparing 2016 and 2020, the amounts of aid provided by the ADB, International Development Association (IDA), and Climate Investment Fund (CIF) have increased, however the aid amounts of other institutions have not changed significantly. With the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aid is accepted in 2020 through the program grant Rapid Credit Facility³⁹.

Table 2-6 Development Assistance to Tajikistan by Major International Organizations

(Net expenditure based, Amount: million USD) *Year 2020 Standard

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
IMF	-	-	-	-	212.1	212.1
ADB	127.0	117.8	72.3	95.1	170.5	582.7
IDA	37.2	36.6	86.1	73.0	96.2	329.1
EU	26.8	24.3	43.4	35.4	26.1	156.0
IsDB	18.9	13.3	15.1	6.8	18.9	73.0
CIF	-	13.5	7.3	3.1	21.6	45.5

Note: 1) IsDB: Islamic Development Bank, 2) The above values are rounded off

Source: Credit Reporting System, OECD Stat. (Accessed November 2022)

2-7 Trends in Japan's ODA for Tajikistan

2-7-1 Performance of Japan's ODA for Tajikistan

Looking at the cumulative amount of Japan's ODA to Tajikistan by aid type for the period covered by this Evaluation, grant aid amounted to 26.718 billion yen, and technical cooperation totaled 2.732 billion yen⁴⁰. Since Tajikistan is not a recipient of loans, the assistance scheme to Tajikistan is limited to grant aid and technical cooperation.

³⁸ JICA (2018), "Tajikistan JICA Country Analysis Paper" (p.13)

<https://www.jica.go.jp/tajikistan/ku57pq00000468a4-att/jcap.pdf>

³⁹ IMF (2020), "Country Report No. 20/151 -Republic of Tajikistan-", (p2, PR20/207),

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2020/05/07/Republic-of-Tajikistan-Request-for-Disbursement-under-the-Rapid-Credit-Facility-Press-49397>

⁴⁰ (1) The number of projects includes those that are partially overlapping the evaluation period.

(2) "Grant Aid" includes GGP, Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects, and Grassroots Cultural Grant Assistance.

(3) The amount provided is the amount already spent (or planned) per project, regardless of the actual year of expenditure.

(4) The projects that span multiple countries and for which the budget allocation for each country could not be specified has indicated the recorded total amount.

(1) Grant Aid

Table 2-7 shows a breakdown of grant aid to Tajikistan for the period covered by this Evaluation. In terms of amount, Grant Aid for General Projects, implemented by JICA, is followed by Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations and Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Programme. Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations accounts for about 30% of the total amount given to the Central Asian and Caucasus countries through international organizations, making it the second largest after Kyrgyz⁴¹.

Table 2-7 Breakdown of Grant Aid

Type	Number of Projects	Amount (Billion yen)
Grant Aid ⁴²	8	119.79
Program for Human Resource Scholarship (JDS)	8	14.35
Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Programme	3	21.00
Grants in Association with International Organization	17	104.38
Grant Assistance for Grassroots Humans Security Projects	65	5.71
Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects	4	1.85
Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects	1	0.10

Note: Amounts are based on Exchange of Notes.

Source: Based on MOFA "List of Exchange of Notes", prepared by the evaluation team⁴³

(2) Technical Cooperation

The number of technical cooperation projects, both in aid amount and number of projects, is not as large as that of grant aid, though seven projects (2.732 billion yen) were implemented during the period under evaluation. By development issue sectors, technical cooperation projects have been implemented in the areas of transportation, health, economy, and water supply, not only in the capital city of Dushanbe, but also in Khatlon and other rural areas.

Although there is a track record of dispatch of Senior Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, t and none for Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, as no dispatch agreement has been concluded⁴⁴.

⁴¹ MOFA "Development Cooperation Results by Country (Asia)", (May 2022)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/jisiseki/kuni/asia.html>

⁴² Refers to Grant Aid implemented by JICA.

⁴³ MOFA "List of Exchange of Notes", ((Updated February 16, 2023)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/note/index.html>

⁴⁴ JICA JOCV "Dispatch Agreement Conclusion Status", (Updated September 30, 2021)

<https://www.jica.go.jp/volunteer/outline/publication/results/contracts.html>

2-8 Tajikistan and Central Asia

2-8-1 Tajikistan and Neighboring Countries

(1) Relations with Afghanistan

Tajikistan and Afghanistan have a long border and deep relations, and a large number of Tajiks are living inside Afghanistan. On the other hand, following the seizing of power by the Islamist Taliban in August 2021, President Rahmon pointed out at the 76th UN General Assembly in September 2021 that "the seizure of power by the Taliban, which is listed on the UN Security Council's list of terrorist groups, has further complicated the already complex geopolitical process in the region", adding that he is increasingly wary of the interim Taliban government that has been established⁴⁵.

(2) Relations with China

According to the State Committee for Investment and State Property Management of Tajikistan, cumulative Chinese investment in Tajikistan's economy through 2020 has amounted to US\$3.015 billion, or 35.5% of total foreign investment. 2020 Chinese investment inflows amounted to US\$152 million, of which US\$120 million will be direct investment. Also, Chinese investment can be seen in almost all sectors⁴⁶.

2-8-2 Framework of "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue

The "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue is a framework launched by Japan in August 2004 to promote intra-regional dialogue, and is based on the recognition that the stability and development of the Central Asian region is important for the peace and prosperity of the Eurasian continent and, by extension, the international community as a whole.

Japan supports the "open, stable and self-sustained" development of Central Asia, and is promoting diplomacy as a "catalyst" for the development of regional cooperation aiming to contribute to regional peace and stability. The pillars of Japan's diplomacy in Central Asia consist of; (1) steadily strengthening bilateral relationships, (2) encouraging regional cooperation and contribution to the common issues of the region through the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, and (3) cooperating in the global arena. Within the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Senior Officials' Meeting, Experts' Meeting, a Business Dialogue, and the Tokyo Dialogue (public symposium of experts) have been held⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ President Rahmon's Address to the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UN Web TV(Day 3) General Debate-General Assembly, 76th, 23 September 2021 07:49:10/12:43:00) <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1u/k1upi6b1oo>

⁴⁶ "Китайские инвестиции в Таджикистане перевалили за 3 миллиарда долларов", Asia Plus (May 18, 2021), <https://asiaplus.tj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/economic/20210518/kitaiskie-investitsii-v-tadzhikistane-perevalili-za-3-milliarda-dollarov> (Accessed December 26, 2022)

⁴⁷ MOFA "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/dialogue/index.html> (Updated December 24, 2022)

2-8-3 Central Asia's Security and Tajikistan

One of the issues for intra-regional cooperation in the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue is counterterrorism/drugs, recognizing international counterterrorism as a common global issue.

Counterterrorism/drugs are pressing issues for Tajikistan, which shares a long border with Afghanistan, and Japan has been providing supports through "the Project for Promoting Cross-Border Cooperation Through Effective Management of Tajikistan's Border with Afghanistan (2015-2018)", "The Project for Establishing Border Liaison Offices and Enhancing Cross-Border Cooperation to Counter Drugs and Crime in Central Asia (2016-2019)" and "the Project for Enhancing Regional Cross-Border Cooperation by Strengthening the Capacity of Border Liaison Offices in Central Asia and Interagency Mobile Teams in Uzbekistan (2020-2022)" and other Grant Aid Projects through UNDP and UNODC.

Chapter 3 Evaluation Results

In this chapter, the following evaluations were conducted in accordance with the ODA Evaluation Guidelines (June 2021 edition) and the ODA Evaluation Handbook (April 2022 edition) formulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

The method of conducting the evaluation is shown in 1-3. Information collected during the period of the evaluation study (May 2022 to November 2022) through literature and reports as well as interviews, site visits, and inquiries to relevant parties during domestic and on-site visits was analyzed and verified based on the results, and the evaluation was conducted from development viewpoints and diplomatic viewpoints. In addition, the final report of the Grant Aid Project through International Organizations "the Project for Establishing Border Liaison Offices and Enhancing Cross-Border Cooperation to Counter Drugs and Crime in Central Asia" was submitted in January 2023, but it is not included in this Evaluation report because the period for conducting the evaluation study indicated in 1-3-2 of this Evaluation report has passed.

