

Country Name	Project for Socio-economic Activation of Rural Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	

I. Project Outline

Background	<p>In the transition period from the post-war reconstruction to the development heading towards a stable and sustainable growth, economic activation in rural areas had been essential to achieve the sustainable growth for Afghanistan where around 80% of the population lived in rural areas (at the time of ex-ante evaluation). Since 2002, the National Programs under the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) had functioned as the driving force for rural development in the country, through implementing the significant number of sub-projects to cope with the individual development needs. However, it was identified that a comprehensive framework should be considered since it was needed to overview the regional development potentials and constraints, and to indicate the direction towards which investment should be made in order to efficiently attain its effects.</p>								
Objectives of the Project	<p>This project aims to (i) formulate a Promotion Plan and Action Plan for Rural Economic Activation in Bamyan Province, (ii) verify the effectiveness of approaches and technologies to improve farmers' livelihood through pilot projects, (iii) strengthen the capacity of central and local government staff in project planning and administration, and (iv) establish a Rural Economic Activation Model that can be utilized for the provinces in the central highland region, thereby contributing to the improvement of livelihood of rural communities in Bamyan Province and the improvement of the capacity of local government staff (through introduction of the Rural Economic Activation Model) and the implementation of development projects (based on the Promotion Plan for Rural Economic Activation) in the central highland region.</p>								
	<p>Expected Goals through the proposed plan¹:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Through the implementation of development projects based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation, the livelihood of rural communities in Bamyan Province is improved. 2) Through introduction of the Rural Economic Activation Model into the central highland region (Ghor Province, Daykundi Province), the capacity of local government staff in the project planning and administration is improved and the development projects are implemented based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation. 								
Activities of the Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project site: Bamyan Province and Kabul city 2. Main activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) To formulate a Promotion Plan and Action Plan for Rural Economic Activation in Bamyan Province, (2) To verify the effectiveness of approaches and technologies to improve farmers' livelihood through pilot projects, (3) To strengthen the capacity of central and local government staff in project planning and administration, and (4) To establish a Rural Economic Activation Model that can be utilized for the provinces in the central highland region. 3. Inputs (to carry out above activities) <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Japanese Side</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Afghanistan Side</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1) Mission members: 11 persons</td> <td>1) Staff allocated from MRRD and Bamyan Provincial Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Equipment: Facilities and equipment for the small-scale pilot projects</td> <td>2) Land and facilities: Office space</td> </tr> </table> 			Japanese Side	Afghanistan Side	1) Mission members: 11 persons	1) Staff allocated from MRRD and Bamyan Provincial Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD)	2) Equipment: Facilities and equipment for the small-scale pilot projects	2) Land and facilities: Office space
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Project Period	August 2011 - August 2013 (extended period: January 2012 to August 2013)	Project Cost	(ex-ante) 240 million yen (actual) 313 million yen						
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) Bamyan Provincial Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD)								
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Oriental Consultants Co., Ltd.								

II. Result of the Evaluation

<Constraints on Evaluation>

• Due to the state of emergency caused by COVID-19, all information was obtained through questionnaires and follow up phone calls/emails to MRRD and PRRD. No site visits were conducted.

<Special Perspectives Considered in the Ex-Post Evaluation>

Use of Supplementary Information:

• In order to examine the motivation of MRRD and PRRD to proceed with the projects proposed by the Promoted Plan/Action Plan, "Was the implementing agency satisfied with the Promoted Plan/Action Plan?" is used as supplemental information 1.

Evaluating the Utilization Status of the Proposed Plan:

• The Promotion Plan and Action Plan for Rural Economic Activation (Action Plan) proposed 22 development projects to be executed for the period of ten years from 2013 at the moment. As stated in the Final Report, however, the Action Plan is to be updated by responding to the future changes, such as changes in the social situations, expected budget allocations and other relevant factors. Therefore, this ex-post evaluation study does not make an evaluation judgment by setting the cut-off point, such as the number of development projects implemented by the given time period, but by the fact on whether the utilization of

¹ The degree of achievement of expected goals is not to be assessed in principle at the time of ex-post evaluation, since it is defined as the medium-to-long-term goals which will be attained as a result of crystallizing the proposed plan ("output" of the project).

the proposed plan is progressed to some degree by responding to the social changes and other relevant factors.

1 Relevance

<Consistency with the Development Policy of Afghanistan at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

At the time of ex-ante evaluation, the project was consistent with the development plan, “Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (2008-2013)” in which the agricultural and rural development is stated as one of the three priority issues of social economic development. Promotion of the diversification of farming and value-added agriculture was considered as “Economic Growth Engine”, thus the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) prioritized the sub-sector of agriculture such as horticulture crop, animal husbandry and industrial crop.

