

Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Technical Cooperation Project

Evaluator, Affiliation	Keiko Watanabe Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development	Duration of Evaluation Study
Project Name	Strengthening of Non-Formal Education Project	January 2010 – December 2010

I Project Outline

Country Name	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan			
Project Period	26 March 2004-31 March 2007 (3 years)			
Executing Agency	Deputy Minister of Functional Literacy (DMFL)			
Cooperation Agency in Japan	National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan			
Total Cost	293.3 million yen			
Related Projects (if any)	Technical Cooperation: Support for Expansion and Improvement of Literacy Education in Afghanistan (LEAF)			
Overall Goal	To reinforce Non-Formal Education in Kabul.			
Project Objective(s)	To develop model-Community Learning Centers (CLCs) for Non-Formal Education.			
Output[s]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop learning materials for Non-Formal Education (literacy, life-skills, and occupational training) programs. 2. To increase the capacity of teachers engaged in Non-Formal Education. 3. To enable each CLC management committee to run its CLC and to enable local people to receive Non-Formal Education at CLCs. 			
	Inputs (Japanese Side)		Inputs (Afghan Side)	
Experts	12 Experts (76 M/M)		Staff allocated	5 C/Ps
Equipments	9.5 million yen		Equipments	N.A.
Local Cost	120 million yen (including CLC construction: 18 million yen)		Local Cost	N.A.
Trainees Received	21 C/Ps 7M/M		Land etc provided	Land for CLC (3 locations)
Others	N.A.		Others	N.A.

II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation
<p>The Project aimed to develop “model Community Learning Centers” (hereinafter referred to as CLCs) at three locations in Kabul City (Districts 5, 8 and 12). In Afghanistan, long domestic conflicts have reduced opportunities for education resulting in very low adult literacy rates for men: 49 %, as well as for women: 19.6 % (2003). Therefore, there was a remarkably high level of needs for this Project, which established non-formal education (herein after referred to as NFE) at the community level in order to improve literacy rates and life skills among both adults who were not previously afforded educational opportunities, and people who are not in reach of public education. This Project established Model CLCs with such functions as operational structures shared with the local communities, provision of classes for life skills and techniques in addition to literacy, and promotion of local coherence among communities. Establishment of the CLCs also enabled local communities to form and promote mutual understanding among different tribes through activities such as sports events, private schooling, and administration of female gymnastics by female groups. In addition, a notable impact was created when the CLCs were broadcasted in NFE programs on local TV. The Government of Afghanistan, in its major education policies, indicated NFE through the CLCs as a strategy to reduce illiteracy and also made plans to establish CLCs in each district. Afghanistan established a CLC Secretariat under the Literacy Department, assuring the Project’s political sustainability. The three CLCs established in the Project are running continuously on a self-supporting accounting system while effectively reflecting locals’ intention, however, the numbers of learners have declined.</p> <p>Owing to the fact that the concept of the CLC is new for Afghanistan, the following issues remain: CLCs are not yet very well understood by the Afghan citizens and coordination among different relevant agencies for CLC operations (government offices, NGOs, international organizations, and citizens) needs improved. Although the Project developed a model for CLC; no CLC has been added yet. Efforts need to be made as described under the recommendation section in order to allow structural flexibility to adapt to the situation of literacy education and also in order that, in the future, the project can maintain a high degree of sustainability. Although an evacuation of Japanese experts during the Presidential election temporarily suspended the Project during the implementation period, originally expected outputs were achieved, and the duration and cost of the project were operated efficiently.</p> <p>In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.</p> <p><Recommendation for Literacy Department></p> <p>Current operations of the three CLCs in Kabul City show that there is an increasingly greater demand for technical training than for literacy training. Considering that these Kabul City CLCs are located in an urban environment, it is necessary to establish an organizational structure capable of adjusting the subjects it provides to meet the needs of the local citizens. The Literacy Department itself mentions the following areas as being necessary to popularize and expand future CLC operations: raising awareness of CLC activities among Afghan citizens, securing classrooms and teachers for technical training, and coordinating with related agencies such</p>

as international organizations, NGOs, the Literacy Department, and the local citizens.

<Constraints of this evaluation study>

Not all the CLCs established by this Project responded to the questionnaire, and therefore this evaluation study was conducted by: analyzing questionnaire answers from the Literacy Department, which supervises the CLCs; by reviewing records and interview of implementing agency of Japan's side (National Federation of UNESCO Associations in JAPAN); and by reviewing related documents. Taking domestic circumstances in Afghanistan into consideration, information could only be obtained to a limited extent and obtaining further questions and/or clarifications was challenging.

