

Ex-Ante Evaluation (for Japanese ODA Loan)

Africa Division 1, Africa Department, JICA

1. Name of the Program

Country: The Republic of Rwanda (Rwanda)

Program: Sector Policy Loan for Nutrition Improvement through Agriculture Transformation

Loan Agreement: August 16, 2019

2. Background and Necessity of the Program

(1) Current State and Issues of the Nutrition Sector and Priority of the Program in Rwanda

Through efforts to improve access to basic health services and to reduce poverty, Rwanda has seen significant improvements in: (1) infant mortality (per 1,000 births), (2) under five mortality (per 1,000 births), and (3) maternal mortality (per 100,000 deliveries) over the past 15 years ((1) 107 (in 2000) → 32 (in 2015), (2) 196 (in 2000) → 50 (in 2015), (3) 1,071 (in 2000) → 210 (in 2014) (Source: World Bank)). The goal of reducing wasting among children under five years of age (referring to a condition in which children do not consume enough calories and face an imminent risk of death, as a result of acute or severe undernutrition), which is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter referred to as “SDGs”), has already been achieved. However, the rate of stunting among children under five years of age (referring to a condition in which children do not intake adequate nutrition on a daily basis and fall into chronic malnutrition, and do not grow to an age-appropriate height) is 34.9% nationwide (Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis: CFSVA, 2018), which is higher than the average of 31.3% in Sub-Saharan African countries (Source: WHO, 2017).

Among malnutrition, stunting has an adverse impact on the formation of human capital in the medium to long term, including delays in physical and brain development, weakening of the immune system, an increase in the risk of disease, etc., which results in a negative impact on economic development. Therefore, in the Fourth Health Sector Strategic Plan (2018-2024), the Government of Rwanda set the goal of reducing the stunting rate among children under five years of age from 38% in 2016 to 19% by 2024, and has been working to accelerate the development and implementation of national strategies, policies, and programs for nutrition improvement. As a result, Rwanda’s stunting rate fell from 43.4% in 2012 to 34.9% in 2018. Although certain results have come out, further efforts are still required.

Under the vision “a nation that enjoys food security, nutritional health, and sustainable agricultural growth from a productive, green, and market-led agricultural sector”, the National Agriculture Policy (developed in 2017) identifies “improved food security and nutrition” as one of the policy objectives. The Strategic Plan for

Agricultural Transformation 2017-2024, which was finalized under the policy above, stipulates that the following measures will be taken in coordination with other ministries and agencies related to the nutrition sector: production expansion and price stabilization of iron-fortified beans and other nutrition-dense food, distribution of small-scale livestock for animal protein intake, promotion of kitchen garden, and dissemination of nutrition-related knowledge to farmers and consumers.

In order to reduce stunting, (1) adequate care, (2) adequate environmental health, and (3) adequate food are required simultaneously. However, less than 4% of children under two years of age have access to all of these (Source: CFSVA 2018). In the northwestern part of the country, there are some districts where the stunting rates exceed 50%. Therefore, the Government of Rwanda is intensively engaged in activities mainly in these districts in the area of adequate care and environmental health, with the cooperation of the World Bank, UNICEF, and other organizations. On the other hand, in the area of adequate food, it is necessary to deal with complex factors, such as insufficient and unstable food production, lack of purchasing power at the household level, monotonous traditional diet without sufficient animal protein, etc. More government-led activities are expected to be carried out. Furthermore, although multi-sectoral coordination is necessary at the local level in order to allow each household to realize (1) through (3) above, the coordination mechanism has just started to function at the central level and has not yet functioned at the local level. Therefore, for reducing stunting in Rwanda, it is necessary to solve the above-mentioned problems.

The Sector Policy Loan for Nutrition Improvement through Agriculture Transformation (hereinafter referred to as the “Program”) supports the strengthening of food and nutrition security and is one of essential projects to improve stunting in Rwanda.

(2) Japan and JICA’s Cooperation Policy and Operations in the Nutrition Sector

The Nairobi Declaration of TICAD VI, which was organized by the Government of Japan in 2016, identifies “Promoting resilient health systems for quality of life” as one of the three Pillars, and emphasizes support for “promoting nutrition”. The Program is based on the Nutrient Focused Approach promoted by the Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa (hereinafter referred to as the “IFNA”), which was launched by JICA at TICAD VI along with the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and other international organizations, thereby greatly contributing to the promotion of the IFNA.

