

Republic of Sierra Leone

FY2021 Ex-Post Evaluation Report of Technical Cooperation Project

"The Project for Capacity Development for Comprehensive District Developments in the Northern Region of Sierra Leone"

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## 0. Summary

This Project was undertaken in the Northern Region<sup>1</sup> of the Republic of Sierra Leone (hereinafter referred to as Sierra Leone) with the aim of enabling Local Councils (LCs)<sup>2</sup> and Ward Committees (WCs) in order to carry out their functions and roles in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (LGA 2004) and to manage district development projects efficiently and effectively.

The objectives of the Project are consistent with the decentralization and development policies of the Government of Sierra Leone and are consistent with development needs, except during the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak.<sup>3</sup> The objectives of the Project are also consistent with Japan's development cooperation policy toward Sierra Leone, and the collaboration between LCs and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) was facilitated through JICA's health and agriculture projects in the region. In collaboration with other donors, the Project worked to revise the Local Councils' Development Operational Guidelines (hereinafter referred to as the Guidelines) to make them more practical and suitable for dissemination. Therefore, the Project's relevance and coherence are high. The Project mostly achieved its purpose at its completion, as the targeted District Councils and WCs in the Northern Region were able to manage community development programs by ensuring that the structure and roles were in line with the Guidelines. However, at the time of the ex-post evaluation, the LCs in the Eastern and Southern Regions had not managed development projects using the Guidelines; thus, the Overall Goal has not been achieved. In addition, the Northern Region has had little lasting effect on the Project due to the transfer of former counterparts. Therefore, the effectiveness and impacts are moderately low. The Project period and Project cost slightly exceeded the plan but not by a large margin. Therefore, the Project's efficiency is high. In terms of sustainability, there is a strong political will in which the operationalization of the Guidelines at the national level is specified in the *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023)*. On

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<sup>1</sup> In 2017, the Local Government Act was partially amended, and the Northern Region was divided into two regions: the Northern and North Western Regions. In addition, two new districts (Karene and Falaba) were created within the former Northern Region.

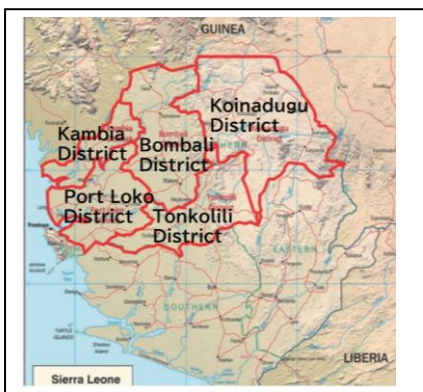
<sup>2</sup> LCs consisted of 15 District Councils and seven City Councils at the time of the ex-post evaluation. In general, these councils are called "Local Councils." In this report, "District Council" is used when describing the specific council of a district.

<sup>3</sup> During the Ebola outbreak, emergency responses were utilized through a centralized system, and essential services were prioritized.

the other hand, there are technical and financial challenges in the dissemination and utilization of the Guidelines. However, there is a prospect of improvement and resolution thanks to the successor Project, which will continue until 2025. Therefore, the Project’s sustainability of effects is high.

In light of the above, this Project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

## 1. Project Description



Project Location

Source: Project Final Report (2019).  
District Names added by the evaluator.



Consulting with Community Members

Source: URL address,  
<https://www.jica.go.jp/Project/sierraleone/0901171/index.html>(cited 2023-03-01.)

### 1.1 Background

The decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone since 1992 ended in January 2002. President Kabbah, who took office after the end of the civil war, prioritized local government reform as one of his key policies. The *Local Government Act* was enacted in 2004. The law established a framework for the formulation of *District Development Plans* by LCs, the construction of social infrastructure, and the delivery of various administrative services. It also established WCs, which are formed in each ward (parliamentary constituency) as the lowest tier within the decentralization structure, and a mechanism to reflect the needs of the community in local development. However, due to the lack of personnel and limited capacity of LCs and WCs, projects could not be carried out in line with the mechanism stipulated in the Act, and the urgent issue was to strengthen the institutional capacity and human resources for efficient and effective regional development.

