

## **Third Party Evaluator's Opinion on Barbara Irrigation Project**

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In the past ten years, especially since the visit of President BEN ALI of Tunisia to Japan, in July 1996, the cooperation and exchange between Tunisia and Japan have increased. In financial cooperation, a real take-off has happened with 6 Loan Agreements signed in 1996 and 4 in 1998, among which exists the Loan Agreement No. TS-P13 for Barbara Irrigation Project.

### **Criteria-1 Relevance**

At the end of the 8th National 5 year Development Plan, in 1996 the Agriculture sector produced 16.5% of the GDP, and the increase of agricultural crops in northwestern region of Tunisia namely in Governorate of Jendouba, Kasserine, Bizerte, le Kef and Siliana was on the top priority of the Tunisian Government not only to meet food security but also to improve the farmers' livelihoods and upgrade standard of living in the mentioned Governorate by creating new condition for their activities.

The 9th and 10th plans were more ambitious for those regions and the "Water Resources Development Plan" underlines clearly the need to promote irrigation perimeters in Tunisia and especially in Barbara region. Before launching the 11th plan for the period 2007-2011, studies were made from 2000 to 2006 to see how it was relevant to implement the project, and a new program is planned from 2008 to strengthen the sustainability of the created irrigated Perimeters in Barbara.

### **Criteria-2 Efficiency**

At the time of appraisal, the 1,863 ha of land was planned to be irrigated in Fernana and Hammam Bourguiba, with installation of very important new infrastructure: one regulating reservoir for about 150 m<sup>3</sup>, pumping stations, reservoirs, water pipes for about 5.9 km and tertiary canals for about 80.4 km. All of the planned facilities were successfully installed with some increase in number in many cases especially for the pumping stations to meet the updated demand. Some delay occurred in the implementation of the project due not only to the number of batches and the Tunisian capacity to produce concrete pipes but also to the local procedures for bidding, aiming at maximizing competition between suppliers. The awarding of contracts in Tunisia is very transparent. ICB rules the bidding process even for civil works, and for that reason all the project was completed with only 1,518 million yen from the contracted 1,913 million yen loan.

### **Conclusion**

Tunisian in urban and rural area are aware of the contribution of Japanese ODA in their daily life; they are more and more keener to learn about culture and social life in Japan.

Friendships, human relation between our two peoples are growing. The question is how to keep, preserve and develop these important achievements.