Japan’s Country Development Cooperation Policy for Rwanda (July 2017) cites agricultural development, which is essential for stunting reduction, as one of Rwanda’s priority areas. The JICA Country Analysis Paper for Rwanda (May 2015) also specifies that support is provided for “capacity development of industrial actors (small entities such as farmers and processors), institutional capacity development of government organizations, infrastructure development such as irrigation, etc.” The Program is consistent with the above-mentioned international commitments, the development cooperation policies and analyses of the Government of Japan and JICA.

In addition, the implementation of measures for stunting reduction is expected to contribute to the SDG 2 (“End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”). Thus, the necessity and relevance of implementing the Program is substantial.

(3) Other Donors’ Activities

The World Bank is implementing projects in the health, social protection, and agriculture sectors for improving nutrition in Rwanda. In particular, a project in the health sector called “the Stunting Prevention and Reduction Project” provides support for capacity development of Community Health Workers (hereinafter referred to as “CHW”) who play a key role in improving nutrition at the community level and for Early Childhood Development ((hereinafter referred to as “ECD”) in 13 districts with severe stunting.

UNICEF provides support for the institutional capacity development of National Early Childhood Development Program ((hereinafter referred to as “NECDP”) to coordinate and implement nutrition improvement programs and for the development of related policies.

3. Program Description

(1) Program Objectives

The objectives of the Program are to promote stable supply, improved access and increased consumption of nutritious food, by facilitating priority policy actions towards nutrition improvement through policy dialogues and financial support, thereby contributing to promoting the economic stability and development efforts of Rwanda.

(2) Program Site / Target Area

Throughout Rwanda. Of the 30 districts in Rwanda, those with severe stunting and relatively few agricultural intervention for nutrition improvement are selected as core target districts of agricultural activities under the Program (12 districts in total). The changes in the value of operation and effect indicators before and after the implementation of the Program would be measured.

(3) Program Components

In order to achieve the targeted stunting rate set by the Government of Rwanda, a total of 27 policy actions. See the attached policy matrix for details. Once these policy actions are implemented, the Program disburses the loan with the aim of filling a part of the financial gap of the Government of Rwanda (5.5% of GDP in FY2018 (approximately 476.3 billion Rwandan Francs or approximately 530 million US dollars)).

(4) Estimated Program Cost (Loan Amount)

10 billion yen

(5) Schedule

Budget support of the Program will begin in July 2019. The policy actions are aimed to be achieved in April 2019, May 2020, and May 2021. The disbursement will be made after confirming the achievement of policy actions for each tranche. The

Program will be completed when JICA's final disbursement is made (tentatively July 2021).

(6) Program Implementation Structure

- 1) Borrower: The Government of the Republic of Rwanda
- 2) Program Executing Agencies: Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) under MINAGRI, National Early Childhood Development Program (NECDP) under the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, and Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) under the Ministry of Health

(7) Cooperation and Sharing of Roles with Other Donors

1) Japan's Activity

Through the Program, it is planned to use the training manual and method developed under the technical cooperation for improving the livelihoods of small farmers called "Smallholder Market-oriented Agriculture Project (2014-2019)" throughout the country, after incorporating nutritional elements into the training manual. In addition, the water management manual, which will be developed under the technical cooperation called "Project for Water Management and Capacity Building (2019-2024)", will be utilized through the Program. Regarding policy actions of the Program, technical support has been provided through the above-mentioned projects and the IFNA. Technical assistance necessary for the achievement of policy actions of the Program will be provided through individual experts such as "Agriculture Policy Advisor."

2) Other Donors' Activity

As the target districts of "the Stunting Prevention and Reduction Project" implemented by the World Bank overlap with some of the core target districts of the Program, joint monitoring and evaluation is under consideration. It is also planned to collaborate with FAO and UNICEF in the implementation of the policy actions. In addition, among the members of the nutrition sector working group, which is composed of the Government of Rwanda and donors, etc., program-related information will be shared and collaboration will be promoted.