3-1 Evaluation from Development Viewpoints

3-1-1 Relevance of Policies

For the relevance of policy, the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan (December 2012), Rolling Plan (April 2014), the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan (September 2018), and Rolling Plan (April 2020) implemented in the period under evaluation, Japanese Fiscal Year 2017-2021, were subject to evaluation.

Summary of the assistance policy is as follows.

Table 3-1 Assistance Policy Overview

Policy Title	Basic Policy of Assistance	Priority Areas	Development Issues
The Country Assistance Policy (December 2012)	Assistance for Economic and Socially Sustainable Nation Building	Rural Development	Improvement of Water Supply
			Improvement of Health Care System
			Rural Development and Industry Promotion
		Economic Infrastructure Development	Sustainable Energy Development
			Transport Sector Development
		Others	Capacity Building
			Terrorism and Drugs Countermeasures
The Country Development	Assistance for Economic and Socially Sustainable	Improving the Basis for Economic	Reconstruction Assistance
			Development of Transport Network and Logistics

Cooperation Policy (September 2018)	and Stable Nation Building	and Industrial Development	Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply
			Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment
		Improvement of Basic Social Services	Improvement of Water Supply
			Strengthening of Health System
			Other Social Services
		Promotion of Stabilization	Border Control and Security Measures
			Human Resources Development for Administrative Officers

The Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan 2012 and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan 2018 have not significantly changed the basic policy of helping Tajikistan to build a country capable of sustainable economic and social development. In terms of recovery from the civil war, the Country Assistance Policy set development issues as “Improvement of Water Supply”, “Improvement of Health Care System”, “Rural Development and Industry Promotion”, with emphasis on regions where development is lagging behind. The Country Development Cooperation Policy focuses on supporting sustainable and stable economic and social development, as Tajikistan has significantly reduced its poverty rate as a result of the implementation of the National Development Strategy (NDS). In the energy sector of the Country Assistance Policy, the development issues is intended to include energy measures in harmony with the environment and the use of renewable energy, but in the Country Development Cooperation Policy, the phrase "Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply" has replaced the phrase, and the wording does not clearly indicate the environment or climate change component.

(1) Verification Item 1: Consistency with Japan's High-level (ODA) Policies

A. Consistency of the Development Cooperation Charter (2015) with the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan

The basic policies of the Development Cooperation Charter are “Contributing to peace and prosperity through cooperation for non-military purposes”, “Promoting human security”, and “Cooperation aimed at self-reliant development through assistance for self-

help efforts as well as dialogue and collaboration based on Japan's experience and expertise". The priority issues of the Development Cooperation Charter are "Quality growth and poverty eradication through such growth", "Sharing universal values and realizing a peaceful and secure society", and "Building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges".

The common basic policy of the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan keeps in mind that peace and stability for Tajikistan is essential for peace and stability in the entire Central Asian and Eurasian region, as well as for peace, self-reliance and prosperity in Afghanistan.

This approach is in line with the basic policy of the Development Cooperation Charter, "Contributing to peace and prosperity through cooperation for non-military purposes", which is proactively contributing to securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community.

In addition, Japan's stance of supporting the implementation of Tajikistan's national development strategy is indicated in the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy, which is in line with the cooperation policy toward "Cooperation aimed at self-reliant development through assistance for self-help efforts as well as dialogue and collaboration based on Japan's experience and expertise".

The following shows the consistency between the development issues of the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy and the priority issues indicated in the Development Cooperation Charter.

- In the area of poverty eradication through "high-quality growth", the government will support the realization of economic growth through private sector growth and other measures by improving the basis for economic and industrial development through "Transport Sector Development (2012)", "Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply (2018)", and other economic infrastructure, and the development of industry through "Rural Development and Industry Promotion (2012)", and "Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment (2018)". It also states that it will address social development issues such as "Improvement of Water Supply (2012, 2018)", "Improvement of Health Care System (2012)", and "Strengthening of Health System (2018)".
- Regarding the sharing of universal values and the realization of a peaceful and safe society, the development issues of "Terrorism and Drugs Countermeasures(2012)", "Border Control and Security Measures (2018)", and "Reconstruction Assistance (2012)" through the implementation of these measures, will support the realization of a peaceful, stable, and safe society.
- Regarding the priority issues of Development Cooperation Charter "Building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global

challenges”, only “Sustainable Energy Development (2012)” is indicated as development issues in the Country Assistance Policy.

For the above reasons, the basic policy of assistance and development issues in the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan are consistent with Japan's Development Cooperation Charter.

B. The "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue and its Consistency with the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan

The "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue for the five Central Asian countries is a framework for political dialogue at the regional level, established by Japan ahead of any other country in the world, to resolve common issues across borders. It was established in recognition that the stability and development of the Central Asian region is important for the peace and prosperity of the Eurasian continent and the international community as a whole.

The "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue is an important part of assistance policy for Tajikistan, as it addresses cross-regional issues such as poverty, environment, disaster prevention, terrorism, and narcotics as noted in the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy. Hence, the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue is consistent with the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy, as it is based on the idea that counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, and border control with Afghanistan, in particular, contribute not only to peace and stability in Tajikistan, but also to peace and stability in Central Asian countries at large.

C. Consistency of the “Joint Statement on Deepening and Expanding the New Partnership between Japan and the Republic of Tajikistan (2018)”⁴⁸ with the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy

The Joint Statement agreed upon during President Rahmon's visit to Japan in 2018 is as follows and is consistent with the focus areas of the Country Assistance Policy.

- Further deepening and expanding the partnership between the two countries based on friendship, mutual understanding, trust and mutual benefit
- Close cooperation between the two countries through the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue and other means to further promote regional cooperation in Central Asia
- Reaffirming the importance of stability in Afghanistan to the international community in light of the current situation in the country, cooperation between Japan and Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries in the areas of effective border control and countering drug trafficking, terrorism, and violent extremism

⁴⁸ MOFA (2018) “Joint Statement on Deepening and Expanding the New Partnership Between Japan and the Republic of Tajikistan October 5, 2018”, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000406674.pdf>

(2) Verification Item 2: Consistency with Development Needs of Tajikistan

The national strategies of Tajikistan targeted for this Evaluation are NDS 2015 and NDS 2030. In addition, these two strategies include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This section verified the consistency between the Country Assistance Policy and the development goals of the above-mentioned national strategy.

A. The Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and Tajikistan's NDS2015, Alignment with Poverty Reduction Strategy 2010-2012 and MDGs

Tajikistan's NDS 2015 and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2010-2012 target poverty reduction with achievement of the MDGs in mind. The Basic Policy of the Country Assistance Policy states the support towards the country's efforts on sustainable development, particularly focused on the development of rural areas and economic infrastructure, especially to the Khatlon Region, which has the largest population and the poorest population in Tajikistan. Khatlon Region is also the area most affected by Tajikistan's civil war, and from the perspective of reconstruction assistance, support that contributes to the improvement of basic social services in the region, such as the provision of safe water and health care system, as well as rural development and industrial promotion for job creation and livelihood stability, is consistent with Tajikistan's development strategy and needs, and thus consistent with the Country Assistance Policy and Tajikistan's NDS 2015, Poverty Reduction Strategy 2010-2012 and MDGs.

B. Consistency between the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan and Tajikistan's NDS2030 and SDGs

Tajikistan's NDS 2030 states that the country will promote more rational, effective, and stable economic and social development efforts with the goals of overcoming vulnerabilities, efficient use of resources, and innovation in economic and social sectors for future development, with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in mind. The Basic Policy of Assistance in the Country Development Cooperation Policy is to support the country's efforts toward sustainable development, focusing on the three areas of "Development of Economic and Industrial Infrastructure", "Improvement of Basic Social Services" and "Promotion of Stabilization". Table 3-2 contrasts the priority areas of NDS 2030 with the development issues in the Country Development Cooperation Policy, but the development issues do not cover all of the Strategic Development Goals of NDS 2030.