<Consistency with the Development Needs of Afghanistan at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

This project was consistent with Afghanistan’s development needs for economic activation in rural areas at the time of ex-ante evaluation as described in “Background” above.

<Consistency with Japan’s ODA Policy at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

The Japanese Government set its assistance policy toward Afghanistan in November 2009. One of the three pillars was “Sustainable Development” in which the “Integrated Rural Development”, including agriculture, rural development, infrastructure development was included².

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the relevance of the project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

<Status of Achievement for the Objectives at the time of Project Completion>

The project achieved its objectives by the time of project completion. The Action Plan was formulated in Bamyan Province based on the analysis of development potentials and its impact by the project completion. The effectiveness of approaches and technologies to improve farmers’ livelihoods were partially verified and valuable lessons learned were drawn through implementing three small-scale pilot projects, that are “Potato Production and Processing Project” by PRRD and Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL), “Dairy Product Improvement Project” by DAIL and “Village Naan-Baking Service Project” by PRRD. Through the process of planning and implementation of these pilot projects, the capacity of project planning and administration for the central and local government staff engaged in the Rural Economic Activation was strengthened. The Rural Economic Activation Model that can be utilized for the provinces in the central highland region was established throughout the process of above-mentioned activities. Interviews with officials of MRRD/ PRRD revealed that MRRD/ PRRD had been satisfied with the contents of the Action Plan which responded to the needs of the implementing agencies (Supplementary Information 1).

<Utilization Status of the Proposed Plan at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

The Action Plan has been partially utilized by the time of ex-post evaluation. It was identified by the study that in Bamyan Province, two development projects were executed from 2013 to 2019 in the program of Comprehensive Agriculture and Rural Development Facility (CARD-F)³. Three development projects have been ongoing in the priority programs since 2013 (Indicator 1). Those development projects in the priority programs have been on going in other central highland region, namely Ghor Province, Daykundi Province as well (Indicator 2). All of development projects referred above are either under the Corp Farming Development Plan or the Livestock Development Plan of six sectoral development plans⁴.

According to the PRRD, 22 development projects proposed by the Action Plan have been under the management of the Program Unit of PRRD which bears the responsibilities to actually implement the project, while MRRD coordinates the collaboration with external donors including the funding. It is reported that some external factors such as the unstable security situation in 2014, turmoil among government agencies after the presidential election in 2014 and 2019 have adversely affected the utilization status of the proposed plan to some degree.

<Status of Achievement for Expected Goals through the Proposed Plan at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

Sufficient data was not available due to that accessibility to the information was limited under the effect of COVID-19. Therefore, it is not possible to examine the achievement status of Expected Goals through the Proposed Plan, “(1)Through the implementation of development project based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation, the livelihood of rural communities in the Bamyan Province is improved” and “(2)Through introduction of a Rural Economic Activation Model into the central highland region (Ghor, Day Kundi Provinces), the capacity of local government staff in the project planning and administration is improved and the development projects are implemented based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation”.<Other Impacts at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

It was identified by the study that some development projects under the Action Plan which have not been implemented yet in the provinces of central highland area, have been implemented in other provinces. The development project under the Crop Farming Development Plan, namely “Project for Strengthening Potato Production and Sales” have been implemented in Herat, Kabul, Nangarhar and Kandahar Provinces from 2013 to 2022. The other development project under the Livestock Development Plan, namely “Project for Improving Milk Processing” has been ongoing from 2013 in Kabul, Logar, Parwan and Nangarhar Provinces. No negative impact was observed by the study.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the effectiveness/impact of the project is fair.

Status of Achievement of Utilization Status of the Proposed Plan and Expected Goals through the Proposed Plan

Aim	Indicators	Results
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² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ODA Country Data book in 2011

³ CARD-F is the large-scale program in which GOA had promoted in collaboration with external donors under the “National Comprehensive Agriculture Production & Market Development Program”.

⁴ The Action Plan consists of twenty-two development projects based on the six sectoral development plans, proposing the activities to be implemented for the first ten years to materialize the Promotion Plan for Rural Economic Activation.

<p>(Utilization Status of the Proposed Plan) (1) Development projects have been implemented in Bamyan Province based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation.</p>	<p>(Indicator 1) The implementation progress of development projects in Bamyan Province based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation.</p>	<p>Status of the Achievement: partially achieved (Ex-post Evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Action Plan, 22 development projects were proposed under the 6 sectoral Development Plans to be executed in 10 years from 2013 to 2023. It was identified by the study that one project under the Crop Farming Development Plan and the other under the Livestock Development Plan respectively were completed from 2013 to 2019. They were executed in the CARD-F. Currently, two development projects under the Crop Farming Development Plan and the one under the Livestock Development Plan have been on going at the time of ex-post evaluation in 2020. It was identified by the study that the food processing centers constructed during the project period for community people has been continuously operated since project completion under the Project for Agro-Processing Business Establishment. The required food processing machines were purchased and 35 direct beneficiaries started working to make income. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Development Plan/ Development Projects</th> <th>Implementing Agency</th> <th>Project Period</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3">1. Crop Farming Development Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-3 Project for Strengthening Potato Production and Sales</td> <td>MRRD and PPP⁵</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-5 Project for Strengthening Vegetable Production and Sales</td> <td>MAIL⁶ and MRRD CARD-F Program</td> <td>2013-2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-6 Project for Agro-Processing Business Establishment</td> <td>MRRD and MAIL</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">2. Livestock Development Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-2 Project to Improve Ruminant Livestock Feeding System</td> <td>MAIL and DAIL, CARD-F Program</td> <td>2013-2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-6 Project for Improvement of Poultry-Raising Technology</td> <td>MRRD, AREDP⁷ and PPP</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </p>	Development Plan/ Development Projects	Implementing Agency	Project Period	1. Crop Farming Development Plan			1-3 Project for Strengthening Potato Production and Sales	MRRD and PPP ⁵	2013 ongoing under the priority program	1-5 Project for Strengthening Vegetable Production and Sales	MAIL ⁶ and MRRD CARD-F Program	2013-2019	1-6 Project for Agro-Processing Business Establishment	MRRD and MAIL	2013 ongoing under the priority program	2. Livestock Development Plan			2-2 Project to Improve Ruminant Livestock Feeding System	MAIL and DAIL, CARD-F Program	2013-2019	2-6 Project for Improvement of Poultry-Raising Technology	MRRD, AREDP ⁷ and PPP	2013 ongoing under the priority program
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<p>(2) Rural Economic Activation Model established by the project has been applied in the provinces of the central highland region (Ghor Province, Daykundi Province).</p>	<p>(Indicator 2) The progress of the planning of Rural Economic Activation in other provinces (including Ghor Province, Daykundi Province)</p>	<p>Status of the Achievement: partially achieved (Ex-post Evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not confirmed whether the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activations have been planned, but it was identified by the study that following three projects have already been implemented in other central highland region, namely Ghor Province, Daykundi Province according to the interview with PRRD. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Development Projects</th> <th>Areas of implementation</th> <th>Implementing Agency</th> <th>Project Period</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="4">1. Crop Farming Development Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-3 Project for Strengthening Potato Production and Sales</td> <td>Ghor Province</td> <td>MRRD and PPP</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-6 Project for Agro-Processing Business Establishment</td> <td>Daykundi Province</td> <td>MRRD, MAIL</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">2. Livestock Development Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-6 Project for Improvement of Poultry-Raising Technology</td> <td>Ghor Province Daykundi Province</td> <td>MRRD, AREDP and PPP</td> <td>2013 ongoing under the priority program</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </p>	Development Projects	Areas of implementation	Implementing Agency	Project Period	1. Crop Farming Development Plan				1-3 Project for Strengthening Potato Production and Sales	Ghor Province	MRRD and PPP	2013 ongoing under the priority program	1-6 Project for Agro-Processing Business Establishment	Daykundi Province	MRRD, MAIL	2013 ongoing under the priority program	2. Livestock Development Plan				2-6 Project for Improvement of Poultry-Raising Technology	Ghor Province Daykundi Province	MRRD, AREDP and PPP	2013 ongoing under the priority program
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<p>(Expected Goals through the Proposed Plan) (1) Through the implementation of development project based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation, the livelihood of rural communities in the Bamyan Province is improved.</p>	<p>(Indicator 1) The number of projects, the number of beneficiaries and livelihood changes in the Bamyan Province brought out through implementation of development projects based on the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activation</p>	<p>(Ex-post Evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility to the information was limited under the effect of COVID-19. Five development projects were executed or have been ongoing in the Bamyan Province as described above. However, it is unknown for the number of beneficiaries and livelihood changes in the Province. </p>																								
<p>(2) Through introduction of a Rural Economic Activation Model into the central highland region (Ghor, Day Kundi Provinces), the capacity of local government staff</p>	<p>(Indicator 2) The number of provinces, the number of projects in other provinces brought out through implementation of development projects</p>	<p>(Ex-post Evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility to the information was limited under the effect of COVID-19. It was confirmed that three development projects in two provinces have been implemented as described above. However, it is unknown whether those projects are based on the Action Plan of each province since it was not confirmed that the Promotion Plan of Rural Economic Activations were developed for those provinces. </p>																								

⁵ PPP: Private Public Partnership

⁶ MAIL: Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock

⁷ AREDP: Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme

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Source : Final Report, Questionnaires and Interviews with the implementing agencies

3 Efficiency

Both the project cost and the project period exceeded the plan (ratio against plan: 130% and 139%, respectively). The project period was extended to complete the implementation of the three pilot projects. The project cost exceeded to cover the operation for extended period. The Outputs of the project were produced as planned.

