

Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Grant Aid Project

Evaluator, Affiliation	Akihiro Nakagome, Shiro Otomo Ernst & Young Advisory Co., Ltd.	Duration of Evaluation Study
Project Name	The Project for Improvement of Medical Equipment on South Regional and District Hospital of Albania in the Republic of Albania	February 2010 – December 2010

I Project Outline

Country Name	Republic of Albania	
Project Period	December 2004-December 2005	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Health	
Project Cost	Grant Limit: 233 million yen	Actual Grant Amount: 175 million yen
Main Contractors	Ogawa Seiki Co., Ltd.	
Main Consultants	ICONS International Cooperation Inc.	
Basic Design	“The Basic Design Study on the Project for Improvement of Medical Equipment on South Regional and District Hospital of Albania”, JICA, September 2004	
Related Projects (if any)	<Grant Aid> Project for Improvement of Medical Equipment for the Pediatric Hospital "Mother Teresa" of University Center of Tirana (2000), Assistance for the Educational Campaigns Program of AIDS Prevention by PSI (1998), Workshop on Production of Wheelchairs for Disabled People in Albania (1998)	
Project Background	<p>Albania is one of the poorest nations in Europe, with the lowest levels of health and medical care among countries in its region. In May 2003, Albania decided on National Social Development Strategy. Based on the achievement of its medium-term development goals for the years 2003 through 2006, the Government would implement various measures to achieve the aims of the long-term development plan for the next 10 years. As part of these efforts, it has formulated a new health law and a new health strategy, including the goal of establishing a referral system.</p> <p>At the five hospitals, which is secondary level medical facilities, in the southern region of Albania covered by this project, most medical equipment had been in use for 10 or more years, which exceeded the average durable life of five years for medical equipment. Such old equipment hindered proper diagnosis and treatment. For this reason, these facilities were unable to provide proper diagnosis and treatment as secondary level medical facilities to patients referred or transferred from primary level medical facilities. Accordingly it led to bypassing these hospitals; therefore, patients were transferred to tertiary-level medical facilities in the capital city Tirana or they needed to visit tertiary-level medical facilities by themselves.</p>	
Project Objective	The objective of this project is to improve medical services and strengthen the referral system in the region, and to reduce the number of patients referred to tertiary level hospitals in the capital city Tirana, by providing medical equipment to five hospitals in the southern region of Albania, with Gjirokaster Regional Hospital as the core,	
Output[s] (Japanese Side)	Procurement of medical equipment consisting of 61 kinds of products, 343 items in total, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Image diagnostic related equipment, -Medical electronics related equipment, -Laboratory related equipment -Operation room related equipment. -Technical assistance for improving maintenance system of medical equipment 	

II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation
<p>This project provided the five target hospitals with basic diagnostic and treatment equipment. In general, the equipment procured has increased the number of tests and diagnoses conducted, and the number of patients has increased at each hospital. In addition, the number of patients referred from the five target hospitals to Tirana has decreased, and for this reason tertiary level medical institutions in the capital city Tirana now are able to specialize in advanced medical treatment; thus it can be said that the referral system in southern region of Albania have been strengthened.</p> <p>While equipment maintenance managers were assigned to each of the target hospitals, some hospitals do not have enough maintenance technicians. Although some equipment appears to be used less frequently due to transfer of the staff members able to operate the equipment, for the most part the procured equipment is being utilized without problems.</p> <p>In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.</p> <p><Recommendations></p> <p>As a recommendation for the target hospitals, it would be desirable to develop a structure to enhance staff's skills needed in maintenance and equipment operation. For example, by providing opportunities with staff to exchange information among maintenance personnel within each hospital and among the hospitals, and by making use of their experience of preparing Equipment Maintenance Sheets and other related documents in this project they can prepare equipment operating manuals in the Albanian language. Moreover, it is highly recommended to provide training on equipment to new personnel.</p>

<Constraints of this evaluation study>

No data for 2004 were available from the executing agency on subjects such as the number of tests and diagnoses conducted with the procured equipment and the number of patients in each hospital. Also, no data were available on the number of tests and diagnoses for all procured equipment; thus, evaluation of the effectiveness which is quantitatively assessed was based on limited data.

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Albania

Albania's National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development (NSSD; established May 2003) and its National Strategy on Development and Integration (NSDI; established March 2008) call for improvements in medical services in the healthcare field and in medical-facility management capabilities. These are highly consistent with this project both at the time of planning and at the time of ex-post evaluation.

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Albania

As a means of realizing improvements in medical services in the healthcare field as called for in Albania's National Strategy, the Ministry of Health aimed to establish a referral system. Since economic development and, in particular, development in the medical sector were severely behind in the southern region of Albania, enhancement of the referral system through renovation and provision of medical equipment at secondary level medical facilities in the southern region through this project is consistent with Albania's development needs.

(3) Relevance with Japan's ODA Policy

Japan has provided aid for realizing socioeconomic reforms in Albania and stabilizing civil administration, with aid policies focused on the medical and educational fields and it can be said that aid for development of medical facilities was a subject of focus. Thus, improvement to medical facilities through this project was consistent with Japan's ODA policy.

This project has been highly relevant with the country's development plan, development needs, as well as Japan's ODA policy; therefore its relevance is high.

2 Efficiency

(1) Project Outputs

Outputs on the Japan side were in accordance with plans for both procured equipment and the soft component.

(2) Project Period

The actual project period was 12 months, while the planned period was 10 months; therefore, the project period was slightly longer than planned (120% of the planned period). This increase was due to the fact that more time than planned was required for tasks related to setting up the equipment, such as long-distance transportation and installation. The soft component was implemented as planned (100% of the planned period).

(3) Project Cost

The actual project cost was 175 million yen, while the planned cost was 233 million yen; thus, the project cost was lower than planned (75% of planned cost).

Although the project period was slightly longer than planned, the project cost was lower than planned; therefore efficiency of the project is fair.

3 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Quantitative Effects

According to data from the executing agency on the number of tests conducted with the equipment procured in this project, the number of X-ray images taken at Gjirokaster Regional Hospital, where X-ray units were installed, had risen from approximately 18,000 to approximately 24,000 (130%) over the period from 2005 through 2009. Regarding ultrasound diagnostic equipment, which was installed in all hospitals, the total number of ultrasound diagnoses at the four hospitals other than Delvina Hospital, for which no data was available, had risen from approximately 9,000 to approximately 14,000 (150%) over the same period. The number of patients at the five target hospitals also had increased from approximately 13,000 to 16,000 (120%) over the same period. The number of referrals to Tirana had decreased from approximately 2,600 to approximately 1,500 (57%) over the same period. However, it is thought that data in 2003 when the basic design study was conducted is not suitable for baseline, as there is a considerable deviation between data in 2003 and one in 2005. Thus, in the ex-post evaluation, data in 2003 should be used for reference purposes only and data in this evaluation is conducted based on data since 2005..

(2) Qualitative Effects

According to the executing agency, the equipment procured enabled the target hospitals to handle medical treatment swiftly and to provide medical treatment for patients who had previously been referred to Tirana; thereby the burden on those patients had been reduced. Moreover, implementation of the soft component has improved maintenance of the existing as well as the procured equipment, resulting in a decrease in the waiting times for delivery of spare parts and supplies.

(3) Impacts (Impacts on the natural environment, Land Acquisition and Resettlement, Unintended Positive/Negative Impact)

According to the executing agency, as noted under (1) above tertiary-level medical facilities in Tirana now are able to concentrate on high level diagnostic and treatment medical services, as a result of the decrease in the number of patients transferred to Tirana.

This project has largely achieved its objectives; therefore its effectiveness is high.

4 Sustainability

(1) Structural Aspects of Operation Maintenance

Managers and other personnel handling maintenance and repairs have been assigned to each hospital as personnel responsible for everyday maintenance of medical equipment. Some hospitals face shortages of maintenance technicians.

(2) Technical Aspects of Operation Maintenance

Regarding operation maintenance for medical equipment, no special skills are required, and no particular technical problems have been reported. In the event of any technical problems that could not be handled at the individual hospital, inquiries are made to the National Biomedical Centre in Tirana. If even the technicians in the National Biomedical Centre are unable to handle the problem, the hospital contacts to private-sector vendors.

(3) Financial Aspects of Operation Maintenance

Each hospital covers its maintenance costs using its annual budget. While the executing agency did not supply any specific amounts, at present no problems have resulted from budget shortages despite the fact that there are shortages in budgets for maintenance.

(4) Current Status of Operation Maintenance

In general, the equipment procured is being put to use. However, the frequency of use of some equipment has decreased due to transfer of the medical personnel able to operate it. In addition, there is other equipment whose frequency of use has decreased due to a lack of personnel able to read the English-language operating manuals. Therefore, there are concerns that this could lead to problems in repair and maintenance as well.

Some problems have been observed in terms of structural aspects of the maintenance, therefore sustainability of the project effects is fair.