Under these circumstances, JICA, at the request of the Government of Sierra Leone, has identified the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Kambia District Council (KDC), and Port Loko District Council (PLDC) in the Northern Region as counterpart agencies to implement “the Project for Capacity Development for Comprehensive District Developments in the Northern Region of Sierra Leone” for five years, starting in November 2009.

The Project was originally scheduled to end in October 2014, but the EVD began to

spread in West Africa. As a result, the Project was temporarily suspended in August 2014. In November 2015, the Government of Sierra Leone declared an end to the Ebola outbreak. The Project was resumed in January 2016. Upon resumption, the Project was extended until July 2018 with the addition of the Output of the promotion of Ebola recovery and by adding the three remaining districts of the Northern Region (Bombali, Tonkolili, and Koinadugu) to the target districts. During the extended period, the Project contributed to the recovery from Ebola and strengthened the LCs' service delivery capacity through the recovery activities.

## 1.2 Project Outline<sup>4</sup>

Overall Goal		LCs' development operations are improved in the Eastern and Southern Regions in addition to the Northern Region.
Project Purpose		Strengthen the structure and function of District Councils and WCs to manage district/rural development more effectively and efficiently in Kambia and Port Loko Districts and other 3 districts (Bombali, Koinadugu, Tonkolili) in the Northern Region.
Output(s)	Output 1	The District/Rural Development Model in Kambia and Port Loko Districts is established through pilot and model Projects.
	Output 2	Capacities of District Councils and WCs in Kambia and Port Loko Districts are developed for more effective and efficient District/Rural Development Management.
	Output 3	The system to disseminate District/Rural Development Model to each district is established by MLGRD <sup>5</sup> .
	Output 4	Practical capacities, including the ability to apply into Ebola recovery, are developed in the five districts of the Northern Region <sup>6</sup> .

<sup>4</sup> Based on the latest version of the Project Design Matrix (PDM) (7th edition). Partial changes made by the evaluator during the ex-post evaluation are explained in the footnotes.

<sup>5</sup> Outcome 3 of the latest version of the PDM is "The system to disseminate District/Rural Development Model to each district is established by MLGRD, and related Acts/Policies of MLGRD are modified". One of the indicators of Output 3, "Modified related Act/Policy", was deleted based on the Mid-term Review (2012), as it was found that the indicator was not expected to be achieved within the Project period due to the delay in the parliamentary progress. However, the Narrative Summary of Output 3 was not revised. Thus, "related Acts/Policies of MLGRD are modified" was removed from Output 3 at the ex-post evaluation.

<sup>6</sup> Output 4 of the latest version of the PDM, "Ebola recovery is accelerated in the five districts in the northern region" is synonymous with the implementation of development projects during the extension period (Ebola recovery period), therefore it does not indicate the Output representing a means to achieve the Project Purpose which is to strengthen the structure and functions of the LCs and WCs. In addition, the indicators for Output 4 contained a mixture of indicators representing the Project Purpose and Overall Goal. In the ex-post evaluation, the logical relationship between the Project Purpose (objective) and Outputs (means) was reorganized and evaluated.

Total cost (Japanese Side)	1,305 million yen
Period of Cooperation	November 2009 - February 2019 (Extension period: January 2016 - February 2019)
Target Area	Northern Region (Kambia, Port Loko, Bombali, Tonkolili, Koinadugu)
Implementing Agency	MLGRD, KDC, PLDC,. Bombali District Council (hereinafter referred to as BDC) Tonkolili District Council (hereinafter referred to as TDC) Koinadugu District Council (KoinDC)
Other Relevant Agencies/ Organizations	MDAs
Consultant/ Organization in Japan	(Extension Period <sup>7</sup> ) NTC International Co., Ltd.
Related Projects	(Technical Cooperation Projects) The Project for Capacity Development to Strengthen Local Resilience in Sierra Leone (2021-2025)  (Other international organizations and aid agencies) The World Bank (WB): The Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Program (IRCBP) and supporting the temporary Secretariat, Decentralization Secretariat (DECSEC) (2004-2011); Decentralization Service Delivery Programme (DSDP) (2009-2015); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Kenema District Economic Recovery Programme (KDERP) (2007-2012)

### 1.3 Outline of the Terminal Evaluation

The following is a summary of the Project's terminal evaluation.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1.3.1 Achievement Status of Project Purpose at the Terminal Evaluation

The Project Purpose was almost achieved. The achievement of the indicator "By the end of the Project, service delivery of District Councils and WCs based on the structure and the function indicated in the District/Rural Development Handbook is provided in Kambia and Port Loko Districts" was determined based on the opinions of the Project's

<sup>7</sup> The initial cooperation period before the extension was conducted by JICA directly contracting experts.

