

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

Japan's Support for Afghanistan

- One Year After the Tokyo Conference -

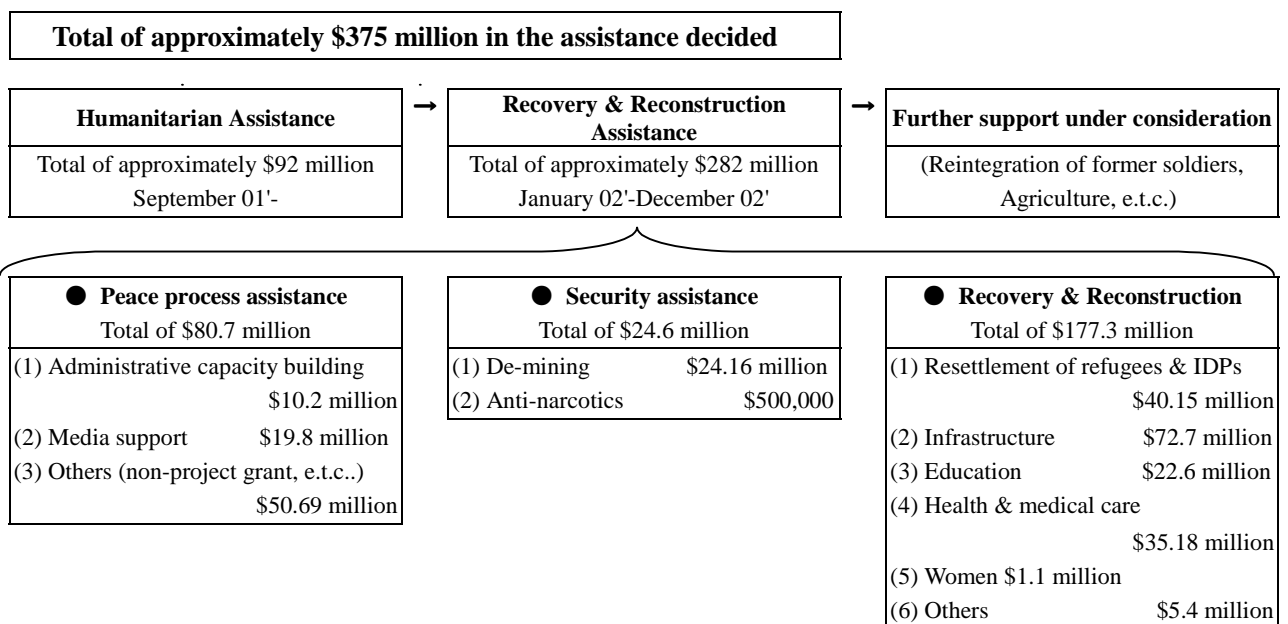
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Second Middle East Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. Introduction

January 21 marked the first anniversary of the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, which was held with the participation of delegates from as many as 61 countries, EU, and 21 international organizations. Japan host the conference and are giving special priority to the implementation of assistance to Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. On this occasion, therefore, we would like to report on the content of Japan's assistance to Afghanistan until now, focusing on assistance projects utilizing ODA for post-conflict recovery and highly appreciated projects with visible results.

< Track Record >



< Main Results of Recovery and Reconstruction Assistance >

Support for school attendance by approximately 2.77 million children
Implementation of training for more than 11,000 teachers
Rehabilitation of approximately 263 schools
Supply of vaccine to an aggregate of more than 10 million children
Supply and rehabilitation of
more than 1,250 schools and temporary learning facilities
Supply of temporary housing equipment for more than 23,000 houses
Rehabilitation of approximately 24 hospitals and clinics
Supply of approximately 300,000 picture books about landmine
Dispatch of an aggregate of 21 experts
Support for more than 35 NGOs
Decision to accept 60 trainees (current fiscal year)
* including projects scheduled to be implemented shortly

2 . Assistance Projects utilizing ODA for Post-Conflict Recovery

As a result of two decades of war, the economic and social infrastructure and the basic system of governance in Afghanistan have collapsed, and there is almost no fiscal base. Domestic security is being maintained in Kabul by the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) and the coalition force, but warlords are still active in the regions. The Afghan national army and civilian police are still being reconstructed, so the country certainly cannot be described as stable. In order for the effective support for the reconstruction of this post-conflict nation , what is required is not only traditional recovery and reconstruction assistance but comprehensive support based on new ideas, including support for the peace process and domestic security. Determined to address this requirement, Japan has developed assistance measures for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, such as "Register for Peace" program designed for the reintegration of former soldiers, assistance for the administrative expenses of the Transitional Administration, and the rehabilitation project of the highway between Kandahar and Kabul.

