

Third Party Evaluation Report FY2025  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

# **Evaluation of Japan's ODA to the Republic of Uzbekistan**

**February 2026**

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## Preface

This report is an Evaluation of Japan's ODA to the Republic of Uzbekistan and was commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) in fiscal year 2025 to International Development Center of Japan Incorporated.

Since its commencement in 1954, Japan's Official Development Assistance (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.

This Evaluation was conducted to review Japan's overall ODA policy toward Uzbekistan, to derive recommendations and lessons for the Government of Japan's future policy formulation and effective, efficient implementation of aid to Uzbekistan, and to fulfill accountability to the public by widely disseminating the evaluation results.

The Evaluation Team in charge of this Evaluation consisted of a chief evaluator (Dr. Yoko Ishida, Assistant to Executive Director/Specially Appointed Professor, Hiroshima University), and an advisor (Hiroshi Niino, Visiting Professor, Kochi University). Dr. Ishida, as a chief evaluator, supervised the entire evaluation process and Professor Niino provided advice as an expert on Uzbekistan and the Central Asian region for appropriate research, analysis, and report preparation. In addition, to complete this Evaluation, we have received support from MOFA, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the ODA Task Force in Uzbekistan, as well as government agencies, project implementation agencies, other donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private companies in Uzbekistan. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all those who supported this Evaluation.

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 2026

International Development Center of Japan Incorporated

Note: This English version is a translation of the Japanese Evaluation Report of Evaluation of Japan's ODA to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

## Evaluation of Japan's ODA to Uzbekistan (Executive Summary)

### Evaluators (Evaluation Team)

- Chief Evaluator: Dr. Yoko Ishida (Assistant to Executive Director/Specially Appointed Professor, Hiroshima University)
- Advisor: Professor Hiroshi Niino (Visiting Professor, Kochi University)
- Consultant: International Development Center of Japan Incorporated

Evaluation Period: Japanese Fiscal Year (JFY) 2020 to 2024

Period of the Evaluation Study: April 2025 to February 2026

Field Study Country: Uzbekistan



Interview with Ministry of Health regarding "Project for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease"

### Background, Scope of the Evaluation and Objectives

Uzbekistan has the largest population in Central Asia (approximately 36.36 million as of 2024) and has played a central role in the region since the Soviet era. The country is rich in natural resources such as natural gas, uranium, and metal ores. Government-led resource development has borne fruit, and despite impacts like the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy has maintained relatively steady growth. This is driven by increased exports of natural gas, gold, and cotton, along with sustained public investment. However, challenges persist, including the aging of economic infrastructure built during the Soviet era, a shortage of personnel suited to a market economy, and inadequate legal systems. Furthermore, economic growth has widened the gap between urban and rural areas, meaning the benefits of growth are not being widely shared among the population.

Under these circumstances, Japan's ODA support for Uzbekistan is expected not only to assist in resolving the country's challenges but also to contribute to the further development of economic relations between Japan and Uzbekistan, including resource security, through promoting high-quality infrastructure investment and improving the business environment. Furthermore, amid instability in neighboring countries such as Afghanistan, which shares a border with Uzbekistan, support for Uzbekistan is significant from the perspective that its stability and development contribute to the stability of the entire region.

This Evaluation aims to assess Japan's recent ODA policy and priority areas for support to Uzbekistan. It seeks to derive recommendations and lessons for formulating and implementing the revised Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan scheduled for fiscal year 2027. It also aims to fulfill accountability to the public by disclosing the evaluation results.

### Summary of the Evaluation Results

#### ● Development Viewpoints

##### (1) Relevance of Policies

Japan's ODA policy toward Uzbekistan is aligned with Uzbekistan's development policies and needs, Japan's overarching policies, and international priorities. Japan and other major donor countries and institutions recognize Uzbekistan as a central player in Central Asia. To promote Uzbekistan's

sustainable economic growth and reduce disparities, they have formulated support policies aligned with the Uzbekistan 2030 Strategy and the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy, jointly aiming to achieve the Uzbek government's fundamental vision. Furthermore, ODA support for Uzbekistan is significant not only for the country's stability and development but also from the perspective of contributing to the stability of its increasingly unstable neighbors and the region as a whole. This support is highly consistent with the discussions held within the "Central Asia Plus Japan" dialogue framework, which serves as a dialogue mechanism between Japan and Central Asian countries. Moreover, leveraging Japan's longstanding track record of assistance spanning soft to hard sectors, the trust built as a major donor, and Japan's advanced technical capabilities and expertise, projects were planned and implemented in fields where Japan possesses knowledge and experience, such as engineering, power, disaster prevention, and industrial human resource development. High-quality human resource development was implemented, and diverse schemes and actors (grant aid, loan aid, technical cooperation programs, individual expert dispatch, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers dispatch, Human Resource Development Scholarship Program, Japan NGO Linkage Grant Aid, Grassroots Technical Cooperation, etc.) were utilized. Based on the above, the policy's appropriateness is judged to be "Highly Satisfactory".

(Rating: Highly Satisfactory)

## (2) Effectiveness of Results

The aid results (inputs) and outputs (such as the number of personnel trained and infrastructure structures built) were confirmed to have been achieved as planned. Japan's aid, aligned with the overarching policy of "promoting sustainable economic growth and reducing disparities," can be evaluated as having implemented aid projects as planned and steadily achieved the set objectives in each of the three priority areas: economic growth, a fair and sustainable society, and strengthening governance. While macroeconomic and broader impacts remain limited at this stage, no projects were discontinued at mid-term. The assistance has earned high trust and reputation from Uzbekistan's government ministries and other donors. Based on a comprehensive assessment of these outcomes, the effectiveness of the results can be rated as "Highly Satisfactory".

(Rating: Highly Satisfactory)

## (3) Appropriateness of Processes

The appropriateness of the ODA policy formulation process is high, as Japan developed its approach while incorporating the needs of the Uzbek government and the activities of other donors through daily on-site communication. Based on this, it established policies and priority areas, and formulated and implemented its approach taking into account the "Central Asia + Japan" dialogue. Regarding the aid implementation structure, while the ODA Task Force does not include JETRO or the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, no particular problems have arisen because daily interactions occur at necessary points, especially given Uzbekistan's strong desire for Japanese corporate entry and overseas investment. Monitoring, evaluation, and information disclosure are conducted adequately according to standard ODA procedures. Information disclosure is also appropriate, utilizing general methods such as press releases and media outreach. Regarding coordination with other donors, Japan is actively leveraging the strengths of both international organizations and Japan itself, which is commendable. However, there is room for improvement in communication regarding the continuity of

coordination, as differences were observed with other aid agencies regarding this point. NGOs are also actively seeking coordination with international organizations. Overall, the appropriateness of the process is judged to be “Satisfactory”.

(Rating: Satisfactory)

\*(Note) Rating: Highly Satisfactory/Satisfactory/Partially Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

## ●Diplomatic Viewpoints

### (1) Diplomatic Importance

Japan’s ODA makes a significant contribution to addressing the priority issues of the international community and the region, as well as global challenges, while fostering human resource development in both the public and private sectors. From the three points that constitute Japan’s national interests, Uzbekistan holds extremely high importance for Japan and its diplomacy.

### (2) Diplomatic Impact

While progress has been made in terms of international society, bilateral relations, and Japan’s national interests, the economic pull effect is still limited at present. To contribute to Japan’s national interests, it is essential to further strengthen the role of Japanese ODA in attracting private investment or facilitating a smooth transition from ODA to private investment, as the focus shifts from aid to private investment.

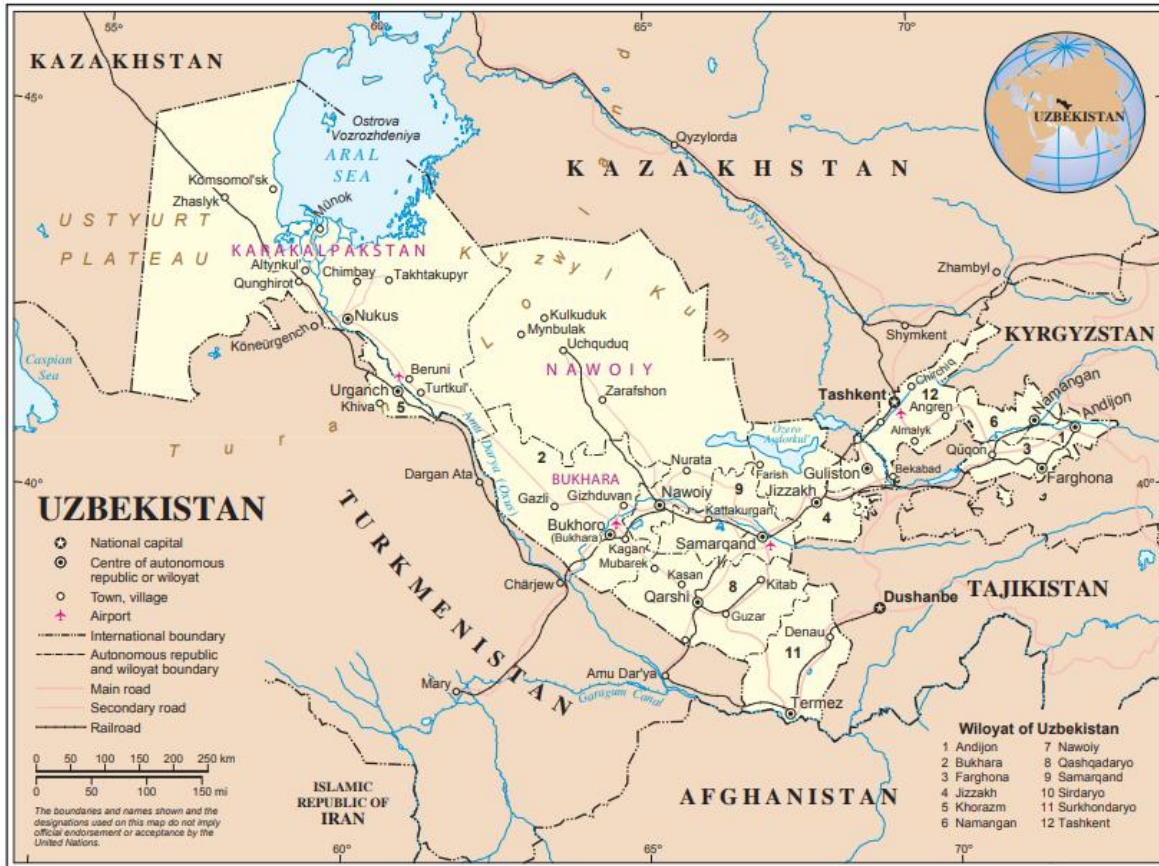
## Recommendations

- (1) Recognizing Potential of Large Markets and Public-Private Partnerships: Pursuing ODA’s New Role as a Lead Partner
- (2) Promoting “Knowledge and Technology Collaboration” and Private Sector Participation
- (3) Strengthening Japan’s ODA Symbolic Projects and Public Relations
- (4) Collaboration with the Private Sector for the Continuous Development of Pro-Japan Human Resources
- (5) Leveraging the “Central Asia Plus Japan” Dialogue: Utilizing It as a Platform to Lead Global Diplomatic Trends

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# Map



Map No. 3777 Rev. 6 UNITED NATIONS  
January 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations  
Cartographic Section

Source: United Nations, Uzbekistan Map No.3777 Rev.6, 2004,  
<https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/uzbekistan> (Accessed on 25th April 2025)

## Chapter 1 Background, Objectives and Evaluation Framework

### 1 Evaluation Background and Objectives

The Republic of Uzbekistan (“Uzbekistan”) has the largest population in Central Asia (approximately 36.36 million) and has played a central role in the region since the Soviet era. The country is rich in natural resources such as natural gas, uranium, and metal ores. Government-led resource development has borne fruit, and despite impacts like the COVID-19 pandemic, Uzbekistan has maintained relatively steady economic growth. This is driven by increased exports of natural gas, gold, and cotton, along with sustained public investment.

However, challenges persist, including the aging of economic infrastructure built during the Soviet era, a shortage of personnel suited to a market economy, and inadequate legal systems. Furthermore, economic growth has widened the gap between urban and rural economies, and the benefits of this growth are not being widely shared among the population.

Under these circumstances, Japan’s ODA support for Uzbekistan is expected not only to assist in resolving the country’s challenges but also to contribute to the further development of economic relations between Japan and Uzbekistan, including resource security, through promoting high-quality infrastructure investment and improving the business environment. Furthermore, amid instability in neighboring countries such as Afghanistan, which shares a border with Uzbekistan, support for Uzbekistan is significant from the perspective that its stability and development contribute to the stability of the entire region.

A comprehensive evaluation (country-specific evaluation) of Japan’s support for Uzbekistan was last conducted in Japanese Fiscal Year (JFY) 2011 as part of the “Evaluation of Market Economy Support for Three Central Asian Countries”, covering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. However, no such evaluation has been conducted in recent years. Japan’s Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan is scheduled for revision in JFY 2027. This Evaluation will conduct a Country Evaluation for Uzbekistan, covering support provided over the past five years (JFY 2020 - 2024). Its purpose is to derive recommendations and lessons for the formulation and implementation of Japan’s future support policies for Uzbekistan. The Evaluation results will also be made public to fulfill accountability to the public.

Specifically, in light of the revision of the Country Development Cooperation Policy, this Evaluation will analyze the direction and priority areas of support, taking into account the key policies outlined in the Development Cooperation Charter (2023).

Furthermore, while considering the support provided by other countries, including Europe, the United States, China, and Russia, which provide substantial aid, as well as the status of private sector projects, the Evaluation will seek recommendations and lessons to further advance the “cooperation taking advantage of Japan’s strengths” outlined in the Development Cooperation Charter.

Furthermore, it aims to obtain recommendations and lessons for development cooperation that give full consideration to and strengthen the implementation principle of “Promoting an inclusive society, including gender mainstreaming, and ensuring fairness” outlined in the Development Cooperation Framework to ensure the appropriateness of development cooperation.

**2 Scope of Evaluation**

The evaluation period for this Evaluation covers the five years from JFY 2020 to 2024. The scope of the Evaluation encompasses Japan’s development cooperation policy toward Uzbekistan and all assistance provided under that policy. The figure below systematically illustrates the Country Development Cooperation Policies formulated in 2017 and 2022, which are the subjects of this Evaluation.