<sup>8</sup> The summary of the 2017 terminal evaluation is provided. Two terminal evaluations were conducted for the Project: the first in 2014 (terminal evaluation of the initial cooperation period before the Ebola outbreak) and the second in 2017 (terminal evaluation of the extension period).

implementation status from KDC and PLDC and by comparing the budget and its expenditure data. Note that, at the time of the terminal evaluation survey (November-December 2017), the PDM covered only KDC and PLDC, and no indicators were set for the remaining three districts (BDC, TDC, and KoinDC).<sup>9</sup>

### 1.3.2 Achievement Status of Overall Goal at the Terminal Evaluation (Including other impacts.)

The Overall Goal was considered difficult to achieve unless the MLGRD had the necessary budget and human resources to implement the dissemination of the Guidelines. It should be noted that, at the time of the terminal evaluation, the dissemination of the Guidelines to all districts of Sierra Leone was stated on the PDM.<sup>10</sup>

Positive impacts other than the Overall Goal were identified according to the health, education, and agricultural facilities constructed under the Ebola Recovery Pilot Projects. No negative impacts were identified.

### 1.3.3 Recommendations from the Terminal Evaluation

In addition to the revision of the PDM (extension of the cooperation period, changes to the Overall Goal and its indicator, and addition of indicators for Output 4), the following recommendations were made to the MLGRD, LCs, and the Project:

(1) For the MLGRD,

- To integrate the Guidelines as a working document into the amended LGA 2004 soon after the election
- To formulate a more detailed plan for the Guidelines' dissemination, including budget and human resources allocation
- To disseminate the Guidelines to donors and other MDAs

(2) For LCs.

- To ensure a budget for monitoring and evaluation/O&M and to strengthen their activities
- To share lessons learned about development activities among LC staff
- To report good practices of their development activities to the central government

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<sup>9</sup> Indicators for the three districts were added in February 2018 based on the results of the terminal evaluation (source: documents provided by JICA).

<sup>10</sup> During the terminal evaluation, it was proposed to change the scope of the Overall Goal from the entire country (all districts) to the Eastern Region and the Southern Region (at least one district each), which was agreed upon in discussions with the counterpart of the Sierra Leone side (Source: Terminal Evaluation Report, 2018,p.24).

(3) For the Project

- To facilitate the MLGRD in order to disseminate the Guidelines to donors and other MDAs

## 2 Outline of the Evaluation Study

### 2.1 External Evaluator

Sachiko Matsumoto, FASID

### 2.2 Duration of Evaluation Study

This ex-post evaluation study was conducted with the following schedule.

Duration of the Study: December, 2021-March, 2023

Duration of the Field Study: April 23-May 10, 2022, September 17-September 24, 2022

## 3 Results of the Evaluation (Overall Rating: B<sup>11</sup>)

### 3.1 Relevance/Coherence (Rating: ③<sup>12</sup>)

#### 3.1.1 Relevance (Rating: ③)

##### 3.1.1.1 Consistency with the Development Plan of Sierra Leone

At the time of the ex-ante evaluation, the Local Government Act (2004) was recognized as the legal basis for the promotion of decentralization and functions, the implementation structure of LCs and WCs, and community participatory development. The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP II (2008-2012), An Agenda for Economic and Social Empowerment*, identified the strengthening of local government as a key common challenge in addressing the strategic priority areas.

At the time of the Project's completion, the *2013-2018 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP III (2013-2018), The Agenda for Prosperity)* focused on strengthening local governance in promoting decentralization.

