

Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Grant Aid Project

Evaluator, Affiliation	Keiko Asato Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development	Duration of Evaluation Study
Project Name	The Project for Enhancement of Educational Facilities at Allama Iqbal Open University in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	January 2010 – December 2010

I Project Outline

Country Name	Islamic Republic of Pakistan	
Project Period	March 2005-March 2006	
Implementing Agency	Allama Iqbal Open University	
Project Cost	Grant Limit: 795 million yen	Actual Grant Amount: 697 million yen
Main Contractors	(Procurement only) Lot 1: Mitsubishi Corporation Lot 2: Iwatani Corporation	
Main Consultants	OPC Corporation	
Basic Design	"Basic Design Study Report on the Project for the Enhancement of Educational Facilities at Allama Iqbal Open University in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan", Japan International Cooperation Agency, January 2005	
Related Projects (if any)	"The Project for Procurement of Equipment for Allama Iqbal Open University (1996)"	
Project Background	Literacy rates and enrollment rates in Pakistan are comparatively low, and for inhabitants of rural areas as well as for females they are even lower. As for teachers, their numbers are far behind what is necessary to sustain an educational basis. Due to this situation, expanding educational opportunities, educating teachers and reducing regional as well as gender inequality have been urgent issues. The Allama Iqbal Open University (hereinafter referred to as AIOU) had been a core organization providing educational programs via TV and radio, as well as running regional campuses and regional learning centers throughout the country. With their existing equipment, however, AIOU had been experiencing difficulties meeting the educational needs of the growing number of students.	
Project Objective	To procure and install equipment necessary to produce: educational TV and Radio programs; and to produce teaching materials in order for AIOU to expand and fulfill its educational programs.	
Output[s] (Japanese Side)	1. To procure and install equipment: for the production of educational programs; for the development of teaching materials; for printing; and for audiovisual equipment at AIOU. 2. To conduct technical training for the members of the Print Production Unit.	

II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation
<p>This project's ultimate goal was to provide educational programs to the people in the rural areas of the Republic of Pakistan (in the form of improved TV and radio programs, multimedia equipment, and printed materials for distance learning produced by AIOU) to address the obvious inequalities in terms of educational opportunities caused by gender, region and/or economic factors. For this purpose, this project procured the following: equipment for the production of educational program to the Institute of Educational Technology (hereinafter referred to as IET) of AIOU, equipment for the development of teaching materials to the Multimedia Electronic Courseware Design Centre (hereinafter referred to as MECDC), equipment for printing to the Print Production Unit (hereinafter referred to as PPU), audiovisual equipment to regional campuses and regional centers (hereinafter referred to as regional bases). In addition, the Project was consequently expected to contribute to the strengthening of teacher-education courses and to the improvement in educational opportunities for those with limited accesses to education.</p> <p>Distance learning in this target country was effective in reducing inequalities in educational opportunities caused by regional and gender issues, as such, the cooperation through this project was highly relevant. Procured equipment was properly used and maintained, resulting in an increased access to education for a greater number of people who previously had had limited educational opportunities, including: women, rural area inhabitants, and employed adults. In addition, teacher-education courses at the regional bases became popular which further strengthened teacher education.</p> <p>In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be highly satisfactory.</p> <p><Recommendations> None</p>

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Pakistan.

The “Ten-Year Perspective Development Plan (2001-2011)”, which was in effect from the time of the project’s planning through to the time of the post-project evaluation, stated “Poverty Reduction and Human Development” as one of four significant areas. This plan indicates strengthening “Education and Training” as a necessary approach to achieve poverty reduction and human development..

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Pakistan.

At the time of project planning, low rates of literacy and enrollment, a high primary education dropout rate, gender inequality, large numbers of uncertified teachers and regional inequalities between the urban and rural areas, were considered the issues to address in the education sector. At present, according to the “Education for All – National Plan of Action 2001-2015” elaborated by the Ministry of Education of Pakistan, an increase of the literacy rate, improvement of teachers’ quality, reduction of educational inequality, adult education, and improvement of teachers’ quality are still mentioned as urgent issues in the national policy. Furthermore, the implementing agencies of this project (IET, MECDC and regional bases of AIOU), reported that since Pakistan is a spacious country, distance learning is an effective methodology to reduce inequalities of educational opportunities (due to regional and social (gender and economic) factors).