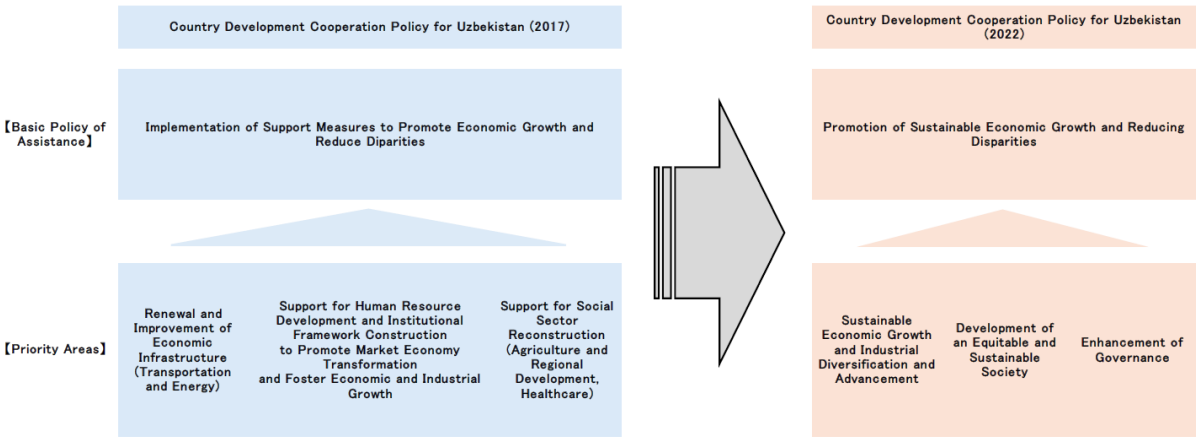


Figure 1 - 1 Japan’s Assistance Policy for Uzbekistan

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on Japan’s assistance policies for Uzbekistan (2017, 2022)

**3 Evaluation Methodology**

**(1) Viewpoints**

This Evaluation is conducted comprehensively based on the criteria for “Development Viewpoints” (relevance of policies, effectiveness of results, and appropriateness of processes), in accordance with MOFA’s “ODA Evaluation Guidelines” (January 2025) and “ODA Evaluation Handbook” (January 2025). Furthermore, taking into account the implications for Japan’s national interests, an evaluation will be conducted based on the criteria for “Diplomatic Viewpoints” (diplomatic importance, diplomatic impact). The main verification items are as shown in the table below.

Table 1 - 1 Viewpoints

Evaluation Viewpoints	Evaluation Criteria	Main Verification Criteria
Development Viewpoints	Relevance of Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistency with Japan's high-level ODA policies</li> <li>Consistency with the development policies and needs of Uzbekistan</li> <li>Consistency with international priority issues</li> <li>Relevance to other donors' aid policies</li> <li>Japan's comparative advantages</li> </ul>
	Effectiveness of Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inputs to Uzbekistan (inputs: financial/human resources/material resource)</li> <li>Goods and services produced by the inputs (outputs)</li> <li>Short/medium/long-term effects of assistance (outcome/impact)</li> </ul>
	Appropriateness of Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriateness of the process for formulating Country Development Cooperation Policies</li> <li>Appropriateness of aid implementation structure</li> <li>Effective collaboration with other stakeholders (companies, NGOs, etc.)</li> <li>Appropriateness of management of assistance in response to changing needs and circumstances</li> <li>Appropriateness of public relations and information disclosure</li> <li>Considerations and adaptations based on characteristics and traits of Uzbekistan</li> </ul>
Diplomatic Viewpoints	Diplomatic Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diplomatic importance in bilateral and international relations</li> </ul>
	Diplomatic Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ripple effects in bilateral and international relations, and contributions to national interests</li> </ul>

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on the ODA Evaluation Handbook (2025)

For the three evaluation criteria of the Development Viewpoints (relevance of policies, effectiveness of results, and appropriateness of processes), a four-level rating ('Highly Satisfactory', 'Satisfactory', 'Partially Satisfactory', and 'Unsatisfactory') was assigned based on the ODA Evaluation Handbook (January 2025).

## (2) Implementation Procedures

The implementation period of this Evaluation is from April 2025 to February 2026. As shown in Figure 1-2, the Evaluation Team formulated an implementation plan including the evaluation scope, evaluation criteria, and work schedule, which was discussed at the first study meeting. Based on the implementation plan, in-country and field surveys were conducted. The field survey in Uzbekistan was conducted from 6 to 20 September, 2025. At the second study meeting held after the field survey, the tentative evaluation results based on the information obtained from the field survey were discussed. Thereafter, the Evaluation Team prepared an evaluation report draft, revised the report based on stakeholders' comments obtained at the third study meeting, and submitted the final report after confirmation by the ODA Evaluation Division of MOFA.

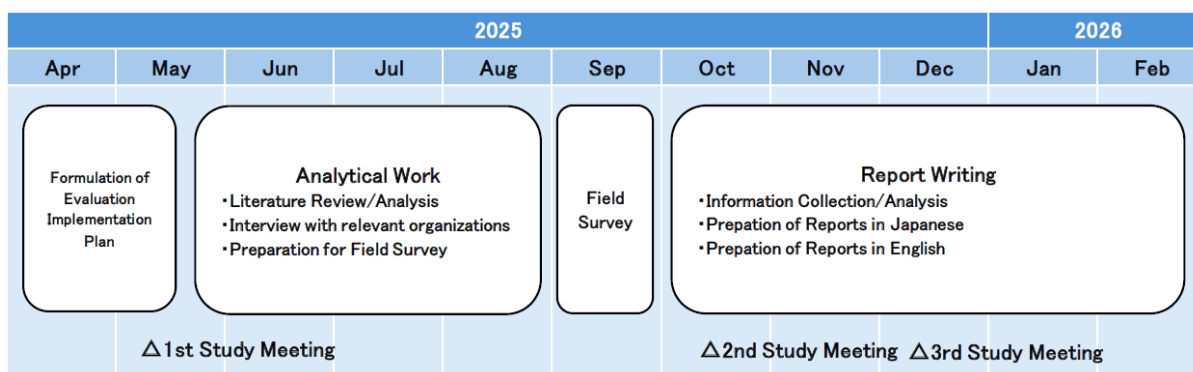


Figure 1 - 2 Implementation Procedures of the Evaluation

### (3) Limitations of Evaluations

This Evaluation is a comprehensive review of Japan's ODA policy and assistance to Uzbekistan over the past five years. However, note that the evaluation results are based on information collected and confirmed during the limited period of in-country and field surveys. In addition, there were some limitations to obtaining information, especially in confirming the implementation process in the past.

### 4 Implementation Structure

Under the guidance of the Chief Evaluator and the Advisor, the Consultant collected, summarized, and analyzed the information necessary for the Evaluation. Table 1-2 shows the team members involved in the Evaluation. The field survey in Uzbekistan was conducted by all members, except for the Evaluation Analyst 3, and Ms. Akiko Onodera from the ODA Evaluation Division of MOFA, who participated as an observer.

Table 1 - 2 Members of the Evaluation Team

Position	Name	Affiliation
Chief Evaluator	Yoko Ishida	Assistant to Executive Director/Specially Appointed Professor, Hiroshima University
Advisor	Hiroshi Niino	Visiting Professor, Kochi University
Chief Consultant/ Evaluation Analyst 1	Ryo Sasaki	Senior Researcher, International Development Center of Japan Incorporated
Deputy Chief Consultant/ Evaluation Analyst 2	Michiru Yabuta	Senior Researcher, International Development Center of Japan Incorporated
Evaluation Analyst 3	Nodoka Kishida	Researcher, International Development Center of Japan Incorporated

## Chapter 2 Overview of Uzbekistan and Trends in ODA for Uzbekistan

### 1 Political System

#### (1) Political System and Recent Development

Uzbekistan adopted a republican system following its independence as a sovereign state in December 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After independence, President Islam Islom Abdug'aniyevich Karimov elected as the first president, used his immense power to extend presidential terms and repeatedly secured his re-election in presidential elections, ruling authoritatively for 25 years. Following President Karimov's death in September 2016, the parliament appointed then-Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev as acting president. He formally assumed the presidency following the presidential election held in December of the same year. President Mirziyoyev has been advancing open policies, including economic reforms such as easing foreign investment restrictions and privatizing state-owned enterprises, and politically, working to improve relations with Western countries, shifting away from the previous administration's strict policies on foreign currency, trade, and investment<sup>1</sup>.

Regarding recent political developments, incumbent President Mirziyoyev won the presidential election held in July 2023 by a landslide with 87.05% of the vote. During the presidential campaign, President Mirziyoyev pledged to double the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to USD 160 billion by 2030 and raise per capita GDP from the current USD 2,200 to USD 4,000, outlining specific policies to achieve these targets<sup>2</sup>. In the October 2024 parliamentary elections, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party increased its number of seats, indicating strong public confidence in the current administration led by President Mirziyoyev<sup>3</sup>. President Mirziyoyev amended the constitution in 2023, extending the presidential term from five to seven years. This reset his previous re-election count, allowing him to run for office again as if it were his first term<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, he can run for president up to two more times after his current term ends, paving the way for a long-term presidency.

### 2 Economic Conditions

#### (1) Overview

Figure 2-1 shows Uzbekistan's GDP growth rate over the past 20 years (2004 - 2024). Although growth slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, GDP generally grew by 4 - 9% year-on-year throughout the past two decades, making Uzbekistan one of the fastest-

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<sup>1</sup> Institute for International Monetary Affairs, Economic Conditions and Challenges in Central Asia: A Comparison of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, <https://www.iima.or.jp/docs/newsletter/2025/nl2025.15.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> JETRO, Incumbent President Mirziyoyev Wins Landslide Victory, Paving the Way for Long-term Rule, <https://www.jetro.go.jp/biznews/2023/07/fbd541634d18a1a6.html> (Accessed on 26th June 2025)

<sup>3</sup> JETRO, Ruling Party Wins Uzbekistan Parliamentary Elections, <https://www.jetro.go.jp/biznews/2024/11/1b8547f9de21349f.html> (Accessed on 26th June 2025)

<sup>4</sup> MOFA, Republic of Uzbekistan, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/uzbekistan/data.html> (Accessed on 26th June 2025)

growing economies in Central Asia. When Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, international financial institutions, including the World Bank, expressed concerns that Uzbekistan’s strong ties with Russia could hamper its economic growth. However, this ultimately did not lead to a significant downward revision of its GDP<sup>5</sup>.

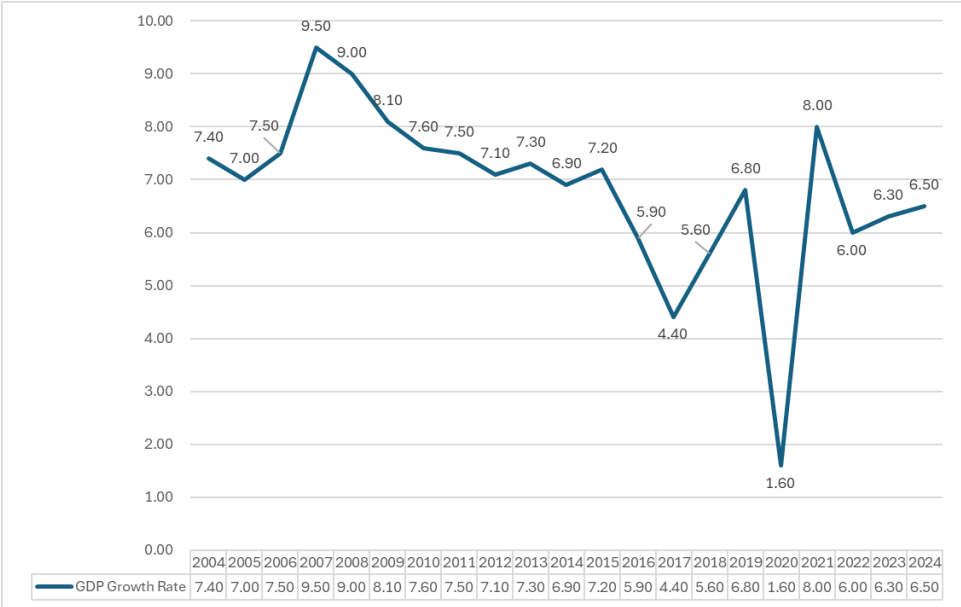


Figure 2 - 1 Uzbekistan’s GDP Growth Rate (2004 - 2024) (Unit: %)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on data from the World Bank

Breaking down Japan’s 2024 GDP growth rate (6.5%) by demand component, gross fixed capital formation recorded a particularly high growth rate of 27.6%, contributing significantly to overall GDP growth. This surge in gross fixed capital formation was driven by increased private investment, primarily foreign direct investment, alongside rising public investment in infrastructure development across sectors such as mining and manufacturing, electricity and gas supply, and housing.

By industry, the GDP growth rates were as follows: agriculture, forestry, and fisheries at 3.1% (previous year: 4.1%), construction at 8.8% (previous year: 7.6%), mining and manufacturing at 6.8% (previous year: 6.4%), and services at 7.7% (previous year: 7.1%). Particularly in the service sector, the results of the government’s promotion of the IT industry were reflected in the figures, with the information and communications industry recording a 24.7% growth<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> JETRO, Trade and Investment in Uzbekistan (2023), [https://www.jetro.go.jp/world/russia\\_cis/uz/gtir/gtir2023.html](https://www.jetro.go.jp/world/russia_cis/uz/gtir/gtir2023.html) (Accessed on 30th June 2025)

<sup>6</sup> JETRO, Uzbekistan Annual Trade and Investment Review, [https://www.jetro.go.jp/world/russia\\_cis/uz/gtir/](https://www.jetro.go.jp/world/russia_cis/uz/gtir/) (Accessed on 15th October 2025)

## (2) Population

Uzbekistan is the most populous country in the Central Asian region, accounting for 45% of the region's population<sup>7</sup>. According to United Nations statistics for 2024<sup>8</sup>, Uzbekistan's population exceeds 36.36 million, with a nearly equal gender ratio, though the male population slightly outnumbers the female population. The main ethnic groups are Uzbeks, Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and others. In terms of age distribution, the youth population aged 24 and under accounts for approximately 45% of the total, with an average age of 29.3 years<sup>9</sup>, highlighting a significant proportion of young people. Furthermore, Uzbekistan's population has been on an upward trend in recent years. Since 2001, the annual population growth rate has continued to increase, reaching 2% in 2024<sup>10</sup>, with the total population increasing by over 11 million. The population is expected to continue growing steadily, reaching a total of 50 million by 2050<sup>11</sup>.

