

Country Name	Project on the Basic Vocational Training in Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	

I. Project Outline

Background	<p>In October 2003, the Afghan government established the Afghanistan New Beginnings Program (ANBP) assisted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), and started promoting the disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants (XCs) through the provision of counseling, education, vocational training, and employment opportunities. Based on the request from the Afghan government regarding assistance for the reintegration of XCs, JICA started the technical cooperation in the field of vocational training.</p>						
Objectives of the Project	<p>STAGE 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Goal: Ex combatants (XCs) are smoothly reintegrated into societies. Project Purpose: XCs in the target areas obtain skills to improve their livelihood and can serve to benefit all members of a community <p>STAGE 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Goal: Vulnerable people* acquire vocational skills to get a job opportunity for better livelihood. Project Purpose: Center-based vocational training system is established for vulnerable people by the MoLSAMD (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled) <p>*Internally displaced persons, refugees, and jobless youth</p>						
Activities of the project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Project site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STAGE 1 Kabul STAGE 2 May 2006-March 2008 : Vocational Training Centers (VTCs, constructed under Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects) in Kabul, Bamyan, Mazar, April 2008-June 2009 : VTCs in Kabul, Bamyan, Mazar, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Gardez, Jawzjan, Herat, Kandahar Main activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STAGE 1 (1) training of trainers (TOT) conducted by NGOs, (2) training of XCs utilizing some of the trainers who were trained by TOT, (3) capacity development of MoLSAMD for implementation and management of Vocational Training. STAGE 2: (1) Developing an administrative system for VTCs, (2) planning and implementation of maintenance of facilities and equipment for vocational training, and (3) implementation, monitoring and evaluation of vocational training Inputs (to carry out above activities) <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Japanese Side</p> <p>STAGE 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experts: 11 persons Trainees received: 10 persons Equipment: Equipment to Kabul instructor TOT center for machinery, sheet metal and welding <p>STAGE 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experts: 3 persons Trainees received: 1 person Equipment: Approx. US\$139,000.- </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Afghanistan Side</p> <p>STAGE 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allocated: 18 persons Land and facilities: Training facilities and project office Local cost: allowance for XCs, workshop expenses and monitoring expenses <p>STAGE 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allocated: 75 persons Land and facilities: Project office and VTC facilities Local cost: US\$258,159.- </td> </tr> </table> 					<p>Japanese Side</p> <p>STAGE 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experts: 11 persons Trainees received: 10 persons Equipment: Equipment to Kabul instructor TOT center for machinery, sheet metal and welding <p>STAGE 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experts: 3 persons Trainees received: 1 person Equipment: Approx. US\$139,000.- 	<p>Afghanistan Side</p> <p>STAGE 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allocated: 18 persons Land and facilities: Training facilities and project office Local cost: allowance for XCs, workshop expenses and monitoring expenses <p>STAGE 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allocated: 75 persons Land and facilities: Project office and VTC facilities Local cost: US\$258,159.-
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Ex-Ante Evaluation	2005	Project Period	STAGE 1 Jan 2004-May 2006 STAGE 2 May 2006 – June 2009	Project Cost	545 million yen		
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD)						
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare						

II. Result of the Evaluation¹**< Special perspectives considered in the ex-post evaluation >**

Due to insecurity reason, only limited ex-post evaluation field survey was possible, which resulted in difficulties to obtain detailed data on the ex-post project period. Thus, only limited reliable quantitative information was available after 2009 for the ex-post evaluation and the ex-post evaluation was conducted with significantly limited information available.

1 Relevance

This project was highly relevant with Afghanistan's development policy as Afghanistan aimed at disarmament and demobilization of 100,000 combatants and to reintegrate them within 3 years in accordance with the peace process in the Bonn Agreement² (2001), and "support for the vulnerable including XCs is prioritized areas for the longer goal of poverty reduction and economic reconstruction" was

¹ Evaluation Judgment was made by analyzing the information/data collected by questionnaire and interviews mainly to the counterparts in Kabul. JICA Afghanistan Office did not visit the project sites in the provinces for this ex-post evaluation due to insecurity.

² Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions

set in policy documents including National Skills Development Program (NSDP) (2006-2021). The project was also relevant with development needs “vocational training for XCs and vulnerable people”, as well as Japan’s ODA policy as the then Foreign Minister Kawaguchi proposed “Register for Peace” when she visited Afghanistan in May 2005 and developed ANBP together with UNAMA. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

The project implements TOT training by NGOs and vocational training to XCs by the trainers trained by TOT (Stage 1), develops an administrative system of 9 VTCs and implements/monitors/evaluates vocational training to vulnerable people (Stage 2). Through these activities, the project aims to help XCs and vulnerable people acquire job skills and to strengthen target VTCs capacity to provide appropriate vocational training.

As to Stage 1, the project purpose of “XCs in the target areas obtain skills to improve their livelihood and can serve to benefit all members of a community” was achieved at the time of the project completion, as the completion rate of vocational training for XCs, which is an indicator to measure the achievement of the project purpose was as high as 96% (554 trainees among 577 registered trainees completed the training). As for the overall goal, the project surveyed the status of employment of ex-trainees at the 1st stage completion, and found that out of 31 respondents, 27 were employed and the rest were searching jobs. According to the interviews with ex-trainees at the 1st stage completion, communication/networking with colleagues at workplaces and families, neighbors and friends in communities were good. They commented that they want to continue the current job and motivated to improve livelihood. To what extent the overall goal is achieved at the time of ex-post evaluation is not clear as there is no information available on the employment rate of the trained XCs and whether XCs have been reintegrated with their communities or working place.

With respect to Stage 2, the project purpose of “Center-based vocational training system is established for vulnerable people by the MoLSAMD” was almost achieved at the time of project completion. Among the indicators which measure the achievement of the project purpose, “completion rate of trainees” was achieved as 92% completion is deemed high compared with the training supported by other development partners. “Employment rate after three months” was also achieved as 72% is high compared with the training supported by other development partners, although “Job placement rate” was slightly lower than the level considered successful as of 2006.

As to the overall management of the 9 VTCs, in 2014 MoLSAMD through NSDP was able to keep VTCs functional and trained more than 1,100 trainees. Although most of the VTCs once became inactive in 2015, all of them are functional at the time of ex-post evaluation with support from UN agencies and international NGOs. All the 9 centers have implemented training courses, but the record is not kept properly and the achievement result of overall goal is not clearly identified.

As for overall goal, employment rate after three years is 73% for FY2008 trainees, which is considered to be relatively high. According to the implementing agency, the main reasons behind unemployment of vocational training graduates include lack of capital to start own business/support in self-employment, limited wage employment opportunity due to weak status of the private sector in the country and inadequate training duration and lack of qualified trainers to acquire skills for gainful employment. MoLSAMD is aware of the challenges, and is working on the improvement of the training standards with the support of UN agencies.

No land acquisition occurred under this project, and no negative impacts on natural environment were observed.

The project achieved the project purpose at the time of completion; however, there is not sufficient information on the continuity of the project effect after the project completion and no data to show achievement status of overall goal. Therefore, effectiveness/ impact of the project is fair.

Achievement of project purpose and overall goal

STAGE 1

Aim	Indicators	Results
(Project Purpose) XCs in the target areas obtain skills to improve their livelihood and can serve to benefit all members of a community	Number of XCs who participated with the vocational training courses	(Project Completion) 554 trainees completed the training. (Ex-post Evaluation) The indicator at the ex-post evaluation is not applicable, considering the nature of the indicator and the project purpose.
	Completion rate of the above XCs	(Project completion) 96% (554 trainees completed/577 registered) (Ex-post Evaluation) The indicator at the ex-post evaluation is not applicable, considering the nature of the indicator and the project purpose
(Overall goal) Ex combatants (XCs) are smoothly reintegrated into societies	Employment rate of trained XCs	(Ex-post Evaluation) no information available.
	XCs are accepted as one of community members in the job and living place	(Ex-post Evaluation) no information available.

STAGE 2

Aim	Indicators	Results
(Project Purpose) Center-based vocational training system is established for vulnerable people by the MoLSAMD.	Completion rate of trainees	(Project Completion) 92% (2,338 trainees completed /2,555 registered) (Ex-post Evaluation) No reliable information at the time of Ex-post Evaluation.
	Job placement rate	(Project Completion) 53% (All trainees (106) in 2006 who had OJT were placed to jobs/199 trainees who completed the course. (Ex-post Evaluation) The indicator at the ex-post evaluation is not available.
	Employment after 3 months	(Project Completion) Employment rate (Those who are employed in the relevant trade of the training they took part in) is 72% (63% in FY2006, 89.3% in 2007, 65.2% in 2008). (Ex-post Evaluation) No reliable information available.