For the above reasons, the Project's direction to promote decentralization in line with the *Local Government Act (2004)* is consistent with the decentralization and development policies of the Government of Sierra Leone from the time of the Project's planning to its completion.

##### 3.1.1.2 Consistency with the Development Needs of Sierra Leone

At the time of the ex-ante evaluation, Kambia District in the Northern Region was particularly damaged by the civil war and was underdeveloped. The development of areas bordering Kambia in Port Loko District were also seriously delayed. In addition, the

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<sup>11</sup> A: Highly satisfactory, B: Satisfactory, C: Partially satisfactory, D: Unsatisfactory

<sup>12</sup> ④: Very High ③: High, ②: Moderately Low, ①: Low

limited capacity of LCs and WCs to properly plan and coordinate with MDAs caused problems in the delivery of basic services and the improvement to the social infrastructure.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding the Ebola outbreak during the Project's implementation, the number of infected persons was 164 in Kambia District and 1,368 in Port Loko District, with Port Loko District presenting the second-highest number of infected persons in the country.<sup>14</sup> During the Ebola outbreak (2014-2015), emergency responses were utilized through a centralized system, and essential services were prioritized. The central government agencies and various donors directly supported communities using their own criteria, which weakened the decentralized system and structures established before the Ebola outbreak, making it difficult to promote consistent local governance. After the end of the Ebola outbreak, decentralization was promoted again, and the need for community development in line with the Local Government Act increased. The Project's target districts suffered significant damage to their livelihoods due to the stagnation of economic activities caused by Ebola, and there was a growing demand for community development such as infrastructure improvements.<sup>15</sup>

From the time of the Project's planning to the period of its completion, except for the emergency period resulting from the Ebola outbreak, the Project's objective of community development through collaboration with LCs and communities is highly consistent with Sierra Leone's development needs.

### 3.1.1.3 Appropriateness of the Project Plan and Approach

The Project actively promoted the participation of women, youth, and people who cannot read through various opportunities, such as basic studies of the target areas, selection of Pilot Projects, and collaborative activities with residents. Furthermore, the Project took care to ensure equity of benefits so that interventions would not be biased toward any social categories.

The Project had decided on a policy of considering effective measures in stages, based on the results of various surveys after the start of the Project.<sup>16</sup> The main reason for this approach was that the political situation in Sierra Leone prior to the Project was highly uncertain and basic data on the target areas were lacking. The PDM was revised frequently during the implementation period.<sup>17</sup> The main reason for those revisions were the clarification and concretization of objectives and the re-setting of indicators. These

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<sup>13</sup> Source: Ex-ante Evaluation Sheet p.1-2.

<sup>14</sup> As of February 2015 (Source: Documents provided by JICA).

<sup>15</sup> Source: Project Final Report (2019) p.1-6.

<sup>16</sup> The Detailed Planning Survey p.13.

<sup>17</sup> The PDM was changed 7 times during the Project implementation (November 2009-February 2019) (Source: Documents provided by JICA).

changes to the PDM were made appropriately through consultation and agreement with the counterpart agencies, in response to the results of basic surveys in the target areas and the Project's activity monitoring, as well as changes in the environment surrounding the Project due to the Ebola outbreak. However, the PDM's Project Purpose remained vague, and the indicators for the Project Purpose were used without providing measurable criteria. In addition, the Project Purpose and some of the Outputs did not show the appropriate logical relationship. Therefore, in line with the latest version of the PDM, there were some difficulties in evaluating the Project. In the ex-post evaluation, the indicators of the Project Purpose and some of the Outputs and their indicators were reorganized in order to determine the objectives' achievement level.

As for the Overall Goal, the planned target was not achieved. Mainly, the target could not be achieved due to the inability to secure budget and human resources for the achievement of the Overall Goal, and this was due to the change of government near the end of the Project. On the other hand, the plan included the Output that contributed to the nationwide dissemination of the Guidelines necessary for achieving the Overall Goal, and there were no serious problems with the Project Plan or Approach.