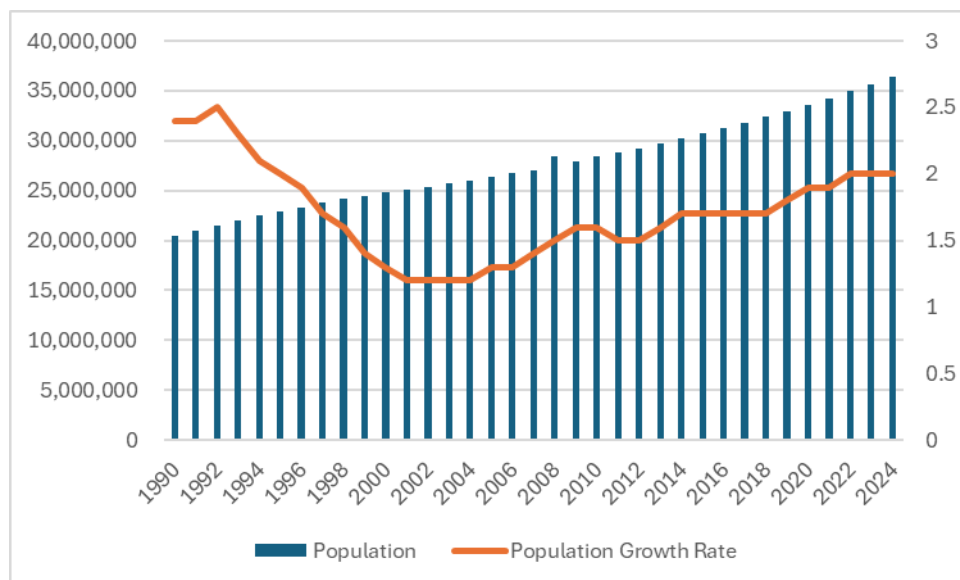


Figure 2 - 2 Uzbekistan's Population Size and Growth Rate Trends (1990 - 2024)  
(Unit: Number of People, %)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on data from the United Nations<sup>12</sup> and the World Bank<sup>13,14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The Astana Times, Central Asia's Growing Population and Youthful Workforce are Signs of Economic Vitality, Says Latest Study", <https://astanatimes.com/2025/01/central-asias-growing-population-and-youthful-workforce-are-signs-of-economic-vitality-says-latest-study/> (Accessed on 28th August 2025)

<sup>8</sup> UNdata, Uzbekistan, General Information, <https://data.un.org/en/iso/uz.html> (Accessed on 19th December 2025)

<sup>9</sup> UZ Daily, The Average Age of the Population in Uzbekistan Reached 29.3 Years by 2025, <http://uzdaily.uz/en/the-average-age-of-the-population-in-uzbekistan-reached-293-years-by-2025/> (Accessed on 28th August 2025)

<sup>10</sup> World Bank Group, Population Growth (Annual %) – Uzbekistan, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?locations=UZ> (Accessed on 28th August 2025)

<sup>11</sup> Yuz.uz, The Population of Uzbekistan Will Reach 50 Million People by 2050, <https://yuz.uz/en/news/naselenie-uzbekistana-k-2050-godu-dostignet-50-mln-chelovek> (Accessed on 28th August 2025)

<sup>12</sup> UNdata, Uzbekistan, General Information, <https://data.un.org/en/iso/uz.html> (Accessed on 19th December 2025)

<sup>13</sup> World Bank, Population, total – Uzbekistan, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=UZ> (Accessed on 15th October 2025)

<sup>14</sup> World Bank Population growth (annual %) – Uzbekistan, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?locations=UZ> (Accessed on 15th October 2025)

**3 Uzbekistan’s Development Policies**

**(1) Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030”<sup>15</sup>**

The new constitution of Uzbekistan was adopted through a national referendum held in April 2023, strengthening the constitutional foundation for building a new Uzbekistan. The Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030” was developed based on Appendix No. 1 to the new constitution. It outlines a development strategy for sustainable and inclusive nation-building, including the main directions and priority areas for national development over the seven-year period up to 2030.

The fundamental concept outlined in the Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030” is as follows<sup>16</sup>:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Joining the ranks of countries with upper-middle income by the means of sustainable economic growth                               | 4. Building a just and modern state in the service of people |
| 2. Creation of education, healthcare and social protection systems that fully satisfy public demand and meet international standards | 5. Guaranteeing the country’s sovereignty and security       |
| 3. Creation of favorable environmental conditions for the population   |  |

The following five items have been designated as priority areas for realizing the above fundamental concept<sup>17</sup>:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Creating decent conditions for realizing the potential of every person     | 4. Ensuring the rule of law, organizing public administration oriented at service to the people    |
| 2. Ensuring the welfare of the population through sustainable economic growth | 5. Consistent continuation of the policy based on the principle of “A safe and peace-loving state” |
| 3. Conservation of water resources and environmental protection               |  |

**(2) Action Strategy for the Five Priority Areas of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021<sup>18</sup>**

The Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021 is a five-year national development strategy whose formulation began under the Mirziyoyev administration, which took office in December 2016. During the President’s first term (2017 - 2021), the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the

<sup>15</sup> Development Strategy Center, “Uzbekistan – 2030” strategy, [https://strategy.uz/index.php?static=strategy\\_actions&lang=en](https://strategy.uz/index.php?static=strategy_actions&lang=en) (Accessed on 30th June 2025)  
<sup>16</sup> Citing provisional translation prepared by Japan Business Association ROTOBO, [https://jp-ca.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UZ\\_UP158\\_2023.pdf](https://jp-ca.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UZ_UP158_2023.pdf)  
<sup>17</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>18</sup> JICA, JICA Country Analysis Paper, Republic of Uzbekistan, March 2023, page 1, <https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/uzbekistan/ku57pq00000467sg-attfjcap.pdf>

Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021<sup>19</sup> was announced. This strategy clearly outlined the fundamental policy direction of economic reform and opening to the outside world.

**(3) Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026**

Based on the fundamental principles set forth in the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021 and its outcomes, the “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026<sup>20</sup>” has been formulated. This strategy aims to further advance the reforms initiated since President Mirziyoyev took office in 2016. As no official documents of the Government of Uzbekistan outlining the full scope of the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021 have been published, this Evaluation creates a target framework diagram based on the current Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026 and conducts its assessment accordingly.

The seven priority areas outlined in the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022- 2026<sup>21</sup> are as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. To build a people’s state by elevating human dignity and the furtherance of a civil society   | 5. To ensure the elevation of spiritual values through developing those institutions tasked with their stewardship        |
| 2. To establish the principles of justice and the rule of law as the most fundamental and critical conditions for development in our country | 6. To approach global challenges through the lens of national interests   |
| 3. To develop a robust national economy that ensures rapid growth  | 7. To strengthen the security and defense potential of our country, pursuing an open, pragmatic and active foreign policy |
| 4. To pursue just and fair public policies and human capital development   |   |

<sup>19</sup> Development Strategy Center, Action Strategy and Development Strategy: What are the Differences?, <https://strategy.uz/index.php?news=1475&lang=en> (Accessed on 1st July 2025)

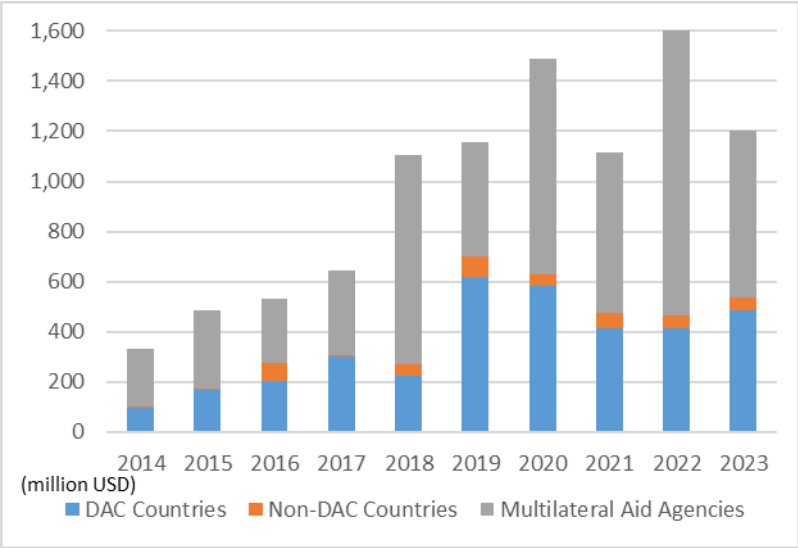
<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Citing provisional translation prepared by Japan Business Association ROTOBO, [https://jp-ca.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/202201\\_UP60\\_jp.pdf](https://jp-ca.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/202201_UP60_jp.pdf)

## 4 Trends in ODA to Uzbekistan

### (1) Overview

Figure 2-3 shows the total amount of ODA provided to Uzbekistan over the past decade. Following President Mirziyoyev’s inauguration in 2016, economic reforms have advanced, promoting market economy transformation, revitalization of the private sector, and active foreign investment attraction. Total ODA to Uzbekistan also increased sharply from 2018, reaching approximately USD 1.2 billion in 2023. Classified into three categories - OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) countries, non-DAC countries, and multilateral aid agencies - support from multilateral aid agencies has accounted for the majority over the past decade.



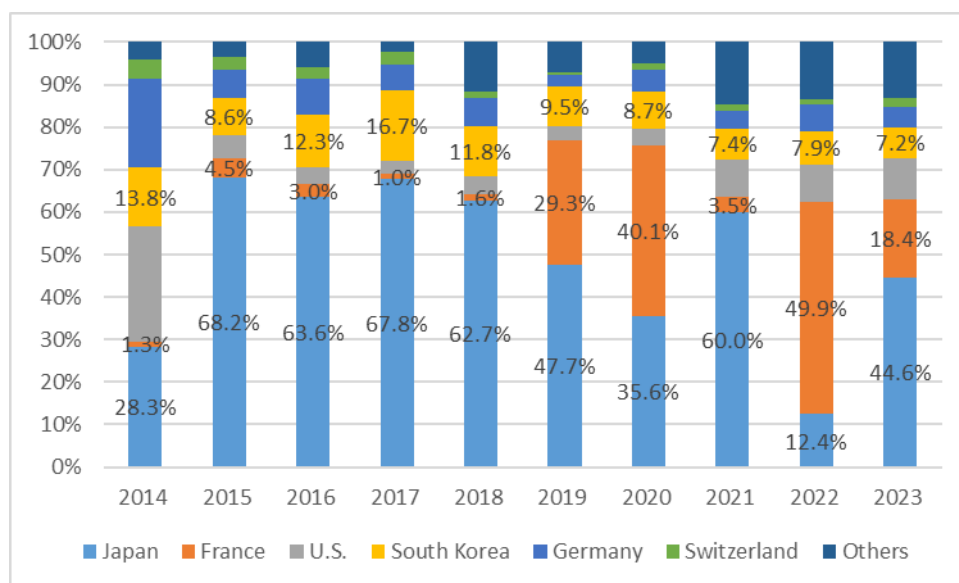
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>DAC Countries</b>	97	167	203	301	225	618	581	413	414	484
<b>Non-DAC Countries</b>	2	7	74	4	44	81	48	60	53	51
<b>Multilateral Aid Agencies</b>	232	313	256	341	834	460	861	640	1,198	665

Figure 2 - 3 Trends in Total ODA to Uzbekistan (2013 - 2023) (Unit: million USD)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on OECD data explorer, <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/?lc=>

### (2) Trends in Bilateral Assistance

Figure 2-4 shows trends in bilateral aid to Uzbekistan (combined total of DAC and non-DAC countries). Japan was the largest bilateral donor to Uzbekistan in all years except 2020 and 2022. Until 2014, the United States (U.S.) was the second-largest donor after Japan, but France has surpassed it in scale since 2019. South Korea has consistently accounted for around 10% of the total. Over the past decade, the year Japan’s aid amount increased dramatically was 2017 (USD 206.7 million), with a sharp rise in amounts thereafter. The trend of increased aid around the time President Mirziyoyev, who is currently advancing economic reforms, assumed the presidency in 2016, indicates that Japan made timely decisions.



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Japan</b>	27.9	115.7	136.1	206.7	157.3	313.1	214.4	283.7	57.6	238.7
<b>France</b>	1.3	7.6	6.5	3.2	3.9	192.3	241.0	16.4	231.3	98.6
<b>U.S.</b>	26.7	9.3	8.4	9.8	10.3	20.2	24.0	42.1	41.4	51.8
<b>South Korea</b>	13.6	14.7	26.4	50.8	29.6	62.7	52.5	34.8	36.5	38.4
<b>Germany</b>	20.6	11.2	17.9	18.1	17.0	17.5	31.2	19.5	28.5	25.3
<b>Switzerland</b>	4.4	5.4	6.3	9.4	3.6	4.1	8.8	7.0	6.5	11.6
<b>Others</b>	4.1	5.8	12.4	6.7	29.2	46.6	29.9	69.4	61.9	70.2

Figure 2 - 4 Trends in Total ODA from Major Bilateral Donors in Uzbekistan  
(Unit: % in total ODA amount in million USD)

Note: The graph shows each country's share as a percentage of the total amount for each year, with the total amount for each year set at 100%.

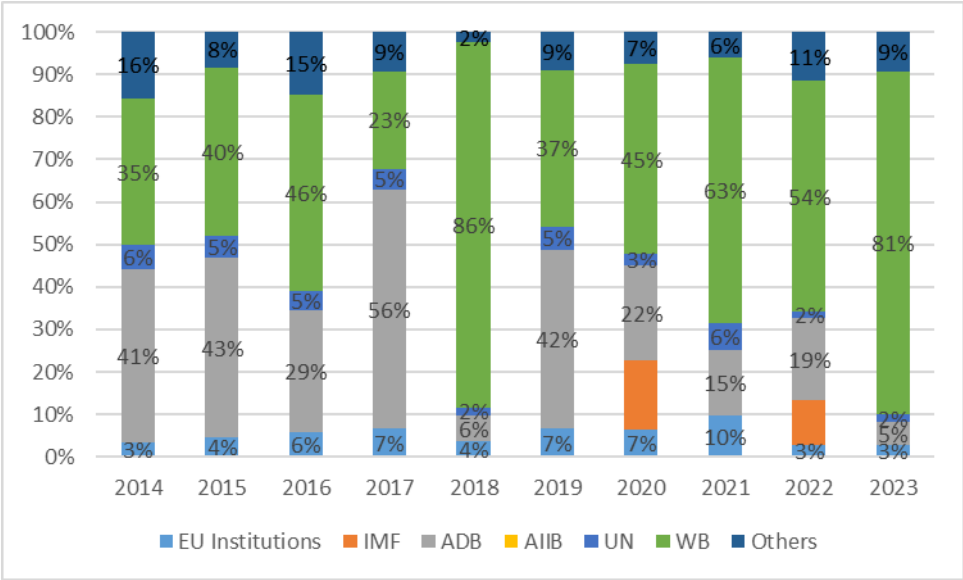
Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on OECD data explorer, <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/?lc=en>

### (3) Trends in Multilateral Assistance

The primary multilateral support institutions for Uzbekistan, as shown in Figure 2-5, are the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations agencies, and the European Union (EU). The World Bank approved a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) in 2022 to support the "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026". CPF sets three main objectives aimed at the country's transition to an inclusive and sustainable market economy: 1) private sector job creation; 2) strengthening human capital; and 3) transitioning to more environmentally friendly growth. The World Bank support has significantly expanded since 2017. Support spans diverse sectors including agriculture, water resources management, sanitation, energy, transport, health, education, social protection, and urban and rural infrastructure, and also encompasses institutional strengthening and improvements to statistical, financial, and tax systems. Through technical assistance and analytical work, it also supports poverty reduction, reforms in health, education, social security, energy, aviation, taxation, and banking, as well as accession to

the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Under its Country Partnership Strategy (2024 - 2028), ADB is focusing on supporting the country’s transition to a green economy, developing and enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector, and investing in human resource development. To date, it has provided a total of 267 public sector loans, guarantees, and technical assistance worth USD13.4 billion.



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>EU Institutions</b>	7.72	14.03	14.98	22.73	29.99	30.57	56.24	63.09	33.36	18.63
<b>IMF</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	138.38	-	126.59	-
<b>ADB</b>	91.62	133.32	75.74	193.33	52.42	194.57	192.80	97.30	232.35	36.05
<b>AIIB</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.09	-	-	-
<b>UN</b>	12.82	15.67	12.47	16.35	14.95	24.88	24.02	40.77	19.89	11.71
<b>WB</b>	77.99	124.37	121.23	78.69	718.48	170.14	385.33	400.61	652.83	537.15
<b>Others</b>	34.99	25.98	39.27	31.82	19.95	41.32	64.59	38.14	137.62	61.51

Figure 2 - 5 Trends in Total ODA from Major Multilateral Donors in Uzbekistan (Unit: % in total ODA amount in million USD)

Note: The graph shows each country’s share as a percentage of the total amount for each year, with the total amount for each year set at 100%.