	Data-basing for Job placement and opportunity	(Project Completion) under construction (Ex-post Evaluation) The trainee database has been used.
	Evaluation result for each site	(Project completion) In overall trainees set a comparatively higher rating on training course. (Ex-post Evaluation) The indicator at the ex-post evaluation is not applicable.
(Overall goal) Vulnerable people acquire vocational skills to get a job opportunity for better livelihood.	Employment rate in 3 years after the training	(Project Evaluation) 73% for FY2008 trainees. (Ex-post Evaluation) No information available
	Employment rate in 5 years after the training	(Ex-post Evaluation) The indicator at the ex-post evaluation is not applicable.

Source : Terminal evaluation report , questionnaire survey with counterpart

3 Efficiency

Although the project cost was within the plan (ratio against the plan: 73%), the project period was longer than the plan (ratio against the plan: 125%). The project period was extended to carry out activities for (1) strengthening trainers, (2) supporting making of training plans under NSDP framework, and (3) strengthening job placement capacity in order to secure sustainability. Therefore, efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

In the policy aspect, this project is still given importance in the current development policy as the government current strategic documents, i.e. National Priority Program, MoLSAMD 5 year's strategic plan, NSDP Document and National TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) Strategy, are supporting skills development for the vulnerable segment of the society. VTCs officially became sections of MoLSAMD in 2010, and the status of the administrative staff of VTCs is now permanent civil servants. MoLSAMD is managing the budget, planning and implementation of the activities of VTCs and have kept all the VTCs functional. However, the trainers of VTCs are still working under project-base contracts. The number of both administrative staff and trainers are not sufficient to provide quality training courses. MoLSAMD is now working hard to make the status of the core trainers to be permanent civil servants and to secure enough number of staff to further improve the quality of the training courses.

As for the technical capacity, MoLSAMD and the VTCs supported by the project currently have the sufficient technical level to manage the vocational training activities; however, there is need of institutional capacity building of MoLSAMD. As to the capacity of instructors/trainers, their technical level is somewhat sufficient on local level, but it needs to be strengthened to meet the required national and international standards of qualification to produce skilled labor force who could meet need of the labor market. Training of trainers is held but not regularly. Financially, the vocational training by MoLSAMD is supported by development partners for the time being, and MoLSAMD has managed to keep all the 9 VTCs functional. However, the budget after the financial assistance ends in the future is not clear. MoLSAMD is doing their best to secure enough budget for vocational trainings although the fiscal situation of Afghanistan is severe. From these findings, it is considered that the project has some challenges in institutional, technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency; therefore, sustainability of the project is fair.

5 Summary of the Evaluation

The project achieved the project purpose at the time of completion; however, there is not sufficient information on the continuity of the project effect after the project completion and overall goal. Although completion rate and employment rate of trainees were relatively high at project completion and thereafter, the data on recent years is not available. Although facing budget constraint, MoLSAMD has managed to keep VTCs functional with the support of development partners. As for sustainability, this project is still given importance in the current development policy. However, there are challenges in terms of institutional, technical and financial aspects due to unstable status of VTCs and their staff, insufficient capacity of trainers and uncertain budget in the future.

In the light of above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency:

MoLSAMD should continue taking strong leadership in making the VTCs' operation sustainable for the purpose of achieving the policy goals of National Priority Program, MoLSAMD's Strategic Plan and National TVET Strategy. The measures required include securing necessary government budget, hiring enough permanent staff who will be the core of planning and implementing TVET activities, and improvement of TVET curriculum.

Lessons learned for JICA

The project achieved good results upon completion, but assuring sustainability is a big challenge in vulnerable countries which suffer from frequent conflicts and insecurity. Considering such uncertain environment, it is recommended that project in peace-building countries should create funds to maintain the outcomes after the project completion or establish framework with which other NGOs or donors can participate in to assure longer-term support of the project achievements after its completion. In spite, the intensive support after the post-conflict stage is considered important and effective regardless future uncertainty, as it could be a critical factor to build a basis for the post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding.