

Country Name	Agricultural Development Project in Kambia District
Sierra Leone	

I. Project Outline

Project Cost	353 million yen	
Project Period	February, 2006 – March, 2009	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS); Rokupr Agricultural Research Center (RARC) (Former Rice Research Station at Rokupr (RRS-R))	
Cooperation Agency in Japan	RECS International Inc.	
Related Projects (if any)	[Japan's cooperation] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Children and Youth development Project in Kambia District (Development Study, 2005-2008) · Sustainable Rice Development Project (Technical Cooperation, 2010-2014; de facto Phase 2) [Other donors' cooperation] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Agricultural Business Unit (ABU) (UNDP) · Farmers Field School (FFS; technical assistance for improving productivity) (FAO) · Freetown-Conakry Highway (rehabilitation of national highways, 2011) (EU) · NEPAD/CAADP Investment Plan "Small Commercialization Program (SCP)" (EU, GAFSP, etc., 2009-2014) 	
Background	Sierra Leone, located in the tropical rain forest climate zone in West Africa, is blessed with plentiful rainfall and sunlight, and thus suited for growing variety of crops such as rice, cassava, groundnut and sweet potato. In Kambia district, the target area of this project, most of the 270,000 population was engaged in agriculture, and the district served as a major rice production center to support the national economy until the 1980s. However, the civil war that started in 1991 destroyed the district's agricultural facilities including storage, rice mills and research institutions, and farmers couldn't help but leave their farmland. As a result, rice production was halved compared to pre-civil war time. Considering these backgrounds, MAFFS requested technical cooperation to strengthen the agricultural support system of the district and thereby to increase food production centering on rice.	
Inputs	Japanese Side	Sierra Leone Side
	1. Experts: 9 persons for Long term 2. Trainees Received: 1 person 3. Equipment: 20 million yen 4. Local Cost: 34 million yen	1. Personnel assigned: 24 persons 2. Land and facilities: project office
Project Objectives	Overall goal	
	Productivity of food crops for self-sufficiency thereby contributing to food security in Kambia district is improved.	
	Project Objective(s)	
		Agricultural technical support system in Kambia district is strengthened.
		Output(s)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Output 1: Agricultural support system of MAFFS-K is improved. · Output 2: Agricultural technical package to improve agricultural productivity is formulated. · Output 3: Agricultural technical support guidelines for farmers is developed.

II. Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the Evaluation

In Sierra Leone before the commencement of this project (2005), there was still a long way to self-sufficient food production due to crop storage buildings and rice mills that were destroyed during the civil war and the dysfunctional agricultural extension system. Under such circumstances, the Government of Sierra Leone held self-sufficient food production as the most important issue, amongst which promotion of high potential rice production was the urgent task.

For the project purpose of strengthening agricultural technical support system in Kambia district, this project has partially achieved the target: it achieved the development of the agricultural technical package and the guidelines for extension of the package to farmers, but challenges remain in terms of still insufficient manpower and technical level of MAFFS Kambia district office (MAFFS-K), the implementing agency. Therefore, the extension system for the entire district (including non-pilot sites) is still weak, and MAFFS-K receives support from the Phase 2 of this project as well as other donors. For the overall goal, the outcomes of this project are continuously applied in the Small Commercialization Program (SCP) that is being implemented under the National Sustainable Agricultural Development Plan (NSADP) developed by MAFFS in 2009. Positive impacts of this project are expected if NSADP, which aims at food security through increased crop production, is implemented as planned.

As for sustainability, while this project is well placed in the policy aspect, some problems have been observed in terms of institutional, technical and financial aspects due to the above-mentioned challenges of MAFFS-K in its extension system and technical capabilities, and also because the financial aspect may depend on donors' funding situations.

For relevance, the project has been highly relevant with Sierra Leone's development policy, development needs as well

as Japan's ODA policy. For efficiency, the project period slightly exceeded the plan.
In the light of above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

1 Relevance

This project has been highly relevant with Sierra Leone's development policy "self-sufficient food production through agricultural promotion" as set in policy documents including the Agricultural Development Program 2004, Sierra Leone Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (SL-PRSP) (draft as of 2005) and SCP 2009, development needs "development of rice cultivation in Kambia district", as well as Japan's ODA policy "assistance in community development through agricultural promotion" as set in the policy dialogues and JICA's Country Assistance Program at the time of both ex-ante and project completion. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