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Afghanistan

The "Revival and Development of Education in Afghanistan (2002)" and the new Constitution enforced in January 2004 both mention reducing illiteracy. In addition, the importance of literacy education is repeatedly mentioned in documents published during the implementation period of the Project including both the "Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2005)" and the "National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (2006-2010)". Among other reasons, the importance of literacy education derives from its possible impact on promoting employment and economic activities.

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Afghanistan

According to a survey study by UNICEF in 2003, adult literacy rates were 49 % for males and 19.6 % for females, less than half of male's rate. Statistically, as illiterate persons are more densely distributed among the poor, this Project's aims match the developmental needs of the country: promoting economic activities and reducing poverty through literacy education.

(3) Relevance with Japan's ODA Policy

Japan announced the "Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN)" in 2002, which mentioned support for NFE as one of the significant issues. One of five development issues mentioned in JICA's assistance strategy for Afghanistan is the education sector, including NFE.

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 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Achievement of Project Outputs and Project Objective(s)

In this Project, teaching materials for NFE staff members and 6 learning materials related to literacy on life skills and technical training were produced as planned, and most of these materials have been translated into Dali, Pashto or both. Planned training sessions for staff members of the Literacy Department, the CLC personnel (260 trainees planned) and ones for teachers and holders of teaching certificates (440 trainees planned) ended in more trainees in each kind of training than had been planned: five training times for literacy teachers (178 trainees), 20 training times for staff members of the Literacy Department (473 trainees), two training times for teaching material development (92 trainees) and six seminar times for NFE personnel and university students (1,160 trainees). The Project incorporated supplement teaching materials' development for high need topics from the local communities such as; environmental preservation; calculation drills and income generating activities; and teaching methodologies with locally available materials. Such use of teaching materials based on people's needs and development of supplementary teaching materials promoted teachers' teaching abilities and the monitoring results by the implementing agency demonstrated increased student satisfaction for their classes. For administration of a CLC, local community and government officers participated in establishing a CLC Management Committee (CLCMC) that helped reflect people's needs into the operation of the CLCs. The CLC also recruited skilled locals as volunteer technical instructors. This approach laid the groundwork for participatory administration of CLC. Meanwhile, the number of the locals that received literacy education at the three-targeted CLCs amounted to 750, which was short of the original goal (1500). The main reasons for the shortfall included: changing residency, transferring to other literacy classes run by NGOs (which pay extraordinary amounts of allowance), and marriage. The shortfall in the number of the locals receiving literacy education at CLCs did not negatively impact the project goal; however, because the goal of this Project was to establish the CLC model: not to increase literacy rates. Additionally, 37 % of the literacy course graduates (279 in total) passed the literacy certificate examination administered by the Literacy Department (equivalent to a fourth year primary school literacy level), which exceeded the targeted rate of 35 %. In addition to literacy classes, targeted CLCs were also used for local activities such as marriage ceremonies and sports events.

These outputs indicate that the CLCs established by the Project served as a model in the following areas: 1) joint-administration by the government and the locals, 2) providing not only literacy classes but also life skills and technical classes based on local needs, and 3) functioning as bases for local communities.

(2) Achievement of Overall Goal, Intended and Unintended Impacts

At the CLCs in district 8, the youth committees operated private schools, and in district 5, women's groups operated gymnastics classes for females. Both examples indicate the promotion of community formation and mutual understanding in the multi-ethnic city. Approximately 80 % of learners at the CLCs are females, indicating that the Project had a greater impact on females who suffered from lower literacy rate. Another example of positive impacts includes broadcasting of the CLCs in a literacy documentary program produced by the private TV company on the International Literacy Day. Nevertheless, no new CLC has been established in the Kabul City yet. The causes, according to the Literacy Department include: insufficient public promotion of the relatively new concept of CLCs in the community and insufficient coordination among the agencies related to CLC operation (government bureaus, NGOs, and international organizations). This was reported as an issue for expansion of the CLCs in future. Also, the number of literacy education learners is currently declining at the three CLCs. A post-project evaluation by a Japanese implementing agency reported that this was because of a major shift in the environment that surrounds literacy education: the expansion of literacy activities by other institutions and formal education in the Kabul City (where the three CLCs are located) have caused a decline in the demand for literacy education.