(8) Environmental and Social Consideration / Poverty Reduction / Social Development

1) Environmental and Social Consideration

- i) Category: C
- ii) Reason for Categorization: The Program is classified as Category C as it is likely to have minimal or little adverse impact on the environment and society under the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (issued in April 2010).

2) Cross-Cutting Issues

The Program designates areas with high stunting rates as core target districts and provides complementary support for the promotion of kitchen garden and the distribution of small-scale livestock that benefit the poor. The Program, therefore, is categorized as a program for poverty reduction and consideration.

3) Gender category: [Gender issues] ■ GI (S) (Gender Integrated Projects)

Reason for classification: Based on the consultation with the Government of Rwanda, it was agreed that policy actions, which result in nutrition improvement of local people including pregnant and lactating women, would be set and carried out.

(9) Other Important issues: None in particular.

4. Targeted Outcomes

(1) Quantitative Effects

1) Performance Indicators (Operation and Effect Indicators)

Indicator	Baseline (Recorded in 2015)	Target (2023) [2 years after completion]
Number of the districts which identify Nutrition Dense Food (NDF) and have district plans including target amounts of NDF production	0*	12
Percentage of children under two years who consume iron-rich foods in last 24 hours in target districts	13.4	45
Percentage of children under two years who consume animal source protein in last 24 hours in target districts	27.3	45
Percentage of children under two years who have access to the services for all three underlying factors of child undernutrition in target districts (adequate care, adequate environmental health, and adequate food)	4.3	8
Percentage of children under two years who are fed Minimum Acceptable Diet in target districts	15.5	22

*: Recorded in 2018

In addition, the national stunting rate among children under five years of age will be monitored as an impact indicator for the Program.

(2) Qualitative Effects

Improving the quality of CHW's activities at the community level, enhancing the nutrition-related knowledge of farmer promoters, increasing the income and livelihood of local residents, and promoting economic stability and social development.

(3) Internal Rate of Return

Not calculated.

5. Preconditions / External Conditions

(1) Preconditions: For the Government of Rwanda, "the stunting reduction among children under five years of age" remains as one of priority agendas.

(2) External conditions: The political and economic situation in Rwanda will not

deteriorate rapidly.

6. Lessons Learned from Past Programs

The results of the ex-post evaluation of the Japanese ODA Loan, “Budget Strengthening Support Loan” for the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (prepared in 2017) revealed that it is essential to combine general budget support with other technical assistance such as dispatching a policy advisor and implementing technical cooperation projects, in order to smoothly implement general budget support.

In the “Health Sector Policy Loan for Attainment of the Universal Health Coverage (hereinafter referred to as “UHC”)” for the Republic of Kenya, the UHC Coordination Committee, which was in charge of coordination of several UHC programs at the national level, was supposed to monitor the JICA loan program, but this committee did not function well as a place to regularly supervise programs because the frequency of its meetings decreased.

In implementing the Program, it is planned to provide technical assistance through the dispatch of individual experts (Agricultural Policy Advisors, etc.) and to strengthen the capacity of the MINAGRI and the NECDP through country-focused training. It is also planned to establish the Technical Monitoring Committee of the Program and to provide indirect support by JICA and individual experts for the meetings of the committee so that the implementation of policy actions of the Program is facilitated. In addition, through the Technical Monitoring Committee of the Program, timely monitoring of the activities of the Government of Rwanda concerning the stunting reduction and the progress of related programs will be expected.

7. Evaluation Results

The Program is consistent with Rwanda’s development agendas and policies and with the development cooperation policies and analyses of the Government of Japan and JICA. Through the implementation of measures for stunting reduction, the Program aims to improve nutrition in Rwanda, thereby contributing to attaining SDG 2 (“End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”). Thus, the necessity for JICA to support the Program is substantial.

