

CENTRAL ASIA BRIEFING SERIES

COUNTRY BRIEF# 1: TAJIKISTAN

COUNTRY FACT SHEET # 1: TAJIKISTAN



Country in Statistics

Population, total (millions)	6.64
Population growth (annual %)	1.36
Life expectancy at birth, female (years)	69.20
Life expectancy at birth, male (years)	63.95
GDP (current US\$) (billions)	2.81
GDP growth (annual %)	7.00
GNI, Atlas method (current US\$) (billions)	2.57
Inflation, consumer prices (annual %)	..
Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP)	12.04
Unemployment, total (% of total labor force)	..

(SOURCE: WORLD BANK, 2006)

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HDI Rank:	122 (177 nations)
Percentage of Population having no access to Improved WATSAN:	41%
Corruption Perceptions Index Ranking (2007):	150 (180 countries)
Doing Business in Landlocked Economies Rankings	159 (181 economies)

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Tajikistan is a post-conflict; landlocked “low-income” country in Central Asia, one of the poorest and most fragile of the CIS countries.

The country is thorn by a civil war of more than 5 years from 1992 to 1998, when 60% of GDP was wasted in vain & up to 50,000 lives were lost. However, it is one of the few post-conflict countries that have moved quickly from war to internal stability and have formed a functioning government.

It is the only country in Central Asia who is likely not to achieve the MDGs. And its implications for 67.5 % of its population under the age of 29 are notable.

This is a mountainous country, having 93% of such terrain & has more than 50% of its land above 3000 masl height.

Environment & Climate:

Climatic condition:

- Arid and dry climate prevails and this needs to be taken into account when designing ICIMOD exchange/training programs. However, with the changing climate, unusual weather and calamities are of higher frequency as the heavy snow fall of winter 2007 made the country to appeal for an International Humanitarian Assistance. Unusually heavy (or 245% exceeding the average norm) snow fall in December 2007 caused disruption of energy supply and heating system and sky-rocketed the fuel price. As the Nurek HPS alone produces 60% of the country’s power, decrease in water level of the reservoir forced to cutting the supplies of energy for remote villages.

Major montanes:

- Pamir /TienShan mountain ranges (east with the highest summit of Ismoil Somoni at 7,495 masl);
- Kuhiston mountain ranges (central);

Major Glaciers:

- Considered as the main glacial knot for CA: Glaciers occupy 6% of the national territory: with 8000 glaciers; 7 of them longer than 20 km.
- The largest: The Fedchenko Glacier (size: 70km x2 km x 1km thickness)

Major watersheds:

- Syrdaya (North); Zeravshan (central); Pyanji (Pamirs);

- 80% of lakes are high altitude lakes at 3000 masl altitude. The Sarez Lake is the deepest freshwater and 1911 quake- formed lake (west Pamir);

Largest plains:

- Ferghana,
- Penjikent;
- Kuliab;
- Gissar Vakhsh; and
- lowland Kafirgan

Forest as an Immediate Carbon Sink: Primary forest over which the state has control constitutes 3 % of the entire territory.

BD/Habitat protection in Tajikistan:

Tajikistan has the highest share of protected areas: with 22,1 % of land taken under Special Protection. For the summary info on PAs, please visit <http://www.usembassy.uz/Central Asia Regional Environmental Hub Highlights>, 2006. Categorization/classification system in Tajikistan is still from the FSU time: Zapovedniks with no economic activities allowed; limited economic activities allowed in zakazniks and national parks. The State Environmental Protection & Forest Management Committee is charge of PA issues.

Socio-Economic Overview:

- Economic growth rate (annual): 8 % on average (2000-2006)
- GDP Structure (2007):
 1. 9% of GDP: Cotton and aluminum export;
 2. 20% of GDP: Agriculture employing 60% of population;
 3. 36% of GDP: Remittances by Laborer-Migrants to Russia

Poverty:

- Per capita income equals to US\$410 (Atlas method, 2007).
- 57 percent of population living below US\$ PPP 2.15/day.
- Debt burden: external debt down to 42 percent of GDP in 2005 from 124 percent in 2000 (Russia), but USD 604 million in long-term loans from China for energy and transport projects standing for 25 percent of GDP (concessional basis, with a 40 percent grant element)
- High labor migration creating all the subsequent chains of social problems

Past achievements:

- Number of Doctors: 21.2 physicians/52.8 medical nurses for every 10,000
- Number of health inst: 1000 (433 hospitals)
- Number of schools: 3,357 schools for 1,5 million students; 30 universties/72 colleges for 100,000 students
- Number of Science workers: 5000 scientists

CHALLENGES: SOCIO-ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Social Issues:

- Feminization of rural areas due to large scale migration;
- Drug trafficking along 1200 km long border with Afghanistan
- HIV/AIDS Spread
- Ensuring pro-poor growth and addressing poverty

Economic challenges:

- Inducing macro-economic solutions with creating more jobs & financial stability;
- Diversification and value addition of narrow export base highly susceptible to volatile external market price shocks;
- Reducing high dependency on oil import;
- Restructuring/privatization of state properties and supporting SMEs;
- High ODA dependence w/ current debt US\$604 mill. (PRC); and
- Balancing competing interests for economic growth and environmental sustainability in order to avoid the “resource curse” phenomena

Environmental Issues:

Combination of natural and anthropogenic factors leads to climatic fluctuations and more frequent disasters; land degradation; increased desertification and degradation of mountain ecosystem. The Aral Sea crisis and fine particles of salt and dust from Aralkum desert (a post Aral-Sea Disaster formation) impact the countries in vicinity including Tajikistan: its human population and natural environment, as the dust can be dispersed to a 500 km range area with toxic sulphate/chlorine salts and pesticide residues.

Human factors include: Unsustainable use and over-extraction of resources; outdated monoculture agrarian system and mushrooming of small subsistence farmers replacing the soviet time kholkhoz and sovkhoz systems; pollution and contamination due to accumulation of toxic waste and outdated technologies for exploration/extraction industries.

Natural factors include: climate change impacts and aridity exacerbating desertification and its geographic location in seismically active zone making it particularly prone to natural disasters, melting of glaciers and changes in species composition etc.

At the policy level, environmental concerns have not been mainstreamed and integrated adequately into the Government undertakings due to multiple factors such as lack of monitoring and multi-year data to support the formulation of solid policies. Shortage of professionals ensuring inter-agency integration and coordination is another hurdle for effective institutional coverage of the issues.

Some Statistics on state of Tajikistan’s NR use:

Land degradation translated in loss of soil fertility and desertification due to collector drainage system and monoculture of cotton and grains resulted in excessive soil salination and top layer soil compaction due to application of heavy machineries.

Rangeland overgrazing leads to desertification; for summer pastures the rate is at 90% and for winter pastures: 92.5%. Productivity is reduced in 5-10 times.

More than 90% industrial waste is constituted by the discharges from non-ferrous metal and mineral mining.

Water is harvested for hydro-electric power: in total reserve of hydro power resources. Tajikistan is 8th place in the world. 92% of total capacity of energy system falls on the share of hydropower. Tajikistan has 2 of the world's highest dams. They are Nurek and Rogun Dams.

	River, location	Structural height		Gross reservoir capacity		Year completed
		ft	m	Thousands of ac ft	Millions of cu m	
Rogun	Vakhsh, Tajikistan	1,099	335	9,404	11,600	1985
Nurek	Vakhsh, Tajikistan	984	300	8,512	10,500	1980

However, towns like Taboshar (with 11,000 population) in northern Sogd Province of Tajikistan experience acute shortage of potable water and residents are forced to leave their homes. Drought of 2008 leads to drying up of many natural springs, the only source of clean drinking water for many. This has grave implication on spread of infectious water-borne diseases. As Tajikistan shares the largest proportion of river basins of Amudarya and Syrdarya (43,4%), pollution and depletion of water flows for irrigated agriculture and power generation in the region hit hard through the country's groundwater reserve.

LIST OF ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND UNITS

BD	Biodiversity
CA	Central Asia
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
inst.	Institution
m.a.s.l	meters above sea level
NR	Natural Resource
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PA	Protected Areas
PRC	People's Republic of China
SME	Small & Medium Enterprises
WATSAN	Water & Sanitation

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