In light of the above, this project has somewhat achieved its objectives; therefore, its effectiveness is fair.

3 Efficiency

(1) Outputs

As described in 1) Effectiveness·Impact, this Project produced outputs as had been initially planned.

(2) Elements of Inputs

In relation to the construction sites for the CLCs, the processing for transfer from Kabul City to Ministry of Education took nine months, causing a delay in CLC construction. In addition, as a security precaution during the Presidential election, the Japanese experts were evacuated for three months from September to December 2004. This resulted in input lags, causing delays to such planned activities as training, and this reduced the project efficiency. This, however, had no influence on the achievement of the project goal.

(3) Project Cost, Period of Cooperation

The Project lasted 36 months as planned (100 %). The cooperation cost was 293.28 million yen, 92.8 % of the 315.78 million yen planned cost, and therefore, was within the budget.

In light of the above, the inputs are appropriate for producing outputs and achieving the project objective; therefore, efficiency of the project is high.

4 Sustainability

(1) Related Policy towards the Project

“The National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (2006-2010)” states the importance of NFE for increasing literacy rates and mentions the construction of a CLC in each district (398 in total) as an effective means. In the “National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (2008-2013)”, the CLC is pointed out as a literacy program that facilitates locals’ participation. Additionally, the position of CLC Secretariat was founded within the Literacy Department of the Ministry of Education assuring its political sustainability.

(2) Institutional and Operational Aspects of the Executive Agency

Along with the reform of the Ministry of Education, establishment of the CLC Secretariat strengthened the administration of CLCs and enhanced structural aspects within the government. At the same time, the CLC Secretariat and the CLCMCs (founded by the Project) handle CLC’s administration but some CLCMCs have become inactive and may only exist nominally. However, locals are still voluntarily participating in the administration of CLCs even that are mainly run by the CLC Secretariat on the government side. By this kind of local participation in CLC operation, the local interest and needs are reflected to the CLC operation. At each CLC, the Literacy Department dispatches a CLC Director, eight literacy teachers, and one security guard. On the other hand, in regards to technical training (the other function of CLC) there are currently 7 – 8 specialized instructor positions. However, there have been reports of difficulties in securing classrooms for technical training and in securing enough specialized instructors resulting in a situation in which subject selection for classes is dependent on the availability of instructors rather than the needs of the locals.

Positions for one head supervisor and two supervisors have been established within the provincial Literacy Departments to handle supervision of literacy teachers at CLCs.

(3) Technical Aspects of the Executive Agency

Teaching materials and instruction manuals developed in the Project are still in use, and teaching methods employing locally available teaching materials is still conducted, as was done during the Project. Specifically, teachers use familiar materials such as sand, beans, leaves, and flowers as teaching materials, and also improve their teaching methodologies by incorporating poems and flip charts to promote students’ interests. As for CLC operation and maintenance, the Literacy Department provides workshop sessions and seminars to its staff members. For CLC teachers, experienced staff members from the Literacy Department of the Ministry of Education provide training sessions.

(4) Financial Aspects of the Executive Agency

The Literacy Department budgets the salary of officers at provincial offices and literacy teachers. Costs for literacy textbooks, and heating are an operational cost for CLC. The Ministry of Education earmarked one million Afs (approximately 22,000 USD) in 2009 to procure equipment for the nine CLCs throughout the country, and also distributed 195,600 Afs for the cost of teaching materials from the development budget of the Ministry of Education. Each CLC has its own marginal income from class fees applied to income-generating-activity classes and from the sales of products from classes such as dressmaking.

(5) Continuity of Effectiveness and Impact

According to the ex-post evaluation by the Japanese implementing agency, the number of open classes in 2008 has not changed, but the contents of the classes show modifications that reflect the locals’ needs. The number of training sessions differs from one CLC to another (the number of classes in district 5 decreased), and the number of yearly graduates has declined to one third of that of 2006. At the other two CLCs (district 8 and 12), with financial and procurement assistance from the Turkish Army at the Civil-Military Cooperation Center of the International Security Assistance Force, the number of class sessions has been maintained. The number of graduates of both districts, however, has been declining by 100 annually. Total decline in numbers was influenced by the decrease in the number of literacy learners; however, some technical training subjects have increased their students, suggesting an influence caused by the changing learning needs in each area.

Some problems have been observed in the structural aspects of the executing agency, and therefore, sustainability of the project effects is fair.