8. Plan for Future Evaluation

- (1) Indicators to be Used: As indicated in (1) and (2) of section 4.
- (2) Timing: Two years after program completion (ex-post evaluation)

End

Appendix: Policy Matrix of the Sector Policy Loan for Nutrition Improvement through Agriculture Transformation

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Areas		Policy Actions (PAs) for 1st Tranche (Achieved by April, 2019)	Policy Actions (PAs) for 2nd Tranche (by May, 2020)	Policy Actions (PAs) for 3rd Tranche (by May, 2021)
1. Strengthening Food & Nutrition Security				
1-1	Mainstreaming nutrition sensitive agriculture	PA(1) NSA Mainstreaming Guidelines document is updated and necessary FY2019 budget for mainstreaming nutrition sensitive agriculture is estimated and requested by MINAGRI to MINECOFIN through budget consultation process. 【MINAGRI in charge】	PA(9) The NSA Mainstreaming Guidelines document is officially approved by MINAGRI through Agriculture Sector Working Group. 【MINAGRI in charge】 PA(10) In target districts, training on NSA Mainstreaming Guidelines is conducted at central and district level and accordingly NDF is identified at district level. 【MINAGRI in charge】	PA(19) Rwandan Food Composition Table (RFCT) is prepared. 【MINAGRI in charge】
1-2	Availability		PA(11) In target districts, district plans which include production targets and activities for NDF production are developed. 【MINAGRI in charge】 PA(12) Necessary support and budget for NDF production in target districts are endorsed by MINAGRI through the Agriculture Sector Working Group. 【MINAGRI in charge】	PA(20) By applying the principles of NSA Mainstreaming Guidelines, crop calendars for irrigation schemes are prepared. 【RAB in charge】 PA(21) NDF production is carried out in target districts and reported to MINAGRI. 【MINAGRI in charge】
1-3	Accessibility	PA(2) Necessary FY2019 budget for training on mainstreaming nutrition sensitive agriculture is estimated and requested by RAB to MINECOFIN through budget consultation process. 【RAB in charge】	PA(13) Cooperative training on mainstreaming nutrition sensitive agriculture is conducted in target districts and necessary FY2020 budget for its training is estimated and requested by RAB to MINECOFIN through budget consultation process. 【RAB in charge】	PA(22) Cooperative training on mainstreaming nutrition sensitive agriculture is conducted in target districts and necessary FY2021 budget for its training is estimated and requested by RAB to MINECOFIN through budget consultation process. 【RAB in charge】
1-4	Utilization	PA(3) The training module of kitchen garden is prepared and by using its cascade training is initiated at district level. 【NECDP in charge】	PA(14) Kitchen garden training for sector agronomists and farmer promoters is conducted in target districts. 【NECDP in charge】 PA(15) Sensitization on nutrition is incorporated into the national maternal and child health (MCH) campaign and it is conducted. 【RBC and NECDP in charge】	PA(23) Based on results of previous sensitization, Sensitization activities on nutrition are reviewed and conducted. 【RBC and NECDP in charge】
1-5	Stability	PA(4) The guideline of animal protein consumption is prepared to enhance animal food consumption at household level. 【NECDP in charge】	PA(16) Mid-term impact assessment of small livestock program is conducted and its distribution is implemented. 【RAB in charge】	PA(24) NDF consumption including animal source protein is promoted at ECD centers and the necessary budget of FY2021 for its implementation is mobilized. 【NECDP in charge】
2. Strengthening Multi-Sectoral Approach				
2-1	Programing (Central, District)	PA(5) NECD Strategic Plan is prepared. 【NECDP in charge】 PA(6) The first draft of National Nutrition Policy is prepared. 【NECDP in charge】		PA(25) The incentive framework for ECD caregivers is developed. 【NECDP in charge】
2-2	Implementation (Community, District)		PA(17) Integrated training package on Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) is updated and necessary budget for FY2020 for its training is mobilized. 【NECDP in charge】	PA(26) The guidelines for CHWs, caregivers and farmer promoters to monitor access to the service for all three underlying factors of child undernutrition (food intake, environmental health and child care practice) is developed. 【NECDP and RBC in charge】
2-3	M&E (District, Central)	PA(7) NECDP staff members are allocated to 30 districts to enhance planning, monitoring and evaluation of DPEM at district level. 【NECDP in charge】 PA(8) Integrated ECD Scale up Plan is prepared. 【NECDP in charge】	PA(18) M&E system for integrated ECD is under development. 【NECDP in charge】	PA(27) Simplified tools to monitor the dietary habits at household level are developed and applied at community level. 【NECDP and RBC in charge】

MINECOFIN: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning