

Country Assistance Policy for the Kingdom of Lesotho

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Embassy of Japan

1. The significance of assistance

The Kingdom of Lesotho, which achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1966, is a constitutional monarchy and a lower middle-income country. Its total GDP in 2012 was approximately \$2.4 billion, whereas its GNP per capita in 2011 was \$1.22 thousand.

In this country, human resource development and food security are prioritized areas. Firstly, Lesotho's lack of natural resources places critical importance on its development of human resource. The Government of Lesotho published Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015, and it has made efforts to achieve the target of all pupils' accessing free and high-quality primary education by 2015. Secondly, Lesotho is highly dependent on food imports; therefore, the current rise in global food prices has resulted in the lack of food amongst the poor as well as the deterioration of its trade balance. Recurring droughts in recent years have also brought about chronic food shortage in the country.

The support with settling above-mentioned difficulties in Lesotho is salient, particularly in terms of human security, poverty reduction and sustainable growth. In Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter, the importance of these areas is clearly mentioned. In addition, Lesotho's efforts in strengthening its relationship with Japan through numerous efforts including the establishment of its Embassy in Tokyo in 2007, places great significance in its diplomatic ties with Japan. Thus, from diplomatic perspective, the support for Lesotho is also significant.

Therefore, the Government of Japan will provide the following assistance to Lesotho.

2. Key principle of assistance : Support for economic growth and poverty reduction with the aim of building a stable, democratic and economic state

In May 2012, the Government of Lesotho published the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) indicating the principles of economic development for five years. Lesotho's NSDP aims at creating a stable and democratic state by 2020 as well as an eco-friendly and technology-based nation with high-quality human resources. Based on the NSDP, the Government of Japan will support Lesotho to promote economic growth and poverty reduction in the country through enhancing human resource development and improving livelihood of Lesotho people.

3. Prioritized areas: Encouraging human resource development and solidifying social base

The Government of Japan will assist Lesotho to upgrade the service of basic education for the poor, particularly in local areas focusing more specifically on vulnerable groups. In this process, the Government of Japan will address issues to improve educational administration in terms of access, quality and management, and to assist to develop human resources in this respect. will be tackled. Simultaneously, the Government of Japan is also going to support the human resource development in agriculture in which 80% of the Lesotho population is involved. Moreover, the Government of Japan will assist with the expansion of social services including health care to forge social base.

4. Points to consider

At the policy consultation on economic cooperation between Japan and Lesotho held in November 2012, the Government of Lesotho requested Japan's support in the arena of agriculture, climate change and infrastructure. Taking into consideration of those areas of request and limited budget for assistance, the Government of Japan is going to strive to find genuinely feasible projects which it will assist.

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