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on OECD data explorer, <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/?lc=en>

## 5 Trends in Japan's ODA for Uzbekistan

### (1) Japan's ODA Policy for Uzbekistan

Japan's ODA to Uzbekistan commenced in 1993 with the acceptance of trainees and dispatch of experts, following Uzbekistan's independence in 1991 and Japan's recognition of the country in 1992. Grant aid began in 1994, and ODA loans in 1995. In 1998, an agreement was signed to dispatch Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV). A technical cooperation agreement was concluded in 2006. Support continued steadily throughout the long-term administration of President Karimov, from his election in 1990 until his death in 2016. Following President Mirziyoyev's inauguration in 2016, market economy reforms, privatization, and efforts to attract foreign investment accelerated. Japan's support also increased in tandem with these developments.

The current basic policy for Japan's ODA to Uzbekistan, as shown in Figure 2-6, focuses on three priority areas: 1) sustainable economic growth and industrial diversification; 2) development of an equitable and sustainable society; and 3) enhancement of governance.

In promoting the ODA policy, the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue, initiated under the leadership of the Government of Japan, was also taken into consideration. The "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue was launched in August 2004 as a framework for dialogue and cooperation with the five Central Asian countries. It is the earliest policy dialogue platform established by Japan in the Central Asian region, preceding other donors. It comprises Summit Meetings, Foreign Ministers' Meetings, Senior Officials' Meetings, Experts' Meetings, Business Dialogues, and the Tokyo Dialogue (a public symposium by experts). It marked its 20th anniversary in 2024, with the first "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue Summit Meeting scheduled in August that year. However, it was postponed following the issue of a "massive earthquake warning" related to the Nankai Trough earthquake. Subsequently, the first Summit Meeting was held in Tokyo on 19th and 20th December 2025. Furthermore, the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue Water Sector Expert Meeting took place on 5th March 2025. An overview of the dialogue during the period under evaluation is provided below.

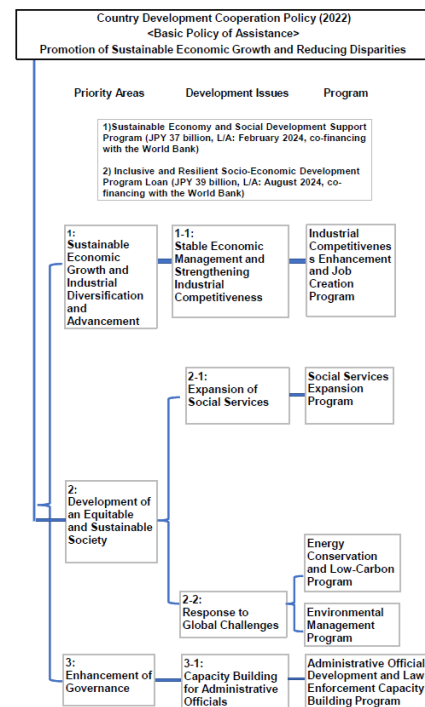


Figure 2 - 6 Framework of Country Development Cooperation Policy (2022)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on Country Development Cooperation Policy (2022)

Table 2 - 1 Overview of the “Central Asia Plus Japan” Dialogue (2013 - 2022)

Date, Host Country	Session	Key Outcomes
July 2014 Kyrgyzstan	5 <sup>th</sup> FMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prospects for a new decade of mutual partnership between Central Asian Countries and Japan</li> <li>• Cooperation for agricultural sector, stability and development in Central Asia, and stability and peace in the international community</li> </ul>
May 2017 Turkmenistan	6 <sup>th</sup> FMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration in the fields of security, trade and investment, development, people-to-people and cultural exchanges, cooperation in the international community, disarmament, prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation, and among others</li> <li>• Adaptation of a regional cooperation roadmap for the transport and logistics sector</li> </ul>
May 2019 Tajikistan	7 <sup>th</sup> FMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation in the tourism sector, trade, investment, development (including Japanese companies' overseas expansion), and regional security</li> <li>• Participation of the Afghanistan Foreign Minister as a guest</li> </ul>
April 2022 Online	8 <sup>th</sup> FMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives to strengthen cooperation between Central Asian countries and Japan</li> <li>• Regional situations, including those in Ukraine and Afghanistan</li> </ul>
December 2022 Japan	9 <sup>th</sup> FMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperations in the areas of economic and social exchanges, decarbonization and green growth, investment, trade, digital connectivity, health, agriculture, education and research, hydropower, climate change, transportation, and logistics</li> <li>• Contribution to the economic development of home countries by leveraging work experiences of Central Asian workers in Japan</li> </ul>
December 2025 Japan	1 <sup>st</sup> PMs' Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on the geopolitical importance of Central Asia as a junction between Europe and Asia, the significance for economic security due to its energy and mineral resources, and its potential given its remarkable economic growth and population increase</li> <li>• Identification of three new priority areas for cooperation: green and resilient development, connectivity, and human resource development</li> <li>• Launch of “CA+JAD Tokyo Initiative” to support the industrial upgrading and diversification of the five Central Asian Countries and strengthen mutually beneficial relations between Central Asia and Japan</li> </ul>

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)

Note: FM (Foreign Minister), PM (Prime Minister)

The website only contains records for the 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> FM sessions and the PMs' session.

## (2) Japan's ODA Performance in Uzbekistan

Japan has been the largest aid provider to Uzbekistan (on a cumulative basis). Looking at the breakdown over the past decade, ODA loans have accounted for the majority of loans. Looking at the total amount by fiscal year, the JFY 2019 stands out with an exceptionally large support amount of JPY 189.451 billion. This is due to support given in the energy sector, which Japan has long supported: the Navoi Thermal Power Plant Modernization Project (Phase 2), the Electric Power Sector Capacity Development Project (Phase 2), and loans for the agricultural sector, specifically the Horticulture Value Chain Promotion Project. Furthermore, Japan's continued dominance in the total amount of ODA loans is also due to

the COVID-19 Emergency Response Support Loan in 2020 and the commencement of co-financing with the World Bank starting in 2021.

Table 2 - 2 Japan’s ODA Performance to Uzbekistan by Type  
(JFY 2013 - 2023)  
(Unit: 100 million JPY)

JFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>ODA Loans</b>	987.11	-	-	-	-	1878.9	150	210.6	216	370
<b>Grant Aid</b>	3.3	14.62	5.61	5.1	11.17	6.78	8.16	11.3	4.37	6.14
<b>Technical Cooperation</b>	8.2	7.19	6.66	7.07	5.26	8.83	4.71	10.19	8.91	10.55
<b>Total</b>	998.61	21.81	12.27	12.17	16.43	1894.51	162.87	232.09	229.28	386.69

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on ODA Country Data by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)<sup>22</sup>  
 Note: The classification and amounts for each JFY are generally based on exchange notes for ODA loans and grant aid, and on actual expenditures for the budget year for technical cooperation.  
 Due to rounding, totals may not always match.

Figure 2-7 shows Japan’s aid over the past 8 years by sector. Economic infrastructure services (mainly energy, but also transportation and communications) account for over 90% of the total, indicating a focus on thermal power generation and capacity building in the electricity sector. This is followed by program cooperation, social infrastructure services (education, water supply and sanitation), multisectoral projects, and humanitarian assistance. Cooperation in the energy sector, including green energy, is expected to continue in the future.

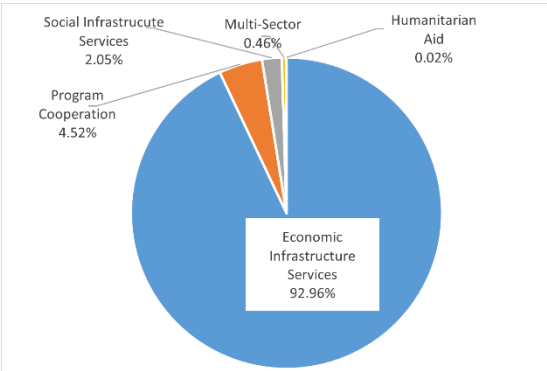


Figure 2 - 7 Japan’s Sector-Specific ODA Expenditure Ratio for Uzbekistan (2014 - 2021)

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on GeoBook: Geographical flows to developing countries by OECD, <https://stats.oecd.org>

<sup>22</sup> MOFA, ODA Country Data, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/kuni.html> (Accessed on 8th December 2025)

## Chapter 3 Evaluation Results

### 1 Evaluation from Development Viewpoints

This section presents the evaluation results from the Development Viewpoints, covering “relevance of policies,” “effectiveness of results,” and “appropriateness of process.”

#### (1) Relevance of Policies

“Relevance of Policies” examines whether Japan’s ODA policy toward Uzbekistan was appropriate during the evaluation period from JFY 2020 to 2024. The Japanese ODA policy toward Uzbekistan referred to here is the “Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2017)” and the “Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022).” The specific verification items are: “consistency with development policies/needs of Uzbekistan,” “consistency with Japan’s high-level policies,” “consistency with international priority issues,” “relevance to other donors’ aid policies,” and “Japan’s comparative advantages”. Figure 3-1 summarizes the main development policies covered by this Evaluation.

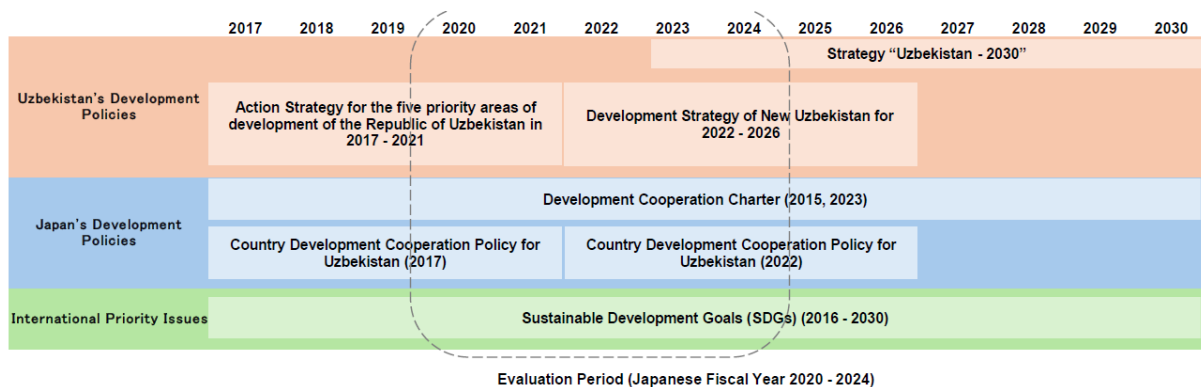


Figure 3 - 1 Major Development Policies During the Evaluation Period

#### A Consistency with Development Policies/Needs of Uzbekistan

This section covers the Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030”, the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021, and the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026, all formulated and implemented during the evaluation period. Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021 was formulated under the administration of current President Mirziyoyev, which took office in December 2016. The current Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026 was formulated as its successor. Both the Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030” and Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026 are positioned as phased national development plan visions, with the former representing long-term goals and the latter medium-term objectives. The Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030” is built on five pillars: 1) creating decent conditions for realizing the potential of every person; 2) ensuring the welfare of the population through sustainable economic growth; 3)

conservation of water resources and environmental protection; 4) ensuring the rule of law, organizing public administration oriented at service to the people; and 5) consistent continuation of the policy based on the principle of “A safe and peace-loving state”. These five pillars encompass a total of 100 specific objectives. The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026 outlines seven priority areas and 100 goals based on the pillars of Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030”. In contrast, the “Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2017)” and the “Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022)” were established as the basic ODA policy to support Uzbekistan’s sustainable economy and provide assistance aimed at reducing disparities. This aims to support Uzbekistan in addressing its challenges and to further develop economic relations between Japan and Uzbekistan, including resource security. Hence, consistency with Uzbekistan’s development policies is ensured.

Furthermore, regarding specific areas of support (needs), Japan has outlined the Rolling Plan involving cooperation programs through multiple schemes. These include infrastructure development contributing to industrial promotion (transportation, energy, etc.), industrial human resource development in both the public and private sectors (horticulture, tourism, agriculture, etc.), improving the quality of social security (healthcare, education), social welfare services, strengthening the capacity of administrative officials, human resource development in the legal and judicial fields, border management and counter-narcotics, environmental conservation, and disaster prevention. All of these areas are explicitly stated as priority sectors within the Uzbekistan’s national development strategies and align with Uzbekistan’s needs. Furthermore, officials from the Uzbek implementing agencies involved in projects inspected on-site also expressed recognition that these initiatives align at a high level with and contribute to the outputs of the Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030,” the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017 - 2021, and the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026<sup>23</sup>.

However, regarding the organization of Priority Areas and Development Issues in the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022), there is room for review during the revision process to clearly and further demonstrate alignment with Uzbekistan’s needs. Specifically, each development issue is broad, and projects in different fields are positioned under the same cooperation program. For example, Development Issue 2-1: Expansion of Social Services included and implemented projects spanning diverse fields such as healthcare, education, vulnerable groups, and heritage preservation. Since these fields are organized into sector-specific goals within Uzbekistan’s national development strategies, it is conceivable to reorganize projects into cooperation programs that address Uzbekistan’s key challenges as outlined in the Strategy “Uzbekistan - 2030” and the

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<sup>23</sup> Based on the interview with Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, Government of Uzbekistan (September 2025)

Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026. This could be achieved, for example, by dividing development challenges or cooperation programs by theme.

## **B Consistency with Japan’s High-Level Policies**

Japan’s high-level policies during the evaluation period are the Development Cooperation Charter (2015) and the Development Cooperation Charter (2023). However, Japan’s aid policies toward Uzbekistan, which are the subject of this Evaluation, were all formulated based on the former Development Cooperation Charter (2015).

The Development Cooperation Charter (2015) identifies three priority issues: 1) “quality growth” and poverty eradication through such growth; 2) sharing universal values and realizing a peaceful and secure society; and 3) building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges. The priority areas of Japan’s assistance policy for Uzbekistan<sup>24</sup> correspond to and are aligned with these priority issues.

Furthermore, the Development Cooperation Charter (2023) was newly approved by the Cabinet in June 2023. Key revisions to the basic policy include the addition of “solidarity” among various actors alongside the protection and empowerment of individuals, under the concept of “Human Security in the New Era,” the inclusion of co-creation with developing countries, and an emphasis on leading the dissemination and implementation of international rules for development cooperation. Key changes in priority policies include emphasizing economic autonomy and resilience in areas such as digital, food, and energy, alongside urgent global challenges like climate change, health, and humanitarian crises, under the theme of “Quality Growth in the New Era”. It also explicitly states promoting efforts to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) as part of maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law. Furthermore, the Development Cooperation Charter (2023) outlines three evolved approaches for implementation: 1) co-creation with various actors; 2) strengthening strategic focus through proactive cooperation (including “offer-type cooperation” and investment in people); and 3) further improving ODA institutional design with the keywords “flexibility and efficiency” and “speed”. The priority areas for Japan’s ODA policy toward Uzbekistan align with the key policies outlined in the Development Cooperation Charter (2023). Considering the revisions made in the aforementioned Development Cooperation Charter (2023) and the recent shortage of international aid funds, the next revision of the Country Development Cooperation Policy

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<sup>24</sup> Priority areas of the Country Development Cooperation Policy (2017): 1. Renewal and Improvement of Economic Infrastructure (Transportation and Energy), 2. Support for Human Resource Development and Institutional Framework Construction to Promote Market Economy Transformation and Foster Economic and Industrial Growth, 3. Support for Social Sector Reconstruction (Agriculture and Regional Development, Healthcare)  
Priority areas of the Country Development Cooperation Policy (2022): 1. Sustainable Economic Growth and Industrial Diversification and Advancement, 2. Development of an Equitable and Sustainable Society, 3. Enhancement of Governance

should explore more concrete measures. These include strengthening fund mobilization through enhanced collaboration with diverse actors, including private companies, and specifying initiatives to realize co-creation with Uzbekistan.

The Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2017) and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022) state that ODA support for Uzbekistan is significant not only for the country's stability and development, but also from the perspective of contributing to the stability of its increasingly unstable neighbors and the region as a whole. Furthermore, the priority areas outlined in these policies are consistently aligned with the discussions held within the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue, a framework established by the Government of Japan in 2004 to promote cooperation with Central Asia.

### **C Consistency with International Priority Issues**

This section examines alignment of Japan's ODA policies for Uzbekistan with the SDGs adopted at the 2015 UN Summit as an international priority. The SDGs are 17 goals set to be achieved over the 15-year period from 2016 to 2030. Elements of the SDGs were considered in formulating the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2017) and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022). Specifically, the Basic Policy of Assistance (Implementation of Support Measures to Promote Economic Growth and Reduce Inequality 2017), (Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth and Reducing Inequality 2022 aligns with Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), and further connects to Goal 9 (build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation) and Goal 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries). Furthermore, it has been confirmed that the priority areas of the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2017) and the Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan (2022) align with one of the SDGs.

### **D Relevance to Other Donors' Aid Policies**

Japan's ODA policy toward Uzbekistan positions the country as a central player in the Central Asian region. It promotes sustainable economic growth and addresses disparities in Uzbekistan by providing cooperation aligned with Strategy "Uzbekistan - 2030" and the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026. This approach is consistent with the support policies of major donors and aid agencies (such as the United States, South Korea, EU, Global Fund, World Bank, ADB, etc.). Furthermore, MOFA, through the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and JICA, routinely shares information on policies and future support strategies with the Government of Uzbekistan and other development donors. It also strives to grasp the trends in assistance based on reports published by each donor and reflects this in the formulation of its ODA policy for Uzbekistan. Moreover, in the economic and social

development sector, MOFA implements co-financing with the World Bank. JICA also collaborates with the World Bank, ADB, EU, UN agencies, and others by participating in working groups and in project formulation and implementation, indicating a high degree of relevance.

## **E Japan's Comparative Advantages**

This section examines whether Japan's ODA policy toward Uzbekistan was appropriate from the perspective of Japan's comparative advantages. Interviews with aid officials and others in both countries identified Japan's comparative advantage as: "fields where Japan possesses high technological capabilities, knowledge, and experience (engineering, power (including energy and material efficiency), disaster prevention, earthquake and disaster risk, traffic safety, etc.)", "human resource development based on Japanese diligence utilizing Japan's human and material resources", "democracy-based cooperation from a position unlikely to pose a geopolitical security threat to Uzbekistan", "cooperation through diverse schemes (yen loans, grants, scholarships, etc.)", and "support that promotes the development not only of Uzbekistan but of Central Asia as a whole"<sup>25</sup>.

During the field survey, numerous comments were heard not only from relevant Uzbek agencies but also from development partners stating, "Japan's strength lies in providing high-quality assistance through diverse schemes, which we highly value". Officials of the Government of Uzbekistan emphasized that they view cooperation based on Japan's advanced technology and expertise very positively and welcome cooperative relationships facilitated through the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and JICA.

Regarding support leveraging Japan's advanced technology, expertise, and experience<sup>26</sup>, for example, Japan supported the construction and upgrading of thermal power plants with high thermal efficiency while minimizing carbon dioxide emissions and maximizing environmental consideration in the power sector. In industrial development, technical cooperation based on Japan's unique production of dried persimmons and sales technology enabled farmers, including those in poverty, to efficiently produce dried fruits independently and established sales channels. Regarding human resource development, through the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), Japan provided young officials of the Government of Uzbekistan with opportunities to obtain master's and doctoral degrees based on advanced education in Japan. Furthermore, in the context of ODA and technical cooperation projects, while other donors often limit their support to providing goods, Japan possesses a comparative advantage. This is because, in addition to infrastructure development and goods provision, Japan concurrently focuses on establishing mechanisms and developing human resources to ensure Uzbekistan can sustainably maintain the effects

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<sup>25</sup> Based on the interviews with Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, Government of Uzbekistan, Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan, JETRO, and Japan Business Association ROTOB (June to September 2025)

<sup>26</sup> Based on the interview with Country Assistance Planning Division I, MOFA (June 2025)

of the support even after the project concludes<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, Japan’s comparative advantage in Uzbekistan lies in its history of cooperation utilizing diverse aid schemes and multiple actors. In contrast, opinions were also heard expressing the expectation that support should be further enhanced to promote the entry of private companies and public sector enterprises into Uzbekistan. This is to bolster their expansion in pursuit of further economic growth accompanying population growth, through measures such as issuing non-sovereign loans and facilitating the entry of Japanese companies into Uzbekistan<sup>28</sup>.

Based on the above, Japan’s ODA policy toward Uzbekistan has been confirmed to be consistent with Uzbekistan’s development policies and needs, Japan’s overarching policies, and international priorities. Furthermore, as Japan’s ODA policy toward Uzbekistan reflects Japan’s comparative advantages as described above, the relevance of policies is judged to be **“Highly Satisfactory”**.

**(2) Effectiveness of Results**

“Effectiveness of Results” evaluates Japan’s aid to Uzbekistan from the perspectives of “Japan’s aid performance to Uzbekistan (inputs)”, “effectiveness of Japan’s support to Uzbekistan (outputs)”, “effectiveness of Japan’s support to Uzbekistan in priority areas (outcomes)”, and subsequently, from the perspective of ripple effects (impact).

This report defines the following terms as follows:

Input (aid performance) (funding, deployment of experts, etc.) <
Output (activity result) (the number of personnel trained, the structures of completed infrastructure, etc.) <
Outcome (results or ripple effects that are made possible from output(s)) <
Impact (the ultimate ripple effect of Japan’s aid made possible by outcome)

Note that in economics, the narrow definition of “impact evaluation” refers to the “pure change caused by the intervention” as the “impact”, which differs from the terminology defined in this report.

**A Japan’s ODA Performance to Uzbekistan (Inputs)**

The trend in the total amount of aid performance (inputs) is as described in the previous chapter. Details for the five-year evaluation period are shown in Table 2-2 (Japan’s Aid Performance to Uzbekistan by Type) and Figure 2-7 (Japan’s Sector-Specific ODA Expenditure Ratio for Uzbekistan). This aid disbursement pattern can be positively evaluated as stable, based on agreements with the partner government and aligned with Japan’s Country Development Cooperation Policy. This is largely attributable to the high planning

<sup>27</sup> Based on the interview with Country Assistance Planning Division I, MOFA (June 2025)  
<sup>28</sup> Based on the interview with Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, Government of Uzbekistan (September 2025)

capabilities and meticulous management of Japan’s aid supervisory agency (MOFA) and aid implementing agency (JICA). While other countries’ aid agencies sometimes show discrepancies between promises or plans and actual implementation, Japan’s implementation has been consistent with its commitments. This is assessed as contributing to the “high level of trust in Japan” frequently mentioned during this field visit.

**B Effectiveness of Japan’s Support to Uzbekistan (Outputs)**

Outputs (activity results) (such as the number of personnel trained and completed infrastructure structures) were confirmed to have been achieved as planned. Similar to the inputs mentioned above, the outputs were also confirmed to have been achieved largely as planned, allowing for a positive evaluation. This too is largely attributable to JICA’s high planning capabilities and meticulous management, as well as the high capacity of the Japanese implementing agencies (including development consultants). As mentioned above, this has contributed to the Government of Uzbekistan’s high regard for Japan. Furthermore, the inherently high implementation capacity of Uzbekistan’s aid recipient institutions can be cited as a factor. This is also attributable to the contribution of JDS for training administrative officials and business personnel development, including the Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Resource Development (UJC).

**C Effectiveness of Japan’s Support to Uzbekistan in Priority Areas (Outcomes)**

Outcomes (results or ripple effects) have been achieved as anticipated, particularly for projects in the energy and human resource development sectors. Meanwhile, ongoing projects are being implemented according to plan. Under stable macroeconomic conditions with no significant changes in circumstances or policy, outcomes are highly likely to be achieved as scheduled going forward.

The section below presents the evaluation results about the effectiveness of major projects inspected during this field survey, categorized by priority areas of the Country Development Cooperation Policy. The target fiscal year indicated in the pre-project evaluation form is shown in parentheses after each project name. Note, however, that some projects had prior phases implemented before the target fiscal year.

(Note: TC=Technical Cooperation, L=ODA Loans, GA=Grant Aid, GGHSP=Grant Assistance for Grassroot Human Security Projects, SME=Business Development Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), SATREPS= Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development)

**Priority Area 1: Sustainable Economic Growth and Industrial Diversification and Advancement**

**Development Issue 1-1 : Stable Economic Management and Strengthening Industrial**

**Competitiveness (Industrial Competitiveness Enhancement and Job Creation Program)**

**【TC】 Project for Development of Industrial Human Resources in Uzbekistan by Utilizing Employment Opportunities in Japan (2023 - 2026)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The project is currently ongoing. Since its launch in March 2024, the project has been implementing activities under four pillars: 1) establishing the Japan Career Portal (JCP) and providing information; 2) supporting Japanese companies in utilizing personnel and providing pre-employment education and training; 3) expanding the types of occupations for which the Specified Skills Evaluation Test is administered locally; and 4) supporting employment in Uzbekistan by identifying individuals who have acquired skills while working in Japan. In 2025, a fifth pillar, 5) “strengthening the capacity of sending countries”, was added.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The overall goal is industrial development in Uzbekistan and strengthening bilateral relations. While the nationwide ripple effects remain limited, this initiative is introduced as a best practice to cultivate industrial talent for the entire country, prioritizing national interests over the profits of specific companies. Furthermore, as ODA is public assistance, the scope of this project is primarily limited to “providing information” and “introducing partner educational institutions.” It is explicitly understood that direct job placement or matching individuals with companies is not possible, and such activities have not been conducted at all.

**【TC】 The Project for Strengthening the Capacity of Research Activities of Uzbek-Japan Innovation Center of Youth (2023 - 2024) and 【TA】 The Project for Organizational Management and Self-Sustaining Development Capacity Building of Uzbek-Japan Innovation Center of Youth (Phase 2) (2024 - 2028)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The project was implemented according to the initial plan, and the original project goal can be considered as achieved. Currently, there are four research laboratories with 35 staff members (including 25 researchers), but staffing is limited by the maximum number of staff and cannot be increased further.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The center initially lacked equipment and held a low status as a research institution. However, amid competition with similar research centers nationwide, it has now achieved significant development, ranking as the 11th research institute among the numerous universities and research institutions across Uzbekistan. It is desirable to regularly conduct risk analyses for projects, including those related to sustainability, and to formulate exit strategies from the project’s inception.

**【L】 Horticulture Value Chain Promotion Project (Loan Agreement (L/A): 2019) and 【L】 Horticulture Value Chain Promotion Project (Phase2) (L/A: 2022)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: Phase 1 involved: 1) implementation of nearly 600

subprojects (individual loans); 2) construction or purchase of 10 cold storage facilities; 3) installment of 548 greenhouses. Phase 2 began with the loan agreement signing in August 2022 and it has implemented 4,467 subprojects to date.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Phase 1 focused on “production” and featured many greenhouses, while Phase 2 included numerous subprojects targeting “processing” and “transportation”. Since this as a long-term 30-year strategy, it is certain to have a massive impact. This project introduced technological innovation and contributed to the realization of achieving stable agriculture. Therefore, it can be evaluated as having functioned successfully.

**【L】 Sustainable Economy and Social Development Support Program (L/A: 2024)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: This program loan was a joint financing project between the World Bank and JICA. The Fifth Development Policy Operation (DPO 5), launched in late 2023 with the World Bank also in coordination with JICA, covers numerous laws requiring revision and is positioned as a significant policy operation. The target laws include Competition Law and Insolvency Law. The World Bank was primarily deeply involved in Competition Law. In Uzbekistan, it often takes considerable time for a bill submitted by the government to Parliament to actually become law. Therefore, this DPO 5 provided support at least up to the stage of the government submitting the bill to Parliament. Furthermore, it was agreed that if the submitted bill becomes law, a review comparing the bill with the actual enacted law would be conducted. The Government of Uzbekistan recognizes that any discrepancies between the bill supported by the World Bank and the enacted law could impact subsequent processes.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: While some revisions were not completed in time or were achieved late, the initially planned indicators can be considered largely achieved. Based on this achievement status, one outcome is that progress on DPO 8 and DPO 9 (currently supported by the World Bank), is proceeding smoothly with the Government of Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, the World Bank provided the following assessment: “Japan is viewed favorably due to its efforts to engage in cooperative, friendly, and meaningful consultations; this joint financing is considered a good example of cooperation”. In addition to the agreed items with the World Bank, Japan also made proactive proposals requesting additional financing conditions based on its own unique support strategy and priority issues.

**【L】 Inclusive and Resilient Socio-Economic Development Program Loan (L/A: 2024)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: This project is currently ongoing. It is the World Bank’s first program-based development policy operation (DPO 6 and DPO 7, spanning two years), with the Government of Japan supporting the first year of DPO 6. Implementation

of the ODA loan was confirmed to have proceeded as planned.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: To measure the progress of Uzbekistan's socioeconomic reforms, result indicators have been established and regular monitoring is conducted. The indicator period covers 2016 to 2026, requiring an assessment in 2026. However, prior to that assessment, an Interim Compliance Review (ICR) was conducted in 2024 to verify the appropriateness of the indicator settings at that point (currently underway, with an interim report being prepared). This project is significant for Uzbekistan's social development. The World Bank has provided positive feedback, stating, "we are pleased that Japan has implemented co-financing". Based on these results, the World Bank also commented that it would welcome Japan's consideration of continuing to implement co-financing.

**【TC】 Project for Capacity Development of Business Persons and Networking through Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Resource Development (Phase 2) (2023 - 2025)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: Progress is proceeding according to the initial plan and target figures as stated in the center's annual report. UJC is a joint project operated equally by Japan and Uzbekistan. It functions not only as an ODA initiative but also as an independent organization, making it a successful project in this regard as well.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Including Phase 1 (2015 - 2021) results, graduates now exceed 2,500, with many becoming business owners. Business matchmaking between them and Japanese companies has reached 135 cases to date, including those currently under discussion (the target was 100 contracts). UJC can be evaluated as a prime example of how Japan's ODA contributes to business exchange between Uzbekistan and Japan.

Regarding Priority Area 1, the outcomes (results or ripple effects) of the major projects inspected during this field survey have been realized as anticipated. Furthermore, ongoing projects are being implemented according to plan. Under stable macroeconomic conditions with no significant changes in circumstances or policy, it is highly likely that outcomes will be achieved as scheduled going forward.

**Priority Area 2: Development of an Equitable and Sustainable Society**

**Development Issue 2-1: Expansion of Social Services (Social Services Expansion Program)**

**【TC】 Project for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease (2023-2026)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The project is currently ongoing. The target regions are

Tashkent and Navoi provinces. To date, training has been provided to 10 hospitals in urban Navoi, 46 family-oriented general clinics, and 96 rural healthcare points, with a total of 537 teams and 2,770 healthcare workers participating. A similar number of healthcare workers in Tashkent have also undergone training. Note that while this project was signed in 2019, its implementation timeline was delayed due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now being implemented from 2021 to February 2026, hence the current implementation phase.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: To further expand the impact of the training conducted in this project, implementing training for current and pre-service teachers involved in health education is also planned. Furthermore, since non-communicable diseases (NCDs) stem from lifestyle and habits (such as diet and smoking), raising public awareness is crucial. The training materials developed in collaboration with Japanese experts were highly praised as being of excellent quality.