### 3.1.2 Coherence (Rating:③)

#### 3.1.2.1 Consistency with Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Policy

In the policy dialogues between the Governments of Japan and Sierra Leone held in May 2005, the establishment of peace and rural development were identified as priority issues for assistance, and Freetown and Kambia District, which was severely affected by the civil war, were selected as priority geographical areas. In addition, the priority area of ODA to Sierra Leone, "Local and Rural Development," included the effective combination of assistance for improving the basic living environment in rural areas, supporting infrastructure development that contributes to agricultural development and technical assistance for human resource development that contributes to sustainable development.<sup>18</sup> In JICA's project implementation plan at the time of the ex-ante evaluation, this Project was introduced as a part of the "Kambia District Regional Development Assistance Program."<sup>19</sup>

From the above, the objectives of the Project were consistent with Japan's development cooperation policy.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. "[19] Sierra Leone". Country Databook. 2009. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/kuni/09\\_databook/pdfs/05-19.pdf](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/kuni/09_databook/pdfs/05-19.pdf) (cited 2023-02-24) .

<sup>19</sup> "Kambia-ken chiiki kaihatu shien program" was translated by the evaluator.



### 3.1.2.2 Internal Coherence

Since this Project has LCs as the counterparts, it was expected from the time of the ex-ante evaluation that it would “serve as the core Project of the cooperation program”<sup>20</sup> in the districts, and it was envisioned that it would collaborate with other projects in various ways. During the Project’s implementation, MDAs and LCs collaborated in facility design, procurement, and so on for the JICA health sector project, “Project for Strengthening Supportive Supervision System” (2013-2018), and the agricultural sector project, “Sustainable Rice Production Project” (2017-2022), which were implemented in the Northern Region during the same period. In the Pilot Project, a health center staff dormitory was constructed next to a village clinic that was renovated by the JICA health sector project, “The Project for Strengthening District Health Management in Kambia District” (2008-2011). Since the village is the most remote location in Kambia District from the district capital, the new dormitory enabled nurses to be stationed in the village, contributing to the improvement of health services in the area, such as emergency response 24 hours a day.

From the above, various forms of collaboration and synergy with other JICA projects were confirmed.

### 3.1.2.3 External Coherence

At the same time as the Project, international donors such as the World Bank, UNDP, and the Commonwealth were supporting the MLGRD to promote decentralization in Sierra Leone, and it was expected to operate in coordination with the Project from its inception.<sup>21</sup> The project participated in regular meetings at the Ministry and actively shared information with other donors and avoided duplication of technical assistance. In 2011, the task force meetings on regional development policy formulation by the MLGRD (including donors) were held on a regular basis. At the request of the Minister, the Project’s long-term expert (Chief Advisor) participated as a key member and held policy discussions for more than six months. However, the policy was not ultimately approved by the Parliament and was not enacted, so synergies did not emerge. On the other hand, DECSEC officers, in support of the World Bank project, participated in the Project as the official members of the Guideline revision team, and they played an important role in the editing and synthesis of the Guidelines.<sup>22</sup>

From the above, the collaboration and coordination initially envisioned with

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<sup>20</sup> The Detailed Planning Survey p.16.

<sup>21</sup> Source: Ex-ante Evaluation Sheet p.6-7.

<sup>22</sup> Prior to the Ebola outbreak, two handbooks had been prepared: the District Development Handbook and the Rural Development Handbook. After the extension, they were edited and consolidated into one more practical guideline, improving the dissemination potential of the Guidelines.

interventions of other donors were achieved, and concrete results were achieved in the formulation of the Guidelines that are practical and easy to disseminate through collaborative work.

The Project was consistent with the development plans and needs of the Government of Sierra Leone. It was also in line with the Japanese government's policy of assistance to Sierra Leone at the time of the ex-ante evaluation. In addition, the Project was implemented in collaboration with JICA's other sector projects, along with other donors promoting decentralization, which had been expected from the outset, and concrete results were confirmed. Therefore, its relevance and coherence are high.

### 3.2 Effectiveness and Impacts<sup>23</sup> (Rating: ②)

#### 3.2.1 Effectiveness

##### 3.2.1.1 Achievement of Project Purpose

As mentioned in the appropriateness of the Project Plan and Approach, the latest version of the PDM has some challenges,<sup>24</sup> and it was difficult to evaluate the Project using only the Project Purpose indicators. Therefore, in the ex-post evaluation, the Capacity Assessment results conducted by the Project and one of the indicators from Output 2 were added to the Project Purpose indicators in determining the Project Purpose's degree of achievement. The Project Purpose indicator for the three additional districts, "Officers in 3 districts (Bombali, Koinadugu, Tonkolili) in the Northern Region understand the concept of the Guideline," was retained.

Capacity Assessment data used for an additional indicator were collected for two District Councils, KDC and PLDC, in 2016 and 2017, and for three District Councils, BDC, TDC, and KoinDC, in 2018.<sup>25</sup> The survey included Core Capacity (management and leadership skills) and Technical Capacity (six categories according to the Guidelines).<sup>26</sup> Of these, Technical Capacity was used as an indicator because it is consistent with the Project Purpose.

Another additional indicator is the "Good Practices of District Council and Ward

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<sup>23</sup> When providing the sub-rating, Effectiveness and Impacts are to be considered together.

<sup>24</sup> Project Purpose "(...) systems and functions will be strengthened" is ambiguous as it can be interpreted differently (e.g., whether it is about improving mechanisms and procedures or about improving service delivery). Furthermore, of the two Project Purpose indicators, "By the end of the Project, service delivery of District Councils and WCs based on the structure and function indicated in the District/Rural Development Handbook is provided in Kambia and Port Loko Districts" does not provide specific targets for the measurement of indicators or achievement level criteria.

<sup>25</sup> Capacity Assessments were also conducted during the initial cooperation period, but the survey contents have changed, so it is not possible to compare Capacity Assessment results from before 2014 and after 2016.

<sup>26</sup> The six categories are "Formulation/Review of DDP/AWP," "Project Implementation," "Project Management," "Operation & Maintenance," "Evaluation/Finance," and "Coordination." Source: Final Report (2019), p.7-6 to 7-14.

Committee” under Output 2, “Capacities of District Councils, and Ward Committees in Kambia and Port Loko Districts are developed for more effective and efficient District/Rural Development Management.” This indicator was chosen to be used as a qualitative indicator of the Project Purpose because carrying out community development projects in accordance with the Guidelines (i.e., good practices) is the utilization of counterparts’ acquired knowledge and skills, which is the Project Purpose level, rather than the acquisition itself.

Table 1 Achievement of Project Purpose

Project Purpose	Indicator	Actual
Strengthen the structure and function of District Councils and WCs to manage district/rural development more effectively and efficiently in Kambia and Port Loko Districts and other 3 districts (Bombali, Koinadugu, Tonkolili) in the Northern Region.	① Technical capacity results of Capacity Assessments for the five target district councils are improved	Technical Capacity of KDC and PLDC in March 2017 had changed positively in all six categories compared to June 2016. For the three additional districts (BDC, TDC, and KoinDC), changes were not captured because there were no data as of 2016 to compare. However, they did not deviate significantly from the result of KDC and PLDC in 2017 (Figure 1).
	② Good practices of District Council and Ward Committee	Using the Capacity Assessment categories, the work performance of KDC and PLDC officials were interviewed, and good practices were identified for 1) Formulation (excluding DDP formulation), 2) facility design, and 3) monitoring activities.
	③ Officers in 3 districts (Bombali, Koinadugu, Tonkolili) in the Northern Region understand the concept of the Guideline	District Council officials from the three target districts made presentations and exchanged opinions at the forum on their achievements in implementing Pilot Projects in line with the Guidelines.

Sources: First terminal evaluation report (2017) p.12-13; Second terminal evaluation report (2018) p.10-12; Final Report (2019) p.3-20 to 3-21, 4-31 to 4-33, 7-11.

A comparison of the 2016 and 2017 Capacity Assessment results shows that KDC and PLDC Technical Capacity changed positively in all six categories (See Figure 1 on p.13). Of these, “Project Management” and “Coordination” had the greatest degree of improvement, whereas “Formulation and Review” and “Evaluation” had the least degree of improvement.<sup>27</sup> The reason for the low level of “Evaluation” was that “Evaluation,” as the final step of the on-the-job training (OJT) for strengthening the practical capacities of LCs (Outcome 4), could not be implemented due to the Project’s time constraints<sup>28</sup> (see Appendix 1 for the achievement status of the four Outputs of the Project).