(3) Relevance with Japan’s ODA Policy

According to the Country Assistant Programme for Pakistan (2005), at the time of this project’s planning, Japan’s important cooperation areas are: 1) Cross-sectional Issues (Gender, Environment and Governance), 2) Human Security and Human Development, 3) Balanced Development of Regional Communities and Economics, and 4) Sound Development of Market Economy. This project is in accordance with cooperation areas 1), 2) and 3).

In light of the above, this project has been highly relevant with Pakistan’s development plan and development needs, as well as with Japan’s ODA policy; therefore, its relevance is high.

2 Efficiency

(1) Project Outputs

The outputs of the Japanese side were achieved as planned. Technical training for PPU members was also conducted as planned.

(2) Project Period (Project Inputs)

The project period took 13 months, as planned (100 %).

(3) Project Cost (Project Inputs)

The actual project cost was 697 million yen, which was lower than the planned cost of 795 million yen (88 %). The project cost was maintained within the planned budget with the help of an appropriate competitive bidding process and due to the fact that the service for the repair and maintenance applied to the domestic commodities were not applied to the international ones.

In light of the above, both the project period and the project cost were within the plan; therefore, efficiency of the Project is high.

3 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Quantitative Effects

The targeted number of participants (which was 2,000) registered for distance-learning courses to be achieved by the target year of 2010/11 had been already achieved by the year 2007/08 (which was 2,785). The number of diplomas issued yearly for teacher-education courses, which was 110,156 in the latest year of 2007/08, achieved 85 % of the goal of 130,000 (for 2010/11). A steady increase at this rate is a realistic target to reach. The number of open courses for distance learning, which had been 1,138 courses at the time of planning (2004), had become 1,200 in 2007/08. With this transition, it is unclear if the goal of 1,500 courses by the year 2010/11 is achievable. Training PPU staff members on printing techniques was conducted as planned. While 2.1 million copies of textbook printing were planned in the year 2010/11, 720,000 copies of textbooks and 41.37 million supplementary materials were produced in 2008/09. AIOU reported that the production of printing materials is satisfactory in terms of printing quality as well as the sharpness of paper holding, binding, and cutting. Delivery times have also been reduced so that material is delivered by the beginning of the courses.

(2) Impacts

The number of broadcasting programs produced for Pakistan Television (PTV) increased from 215 programs in 2003/04 to 547 programs in 2008/09, and 957 sets of CD teaching materials were produced in 2008/09, which were not produced at all at the time of project planning. (In contrast, production is decreasing in terms of the number of radio programs, videos and cassette tape programs). Transitions in the number of male and female participants, in total, registered to the courses are as follows: 724,253 male participants and 801,890 female participants in 2003/04 increased to 1,286,494 male participants (177 % of the number in 2003/04) and 1,499,156 female participants (187 % of the number in 2003/04), suggesting a larger impact of this project on females than on males. At the regional bases, as a result of this project, increased learning opportunities are observed among women, employees, people with fewer educational opportunities in the past (due to a limited access to facilities and/or their financial condition), and senior citizens. Some of the popular programs include language (English), education, business administration, and teacher-education courses. Each regional base reports that distance learning is beneficial for reducing the regional inequality of educational opportunities.

In light of the above, this project has largely achieved its objectives, therefore its effectiveness is high.

(1) Structural Aspects of Operation Maintenance

IET was planning to increase the number of its staff members to 70 along with procurement of equipment. Though currently there are only 53 staffs, tasks are adequately executed by assigning multiple tasks to each person. IET reports its plan to increase its members to 70 by the year 2010/11. At the time of the project's planning, a lack of satisfactory communication between staff members of IET and university faculty members was noted, but currently the faculty members and IET producers regularly hold meetings, strengthening their partnership: the university staff chooses the TV programs' themes, whereas the IET staff produce the programs. The number of MECDC staff members, (30 at the time of project planning) was reduced to 9. This was as a result of government restructuring, which transferred the supervising office of MECDC, from the Department of Science and Technology to the Department of Higher Education, resulting in a reduced budget insufficient for maintaining a satisfactory number of staff. As expected, this reportedly reduced capabilities to produce teaching materials. However, now, in addition to the newly produced material, already existing teaching materials are also used to meet the demands of the increasing number of registered participants. The PPU has 45 staff members, exceeding the planned number of 44, having few structural problems. For the regional bases, their equipment are general-purpose audiovisual equipment (such as TV sets and DVD players), therefore assignment of specialized personnel was not expected in the original plan. However, 21 out of 25 regional bases assign 1 to 4 personnel on this.

In light of the above, though some uncertainties on the structural aspects of the MECDC exist, AIOU, in general, does not have any major structural problem.

(2) Technical Aspects of Operation Maintenance

The IET, MECDC, and PPU set the technical requirements at the time of recruitment according to assigned positions, and hire only those who meet these requirements. Each section provides technical training for the specific position to ensure new staff can smoothly get accustomed to their work. After recruitment, no specialized skill maintenance training is done, but skills are maintained through on-the-job training. Each section effectively uses equipment manuals whenever necessary. When issues outside the scope of the manuals arise, staff members share their experience and knowledge, and/or collect information from the Internet in order to resolve the issues. Additionally, all the major members of the PPU who participated in technical training conducted by this project are still present. Equipments procured at regional bases do not require special skills, and manuals are generally used for their operation.

In light of the above (from reports of the implementing agencies), it can be concluded that issues on technical aspects are a matter of marginal importance at every section.

(3) Financial Aspects of Operation Maintenance

The IET budget at the time of 2007/08 was 2.88 times that of 2003/04 (from 258,000 Pakistan Rupees (hereinafter referred to as Rs) to 744,000 Rs). PPU budget, from 2004/05 to 2007/08, is not stable, but the average budget during this period was 916,000 Rs, which increased from 147,000 Rs in 2004/05, and the annual budget at PPU since 2005/06 is higher than that of 2004/05. At both IET and PPU, the purchase and provision of consumables and spare parts, and repairing malfunctioning equipment are done properly. Though actual figures on budgets were not collected from the MECDC and regional bases accordingly, same as IET and PPU, MECDC reported that purchase and provision of consumables and spare parts, and repairing malfunctioning equipment are done properly. Regional bases have not needed to purchase consumables or spare parts, and therefore are not now experiencing financial limitations. Overall, there have been no practical problems with regards to financial aspects.

(4) Current Status of Operation Maintenance

At IET and PPU, major equipment are currently all functioning, (at IET, 16 out of 16 pieces of equipment, and at PPU, 31 out of 31 pieces of equipment), and they are daily inspected. There have been some malfunctioning equipment, but each time they have been repaired and made operational again. Maintenance of equipment is done at each section by personnel who actually use the equipment, and protocols to respond to malfunctioning equipment was also established. Inventory of consumables and spare parts are regularly administered, and insufficient items are replenished when necessary. Although a manufacturers' designated agency does not exist, local agencies are capable of providing necessary services. MECDC reported on the operation status of five out of the eight major pieces of equipment stating that they are all still in use. Although MECDC does not regularly conduct inspections, they have established protocols to respond to malfunctioning equipment and the equipment that had problems was repaired and at present is in use. Conditions for consumables and spare parts, and agencies are the same as those of the IET and PPU. As for the regional bases, at 22 out of 25 regional bases, all equipment is in use and has not malfunctioned. No problems related to the purchase of consumables and spare parts, inventory management, and functions of agencies were reported, because they have not experienced such issues. However, at two regional bases, a TV set and TV antennae are out of order. They were delivered for repair, only to learn that local agencies were incapable of repairing them and they remain non-operational.

In light of the above, minor problems have been observed in terms of structural aspects of operation maintenance, but a certain level of activity is still secured, and therefore sustainability of the Project is high.