Table 3-2 Strategic Development Goals of NDS 2030 and Development Issues of the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan

Strategic Development Goals of NDS 2030	SDGs Goals	Development Issues of the Country Development Cooperation Policy
Ensure energy security and efficient use of electricity	SDG7	Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply
Exit from communication dead-lock and turn country into a transit path	SDG9	Development of Transport Network and Logistics
Ensure food security and people's access to good quality nutrition	SDG1 and SDG2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of Business Environment and promotion of Employment (agricultural management support) • Other social services (livelihood security, support that contributes to rural development)
Expand productive employment	SDG8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of Business Environment and promotion of Employment (SME promotion / agricultural management support)

Source: Prepared by the evaluation team based on NDS2030, MDGs, and SDGs

The Country Development Cooperation Policy identifies development issues to support the areas left out of Tajikistan's MDGs, such as access to safe and hygienic drinking water and the development of health care system, especially maternal and child health, including nutrition. The Country Development Cooperation Policy is consistent with Tajikistan's NDS2030 and SDGs, as it is in line with Tajikistan's national strategy to contribute to the achievement of Tajikistan's SDGs while improving basic social services and promoting stability.

(3) Verification Item 3: Consistency with International Priorities

A. The Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and MDGs and SDGs

The development issues of contributing to poverty reduction through the development of social infrastructure in Khatlon, a region with a high poverty rate, in the Country Assistance Policy is an assistance policy in line with the MDGs.

In addition, the Government of Tajikistan's implementation of NDS2015 resulted in a reduction in the MDGs' extreme poverty and hunger eradication indicator (MDG1) from 83% to 31% (2015). Similarly, the indicator in the education sector (MDG2: Achievement of full coverage of primary education) has almost achieved full coverage of primary education. On the other hand, the achieved values for access to safe water in reducing infant mortality (MDG4) and improving maternal health (MDG5), and ensuring

environmental sustainability (MDG7) have improved, but not reached their targets.

The priority areas of the Country Development Cooperation Policy, "Improvement of basic social services," contributes to the achievement of the SDGs by continuing to make maternal and child health and access to safe water, which had low levels of achievement in the MDGs, a development issue. The policy of providing such support is consistent with the MDGs and SDGs.

(4) Verification Item 4: Consistency with Other Donors' Assistance

In Tajikistan, many of the aid agencies take part in a functioning framework of donor coordination through the Development Coordination Council (DCC), which exchanges information in various fields and conducts collaborative coordination as needed.

The Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy aim for effective and efficient cooperation through collaboration with CAREC led by ADB. CAREC is an investment program for the development of transport corridors and energy infrastructure and is consistent with Japan's diplomatic policy toward Central Asia, which is to "support the "open, stable and self-sustained" development of Central Asia, and is promoting diplomacy for the development of regional cooperation aiming to contribute to regional and international peace and stability". Currently, Japan is already cooperating with CAREC in the road sector.

The road asset management system that Tajikistan is aiming to establish at the initiative of the World Bank will include the bridge inventory data surveyed in the Japanese technical cooperation project. Once this database is completed, the necessary data on road management in Tajikistan will be consolidated under the Ministry of Transport, thus it promotes complementarity in cooperation among donors in the road sector.

In the health sector, NDS 2030 cites the need for health system reform. The reform, which is being supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with assistance from the European Union (EU) to the Government of Tajikistan, seeks to strengthen the health system by achieving comprehensive and sustainable improvements.⁴⁹

On the other hand, Japan has been implementing technical cooperation projects such as the improvement of the maternal and child health care system in Khatlon Region with a view to introducing a referral system, while coordinating among donors through the DCC, and has been supporting capacity building in the rural medical field for many years, as well as providing equipment to the core hospital in the capital. However, in the course of implementing individual projects, it was not clear where the projects were positioned within the overall picture of health system reform underway in Tajikistan. When

⁴⁹ WHO (2010) "Monitoring the Building Blocks of Health Systems", (p. vi), <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/258734/9789241564052-eng.pdf>

implementing such individual projects, one should always be aware of the overall picture of the area of support to clarify what part of it is being complemented by the project. Therefore, it is necessary to always clarify the position of support and approaches by Japan in introducing a referral system in Tajikistan's health system reform from the perspective of mutual complementarity.

(5) Verification Item 5: Japan's Comparative Advantage

One area in which Japan has a comparative advantage in providing assistance to Tajikistan is "human resource development". In particular, a total of 94 international students have participated in "The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship by Japanese Grant Aid (JDS)" since 2014, and the effectiveness of the JDS Program has been mentioned by Government of Tajikistan officials, the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, and the JICA Tajikistan Office. In addition, interviews and questionnaires with JDS program participants have revealed that a large percentage of graduates have been promoted after participating in the JDS program, and that promotion is faster than for students studying in China or Korea, which is a hot topic, confirming that the program is contributing to the development of human resources who will proactively play a role in Tajikistan's nation-building efforts.

The scheme of technical cooperation, in which Japanese experts work together with counterparts in the field to transfer skills necessary for practice and strengthen capacity, as seen in technical cooperation projects in the sectors of transport, water supply, and health, is not common in assistance from other donors in Tajikistan. In the road and water supply sectors, another advantage of Japan's aid schemes is seen as the synergistic effect of combining different schemes, such as combining grant aid and technical cooperation projects at the beginning of project planning, based on a long-term perspective, to improve the capacity of utilizing materials and equipment provided by grant aid through technical cooperation projects so that they can be used properly.

(6) Summary of Evaluation of Relevance of Policies

In terms of relevance of policies, the evaluation team verified Japan's high-level policies, Tajikistan's development policies, international development initiatives, complementarities with other donors, and comparative advantages that Japan has over other donors for the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan. As a result, the country's policy was confirmed to be consistent with Japan's Development Cooperation Charter and in line with Tajikistan's national strategy and international development initiatives. As for the relationship with other donors, while complementary relationships with other donors were observed in the transport sector, the approach in the health sector was different since it was difficult to confirm whether or not the introduction of the referral system by Japan was complementary

to the health system reform of other donors. Japan's comparative advantage is also evident in its capacity building through human resource development programs and technical cooperation projects. Given the high validity of almost all verification items, it can be concluded that the relevance of policies is "Satisfactory".

3-1-2 Effectiveness of Results

The effectiveness of results was verified by examining the extent to which the Country Assistance Policy for Tajikistan and Rolling Plan 2014 and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan and Rolling Plan 2020, which are the subject of this Evaluation, are actually effective based on the flow from inputs to outputs and outcomes. In this section, grant aid projects and technical cooperation projects with significant inputs to priority areas that have been completed or whose results have been finalized from FY2017 to FY2021 are included in the analysis. Since there were only a few projects implemented in Tajikistan during the evaluation period for which a terminal or ex-post evaluation was conducted, the outputs and outcomes of the projects were confirmed based on reports, interview information, and data.

(1) Verification Item 1: Inputs

The projects implemented or are being implemented in Tajikistan during the period under evaluation are presented in Table 3-3 against the Priority Areas and Development Issues of the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan.⁵⁰

Table 3-3 List of Inputs in Country Development Cooperation Policy

Priority Areas	Development Issues	Grant Aid	Technical Cooperation	Grants through International Organization	Other Grant Aid	Total (Excluding other Grant Aid)
Improving the Basis for Economic and Industrial Development	Development of Transport Network and Logistics	5	4			9
	Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply	2				2
	Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment		1	4	2	5
Improvement of Basic	Improvement of Water Supply		1		5	1

⁵⁰ The policies covered were the Country Assistance Policy and the Country Development Cooperation Policy, but comprehensively the most recent Country Development Cooperation Policy was used to categorize priority areas and development issues.

Social Services	Strengthening of Health System	3	1	3	29	7
	Other Social Services			1	34	1
Promotion of Stabilization	Border Control and Security Measures	1		9		10
	Human Resources Development for Administrative Officers	8				8
Total		19	7	17	70	-

Note 1: Other Grant Aid refers to Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP), Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects. The Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects for the provision of agricultural equipment and the construction and renovation of irrigation facilities are included in the "Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment".

Note 2: For Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations that were implemented in different phases, each phase was counted as one project.

The inputs (number of projects) for the evaluation period covers all development issues. Excluding GGP, Grant Aid Projects accounted for the largest number of projects (19), followed by Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations (17), and Technical Cooperation Projects (7). By development issues, "Development of Transport Network and Logistics" (9 projects), "Strengthening of Health System" (7 projects), and "Border Control and Security Measures" (10 projects) had the largest number of projects, while "Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment" (5 projects), "Improvement of Water Supply" (1 project), and "Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply" (2 projects) had fewer projects. As for the amount already implemented or planned for each development issue, a large amount of money was invested in "Development of Transport Network and Logistics" and "Strengthening of Health System", with these two issues accounting for about 50% of the total amount invested. The value of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations accounts for about 35% of the total, and the number of such projects is second only to Grant Aid for General Projects.

GGP includes health, medicine, water supply, and other areas included in the development agenda, as well as many projects related to social services such as education and disasters. Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects provide assistance to facilities for people with disabilities. Combined with GGP, these inputs are targeted to vulnerable communities such as disabled person and women.

(2) Verification Item 2: Outputs, Outcome and Impact

Based on the final reports submitted, the evaluation team confirmed that the outputs resulting from the project activities achieved the project objectives and subsequently

generated outcome and impact. In cases where the final report confirmed that the project goals had been achieved, but the outcome and impact could not be confirmed, the outcome and impact was verified through interviews and site visits to the possible extent in survey schedule and safety constraints.

For each development issue, the degree of achievement of outputs and the emergence of outcome and impact of the implemented projects were examined.

A. Priority Area 1: Improving the Basis for Economic and Industrial Development

(A) Development Issue1-1: Development of Transport Network and Logistics

Of the nine projects in the transport sector (10.082 billion yen), all of the outputs of the projects that have been implemented are identified, with the exception of the projects that are currently being implemented. Regarding outcomes, "The Project for Improvement of Equipment for Road Maintenance in Sughd Region and the Eastern Part of Khatlon Region" has significantly exceeded the targets set at the time of the plan in terms of pothole repair area and repair distance. The impact of the project has also been confirmed by the expansion of the effectiveness of the activities, such as the fact that the road maintenance and management manuals developed through "The Project for Capacity Development for Road Disaster Management in the Republic of Tajikistan" are used in all road management offices in Tajikistan.

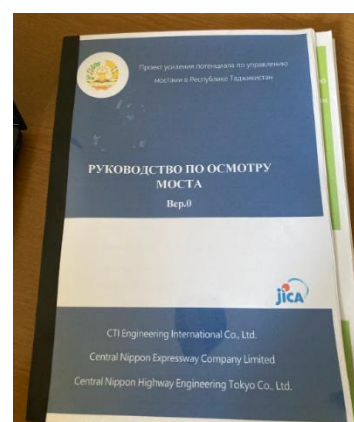


Photo 1 Road maintenance manual
(Photo by the evaluation team)

"The Project for the Rehabilitation of Kizilkala-Bokhtar Section of Dushanbe-Bokhtar Road" is currently being implemented, but the Road Maintenance and Management Department of the Ministry of Transport, which maintains the roads to be rehabilitated, does not have the necessary budget for maintenance and repair of the road under this project at this time, resulting in the construction of asphalt paved roads that exceed their budgetary maintenance capacity.

In "The Project for Improvement of Dushanbe International Airport (Phase 1 and 2)", the work to set up the flight rules that position where the Instrument Landing System (ILS), which guides aircraft to the runway, can be used has been delayed due to the lack of capacity of the implementing agency. Therefore, the installed ILS is operational but not in operation. At the time of planning, the annual volume of air cargo handled was expected to increase sharply from 3,258 tons in 2013, but since 2018, when the project was completed, the volume of international cargo handled at Dushanbe Airport has been below the 2013 baseline and the air cargo terminal has not reached its capacity. The decline in the volume of cargo handled can be attributed to the reopening in 2019 of the border between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which had been closed since 1998, allowing cargo volumes to be transported by land. Airport closures due to the impact of COVID-19 after 2020 may also

be a reason for the lower cargo volume, which is still below the standard level as of 2022. The ILS installed with Grant Aid Projects is functioning, allowing approach and landing on the runway from two directions, and the project objective of “Promoting economic and trade development by upgrading aircraft departure/landing safety and efficiency, as well as air cargo handling efficiency at Dushanbe International Airport”, has not been achieved, and the outcome and impact of the project have not been confirmed. The ILS was established with the expectation that it would function after the grant aid was implemented, but because the ILS is not operated, it has become necessary to strengthen the capacity of implementing agencies to operate the ILS by Technical Cooperation Projects. It can be considered that there may have been room for improvement in the research at the planning stage of grant aid.

(B) Development Issue 1-2: Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply

There are two Grant Aid Projects (2.64 billion yen) that fall under the development issues of the Promoting Sustainable Energy Supply, and outputs have been achieved in both cases.

"The Project for Introduction of Clean Energy by Solar Electricity Generation System" was changed from the original plan of two solar installations to three, but it took time to determine and coordinate the location of the third installation, resulting in a significant delay in the completion of construction from the scheduled March 2011 to June 2019. The photovoltaic (PV) installation to the three hospitals reduced the amount of electricity supplied by the power grid and reduced their electricity costs. As the first installation of a grid-connected PV system in Tajikistan, the project has contributed to demonstrating Japan's presence by being introduced as an example of a Japanese PV facility installation at an international conference on renewable energy in Central Asia in June 2022.

"The Project for Improvement of Substations in Dushanbe" proposed a construction method to replace aging equipment while keeping the existing substation in operation, and a compact design of the substation to be constructed on a narrow urban site, both of which were realized. In addition, the increase in substation capacity has eliminated frequent power outages. The technical innovations in design and construction applied in this project have produced outcomes, such as enabling the state-owned energy company "Barki Tojik" to introduce them in the renewal work of the substation.



Photo 2 Substation of Dushanbe
(Photo by the evaluation team)

(C) Development Issue 1-3: Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of

Employment

The number of projects related to Improvement of Business Environment and Promotion of Employment is not large, with one Technical Cooperation Project (0.311 billion yen) and five Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations (4.547 billion yen)⁵¹ currently underway.

Although outputs, outcome and impact of "The Business Incubation Project," a technical cooperation project, have not been confirmed due to its ongoing implementation, results have been confirmed, including the strengthening of the capacity of the staff of the business incubators established by the government, improved operations of the targeted incubators, and an increase in the number of entrepreneurs who have received small loans. "The Project for Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-Border Areas (LITACA)", Grant Aid Project through UNDP, began in 2014 and is currently in Phase 3. The project targets border communities in two countries, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, and is implemented by the UNDP in Tajikistan and the Aga Khan Foundation in Afghanistan. The Japan's "One Village, One Product Campaign" has been introduced, and outcomes such as industry development and job creation have been identified.

Although outside the scope of this Evaluation, "The Project for Agriculture Extension Service Improvement through the SHEP approach (TAJIK-SHEP)", which is a Technical Cooperation Project, was initiated in 2022. This aims to improve productivity and added value in the agricultural sector, which accounts for the majority of the working population in Tajikistan. Similarly, the company that proposed "The Survey on Biomass Technology Application on Liquid Waste Water After Glycyrrhizin Extract Process (SME Partnership Promotion)" is the best Japanese company in Tajikistan, and through its joint venture with Tajikistan, it has been confirmed that it will contribute to revitalizing the local economy by utilizing licorice cultivation and processing technology in the border area with Afghanistan.

B. Priority Area 2: Improvement of Basic Social Services

(A) Development Issue 2-1: Improvement of Water Supply

As for water supply sector, there is only one technical cooperation project (0.41 billion yen) which has achieved outputs, and has been completed. Grant aid projects were provided prior to the technical cooperation project, and water distribution facilities such as elevated water tanks and distribution pipes, water supply equipment, and water meters for each household were installed in the Pyanj and Khamadoni Vodokanals (VK) by grant aid (total 3.585 billion yen). In terms of technical cooperation project, metered-rate system has been introduced through support including the dispatch of individual experts as part of "The Project for Strengthening the Water Service Management of Pyanj and Khamadoni Vodokanals". As a result, Pyanj and Khamadoni VK has become an excellent water provider in Tajikistan with increased revenues due to increased customers. As for outcome

⁵¹ Two of the projects are targeted for the five Central Asian countries, not only Tajikistan.

and impact, Khamadoni VK has achieved 24-hour water supply, and number of customer complaints reduced to zero. In this case, based on a long-term perspective considering combination of grant aid and technical cooperation, water distribution facilities and water supply equipment were developed through grant aid at the beginning of the project planning. Technical cooperation was implemented to strengthen the capacity of the water supply service provider so that the developed facilities could be utilized appropriately. As a result, the project has improved the financial situation of the organizations and their services. This project is a good practice of the introduction of metered-rate system. However, this success was reliant to the condition where the amount of distributed and supplied water was stabilized since the water distribution facilities and water supply equipment had been improved in advance with grant aid projects. Other donors, EBRD, WB, and ADB, have also implemented pilot projects and installed water meters for each household. However, many VKs in Tajikistan are finding it difficult in terms of their financial situation to expand their pilot projects because pilot projects are done by loan only or a combination of grant aid and loan. Interviews at the KMK headquarters and Khatlon Region KMK also indicated that, although they praised the success of the pilot projects and the introduction of the metered-rate system, no other VKs have introduced or plan to introduce the metered-rate system due to their organizations' financial situation.