<sup>27</sup> The reason for the lowest degree of improvement in “Formulation and Review” was that no Ward Development Plan was formulated and submitted. However, the formulation of the Ward Development Plan is excluded from the scope of Project Purpose because it is not mentioned in the Guidelines and therefore was not the subject of the Project.

<sup>28</sup> Source: Final Report p.7-18.

In the good practices of District Councils and WCs, Indicator 2, the close collaboration between the District Councils and WCs resulted in the formulation and monitoring of development projects with the community's participation and the design of facilities in accordance with the standards, which were confirmed as example practices of service delivery in line with the Guidelines.

Indicator 3 aimed at understanding the concept of the Guidelines for the three additional District Councils during the extension period, with the intention of reducing the level of difficulty compared to the original two councils. Because the officers in the three target District Councils had implemented Pilot Projects using the Guidelines, presented their experiences at the forum, and exchanged opinions, it has been considered that the concepts of the Guidelines were mostly understood.

From the above, although the criteria for achieving the Project Purpose were not clearly defined, it has been determined that the Project mostly achieved its purpose because the work performance in the work categories in line with the Guidelines has improved.

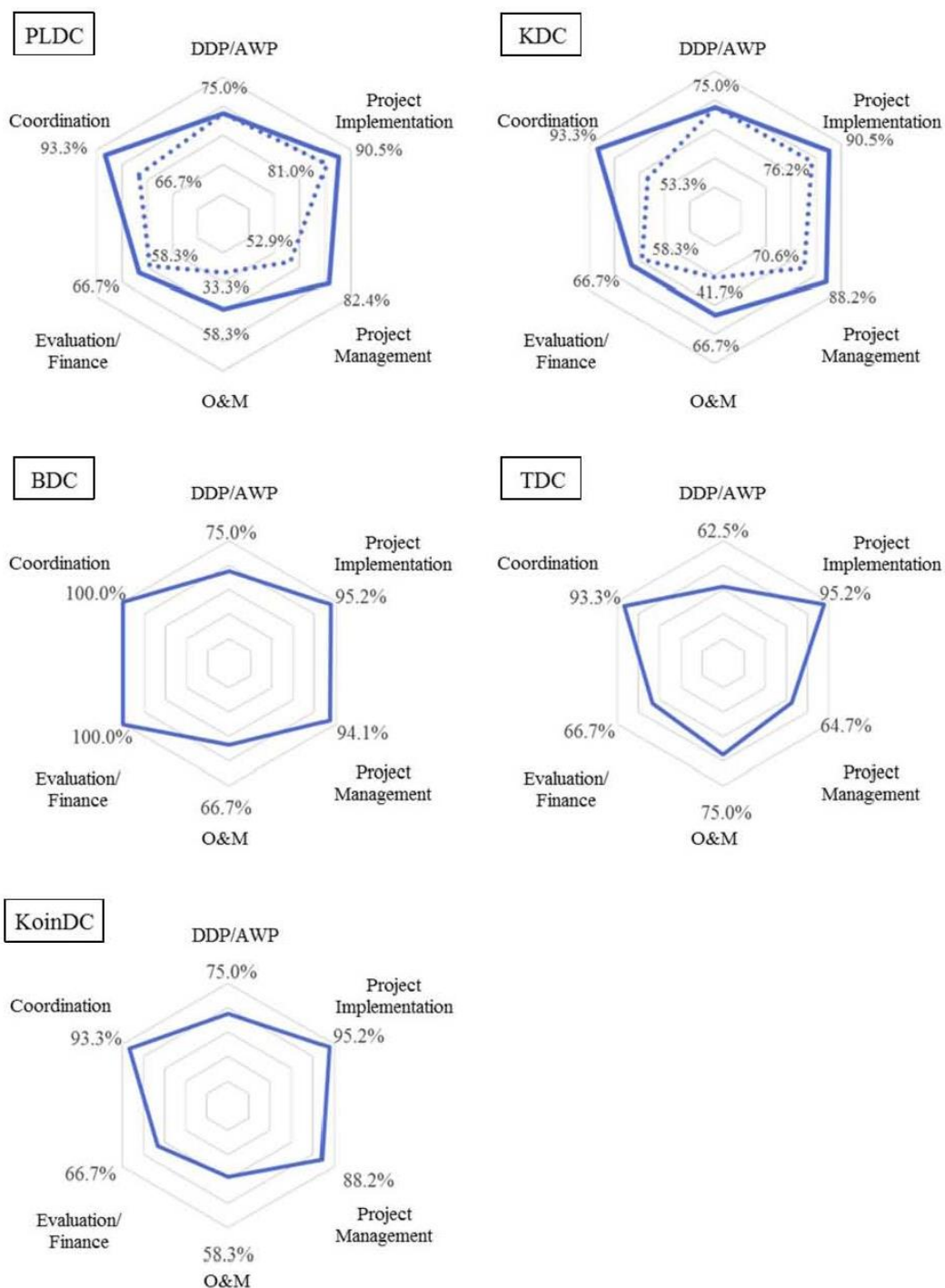


Figure 1. The Results of Capacity Assessment (Technical Capacity)<sup>29</sup>

Source: 'Figure 7.3.1 Balance of capacity of the five district councils to deliver development projects' from the Final Report (2019) p.7-13.

Note: For KDC and PLDC, the dotted lines are the results as at June 2016; the solid lines are at March 2017. For BDC, TDC, KoinDC, their results as at June 2018. 'DDP/AWP' is the 'District Development Plan/ Annual Work Plan'.

<sup>29</sup> The capacity assessment was conducted by interviewing prefecture council officials (Chief Administrator, Deputy Chief Administrator, Human Resources Officer, Finance Officer, Development Planning Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Engineer, and Procurement Officer) from the five target districts using the Capacity Assessment Checklist. It was conducted by Japanese experts and locally hired program officers during the extension period (Source: Final Report, p.7-7).