(1) "Register for Peace" Program for the Reintegration of Former Soldiers

Even now, with the peace process under way, there are said to be several hundred thousand combatants in Afghanistan. Promoting the return to society of these soldiers is extremely important from the point of view of the recovery of domestic

security and economic reconstruction. The Transitional Administration of Afghanistan, however, still rests on a fragile foundation, so that strong support of the international community is indispensable to back up its efforts to undertake the difficult challenges of disarming and demobilizing soldiers and of establishing a national army.

The "Register for Peace" program, based on the concept announced by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Yoriko Kawaguchi during her visit to Afghanistan in May of this year, is a peace-building program which would involve the register of discharged soldiers who express determination to lead peaceful lives and assistance for their return to society, including the promotion of vocational training and employment. This is the first time for Japan to propose concepts in the field of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), and to take leading role in developing and carrying out such a program. Japan's leadership in this effort so far has been supported by the Transitional Administration and other relating countries. At present, in order to materialize this program, Japan, together with the UNAMA, is considering the contents of specific projects and ways of support.

(2) Assistance for the Administrative Expenses of the Transitional Administration

At the Emergency Loya Jirga, a transitional administration was inaugurated with the President Hamid Karzai. Serious problems arose, however, including a shortage of administrative expenses to pay for, among other things, the wages of government workers.

Under its ODA policy, Japan had not implemented assistance to cover administrative expenses, since it could be against the principle of supporting self-help efforts and was difficult for Japan to receive recognition as an implementing country. However, especially after the terrorist attacks in the U.S., the trend that the international community jointly commit the end of conflicts and as the reconstruction assistance support the administrative expenses of a new administration came to be obvious.

Under these circumstances, taking into consideration the support of the international community to the Transitional Administration, its self-help efforts to secure its own fiscal resources, the length of the assistance, and measures taken to ensure transparency, Japan decided to disburse \$27 million to support the Emergency Loya Jirga and \$50 million to cover the administrative expenses of the Transitional Administration. Furthermore, Japan has announced, as part of new assistance package unveiled on October 29, that it will provide ¥6 billion to enable the Transitional Administration to purchase materials required to implement its National Development

Framework.

(3) Rehabilitation Project of the Highway between Kandahar and Kabul

As a result of many years of war, the economic and social infrastructure in Afghanistan, such as roads, electric power, telecommunications, and water supply, have been destroyed. In the words of President Karzai, it really is starting from zero. From the perspectives of implementing visible assistance and building the foundations for economic activity, the transitional administration has been strongly advocating the importance of road construction from the start.

At the U.N. General Assembly in September, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, U.S. President George W. Bush, and Saudi Arabia Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal jointly issued a statement on the construction of the highway linking Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat. As the first step of this large-scale project, in the package announced on October 29, Japan decided to implement rehabilitation project on the highway from Kandahar to Kabul.

Rehabilitation of the highways needs to be carried out as soon as possible, since it is "visible" assistance from the international community and will provide encouragement to the people of Afghanistan facing severe winter and will help uphold President Karzai's Transitional Administration. By utilizing several ODA schemes, Japan achieved early start of the project within two and a half months of the announcement of the project.

3. Highly Appreciated Projects with Visible Results

(1) Ogata Initiative (Regional Comprehensive Development Assistance Program)

As of 2001, there were 3.5 million refugees in the countries surrounding Afghanistan. Following the end of the war, a large number of refugees, far exceeding the expected number of 1.7 million persons, are returning to their country. Meanwhile, as a result of the impact of ethnic conflicts and drought, there are said to be more than one million internally displaced persons. In order to make these people members of a new process of nation building, the ensuring of means of livelihood is necessary. In particular, the extension of regional support and establishment of an environment to accept large numbers of refugees and displaced persons are urgent issues.

Following her inspection of the actual conditions of refugees and displaced

persons on the occasion of her two visits to Afghanistan, Sadako Ogata, the prime minister's special representative, announced regional comprehensive development assistance that offers suggestions and proposals for the direction of Japan's assistance for Afghanistan from now on. Three regions have been selected to receive priority assistance under this program - those regions centering on the regional cities of Kandahar in the south, Jalalabad in the east, and Mazar-i-Sharif in the north. The aims of the program are to search for forms of comprehensive development that lead to regional reconstruction, provide a seamless transition from humanitarian assistance to recovery and reconstruction assistance, and achieve these targets as quickly as possible. Furthermore, as well as just regional recovery and reconstruction, the program aims to strengthen the capacity of the transitional administration, bolster links between the central government and regional authorities, and promote the independence of communities.

As the first phase, the program puts the spotlight on resettlement assistance for refugees and displaced persons. Through U.N. and other organizations, it is, among other things, supplying equipment and materials for temporary housing, improving water-supply systems, rebuilding agriculture, distributing educational materials for children and teachers, and supplying temporary educational facilities. Through NGOs, it is, among other things, extending assistance for the redevelopment of communities. It is estimated that about 1.5 million people will benefit from this program, which has been steadily implemented since its announcement in July.

As a pillar of the package announced on October 29, Japan announced the Ogata Initiative Phase 2, a program to provide regional comprehensive development assistance on an even larger scale. It is estimated that 3 million people will benefit from this Phase 2, which includes emergency income-creation projects, distribution of food as payment for labor, construction of basic infrastructure, protection of mother-child health, the strengthening of educational implementation capacity, and anti-landmine projects in the three priority regions. Through linkage between this program and such projects as the Kabul - Kandahar primary road construction project described above, bilateral assistance from Japan through JICA, and regional development projects scheduled to be implemented by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, Japan hopes that its program will become a model case of comprehensive regional development.

(2) De-mining

The problem of landmines in Afghanistan is serious. There are said to be 150 -

300 victims a month. The eradication of landmines is important not only from the humanitarian perspective of the daily lives of people and the return of refugees and displaced persons but also as a premise for Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. Japan sees de-mining as a major pillar of its support and is the largest contributing country in this field, shouldering more than 60% of the cost of all U.N. projects relating to landmines in Afghanistan.

In January of this year, as part of activities to support Afghan refugees, Japan supported the replacement of the landmine removal equipment (trucks, four-wheel-drive vehicles, landmine detectors, etc.) that was destroyed or plundered as a result of the military action. In addition, support was provided to the landmine removal activities of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA) and for the supply of artificial limbs and landmine publicity activities by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In the package announced on October 29, as part of the Ogata Initiative Phase 2, which will be explained later, Japan announced the implementation, together with U.N. organizations and NGOs, of landmine publicity activities to prevent the occurrence of new landmine victims (future prevention), landmine removal activities (present response), and the reconstruction and establishment of rehabilitation centers to support landmine victims (past recovery).

(3) Media Support

The construction of media infrastructure is being implemented over the long term as a priority support measure by Japan. Television broadcasting has been resumed at a TV broadcasting station built in the 1970s with Japanese official development assistance, and technicians who have received guidance from experts of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) are active.

Japan also supplied technical support and equipment for satellite broadcasting of the Emergency Loya Jirga throughout Afghanistan. It was highly evaluated that this conference which had strong influence on the future of the peace process had been watched broadly by the Afghan people. Furthermore, Japan is inviting technicians as JICA trainees so that they can study the latest broadcasting technology and program production technology. Also, with the objective of supplying necessary information on such topics as education and enlightenment, health and hygiene, and democratization to the Afghan people, Japan has decided to extend assistance for the improvement of studio program production equipment at the Kabul TV broadcasting station. (END)