The purpose of this project aimed at (i) improvement of capacity of extension officers of MAFFS-K so that they acquire skills for agricultural extension and become able to utilize the tools for extension (guidelines), (ii) development of a prototype of agricultural technical package, and (iii) development of the agricultural technical support guidelines that contain methods of extension. For (i), extension officers acquired skills such as adhere to the cropping calendar, reduction of the amount of seed rice and post-harvest handling. Also, as a result of the pilot activities in which the extension officers provided guidance to farmers with supervision by Japanese experts, crop production increased in the pilot sites (7 villages for rice and 2 villages for vegetables). However, for disseminating the agricultural technical package to rice farmers in the entire district (i.e. beyond the pilot sites), there remain challenges in terms of insufficient manpower and technical level of the extension system. MAFFS-K is facing an issue of aging of its staff: vacancies created by retirement are not filled. Also, as the extension services had not functioned for a long period of time, many extension officers lack basic techniques of rice cultivation and calculation skills. As for (ii) and (iii), the agricultural technical package and the technical support (extension) guidelines focusing on rice cultivation were developed through the pilot activities. Therefore, the target (ii) and (iii) were achieved while (i) was partially achieved. In response to these challenges, MSADP/SCP that MAFFS started in 2009 is developing capacity of extension officers with advices from FAO. It also puts gradual hiring of new staff in perspective.

As for the overall goal, the indicators to measure the achievement level were not set at the time of project planning. Nevertheless, extension officers kept applying part of the technical packages in the pilot sites after the project completion, and farmers there maintain the productivity that the pilot activities achieved (0.5t/ha before the pilot activities and 0.76t/ha after the pilot activities; both without fertilizer). There is no yield per unit data on vegetables, production is reported to have been increased with support from NSADP/SCP. With regard to impacts in the entire Kambia district, extension officers of MAFFS-K keep using the techniques/ knowledge they acquired through this project as well as the agricultural technical package and the extension tool (guidelines), and are actively engaged in activities of NSADP/SCP such as provision of seeds and fertilizer, implementation of training and construction of Agricultural Business Center (ABC) with financial support from EU and Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). As NSADP aims at food security through increased crop production, the achievement of the overall goal of this project is expected.

In this way, this project has somewhat achieved the project purpose and overall goal in terms of consolidating the agricultural technical package suitable for Kambia district and increasing food production in the pilot sites, while additional assistance was needed for expansion of these outcomes to the entire district. Therefore, effectiveness/ impact of the project is fair.

3 Efficiency

While the inputs were mostly appropriate for producing the outputs of the project, and the project cost was within the plan (ratio against the plan: 99%), the project period was slightly longer than the plan (ratio against the plan: 106%) because of several reasons such as the delay in the pilot activities following the delay in aggregating the results of the baseline survey. Therefore, efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

In the policy aspect, this project is still given importance in the current development policy as it aims at the increase in crop production of small-scale farmers through enhanced productivity focusing on rice. The structure of the implementing agency is facing an issue of insufficient manpower to cover the entire district, though the number of staff was partly increased after the project. As for the technical capacity of extension officers of the implementing agency (MAFFS-K), they have been given opportunities of capacity development such as trainings under Phase 2 of this project, which aims to disseminate the project outcomes to the whole country, and Farmers' Field School (FFS) under SCP. Nonetheless, the insufficient level of their technical skills is still an issue as they are weak in putting what they learned into practice in the field and in case-by-case application. The financial aspect may depend on donors' funding situations in the future: donors are monitoring the progress of SCP and considering continuing their financial assistance. From these findings, it is considered that the project has some problems in institutional, technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency; therefore, sustainability of the project is fair.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency

Since the project completion up to the present date, the agricultural extension system of MAFFS-K has lacked manpower and technical capacity to cover the district beyond the pilot sites (where certain outcomes were brought). Nevertheless, hiring of new staff has been started slowly using the SCP budget, and the extension division of MAFFS-K implements re-training of extension officers using the FFS approach based on the medium- and long-term plan to consolidate the technical capacity. Phase 2 of this project also provides more practical and widely-applicable trainings. MAFFS-K is recommended to fully utilize those trainings. Furthermore, MAFFS headquarters is recommended to standardize such trainings, make the guidelines and manuals official, and conduct monitoring of extension works after the training.

Lessons learned for JICA

When supporting a country where aid coordination is in progress, planning a project in line with the sector program (such as NSADP) and establishing an implementation set-up in coordination with other donors will enhance the project impacts and sustainability. Also, compared to the time when this project was started, studies on more efficient assistance during the post-civil war transitional period have already been conducted by a number of donors including JICA and international organizations. Therefore, future assistance for the transitional period should utilize the tools and approaches proposed in those studies.



Rice field of a farmer's group that are still used. It has just been plowed for sowing. (Kunthai Village)



A farmer's group and an extension officer of MAFFS-K (Kalintin Village)



A farmer who continues cultivation of water melons with support from SCP (Makatick Village; photograph taken in 2011)