**【GGHSP】 Project for Provision of Medical Equipment for Samarkand Branch of the Republican Specialized Scientific-Practical Medical Center of Eye Microsurgery (2022)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The medical equipment planned for this project was purchased and used as planned. The number of patients has approximately doubled since 2023, specifically: 345 in 2022, 789 in 2023, 1,148 in 2024, and 745 in 2025 (through mid-September).

Overall Goal Achievement Status: This project contributed to improving the medical care and living standards by providing treatment for eye diseases in Uzbekistan.

**【GGHSP】 Project for Provision of Medical Equipment for Samarkand City Maternity Complex No.2 (2023)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The medical equipment planned for this project was purchased and used as planned, and it has been confirmed that it contributed to saving the lives of women and infants locally. Specifically: 1) from January to September this year, it saved the lives of 7 women in critical condition; 2) it facilitated a total of 213 deliveries (105 and 108) across two maternity units.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Through the project's contributions to saving the lives of women and infants, it can be said that the project helped to improve the medical and living standards of people in Uzbekistan.

**【SME】 SDGs Business Verification Survey with the Private Sector for Strengthening Blood Management System by utilizing Blood Storage and Transportation Equipment (2023 - 2025)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: Uzbekistan previously lacked such equipment, meaning blood collected had to be used for transfusions immediately. However, with the

introduction of Japanese-manufactured equipment through this project, it is now possible to store blood for future use. Equipment for preserving blood quality is also available, ensuring quality is maintained during storage.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The Government of Uzbekistan allocates budgets to hospitals for equipment replacement and new purchases, separate from their regular budgets. Using this budget, it is highly feasible for hospitals nationwide to acquire this equipment. Specifically, 15 blood centers and 2 blood stations (similar to blood donation rooms) in Uzbekistan have already decided to purchase equipment from Daido. Furthermore, should nationwide implementation occur, training to strengthen maintenance and management capabilities at the “Republican Blood Center,” where the equipment will be installed under the supervision of the Ministry of Health, would be crucial.

### **BOX1 Private Sector Collaboration for Blood Management and Transportation to Save Lives in Uzbekistan**

The Chief Evaluator and Advisor highlighted specific topics in boxes within this report. The first is a case study of a private-sector collaboration project. With Uzbekistan’s growing population, demand for blood transfusions is also increasing. JICA implemented the “SDGs Business Verification Survey with the Private Sector for Strengthening Blood Management System by utilizing Blood Storage and Transportation Equipment (SME)” with Japanese private companies. This project aimed to introduce blood storage and transport equipment to the Hematology Testing Center and subsequently expand its use nationwide to blood centers, public and private hospitals, and other medical institutions across Uzbekistan.

The introduction of blood storage and transport equipment at the Uzbekistan Hematology Testing Center has enabled quality assurance during storage and the securing of future blood supplies for transfusions, even in Uzbekistan’s extreme environments of intense heat and severe cold. Furthermore, this technology has also improved the work-life balance of the staff.

This equipment has attracted interest from hospitals across Uzbekistan. Demonstrations of its use and awareness-raising and training sessions for personnel working in hematology departments nationwide were conducted within the Hematology Testing Center.



Currently, 15 blood centers and two blood donation rooms in Uzbekistan wish to purchase

this equipment. It is expected that this blood storage and transport equipment, developed by a Japanese private company, will save many lives in Uzbekistan going forward.

## Development Issue 2-2 : Response to Global Challenges

### <Energy Conservation and Low-Carbon Program>

#### **【L】 Tashkent Thermal Power Cogeneration Plant Construction Project (L/A: 2015)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: This project improved power generation capacity, annual power generation, gas consumption and emissions, and transmission network coverage. Specifically: 1) maximum power generation reached 121 MW against a target of 120 MW; 2) power generation capacity utilization rate reached 89.2% against a target of 79.5%; 3) number of shutdowns (downtime) (times/year) reached 300 against a target of 384; 4) reduction in unit fuel consumption per unit of power generation.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The overall goal of “contributing to power transmission to Tashkent and sustainable economic growth through improved thermal efficiency in thermal power generation” can be considered largely achieved. Key lessons learned from this project include: 1) learning how to prepare projects as a team; 2) anticipating unexpected price increases for materials due to inflation or exchange rate fluctuations by estimating reserve budgets through corporate self-reliance efforts; 3) the importance of organizational coordination (e.g., national-local levels); 4) establishing detailed contracts with service providers (including schedules); 5) importance of defining the project implementation time frame.

#### **【TC】 Project for Strengthening Financial Management Capacity of Power Generation Sector in Uzbekistan (2023 - 2024)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: All initially set project goals have been achieved. Specifically: 1) a business plan has been created; 2) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been established, and the PDCA cycle is being implemented; 3) electricity prices have been set to reflect costs.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Furthermore, the overall goal has also been achieved. Specifically: 1) financial challenges have been addressed (a business plan for foreign investors has been developed and published. IFRS standards set by the government for state-owned enterprises have been approved. Planned management reforms have been implemented); 2) ESG non-financial information such as environmental and gender data is disclosed; and 3) KPIs have been set and are monitored at all branch offices. Furthermore, through this project, there were opinions regarding self-sustaining development such as: 1) international standards have been adopted; 2) an external advisory board was established to obtain opinions and improve management; and 3) the experience gained in setting KPIs was valuable.

#### **【SATREPS】 Project for Development of Innovative Technologies for Efficient**

**Generation of Green /Blue Hydrogen for Realization of Carbon-neutral Society with Consideration of Industrial and Environmental Characteristics in the Region (SATREPS) (2024 - 2028)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The first year of this project is currently ongoing, and it has been confirmed that preparations for implementation are progressing according to plan.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Although the project has just begun, the project is already looking ahead to its completion and pursuing the utilization of the demonstration project scheme offered by Japan’s New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) as an exit strategy, as well as cooperation with private resource companies. Discussions have commenced. In resource-poor Japan, opportunities to conduct technical demonstrations using actual oil fields or mines are scarce. Uzbekistan possesses such sites, creating potential for collaboration.

**<Environmental Management Program>**

**【GA】 Project for Supporting Self-Reliance through Climate Resilient Agriculture in the Aral Sea Region (Collaboration with UNDP) (2023 - 2025)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: The initial implementation period was planned for fiscal years 2022 to 2024, but it was extended to October 2023 to September 2025. The main achievement levels for the project goal and overall goal are as shown in the table below.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: Overall, the UNDP assessed that it had a positive impact and was very successful. While it is important to gather and utilize local concerns and local materials, incorporating the concept of Japan’s One Village One Product (OVOP) movement in this project also secured the cooperation of a local community. Consequently, the introduction and implementation of this concept was also evaluated as a success.

Plan	Key Achievements
<p>Outcome 1: Improved sustainable agricultural production practices that are environmentally sustainable and resilient to climate change impacts are being implemented in households/farms across 50 target communities.</p>	<p>Out of the target 104 households, 101 households implemented improved agricultural practices. Forty households are using the plant activator “fujimin”. There was a 31% increase in agricultural production.</p> <p>(Note: Fujimin is fulvic acid, a type of humic substance produced when animal and plant remains decompose by microorganisms in natural environments such as soil.)</p>

Outcome 2: At least 15 communities are developing climate-resilient community development plans.	Against the target of 15, 12 business Initiatives were created.
Objective 1: Promote climate-resilient innovative agricultural practices at the household/farm level to ensure food security and economic security for vulnerable women and men and enhance their self-reliance. Objective 2: Strengthen the climate change adaptation capacity and resilience of the most affected communities in the Aral Sea region.	1) 15 OVOP projects are being implemented and producing goods. 2) Ripple effects (impact): Improvements were also seen in electrification and drinking water, creating a significant ripple effect. Public Relations: This project was reported in the Gazette, a leading newspaper in Uzbekistan.
Indicators	Target Values and Achievement Levels
At least 100 initiatives on introducing new green and energy-saving solutions in the agricultural production sector and in households	Target: 100 households Actual: 101 households
Number of households/farms with improved skills and capabilities in crop diversification, fertilizer use, and pest control. Number of households/farms that adopted and replicated improved agricultural practices	Target: 17 initiatives Actual: 21 infrastructures initiatives implemented
Number of communities building capacity for innovative new solutions in agricultural business, product development, and marketing based on OVOP and establishing agricultural value chains to export related products in collaboration with JICA and JETRO.	Target: 15 communities Actual: 16 communities developed a plan
New skills in business methods for “household and farm management improvement”	Target: 110 households Actual: 400 households applied advanced technology

Regarding Priority Area 2, the outcomes (results or ripple effects) of the major projects inspected during this field survey have been realized as anticipated. Furthermore, ongoing projects are being implemented according to plan. Under stable macroeconomic conditions with no significant changes in circumstances or policy, it is highly likely that outcomes will be achieved as scheduled going forward.

### Priority Area 3 : Enhancement of Governance

#### Development Issue 3-1 : Capacity Building for Administrative Officials (Administrative Official Development and Law Enforcement Capacity Building Program)

**【GA】 The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) (2024 - 2028)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: JDS began in 1999 and started sending students to

Japan in 2000. It has a long history and is one of the most important projects. Initially, only two or three Japanese universities accepted students for bachelor’s and master’s programs, but now numerous universities participate. The project’s achievements are as follows. It can be evaluated that the project goal was achieved largely as planned.

Indicators		Target (within 2025)	Actual (as of September 2025)
Number of JDS Program International Students	Master’s	15	18
	Doctoral	2	1
	Total	17	19

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The project began 25 years ago, and subsequently, Uzbekistan has also opened up to the outside world. JDS selects students from government ministries, the central bank, and state banks; no students are selected from private companies. When students from companies are included, they come from government-funded enterprises. Furthermore, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation holds feedback sessions when students return. Hearing their accounts reveals significant growth in these returnees. They have achieved results such as completing master’s theses on economics that capture recent trends, confirming that this remains a necessary program.

**【GA】 Regional Border Cooperation Initiative in Central Asia and Interagency Mobile Teams in Uzbekistan (Collaboration with UNODC) (2023 - 2024)**

Project Goal Achievement Status: This project operated through a dual structure: the UNODC Border Office and the “International Mobile Teams” deployed across eight regions of Uzbekistan. The overall project was implemented as planned. As part of Japan’s contribution, the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan provided funding to the five Central Asian countries, which was used to purchase the following equipment:

1. High-quality and highly convenient office equipment and other supplies from Japan.
2. Detection equipment (provided to four checkpoints along the border with Afghanistan).
3. Vehicles (two Toyota and two Nissan vehicles provided to each Central Asian country for patrol use).
4. Passport readers (used along the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan border): These readers increased annual processing capacity from 2,000 people at project launch to 9,000 people by project completion.

Overall Goal Achievement Status: The following results were achieved against the target figures.

Target	Results
<p>This project will strengthen border management and narcotics control measures in the five countries, as well as regional cooperation mechanisms, leading to a reduction in transnational organized crime through enhanced illegal drug control.</p> <p><u>Indicators (logistic aspect)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The inspection time for large vehicles will be reduced by 25%.</li> <li>- The number of large vehicles passing through checkpoints increases by 70%, contributing to regional stability and socioeconomic development.</li> </ul>	<p>Border control has been significantly strengthened and can be said to have contributed to a reduction in organized crime.</p> <p><u>Indicators (logistic aspect)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An international consultant's investigation reported a 50% reduction in inspection time, exceeding the target by 25%.</li> <li>- The number of large vehicles passing through checkpoints tripled, exceeding the target 70% increase.</li> </ul>

Although the budget fell short in 2022, funding was secured from the Embassy of the United States in Uzbekistan to overcome the shortfall. While 2025 is the final year for this project, comments indicated that they are seeking providers of financial support and exploring the possibility of continuing the project despite UN budget cuts. Additional information stated that UNODC plans to provide support, as CARICC<sup>29</sup> (Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Center on Counter-Narcotics), an organization combating drug trafficking in Central Asia (with the Government of Afghanistan also a member), exists.

Regarding Priority Area 3, although the number of projects is small, implementation has proceeded as planned. Outcomes (achievements or ripple effects) can be assessed as either achieved or highly likely to be achieved in the future.

**BOX2 Japan's International Cooperation in the Social Sector in Uzbekistan  
—Contribution to an Inclusive Society based on Human Security—**

Japan's cooperation with the social sector in Uzbekistan has been implemented primarily in the fields of health, medical care, education, and social welfare, based on the SDG principle of "leave no one behind (LNOB)" and the concept of "human security." Through initiatives such as the "Project for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease", multiple "Grassroots/Human Security Grant Aid projects for

<sup>29</sup> Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for combating the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, <https://www.caricc.org/index.php/en/>

medical equipment provision”, UJC, and JDS, Japan has unique trust in Uzbekistan’s social infrastructure development and human resource cultivation. From now on, Japan is expected to deepen cross-sectoral collaboration between healthcare and education, presenting an “inclusive social development model” that also benefits vulnerable groups in rural areas. Uzbekistan holds high expectations that Japan’s experience in building a sustainable and equitable society will serve as a roadmap for “people-centered development” across Central Asia.

## D Ripple Effects of Japan’s Support for Uzbekistan (Impact)

The ultimate impact of Japan’s aid can be seen in changes to the partner country’s macroeconomic conditions, such as GDP and trade relations. While changes in social aspects are also important, this analysis examines the effects on Uzbekistan’s GDP and its trade relations with Japan.

### (1) Trends in Uzbekistan’s GDP

Uzbekistan’s GDP in 2023 was USD 106.6 billion. Looking at the past decade, it is evident that the country has achieved continuous economic growth despite overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the sectoral breakdown of GDP was as follows: agriculture, forestry, and fisheries accounted for 24%, manufacturing for 21%, wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles for 6%, public administration, defense, and social security for 6%, and construction for 6%. From the above, it is evident that Uzbekistan continues its sustained economic growth, with manufacturing now reaching a scale comparable to the traditional industrial sector of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

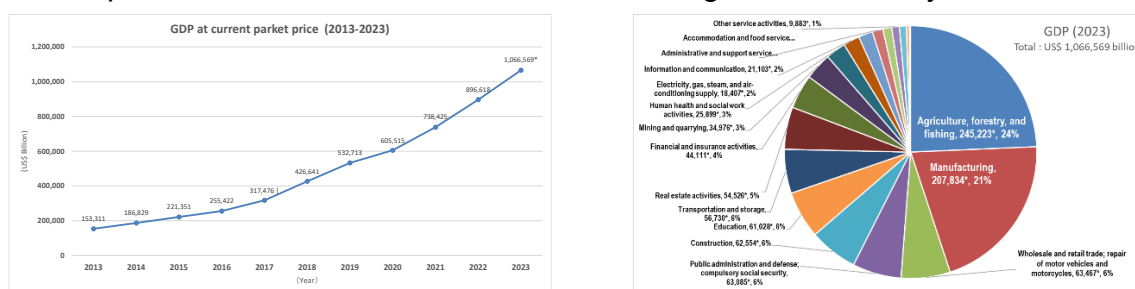


Figure 3 - 2 Trends in Total GDP and Sectoral Composition

Source: Prepared by the Evaluation Team based on data by ADB Data Library, <https://data.adb.org/dataset/uzbe3-1kistan-key-indicators>

### (2) Trends in Uzbekistan’s Trade Volume

Uzbekistan’s total exports amounted to USD 24.3 billion (2023), ranking it as the world’s 72nd largest exporter. Over the past five years, exports increased by USD 13.6 billion from USD 10.7 billion in 2018. Major export items are primary products such as gold (USD 11.2 billion), cotton yarn (non-retail) (USD 1.38 billion), refined copper (USD 535 million),

petroleum gas (USD 535 million), and potash fertilizer (USD 500 million). Exports to Japan totaled USD 21 million, primarily consisting of office equipment parts<sup>30</sup>.