Therefore, the efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

<Policy Aspect>

“Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) (2017-2021)”, a five-year strategic plan for achieving self-reliance, sets the development strategy specifying the National Priority Programs (NPP). Under the NPP, there is the “Comprehensive Agricultural Development Program” with investment priorities toward the national irrigation plan, national wheat sector plan, national horticulture plan, national livestock development policy, livestock development and women in agriculture. In addition, GOA has a number of policies and strategies for better community development such as, “MRRD strategic intent (2010-2025)”, “Provincial Development Plan (PDP) (2010-2025)”, etc.

<Institutional / Organizational Aspect>

According to the interview with PRRD, the Program Unit of PRRD office located in each Province is in charge of the implementation of the project including those development projects under the Action Plan. The number of staff of Program Unit varies from province to province such as from 9 to 25 depending on the scope and the requirements of the project. The staff of Program Unit not only implement the project, but also plan, monitor and design the project, etc. The coordination among MRRD, PRRD and related organization including external donors has been effectively carried out by MRRD to implement the development projects. As explained above, some of development projects were executed in the program of CARD-F and National Rural Access Program.

<Technical Aspect>

It is reported that those staff of MRRD and PRRD have been able to supervise and monitor the projects. However, there is no sufficient data to examine the technical aspect, due to the limited accessibility to the information under the effect of COVID-19.

<Financial Aspect>

Accessibility to the information is limited under the effect of COVID-19. No data was obtained to examine the financial aspect.

<Evaluation Result>

Therefore, the sustainability of the project effects is fair.

5 Summary of the Evaluation

A Promotion Plan and Action Plan for Rural Economic Activation were developed by the time of project completion based on the analysis of development potentials and its impact through implementation of three pilot projects in Bamyan Province. Some external factors such as the turmoil among government agencies after the presidential election in 2014 and 2019 have adversely affected the utilization status of the proposed plan to some degree. However, the consistent efforts of Program Unit of PRRD have enabled to implement some development projects by obtaining the funds of GOA and the external donors. As a result, the Promotion Plan for Rural Economic Activation has partially been utilized by the time of ex-post evaluation,

As for sustainability, no problem has been observed in terms of policy aspect and institutional / organizational aspect. However, sufficient data and information to make an evaluation judgement for other aspects are not available due to the limited accessibility under the effect of COVID-19. As for efficiency, both the project cost and the project period exceeded the plan.

Considering all of the above points, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing Agency:

- 1) It is recommended that MRRD/PRRD should follow up the progress of development projects implemented in Bamyan, Groh and Daykundi Provinces to examine the status of achievement for Expected Goals through the Action plan. The utilization status of the Action Plan was confirmed by the interviews and questionnaire surveys during the study. However, it was not sufficient to examine the achievement status of Expected Goal through the Action Plan due to the effect of COVID-19.
- 2) It is recommended that MRRD/PRRD should review the staff's technical capacity of Program Unit in charge of the Action Plan and their financial aspects in order to identify any issues to be coped with and should prepare the strategy to overcome those issues. Due to the effect of COVID-19, these aspects under the sustainability were not assessed.

Lessons Learned for JICA:

- 1) This ex-post evaluation was conducted seven years after the project completion. It was mainly because the deterioration of local security condition has hampered carrying out the evaluation as planned which is three years after the project completion. With this period, lots of turn over and change of situation have occurred and it was difficult to communicate with those who were aware of the project. In order to make the follow-up activities effective and timely, it is recommended that JICA should explore any simpler ways which enable an Overseas Office to carry out the ex-post evaluation study even under such severe constraints. For example, if the severity of constraints does not allow an Overseas Office to carry out the full-fledged ex-post evaluation study at the ex-post

evaluation year, the Overseas Office should at least monitor the situation via questionnaire survey or interview with the implementing agency just to identify whether there are any crucial issues to be coped with.

- 2) It is understood that the scheme of "Development Planning Project" provides the technical transfer mainly required to proceed the development study in rather short period of time during the project period. After the project completion, only if required, some additional assistance is followed in the form of technical cooperation project or technical assistance by Japanese experts. In case of Afghanistan where the security condition is often unstable, it is crucial to proceed the implementation by themselves after the project completion if the continuation of technical assistance is not made available due to security reasons.

Photos



Qarghan food processing center in Bamyan Province was constructed in 2012 and has been operated mainly by women.

Qargatww food processing center in Bamyan Province was constructed in 2012 has been operated by both Men and Women.