Many VKs in Tajikistan are not in a financial situation that would allow them to implement facility infrastructure development solely from their own funds without donor or external investment, and the introduction of the metered-rate system with facility development, as in this case, has not been replicated in other VKs in Tajikistan at the time of the evaluation.

(B) Development Issue 2-2: Strengthening of Health System

Strengthening of Health System accounts for the third largest amount of aid (totaling 4.071 billion yen) among development issues. The seven projects evaluated are implemented under different schemes, including Technical Cooperation Projects, Grant Aid, and Grants in Association with International Organization.

Except for the projects currently under implementation, outputs have been confirmed. In "The Project for Prevention and Management of Childhood Illnesses", Grant Aid Project through UNICEF, the outcome and impact are confirmed by the fact that the number of cases, deaths, and serious cases of pneumonia and diarrhea have all decreased. Regarding "The Project for Strengthening National Family Planning Services", Grant Aid Project through United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), outcomes were confirmed as a result of the training of 15 specialized health care workers in



Photo3 Weighing scales provided by Japan
(Photo by the evaluation team)

sterilization, two were certified as master trainers, and technology transfer for the placement and removal of intrauterine contraceptive devices was conducted for 100 midwives. Regarding the technical cooperation projects, "The Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Care System in Khatlon Oblast Phase 2", the following activities have been carried out to strengthen management capacity; activities to strengthen management capacities, such as monthly training for domestic managers and on-site management support to the six target hospitals. However, due to the spread of COVID-19, the health facilities targeted for technical cooperation became the receiving facilities for patients with COVID-19. Although outputs were identified, this has led to stagnation and drop-off in the project's target indicators.

(C) Development Issue 2-3: Other Social Services

One Grant Aid Project through International Organization in the field of disaster reduction as other social services (1.172 billion yen), namely "The Project for Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Capacities", has been implemented with UNDP and outputs have been confirmed. As a result of the project, the capacity for disaster prevention and response in Tajikistan has been strengthened, benefits have been received from the project to the residents of the targeted areas, and mutual cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in disaster management has been established. Outcome and impact can be confirmed since this has enabled further efficient and effective implementation of disaster management measures.

The project was scheduled to implement for four years, from 2016 to 2020, but was extended and completed by March 2022 due to the impact of COVID-19 and the political changes in Afghanistan.

In the project report, it was indicated that predictable circumstances such as delays in the construction of facilities due to the cold weather in winter were not considered in the planning stage. The report also lacked information on the outputs achieved and logical explanations of the benefits to the targeted groups in the project activities.

C. Priority Area 3: Promotion of Stabilization

(A) Development Issue 3-1: Border Control and Security Measures

Projects related to the development issue of Border Control and Security Measures are mainly implemented through grants to international organizations, and two of the nine projects (totaling 4.016 billion yen) are currently under implementation. "The Project for Promoting Cross-Border Cooperation through Effective Management of Tajikistan's Border with Afghanistan", Grant Aid Project through UNDP according to the final report, was able to determine that an outcome and impact have emerged as a result of facilities that include a gender perspective, such as the installation of women's toilets, an increased percentage of women among border crossers for trade purposes, and a reported increase

in economic activity around the border due to the development of a market near the border. In the UNDP project "Strengthening Community Resilience and Regional Cooperation for Prevention of Violent Extremism in Central Asia", the final report was submitted, with project goals set, to confirm the importance of the participation of young people in development planning and other activities, the effects of the construction of sports facilities and other facilities, and the expected effects on employment promotion, such as the establishment of a seed fund. Outputs were determined to have been achieved, but outcomes were not confirmed from the report.

"The Project for Strengthening Border Security in Khatlon Region", Grant Aid Project through United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), provided the construction and renovation of new border facilities with Afghanistan, equipment and facility construction for organizations in charge of border control, and security, and capacity building for security agency personnel. Although the report submitted was a Midterm Report, it was judged to be equivalent to the contents of the Final Report in terms of activities, results, and implementation period. However, there were no project goals stated in the report, and although the outputs were confirmed, no description of the emergence of outcome or impact was found. The names of the cases are different in the MOFA's press release, the cover page of the report, and the summary within the report, which needs to be standardized, and if it corresponds to the contents of the final report, it needs to be clearly stated that it is the final report.

"The Project for Establishing Border Liaison Offices and Enhancing Cross-Border Cooperation to Counter Drugs and Crime in Central Asia"⁵², Grant Aid Projects through UNODC, ended in June 2019, it was in January 2023, after the implementation period of the evaluation study indicated in 1-3-2 of this Evaluation Report, that MOFA obtained a final report from the Embassy of Japan in Kyrgyz, the lead agency for this multiple country project, to submit to the evaluation team. In the interim reports that were available, there were detailed descriptions of the activities, but they did not indicate what outputs emerged as a result of the activities and how they led to the achievement of the project goals.

"The Project for Enhancing Regional Cross-Border Cooperation by Strengthening the Capacity of Border Liaison Offices in Central Asia and Interagency Mobile Teams in Uzbekistan"⁵³, Grant Aid Project through UNODC will be completed in December 2022, and a final report will be submitted in the future. In the progress reports that were available, there were detailed descriptions of the activities, but they did not indicate what outputs emerged as a result of the activities and how they led to the achievement of the project goals.

The project has a goal to achieve, activities are carried out to achieve the goal, and

⁵² The final report was not submitted within the time frame for conducting the evaluation survey and is therefore not included in the evaluation.

⁵³ The project was postponed for 11 months and was completed in December 2022, but the activity report during that period was not submitted within the time frame for conducting the evaluation survey, so it is not included in the evaluation as well.

outputs are produced as a result, thus achieving the project goal. However, if the report does not state whether the project goal was achieved or not, it is not possible to confirm the outcome and impact that follows.

Some of the reports on Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations reported the implementation of activities as described above, but did not indicate quantitatively whether the activities produced outputs that led to the achievement of the project goals, or whether the goals were achieved, making it difficult to see the effects of the project implementation.

(B) Development Issue 3-2: Human Resource Development for Administrative Officers

"The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship by Japanese Grant Aid (JDS)" is part of the Government of Japan's "100,000 Foreign Students Plan", grant aid program established in FY1999 to accept foreign students into Japan with the aim of fostering human resources who will play a central role in the planning and implementation of social and economic development policies in developing countries. During the target of evaluation period, eight projects were implemented for Tajikistan with a total input of 1.435 billion yen. A total of 94 students have participated in the program from FY2014 to FY2021.

The JDS program is not only a program to develop future Government of Tajikistan officials, but also to increase the number of pro-Japan personnel within the Government of Tajikistan and to promote bilateral diplomacy between Japan and Tajikistan. The JDS program is said to be a gateway to promotion for administrative officers, as many graduates of the JDS program have been promoted after returning to their home country due to their improved logical thinking and English language skills, in addition to the knowledge acquired in their field of expertise through studying in Japan. To give one example, the Minister of Labor, Immigration and Employment at the time of the field survey was one of the JDS program graduates.

In an online survey of JDS program participants (current students and alumni), all respondents indicated that the skills, experience, and knowledge gained during their time in Japan have been or will be useful in their subsequent career development. In addition, 70% of the graduates indicated that their view of Japan had changed. Many graduates still maintain the networks with Japanese people that they gained during their study abroad, indicating that mutual understanding and communication between Tajikistan and Japan are being promoted on a personal level.

D. Capacity Building for Policy Evaluation

Japan has sent policy advisor to NDC to support NDC and ministries in building their capacity to monitor and evaluate the implementation of NDS 2030. Activities include conducting training on evaluation of NDS implementation and standardization of reporting formats for progress monitoring. Once the monitoring format developed by the expert is

approved by the Government of Tajikistan, it is expected to enhance capacity for policy evaluation and monitoring, such as by unifying ministries' reporting on NDC progress and facilitating annual evaluations.

(3) Summary of Evaluation of Effectiveness of Results

The effectiveness of the results is verified by the inputs, outputs and outcomes for each development issue. In terms of inputs to all development issues, the ratio of the number of projects and the monetary amount of inputs differ depending on the development issue, but inputs are made across all development issues. While outputs were mostly confirmed for the projects that were confirmed to have been completed, there were projects in the transport sector where outcomes did not emerge as expected, partly due to the external conditions of the opening of the land border between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In addition, the facility for aviation sector installed with grant aid was not utilized due to the lack of capacity in implementing agency, resulting to require additional technical cooperation project for further capacity enhancement. There may have been an issue to be solved during the research at the planning stage of grant aid.

In the health sector, there were projects where outputs were confirmed but stagnation or drop in the project's target achievement indicators were found, partly due to the impact of COVID-19.

In the water supply sector, the project achieved in terms of the improved financial situation of the implementing organizations and improved services are cited as a result of the metered-rate system, but, in terms of inputs, this is an example where the Tajik organizations have not been able to replicate the project solely with their own funds. In the area of border control and security measures, some reports on Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations do not logically explain project goals and achievement of goals, making it difficult to see the effects of project implementation.

While it is commendable that efforts are being made to maximize the effects through various innovations given the limited ODA budget and available assistance schemes, for the reasons stated above, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of the results is "Partially Satisfactory".

3-1-3 Appropriateness of Processes

Regarding the appropriateness of processes, the evaluation team verified the appropriateness of the aid policy formulation and policy implementation processes, effective collaboration with other donors and international organizations, and the appropriateness of the aid implementation structure and considerations and efforts given to Tajikistan's features and peculiarities.

(1) Verification Item 1: Appropriateness of the Aid Policy Formulation Process

The policy for the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Tajikistan is based on Tajikistan's National Development Strategy, SDGs, etc., and is discussed by the ODA Task Force, and a draft of the policy is prepared at the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan. The process of formulating the aid policy is properly conducted, as it was confirmed that the draft framework prepared was scrutinized by the Country Assistance Planning Division II, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and after coordination and confirmation among relevant departments of the Ministry and JICA, the draft policy was posted on the Ministry's website and finalized after public comments were solicited.

(2) Verification Item 2: Appropriateness of the Policy Implementation Process (understanding, monitoring, and publicizing the needs of the partner country)

The field survey confirmed that in Tajikistan, when a ministry or agency requests assistance from a donor, including Japan, a request needs to be submitted to the MEDT after conducting internal consultations within the ministry, and that after MEDT's review, the Office of the President designates the donor to whom the request should be addressed.

In terms of understanding Tajikistan's needs, JICA Tajikistan Office staff are engaged in dialogue and consultation with counterpart organizations and ministries at the staff level throughout the project implementation in the areas of development issues where projects have already been implemented, but the requests of the Government of Tajikistan and Japan's assistance policy are not always aligned. JICA's policy is to request the partner country to bear a certain amount of the burden as a self-help effort, which may cause differences in Tajikistan's expectations and perceptions of aid, so JICA staff members are providing careful explanations. Also, JICA staff make site visits to ensure that requests do not deviate from reality, and strive to understand realistic development needs. In addition, considering the tendency for opinions to be biased toward the government side, JICA staff pay efforts to seek a broad range of needs and opinions, especially when make business trip to local areas, by meeting with civil society organizations and exploring viewpoints through observation of the activities of nongovernmental organizations. At the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, it was confirmed that the Embassy has a direct understanding of the needs of rural and village residents through the implementation of GGP, as many of the request sources for GGP are local governments.

On the other hand, for new areas of cooperation and the ministries that have not previously received Japanese assistance may yet to have ties with the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan or the JICA Tajikistan Office, Japan side will need time to identify their needs in a different way than organizations with whom relationships have been established.

Regarding the monitoring of policy implementation, as pointed out in 3-1-2 Verification of Effectiveness of Results in this Evaluation Report, some of the reports submitted for the Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations did not include descriptions of the goals to be achieved or the degree of achievement of the project but mainly described

the implementation of activities, making it difficult to see the effects of the project. There is also a lack of uniformity in format even among reports from the same international organization, and this is thought to have led to the difficulty of project management. Project management was also found to be an issue, as some projects were not submitted with completion reports even though the projects were supposed to be completed. In addition, the names of some projects differ between MOFA press release, the cover page of the report, and the summary within the report, which should be standardized. There was a case, the submitted "Midterm Report" was determined to be a final report, and if it corresponds to the contents of the final report, it should be clearly stated that it is a final report. Another case was a project that had schedule management difficulties because of predictable conditions, such as delays in facility construction due to winter weather, were not factored into the plans, preventing the project from proceeding as planned.

Although some of the projects with reporting issues were implemented in multiple countries, and in some cases, the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan or JICA Tajikistan Office were not the lead agency, project management and monitoring should be improved, including the improvement and unification of reporting formats.

(3) Verification Item 3: Effective Collaboration with Other Donors, International Organizations and Other Aid Entities (including private sector and NGOs)

In Tajikistan, the Development Coordination Council (DCC), established in 2008, holds monthly meetings among donors, and Japan has been actively involved, serving as vice chair of the DCC until two years ago and currently chairing the transportation sector. In Tajikistan, the time-consuming approval process within the government is a common challenge for donors, and the DCC is consolidating donor input by submitting a letter in the name of the DCC chairperson to the presidential office requesting improvements.

Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations account for about one-third (35%) of the total amount of ODA to Tajikistan, and thus play a significant role in the country's ODA. Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations are effectively implemented by taking the advantages that international organizations have. Examples include cases in areas where the activities of Japanese nationals are restricted for security reasons or in the region across borders. In addition, collaboration with UN agencies in areas where the expertise of international agencies can be utilized, such as narcotics, terrorism-related issues, and vaccination, can be expected to enhance development effectiveness.

For international organization collaboration projects, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and JICA review the reports submitted by the counterpart organizations once or twice a year. JICA exchanges comment on the submitted draft reports. The Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and JICA Tajikistan Office also participate in steering committees that meet once or twice a year to monitor the progress of the

projects. It should be noted that JICA, together with UNDP, confirms the implementation status from the beneficiaries, including going to talk directly with local beneficiaries.

Although Japan is the donor for the projects that are carried out in cooperation with international organizations, they are easily seen by the people of Tajikistan as projects of international organizations, and it is difficult for them to see the "Japanese face". Therefore, Embassy and JICA officials participate in events, receptions, signing ceremonies, and steering committees to actively promote the fact that this is a Japan-supported project, and also promote it by putting ODA stickers on the equipment to be provided, among other efforts.

(4) Verification Item 4: Appropriateness of Aid Implementation Structure (Aid implementation systems of relevant organizations such as local ODA task forces, including the receiving system of the partner countryside)

The ODA Task Force is the forum for discussions on ODA in Tajikistan meets monthly by the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and the JICA Tajikistan Office as members. The ODA Task Force checks the status of project implementation, shares information on the development of new projects and promising projects, and raises issues such as challenges to project implementation. The ODA Task Force used to meet once a year, but in recent years it has been meeting monthly for an intensive exchange of information.

Regarding Tajikistan's acceptance system, a major challenge cited by Japanese officials and donor representatives is the time it takes to approve projects. JICA's Country Analysis Paper points out that the President's Office has been tightening its control over ministers and ministries since 2016, and ministries and agencies are unable to smoothly carry out their duties without receiving instructions from the President's Office, even for matters under their own jurisdiction.

(5) Verification Item 5: Considerations and Efforts Given for the Characteristics and Peculiarities of the Partner Country

In Tajikistan, which was part of the former Soviet Union, Russian language is used for technical terms. However, 30 years have already passed since independence, and an increasing number of generations do not understand Russian. JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Programs (KCCP) are conducted in Russian, but the challenge is to deal with participants who do not understand Russian. Since English is the standard language in the aviation sector, the Project for Capacity Development in Air Traffic Services first let participants to acquire English through a Third Country Training Program to create an environment based on which project can be implemented in Tajikistan. One of the benefits of the JDS program is that students return home having mastered English.

The authority of the President's Office is strong in Tajikistan's political system, and even the matters that would be decided at the ministry level in other countries require

approval from the President's Office. This makes the process of project formation and implementation time-consuming and seen as a challenge among donors. The Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan takes it into account the time it takes from the planning stage. On the other hand, GGP is a scheme that allows embassies to collect needs directly from local governments and the private sector without going through the central government or ministries.

(6) Summary of the Evaluation of the Appropriateness of Processes

The aid policy formulation process had been adequate. In the policy implementation process, there is room for improvement in such areas as monitoring through reports on Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations. In Tajikistan, coordination among donors is a regular activity, and Japan is also active in this area. Although the time-consuming decision-making and approval process in the Government of Tajikistan has been an issue affecting project formation and implementation, preliminary steps are being taken at the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and JICA Tajikistan Office. For the reasons discussed above, the evaluation team concludes that the appropriateness of processes is "Satisfactory".

3-2 Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints

3-2-1 Diplomatic Importance

(1) Significance and Importance of Supporting Tajikistan

Stability and security within Tajikistan cannot be considered without relations with neighboring Afghanistan. Tajikistan, which shares a long border with Afghanistan, plays an important role as a bulwark against the influx of drugs, terrorism, and violent extremism from Afghanistan, and the country's security and stability affect the peace and security of the Central Asian region and ultimately the world, including Japan. The "Securing Peace, Stability and Prosperity of the International Community" is a national interest as stated in the Development Cooperation Charter, and strengthening Tajikistan's border control, as indicated in the priority areas of promotion of stabilization, is an important issue from a diplomatic perspective as well. The strengthening of Tajikistan's border control is also considered important by the international community, as Japan, the United States⁵⁴, and the EU⁵⁵ are working with UN agencies such as UNDP, UNODC, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to help manage Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan.

Recently, with regard to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Japanese public's attention to the Central Asia and Caucasus region is considered to be more focused than before. As

⁵⁴ Embassy of the United States of America in Tajikistan, "U.S. Embassy to Deliver a New Project on Strengthening Border Monitoring Capacity of the Tajik Border Forces" (Updated March 4, 2022), <https://tj.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-to-deliver-a-new-project-on-strengthening-border-monitoring-capacity-of-the-tajik-border-forces/>

⁵⁵ UNDP, "EU Border Management in Northern Afghanistan (Bomnaf Phase II)", <https://www.undp.org/tajikistan/projects/eu-border-management-northern-afghanistan-bomnaf-phase-ii>, (Viewed January 4, 2023)

part of the former Soviet Union, Tajikistan has strong ties with Russia and is highly dependent on Russia in economic and military terms⁵⁶. Despite this close relationship with Russia, Tajikistan has taken the position of abstaining from the March 2, 2022, UN General Assembly resolution calling for Russia's withdrawal from Ukraine, as a country in Central Asia that is perturbed by the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Although Tajikistan has strong military and economic ties with Russia and China, it is seeking its own foreign policy while maintaining a balance with each country.

In light of the above, Japan's ODA to Tajikistan for its political, economic, and social stability is of great diplomatic importance for Japan, which aspires to a "free and open Central Asia"⁵⁷.

(2) Importance of ODA to Tajikistan in Strengthening Bilateral Relations

Diplomatic relations between Japan and Tajikistan were established in February 1992. Japan was one of the first countries to recognize Tajikistan as an independent country when it gained independence from the former Soviet Union, and in an interview with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, it was stated that the people of Tajikistan will never forget this fact⁵⁸.

Japanese ODA in Tajikistan seems to be highly recognized. In particular, when the President of Tajikistan attends the completion ceremony of a grant project, it is covered by the major media in Tajikistan. The principal of the 11th School in Rajabov Village, Navobod District, Tursunzoda City, which the evaluation team visited during field survey, said that the completion ceremony of the school building was broadcast on TV and that director of school was contacted by acquaintances in the capital and even in Russia who had seen the news. In the Joint Statement on the Further Deepening and Expansion of the New Partnership between Japan and the Republic of Tajikistan, signed during President Rahmon's visit to Japan in 2018, President Rahmon highly appreciated the role that the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue has played in the development of Central Asian countries including Tajikistan, in which Japan is acting as a catalyst to promote regional cooperation to achieve "open, stable, and self-sustained" development of Central Asia. President Rahmon also expressed his appreciation for the Japanese assistance provided within the framework of ODA, especially in the areas of improving economic and social infrastructure, human resource development, health care including maternal and child health care, counterterrorism and counter-narcotics, and other challenges and security threats, as well as regional development.

For these reasons, ODA has been identified as an important tool in strengthening bilateral relations between Japan and Tajikistan.

⁵⁶ MOFA "Basic Data of the Republic of Tajikistan."

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/tajikistan/index.html>, (Updated February 3, 2023)

⁵⁷ MOFA " "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, 8th Foreign Ministers' Meeting (online) (results)",

https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000365.html, (Updated April 15, 2022)

⁵⁸ From the interview in evaluation study

3-2-2 Diplomatic Impact

(1) Contribution to Peace and Security in the World Including Japan

Based on the belief that the domestic security and stability of Tajikistan will influence the peace and security of the Central Asian region and the world, including Japan, border facilities built and maintained with Afghanistan through Grant Aid Projects through UNDP and UNODC, while provision of equipment, and establishment of a new market for economic development for residents near the border are being carried out. Although it is difficult to comprehensively measure the effectiveness of ODA from existing reports, it is reported that the dismantling of a hide-outs of four drug smuggler groups and the exposing heroin smuggling on the Afghanistan-Tajikistan border as a result of the use of training and equipment for border guards and counter-narcotics officers in the target countries grant projects through UNODC. This indicates that ODA has contributed to peace and stability in Tajikistan and neighboring countries, which in turn is contributing to peace and stability in Japan.

(2) Contribution to the Maintenance of Good Relations between Japan and Tajikistan

The grant aid "The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)" plays an important role in training young administrative officials in Tajikistan. According to interviews with JDS program participants and stakeholders, participation in the JDS program is known as a shortcut to promotion for administrative officials, with 22 of the 59 program graduates by 2021 having been promoted to section chief or higher position in the central government. Four advisors to the Office of the President, the center of a national government, and the Ex-Minister of Labor, Immigration, and Employment are graduates of the JDS program. In the questionnaire to those who had studied in the JDS program, 16 out of 24 respondents answered "yes" to the question "Do you think you can be a bridge between Japan and Tajikistan through the JDS program?" It is hoped that young administrative officials who will play a central role in nation-building in Tajik ministries will serve as a bridge for relations with Japan and help maintain the good relationship between the two countries.

(3) Contribution to Strengthening Japan's Presence in the International Community

Tajikistan has abundant water resources, as it is said to be the water source of the Central Asian region. However, in response to the growing demand to resolve the global water crisis, Tajikistan is leading the UN General Assembly Resolution for the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development" (2018-2028). They have been promoting integrated water resources management, achieving water-related targets of the SDGs, and other initiatives.

"Kumamoto Initiative for Water" has been adopted when Japan hosted the "4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit" (Water Summit). In this Initiative Japan has expressed its support

for water-related improvement efforts in developing countries.

The "Second High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028" was held in June 2022 in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, as a part of preparatory process for the "UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, Water for Sustainable Development" (the UN 2023 Water Conference) to be held in March 2023. At the meeting, Japan expressed its commitment to play a leading role⁵⁹ in water sector initiatives with Tajikistan through the UN 2023 Water Conference. Japan has also demonstrated its support to Tajikistan by running for a co-chair of the interactive dialogue of "Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment" of the UN 2023 Water Conference. As a concrete initiative to "promote water-related improvement efforts in developing countries", Japan is planning to provide grant aid to Tajikistan to establish a sustainable water supply service.

In this way, through bilateral assistance to Tajikistan, Japan's leading initiatives in the international arena in the water sector, together with Tajikistan, will lead to strengthening Japan's presence in the international community.

3-3 Summary of Evaluation Results

In the evaluation of the development perspective, the "Relevance of Policies", "Effectiveness of Results" and "Appropriateness of Processes" were verified. As a result, it was concluded that the validity of the "Relevance of Policies" was "Satisfactory" as almost all validation items were confirmed to be valid.