Meanwhile, Uzbekistan's total imports reached US\$38.1 billion (2023), ranking it as the 66th largest importer globally. Over the past five years, imports increased by USD 19.5 billion from USD18.6 billion in 2018. Major import items include automobiles (USD 1.94 billion), automotive parts and accessories (USD 1.54 billion), pharmaceuticals (USD 1.37 billion), refined petroleum (USD 1.09 billion), and aircraft/helicopters/spacecraft (USD 1.01 billion). Imports from Japan totaled USD 313 million, primarily consisting of automotive parts.

At present, trade relations with Japan must be assessed as limited. Therefore, while Japan's ODA aligns with the policy direction of industrial upgrading and opening to the outside world, its impact must also be considered limited.

### **(3) Trends in Uzbekistan's HDI and GII**

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Uzbekistan's Human Development Index (HDI) value was 0.725 in 2018, indicating "medium human development," but improved slightly to 0.740 in the latest 2023 data. Key factors included improvements in education levels, a slight increase in life expectancy, and rising income levels. Furthermore, the Gender Inequality Index (GI), which reflects potential human development losses due to inequality between women and men across three dimensions - reproductive health, empowerment, and labor market participation - was 0.27 in 2018, indicating "moderate inequality." However, it slightly declined to 0.29 in 2023, requiring attention.

As explained above, it has been confirmed that aid performance (inputs) and outputs (results of activities such as the number of personnel trained and infrastructure structures) were achieved as planned. Japan's aid, aligned with the overarching policy of "promoting sustainable economic growth and reducing disparities", can be evaluated as having implemented aid projects as planned and steadily achieved the set objectives in each of the three priority areas: economic growth, a fair and sustainable society, and strengthening governance. While macroeconomic and broader impacts remain limited at this stage, no projects were discontinued mid-term. The assistance has earned high trust and a good reputation from Uzbekistan's government ministries and other donors. Based on a comprehensive assessment of these outcomes, the effectiveness of the results can be rated as **"Highly Satisfactory"**.

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<sup>30</sup> OEC, What does Uzbekistan export?, [https://oec.world/en/visualize/tree\\_map/hs92/export/uzb/all/show/2023,import/uzb/all/show/2023](https://oec.world/en/visualize/tree_map/hs92/export/uzb/all/show/2023,import/uzb/all/show/2023)

### **(3) Appropriateness of Processes**

Appropriateness of Processes is examined from five perspectives: 1) appropriateness of ODA policy formulation process; 2) appropriateness of implementation process based on ODA policy; 3) appropriateness of aid implementation structure; 4) appropriateness of monitoring and evaluation and information disclosure; 5) effective collaboration with other stakeholders. This assessed whether processes were adopted to ensure the validity of the policy and the effectiveness of the results.

#### **A Appropriateness of ODA policy Formulation Process**

In formulating the current Country Development Cooperation Policy for Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan's needs are identified through daily information gathering and dialogue conducted via the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and the JICA Uzbekistan Office. Based on this, policy consultations on ODA are held between the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and the Government of Uzbekistan. Japan's development cooperation policy is communicated to the Uzbek side, their views are heard, and mutual coordination is conducted to reflect them in the Country Development Cooperation Policy. Coordination during the formulation stage regarding cooperation with other donors and potential duplication is also carried out by the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and the JICA Uzbekistan Office. In setting the basic policy and priority areas, comprehensive consideration is given to the challenges faced by Uzbekistan, Japan's track record of support, the results of consultations with other donors, and various Japanese policies.

The "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue and Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in December 2022 established an overall support policy for Central Asia aligned with "quality growth" and "investment in people". This process also ensured consistency with the current development assistance policy.

#### **B Appropriateness of Implementation Process Based on ODA policy**

In the process of forming bilateral projects, projects are determined by coordinating various support needs requested by the Uzbekistan side while consulting with relevant ministries and agencies in Japan. When selecting projects, MOFA makes comprehensive judgments and decisions regarding the timing of project selection and implementation, taking into account not only the development impact of the project itself, but also Japan's past support track record, relationships and synergies with other schemes, alignment with the development strategies of Uzbekistan and Japan, the potential for Japanese corporate participation, diplomatic events, and budget scale. However, challenges include responding to changes in Uzbekistan's loan approval process based on the February 2025 Uzbek presidential decree and the need for swift and flexible formulation of loan projects desired by the Uzbek side.

As projects providing cross-cutting support to the Central Asian region, examples include ensuring border security, countering narcotics, harmonizing customs systems, disaster prevention, and regional cooperation in the health sector - all addressing global challenges common to Central Asian countries. In developing these projects, advance explanations are provided to each country and their understanding is secured. The “Central Asia plus Japan” dialogue serves as an effective consultative forum where the five Central Asian countries gather with Japan acting as a facilitator. When developing projects, consideration is given to both exploring the best approach for the region as a whole and leveraging each country’s interests in areas such as water and energy, as well as their regional characteristics.

In cases of international organization cooperation, the international organization first formulates a support strategy and policy based on a request from the Government of Uzbekistan, then requests cooperation from donor countries, including Japan. When Japan receives such a request, it comprehensively assesses factors such as Japan’s development policy, effectiveness, and potential synergies to determine whether to provide cooperation. Regarding co-financing with international organizations, JICA is responsible for project formulation. Furthermore, proposals sometimes arise from the regular interactions between the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and JICA with other international organizations, leading to project formulation.

### **C Appropriateness of ODA Implementation Structure**

Regarding Japan’s ODA implementation structure, the ODA Task Force in Uzbekistan includes participation from the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan and the JICA Uzbekistan Office. This Task Force regularly reviews the basic principles, priority areas, and schedule outlined in the Country Development Cooperation Policy, and implements projects in close coordination with MOFA headquarters. While in other countries, the ODA Task Force may include participation from local offices of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, or Japanese companies, this is not the case in Uzbekistan. However, JICA and JETRO routinely share information and collaborate, focusing on topics such as the local expansion of Japanese companies, the potential for utilizing Japanese and Uzbek personnel, and private sector engagement. Given the Government of Uzbekistan’s recent efforts to attract investment from donor countries, one option is to consider further collaboration with JETRO and participation in the ODA Task Force.

The Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade serves as the focal point for Uzbekistan’s acceptance of assistance. Local approval for project formulation is handled by the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The Japanese side has also established a framework for regular exchanges with the Government of Uzbekistan, including the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, regarding project

implementation. The Ministry of Economy and Finance oversees financial management for all donor projects and develops specific plans for loans from each donor.

**D Appropriateness of Monitoring and Evaluation and Information Disclosure**

Monitoring and evaluation are being appropriately implemented in accordance with the standard procedures for technical cooperation, grant aid, and ODA loans, respectively. On a project basis, field surveys confirmed that Japan and Uzbekistan are appropriately managing project operations through daily monitoring.

The Government of Uzbekistan’s strong project management capabilities were noted by the Japanese implementing agencies on-site, and no particular issues were identified regarding monitoring and evaluation. Based on local interviews, however, it appears that an evaluation system within Uzbekistan has not yet been established. Nevertheless, it is evident that Uzbekistan requires strict and detailed procedures for project formulation and implementation, with a strong emphasis on financial management and schedule control.

Regarding information disclosure, publicity for Japan’s ODA to Uzbekistan primarily follows conventional ODA publicity methods. While efforts focus on social networking services (SNS) for outreach to Uzbek citizens, Japanese aid officials also expressed the view that “there are challenges in conducting more effective and widespread publicity.” Regarding public relations efforts to enhance Japan’s recognition among Uzbek citizens, contributions were confirmed not only through UJC’s promotion of Japanese culture but also through cooperation in study abroad seminars for Japanese universities and the hosting of matching events between Japanese companies and Uzbek entrepreneurs.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOX3 Achievements and Challenges in Japan’s ODA Outreach</b> <b>—From “Visible Support” to “Partnerships in Dialogue” —</b></p> <p>Japan’s ODA outreach in Uzbekistan is evolving beyond traditional “visibility of results” to become “outreach that fosters empathy and participation”. Japan’s ODA outreach significantly contributes to “building trust”, with its sincerity and continuity representing strengths unmatched by other countries. Going forward, it is expected to evolve from merely “showing” project outcomes to a stage of “speaking and communicating together” with local communities. This shift towards interactive public relations aims to enable Uzbek citizens to narrate Japan’s cooperation as part of their own stories. This will be key to embedding the value of Japan’s ODA as a “co-creative partnership” within society, transcending mere assistance.</p>
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**E Effective Collaboration with Other Stakeholders**

The Government of Japan maintains daily information sharing with other donors regarding

current projects and future directions, while also monitoring trends based on reports published by individual donors. Among bilateral donors, the EU and China are recognized as particularly influential donors in Uzbekistan. Multilateral donors include the World Bank, UNDP, UNODC, and ADB. With the World Bank Group's IFC, Japan engages in co-financing in non-sovereign sectors, such as wind power plants and on-lending for SME development through bank loans. Fiscal support to Uzbekistan is largely provided by international organizations. Japan leverages the expertise of these leading donors and utilizes major frameworks established by entities like the World Bank to deliver its fiscal support. UNDP is a partner with which the Japanese government jointly implements grant aid through international organization collaboration. UNDP possesses extensive experience in supporting regions where the Government of Japan finds it difficult to operate directly, such as through regional cooperation in disaster prevention across Central Asia and refugee assistance. Collaboration occurs in areas where UNDP has proven track records and comparative advantages, and where JICA, as a bilateral donor, finds it challenging to take the lead. Furthermore, Japanese NGOs (such as OISCA) have also actively collaborated with UNDP, resulting in successful examples.

**BOX 4 An Example of Collaboration Between a Japanese NGO and UNDP**

OISCA, a Japanese NGO, implemented the “Project for Desert Greening and Livelihood Improvement through Afforestation and Medicinal Herb Cultivation in Western Uzbekistan (Japan NGO Cooperation Grant Aid (JNGOCA))” in Karakalpakstan during Japanese fiscal year 2023. At that time, UNDP consulted OISCA on how to encourage local citizen participation beyond mere afforestation for their Aral Sea project, which led to the establishment of collaboration between the two organizations. OISCA contributes to demonstrating Japan’s presence in the agricultural sector by pursuing collaborations with UN agencies, implementing joint projects with JOCV and universities, and monitoring other donor activities.



Herb Seeding in the Aral Sea  
Afforestation Area



Herbal Medicine Cultivation Training in the  
Aral Sea Region

Source: Project Completion Report of the “Project for Desert Greening and Livelihood Improvement through Afforestation and Medicinal Herb Cultivation in Western Uzbekistan”, Organization for Industrial Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA)

Note: The provisional translation for the project name was prepared by the Evaluation Team due to the absence of an official English translation.

Furthermore, through interviews with multiple international organizations during the field survey, it was confirmed that while the Japanese side understood the collaboration to have “concluded as scheduled,” the international organizations perceived that “continuation (or a next phase) had been anticipated but did not occur”. It is desirable to establish clearer expressions of intent or agreement steps regarding the conclusion of project, continuation or termination.

Examples of collaboration between Japanese private companies and universities and UJC were also observed. In 2024, UJC launched the Uzbekistan-Japan Next Generation Education Creation Platform, which provides opportunities for information exchange to private and public educational institutions and organizations considering expansion into Uzbekistan. Furthermore, since 2023, UJC has hosted study abroad fairs in Uzbekistan, with participation from Japanese universities. Furthermore, companies expanding into Uzbekistan have requested that the Japanese government support the development of legal systems that are not yet codified or fully established in Uzbekistan, and that it provides clearer explanations of these systems.

As described above, Japan’s aid formulation process was highly appropriate. This was achieved by establishing policies and priority areas based on daily on-site communication that captured the needs of the Government of Uzbekistan and the activities of other donors, while simultaneously advancing the formulation process within Japan. Furthermore, policies were formulated and implemented in consideration of the “Central Asia plus Japan” dialogue.

Regarding the aid implementation process and project execution process, no major problems have arisen. However, it is important to note that costs have been incurred due to

Japan's response to changes in Uzbekistan's loan procedures. Furthermore, the Uzbek side also desires more speedy and flexible loans from donors, meaning Japan will need to match the speed of other donors going forward. For projects providing cross-regional support in Central Asia, project design has been achieved while considering the needs, differences, and relationships among the countries involved. Regarding international organization collaboration, efforts are underway to explore synergistic partnerships between Japan and international organizations that leverage their respective strengths to effectively utilize limited budgets. Therefore, the appropriateness of the aid implementation process is high.

Concerning the aid implementation structure, while the Uzbek side strongly desires the entry of Japanese companies and overseas investment and financing, JETRO and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry do not participate in the ODA Task Force. However, since necessary daily interactions occur where required, no particular problems have arisen at present. Furthermore, multiple comments from the Uzbek side indicated that communication is sufficient on a project-by-project basis. Therefore, the appropriateness of the aid implementation structure is high.

Regarding monitoring, evaluation, and information disclosure, evaluation and monitoring are conducted adequately in line with standard ODA procedures. Cases where the Uzbek side participates in monitoring on a project-by-project basis have also been confirmed, and this is judged appropriate. For information disclosure, methods such as general press releases and media outreach were employed. Efforts are underway to explore ways to ensure outreach to the Uzbek side reaches a wider audience, including through SNS. Furthermore, appropriate information provision regarding employment in Japan is being implemented, primarily through technical cooperation. Therefore, the appropriateness of monitoring, evaluation, and information disclosure is high.

Regarding coordination with other donors, it is commendable that efforts are being made to actively coordinate, leveraging the strengths of both international organizations and Japan. However, there is room for improvement regarding communication on the continuity of collaboration, as differences in understanding this point were observed between the Japanese side and other donors. Collaboration with Japanese private companies and universities is partially visible through entities like the UJC. The active efforts of NGOs to collaborate with international organizations are also commendable. Therefore, the appropriateness of collaboration with other donors and entities is high. Based on the above, the appropriateness of the process is judged to be **"Satisfactory"**.

## **2 Evaluation from Diplomatic Viewpoints**

Following the evaluation from development viewpoints in the previous section, this section evaluates the Japan's ODA for Uzbekistan from diplomatic viewpoints, focusing on "diplomatic importance" and "diplomatic impact".

## **(1) Diplomatic Importance**

### **A Importance for Solving International and Regional Priorities/Global Issues**

Climate change is one of the challenges facing the international community. In particular, the shrinking water volume of the Aral Sea in western Uzbekistan has become a major transnational issue. In response, Japan has implemented the “Project for Supporting Self-Reliance through Climate Resilient Agriculture in the Aral Sea Region” (Grant Aid, 2023 - 2024, in collaboration with UNDP) and achieved results. As noted in the “Effectiveness of Results” section of this report, this project has received high praise from UNDP. In fact, it is an ODA project that achieved success through explosive dissemination by applying the concept and experience of Oita Prefecture’s “One Village, One Product Movement (OVOP)”, which is Japanese expertise. Furthermore, as a related initiative, Japan has launched an advanced research and development project titled “Project for Development of Innovative Technologies for Efficient Generation of Green /Blue Hydrogen for Realization of Carbon-neutral Society with Consideration of Industrial and Environmental Characteristics in the Region” (SATREPS, 2024 - 2028). This success represents a Japanese-originated case study that can serve as a reference for other regions worldwide experiencing water volume reductions due to climate change.

Furthermore, transnational drug trafficking stands as one of the challenges facing the international community. To address this issue, Japan is implementing the “Regional Border Cooperation Initiative in Central Asia and Interagency Mobile Teams in Uzbekistan” (Grant Aid, 2023 - 2024, in collaboration with UNODC), contributing to international countermeasures. This contribution has been highly evaluated not only by UN agencies but also by the Embassy of the United States in Uzbekistan, which has a particularly strong interest in narcotics issues. As noted in the “Effectiveness of Results” section of this report, Japan’s provision of high-quality counter-narcotics equipment and globally recognized Japanese-made 4WD vehicles has been greatly appreciated for significantly contributing to the management of human and material movement across borders, including in Uzbekistan. Japan’s support has also earned a reputation as a model for donor countries.

Furthermore, the attempt to verify the effectiveness of new Japanese technologies through demonstration experiments in Uzbekistan will contribute to solving global issues not only for both countries but also for the world. Although it has only just begun, the “Project for Development of Innovative Technologies for Efficient Generation of Green /Blue Hydrogen for Realization of Carbon-neutral Society with Consideration of Industrial and Environmental Characteristics in the Region” (SATREPS, Science and Technology, 2024 - 2026) is an example of this. While opportunities for experiments using actual oil fields and mines are scarce in Japan, which has few natural resources, Uzbekistan offers such opportunities, and joint projects between the two countries have the potential to contribute to solving global

issues.

In conclusion, Japan's ODA makes an important contribution to solving priority issues for the international community and regions, as well as global issues, and has the potential to be expanded and applied to other regions.

## **B Importance for Bilateral Relations with Uzbekistan**

Of course, it goes without saying that all ODA projects are important for bilateral relations, but among them, human resource development has long-term effects and is crucial for bilateral relations. Within Japan's ODA to Uzbekistan, JDS (2024 - 2028), implemented as part of the capacity building for administrative officials (Administrative Official Training and Law Enforcement Capacity Building Program), corresponds to the so-called JDS program, which provides support for studying in Japan. This ODA initiative, launched in 2000 and continuously implemented for 25 years, contributes to developing highly skilled personnel by sending staff from Uzbekistan's central government ministries to study at Japanese graduate schools. Graduates return to their original ministries, becoming high-level government officials who lead various sectors of the country. They have become indispensable personnel for bilateral relations with Japan. This network represents a significant asset for Japanese diplomacy. Meanwhile, in recent years, China, South Korea, and the EU have implemented similar scholarship programs, whose scale now surpasses Japan's JDS. While Japan cannot compete in terms of volume (number of students accepted), the Ministry of Higher Education notes that outstanding personnel from central ministries have traditionally studied in Japan. Therefore, maintaining the program's characteristic focus on "quality over quantity" is desirable. Furthermore, regarding private sector human resource development, the "Uzbekistan-Japan Human Resource Development Center" (2023 - 2025) and the "Uzbek-Japan Innovation Center for Youth" (2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2028) have produced numerous graduates. Many of these graduates have obtained MBAs and started their own businesses, demonstrating significant contributions to private sector human resource development. Japan's ODA plays an extremely important role in the bilateral relationship between the two countries by enabling human resource development in both the public and private sectors.

## **C Importance for Japan's National Interests (1. Japan's Existence, 2. Japan's Prosperity, 3. Maintenance of International Order)**

Regarding "Japan's Existence", the "Central Asia plus 1" (C5 plus 1) framework was established 20 years ago. Since then, the EU, France, Italy, China, and this year the United States have each established their own C5 plus 1 framework. As the first donor nation to establish such a framework, Japan should actively utilize this mechanism.

Related to this, if Uzbekistan continues its current path of market economy reforms and outward opening to sustain economic growth, it is expected to graduate from being an aid

recipient and eventually become a regional donor country. Japan should consider collaborating with it as an aid partner. In Southeast Asia, Thailand and Malaysia have transitioned to becoming donor countries and are collaborating with Japan to implement third-country training programs for neighboring nations, setting a precedent.

Regarding “Japan’s Prosperity”, the potential market size of Uzbekistan and Central Asia must be noted. With a population of approximately 36 million in Uzbekistan alone and around 80 million across the five Central Asian nations, this market could reach 100 million people in the near future if current high growth rates continue. However, to borrow the words of Japanese private companies and related organizations, “this region is simply not well known among Japanese private companies.” This situation makes it, “the last frontier in Asia (for Japan).” Furthermore, the Central Asian countries, including Uzbekistan, possess abundant rare earth deposits that remain largely undeveloped. From the dual perspectives of market size and potential rare earth supply sources, this region is critically important for Japan’s economic prosperity.

Regarding the “Maintenance of the International Order, FOIP serves as a good precedent. FOIP, one of the fundamental strategies of Japanese diplomacy, was proposed by Japan and has now become an international strategic concept supported by the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, India, and others. With the rule of law and free trade at its core, it can be considered a successful example of Japan’s leading global diplomacy. In fact, FOIP evolved from the “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” concept Japan proposed in 2006, a fundamental strategy that originally encompassed the Central Asian region, including Uzbekistan. Building on the track record of initiating the “Central Asia plus 1” in the region and the subsequent adoption of similar frameworks by other nations, Japan is well-qualified to lead the diplomacy of other donor countries in promoting the rule of law and free trade.

In summary, based on these three points constituting national interests, Uzbekistan holds extremely high importance for Japan and its diplomacy.

## **D Diplomatic Impact**

### **(A) Impact on the International Community**

As explained in terms of diplomatic significance, each ODA project addressing global challenges is recognized and highly valued by UN agencies and embassies, as confirmed by this survey. The next step is how to promote these achievements within the international community to broaden awareness. In Uzbekistan, it was frequently noted that the heads of local offices of international organizations were Japanese nationals. Close coordination in Japanese with the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan was cited as a key success factor. This case suggests the importance of strategically increasing the number of Japanese staff within international organizations and strengthening networks to enhance the ripple effects of ODA projects in the international community.

Another example is the global dissemination of the strategic concept FOIP. Evaluating how FOIP influenced global policy formation to gain insights is recommended. Examining concrete examples of spillover effects, including as part of MOFA's annual ODA evaluations, are likely beneficial not only for Japan's ODA but for the development of Japan's overall foreign policy.

### **(B) Impact on Bilateral Relations**

As explained in terms of diplomatic importance, the development of high-level personnel at the government level is highly valued by the Government of Uzbekistan through study abroad support programs, including the JDS. The ripple effect of developing such high-level personnel at the government level is substantial. The ripple effect on bilateral relations (at the government level) through these personnel is significant and generally offers high cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, not only JDS but also the training programs within the technical cooperation projects evaluated this time have cultivated numerous personnel in the public sector. For example, the "Project for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease" in the health sector (2023 - 2026) has trained over 2,000 medical professionals. This too is contributing to ripple effects in bilateral relations.

### **(C) Impact on Bilateral Relations (Private/Citizen Level)**

As explained in terms of diplomatic importance, the private sector has been spearheaded by UJC, which has trained over 2,500 business professionals to date. Reports indicate that a significant proportion of these graduates have started businesses and expanded their service chains within Uzbekistan. This demonstrates substantial ripple effects for the private sector in both countries and holds great potential.

### **(D) Impact on Economic Relations (including "Priming Effects")**

In contrast, the "priming effect of Japanese ODA providing infrastructure to attract investment from Japanese companies appears to be limited. As seen in the Southeast Asian region (ASEAN), Japan has a limited track record of large-scale support for transportation infrastructure such as highways, railways, ports, and airports in Uzbekistan. Furthermore, there is no track record of supporting the development of large-scale public or PPP (public-private partnership) industrial parks. Consequently, the so-called "priming effect" through hard infrastructure is limited. However, stable power supply is often a bottleneck for industrial development in many developing countries as seen in projects such as the "Tashkent Thermal Power Cogeneration Plant Construction Project" (2023 - 2025), the "Navoi Thermal Power Plant Modernization Project" (2023), and the "Torkulagan Thermal Power Plant Station Construction Project" (2023 - 2024).

As explained earlier, the effectiveness of the results in trade between Uzbekistan and

Japan remain very limited in both exports and imports at present. Comments from local Japanese companies and JETRO indicate this is largely due to the fact that Uzbekistan and the Central Asian region are simply not well known to Japanese private companies, including potential investors. For the Government of Japan, to realize the ripple effects on economic relations, including the “priming effect”, it may be effective to focus not only on ODA but also on general public relations about local conditions, conducted in cooperation with economic organizations and others.

As Uzbekistan is expected to shift its primary focus for overall development, including economic development, from “aid to private investment” going forward, Japan’s ODA should also be implemented in a manner that attracts Japanese private investment or smoothly connects ODA to private investment.

**BOX 5 Future Direction of the “Central Asia plus Japan”  
—With a Primary Focus on Uzbekistan—**

Against the backdrop of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and China’s expanding economic influence, the values-based diplomacy centered on a “free and open international order based on the rule of law” remains crucial for “Central Asia plus Japan”. Meanwhile, Uzbekistan, a core regional power, is shifting its focus toward business-oriented economic exchanges, not just ODA. Japan must also view the region’s rapid growth as a business opportunity and deepen its economic engagement to strengthen future relations. If ODA serves as a catalyst for promoting business exchanges, even SMEs can confidently enter this relatively unknown region. Furthermore, the Central Asian region is rich in energy resources such as oil and natural gas, as well as critical minerals like uranium. Japan faces the pressing challenge of securing its rare earth supply chain, making the establishment of mutually beneficial relationships feasible.

**<Comprehensive Evaluation Results from Diplomatic Viewpoints>**

Japan’s ODA has made significant contributions to addressing the priority issues of the international community and the region, as well as global challenges, while fostering human resource development in both the public and private sectors. From the three perspectives constituting national interests, Uzbekistan holds extremely high importance for Japan and its diplomacy. Furthermore, while achieving results in each area, the economic attraction (priming effect) remains limited at present, which is the diplomatic assessment of Japan’s ODA.

To contribute to Japan’s national interests, amid the shift from aid to private investment, Japan’s ODA should explore and implement approaches that attract private investment or facilitate a smooth transition from ODA to private investment.

## Chapter 4 Recommendations

Based on the above evaluation results, the following recommendations regarding future development assistance to Uzbekistan are made.

- **Recognizing the Potential of Large Markets and Public-Private Partnerships: Pursuing ODA's New Role as a Lead Partner (For MOFA and JICA)**

The existence of a potentially large market (approximately 36.36 million people in Uzbekistan alone with a high population growth rate, and 80 million people across Central Asia as a whole), infrastructure development (transportation and power infrastructure), and human resource potential (including not only basic education but also abundant highly skilled personnel in fields like IT) are increasing, yet Japan simply lacks awareness of this. Amidst anticipated reductions in ODA due to rapid economic growth, promoting public-private partnerships and mobilizing funds to encourage private sector entry is urgent. In essence, while ODA is expected to facilitate the shift from “aid to private investment”, the backing provided by the Japanese government’s ODA is reassuring for private companies considering entry. Particularly in high-potential sectors like IT, infrastructure, and resources/energy, ODA should lead private sector entry or explore models for transitioning from ODA to private projects. Furthermore, to ensure citizens and businesses in both countries have sufficient information, including procedural details, regarding Japanese corporate entry into Uzbekistan and the development/engagement of Uzbek talent, greater emphasis should be placed on public relations efforts and seminars.

- **Promoting “Knowledge and Technology Collaboration” and Private Sector Participation (For JICA)**

It is necessary to strengthen “knowledge and technology-based collaborative cooperation” that organically integrates research, education, human resource development, and infrastructure support - currently conducted as separate initiatives - and to explore measures that simultaneously advance the diversification and upgrading of domestic industries in Uzbekistan alongside human resource development. Furthermore, increasing efforts to encourage private sector participation, such as through non-sovereign loans, and providing support to boost employment creation and industrial upgrading by the private sector are also considered effective. Specifically, establishing industry-academia-government collaboration programs where universities, research institutions, and companies jointly cultivate technological innovation talent is conceivable. Building on the SATREPS model, we will evolve from simple ODA to a “co-creation innovation partnership”. This will also help Japanese companies secure talent.

- **Strengthening Japan's ODA Symbolic Projects and Public Relations (For MOFA and JICA)**

While Japan's assistance is highly valued by the Government of Uzbekistan and other donor countries and institutions, implementing projects that gain broad recognition within Uzbekistan and its neighboring countries would enhance awareness of Japan's aid presence as a means to speak and communicate together with local communities. Symbolic projects benefiting both Uzbek and neighboring populations, such as the bridge connecting Turkey and Thailand to Laos, are also recommended from the perspective of effectively utilizing Japan's limited ODA budget. Relatedly, there is room for improvement in ODA outreach within Uzbekistan and Japan itself, leveraging such symbolic projects.

- **Collaboration with the Private Sector for the Continuous Development of Pro-Japan Human Resources (For MOFA and JICA)**

Support provided by JDS for Uzbek civil servants to pursue master's and doctoral degrees in Japan, along with advanced business talent development programs at institutions like UJC, has earned high praise in Uzbekistan and is recognized as contributing to the country's industrial upgrading. However, compared to countries like Russia, China, South Korea, and those in Europe that implement study support programs, the volume of personnel exchange remains relatively low. Therefore, while maintaining the quality and scale of high-level personnel exchange between government ministries and agencies, efforts to further promote private-sector personnel exchange involving universities, research institutions, and companies are desired.

- **Leveraging the "Central Asia Plus Japan" Dialogue: Utilizing It as a Platform to Lead Global Diplomatic Trends (For MOFA)**

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Japan initiated the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue. Subsequently, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Korea, China, and other emerging Asian nations, along with Russia, have launched "Central Asia plus 1" dialogues to strengthen diplomatic and business ties. As the pioneer in launching this initiative, Japan possesses both the qualifications and responsibility to lead this global trend one step further. Similar to Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) diplomatic policy - a concept and terminology that Western and Asian nations followed after Japan first proposed it - Japan should aim to play a leading role in global diplomacy within Central Asia as well. Furthermore, Japan should take the lead in promoting intra-regional exchanges across multiple Central Asian countries and scaling up successful projects to neighboring nations.

Table 4 - 1 Recommendations, Responsible Agencies, Timelines, and Levels of Importance

Recommendations	Responsible Agencies	Timeline	Level of Importance
Recognizing the Potential of Large Markets and Public-Private Partnerships: Pursuing ODA's New Role as a Lead Partner	MOFA and JICA	Long-term	Extremely Important
Promoting "Knowledge and Technology Collaboration" and Private Sector Participation	JICA	Short-term	Important
Strengthening Japan's ODA Symbolic Projects and Public Relations	MOFA and JICA	Medium-term	Important
Collaboration with the Private Sector for the Continuous Development of Pro-Japan Human Resources	MOFA and JICA	Medium-term	Important
Leveraging the "Central Asia Plus Japan" Dialogue: Utilizing It as a Platform to Lead Global Diplomatic Trends	MOFA and JICA	Long-term	Important