Regarding the "Effectiveness of Results", it is commendable that Japan's ODA to Tajikistan has been efficiently utilized, as efforts have been made to maximize results through various innovations, such as addressing development issues by combining grant aid and technical cooperation, despite the limited ODA budget and available assistance schemes. However, there were cases where some outcomes did not appear as expected, and cases where the description of outcomes could not be confirmed. It was concluded that "Effectiveness of Results" was "Partially Satisfactory".

Regarding the "Appropriateness of the Processes", there is room for improvement in the monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations in the aid implementation process. Meanwhile, utmost efforts by the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and JICA Tajikistan Office have been made to address the challenges to the slow decision-making and approval process of the Government of Tajikistan as much as possible. Therefore, "Appropriateness of the Processes" was concluded "Satisfactory".

Regarding the "Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints," from the perspective of "Diplomatic Importance", the aim to achieve political, economic, and social stability in

⁵⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda's Visit to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (Results)", https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ca_c/page4_005627.html, (Updated June 9, 2022)

Tajikistan through Japanese ODA, which shares a long border with Afghanistan, is diplomatically important to Japan who aspires to a "free and open Central Asia". It also confirms that ODA is an important tool in strengthening bilateral relations between Japan and Tajikistan.

In terms of "Diplomatic Impact", the implementation of projects to strengthen border control through international organizations has contributed to the stability of Tajikistan and neighboring countries, and to peace and stability of Japan. In addition, "The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)" provides an opportunity for young Tajik administrators to study in Japan and increase the number of pro-Japanese administrators, thereby contributing to the improvement of bilateral relations. Cooperation has been demonstrated on the international stage with Japan's candidacy for co-chair of an interactive dialogue at the UN 2023 Water Conference, and its commitment to play a leading role in efforts in the water sector by supporting Tajikistan who co-chairs the UN 2023 Water Conference.

Chapter 4 Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4-1 Recommendations

Based on the evaluation results of the previous chapter, the evaluation team makes the following recommendations;

Recommendation1: Strengthen Monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations

With regard to the monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations, some projects were implemented between multiple countries and their final reports were submitted to the Embassy of Japan in the lead country for each projects. Some of the final reports were not submitted within the implementation period of evaluation survey even though the projects were already completed, making the evaluation team not being able to confirm the implementation status of the projects and the achievement of goals. In addition, some of the submitted reports were only focusing on outputs, or not describing the outcomes clearly, making it difficult to see the achievement of project goals. Although there are Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations which Tajikistan does not appear as the lead country, the project must be managed in a same way as other projects, and the project goals, achievement of goals, and achievement of outcomes must be specified. In this perspective, the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan, JICA Tajikistan Office, and responsible Japanese departments, which are in a position to verify the International Organizations' self-monitoring of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations, are recommended to improve the timely receipt and management framework of reports.

There are many Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations in Tajikistan, and the implementing agencies are diverse. As a donor, Japan should standardize the minimum required contents to be included in the report through discussions with implementing agencies. Clarification of the reporting contents will not only facilitate monitoring of projects, but also enables objective comparisons with similar projects. Therefore, it is recommended to improve the content of the reports submitted from Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations.

Recommendation 2: Complementarity between Japanese Projects and Health System Reform in the Health Sector

In the health sector, Japan has been supporting for many years capacity building of the healthcare in rural area by implementing technical cooperation projects to improve the maternal and child health care system in Khatlon Region intending to introduce the referral system. On the other hand, Government of Tajikistan is pursuing the health system reform nationwide. It is unclear whether the Japan's assistance to introduce referral system is complementary to health system reform as a whole. When implementing individual projects,

it is essential to be aware of the overall picture of the area of assistance and identify which part the project complements. Therefore, the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan and the JICA Tajikistan Office are recommended to coordinate with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population of Tajikistan and other donors to always confirm the position of the Japan's assistance, support and approaches for referral system, within the health system reform in Tajikistan from the complementarity perspective.

4-2 Lessons Learned

The following lessons were learned from the survey results.

Lesson Learned 1: Combination of Different Aid Schemes

One of the advantages of Japan's ODA is its approach of systematically utilizing different schemes, such as grant aid and technical cooperation, to achieve synergies in order to solve development issues. In the field of water supply, the utilization of water distribution facilities and water supply equipment, including elevated water tanks, developed through grant aid, and the strengthening of the capacity of organizations providing water supply services through technical cooperation, which resulted in the improvement of the financial situation of the organizations and the improvement of services, are good examples. On the other hand, in the aviation sector, the Instrument Landing System (ILS) installed by grant aid has not been utilized by the operating organization, and it has become necessary to enhance the capacity of the operating organization by the technical cooperation project after the grant aid project. It seems that there was a point to be considered with the survey at the planning stage. Based on a long-term perspective, it is desirable to solve development issues by making good use of different schemes of grant aid and technical cooperation, aiming for synergistic effects as well. On the other hand, the easy use of schemes in which inadequacies in Grant Aid Projects are compensated for with Technical Cooperation Projects is not encouraged from the perspective of ODA budget efficiency.

Lesson Learned 2: Strategies for Utilizing Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations

The advantages of Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations include the possibility of implementing projects in areas where activities by Japanese personnel are difficult for security reasons, or in multiple countries or large areas, and the ability to implement specialized projects such as vaccine supply and countermeasures against drug and arms smuggling. The Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations on the development issues of "Border Control and Security Measures" is an example of utilizing this advantage. On the other hand, as mentioned in the Recommendations, there are issues in monitoring through reports when projects are implemented by international

organizations, and in general, there are aspects that make it difficult to publicize the fact that the project is supported by Japan. Therefore, when implementing Grant Aid Projects through International Organizations, it is important to agree on the objective of the project and monitoring methods with the implementing organization.

Lesson Learned 3: Replicability of the Pilot Project

"The Project for Strengthening the Water Service Management of Pyanj and Khamadoni Vodokanals", which supported the water supply sector, was introduced as a good practice for introducing a metered-rate system resulted the water service in the targeted area improved. In this project, grant aid had been used to develop water distribution facilities, including elevated water tanks, and to install water meters. Then, technical cooperation took place to strengthen the management capacity to cause a synergistic effect and it can be said that the expected effects were achieved as a pilot project. However, this survey confirms that no water and sewage public corporation (VK) has introduced or plans to introduce a metered-rate system in response to this project.⁶⁰ This is because many VKs in Tajikistan have old water supply facilities and limited investment resources, including the inability to raise the necessary funds for facility maintenance and installation of water meters. In addition, other donors do not always have schemes that combine grant aid and technical cooperation. This indicates that the approach, which requires large amount of investment, may be successful as a pilot project, but is not replicable by other donors or by the Government of Tajikistan. Not only the assistance to Tajikistan, but also the significance of implementing pilot projects with little replicability in the sense that even if results emerge explicitly in this way, it is difficult for the partner government to implement the project on its own, so it should be fully considered in advance in light of the partner government's broad development policy.

Lesson Learned 4: Introduction of Infrastructure that Matches the Capacity of the Partner Country

The grant aid project "The Project for the Rehabilitation of Kizilkala-Bokhtar Section of Dushanbe-Bokhtar Road" has had a high public relations impact, with the President attending the groundbreaking ceremony and other local media exposure. However, the State Enterprise for Transport Management of the Ministry of Transportation, which maintains the roads to be rehabilitated, does not currently have the necessary budget for the maintenance and repair of the roads in question, resulting in the construction of asphalt paved roads that exceed budgetary maintenance capacity. This problem could be foreseen from the planning stage, and it is necessary to verify whether the budgetary capacity of the partner country was adequately assessed. In addition, the instrument landing gear at Dushanbe International Airport has not been utilized, although it was

⁶⁰ Interviews with KMK executives in Khatlon Region

installed, due to the lack of capacity of the implementing agency. The provision of "high-quality infrastructure" requires not only the requests of the partner government and the publicity effect of the Government of Japan's assistance, but also a thorough assessment of the partner organization's operational and maintenance management capabilities (financial, technical, human, and institutional) before the project is formed. It should be reaffirmed that, based on an appropriate assessment of the technical level and maintenance and management capabilities of the partner country, restraint in providing aid that does not contribute to long-term self-sufficiency is what truly leads to "high-quality aid", and this is the attitude that Japan needs in order to contribute to the international community as a "responsible donor".