### 3.2.2 Impacts

#### 3.2.2.1 Achievement of Overall Goal

The Project’s Overall Goal, “LCs’ development operations are improved in the Eastern and Southern Regions in addition to the Northern Region,” aimed to disseminate the demonstrated model (the mechanisms and procedures outlined in the Guidelines) outside the target area. In particular, Output 3 (establishment of a national dissemination system) was included in the Project Plan to directly promote the achievement of the Overall Goal. However, the change of government near the end of the Project caused changes in the personnel and structure within MLGRD. As a result, the dissemination plan established under the Project was not carried over, and no budget or human resources were secured for dissemination, so activities to disseminate the Guidelines outside the Project target area were not implemented.<sup>30</sup> In 2019, after the completion of the Project, JICA sent a study team to determine a successor Project, “The Project for Capacity Development to Strengthen Local Resilience in Sierra Leone,” for dissemination to the Eastern and Southern Regions.<sup>31</sup> The successor Project was delayed to start due to the impact of the COVID-19 and is scheduled to be implemented for four years starting in June 2021.

The status of achievement of the Overall Goal target is shown below.

Table 2 Achievement of Overall Goal

Overall Goal	Indicator	Actual
LCs’ development operations are improved in the Eastern and Southern Regions in addition to the Northern Region	LC’s services were delivered in accordance with the Guidelines in at least one LCs in the Eastern and Southern Regions respectively, approximately 3 years after the end of the Project.	As the former counterparts of the Project were transferred to the Eastern and Southern Regions, some of their works in line with the Guidelines were carried out at the discretion of each individual. However, it was not a situation where this was being done as an organizational effort as the Overall Goal aimed for.

Source: interviews with Chief Administrators or deputies of LCs (city councils and district councils, four in total) in Bo (Eastern Region) and Kenema (Southern Region).

Although the successor Project was under implementation at the time of the ex-post evaluation, no effect on the Project's Overall Goal was observed because of the restriction of dissemination activities due to the COVID-19. Some officers in the LCs in the Eastern and Southern Regions were equipped with knowledge and skills of the

<sup>30</sup> Source: Interviews with officials of the implementing agencies.

<sup>31</sup> Source: Materials provided by JICA.

Guidelines, as former counterparts of the Project had been transferred to these councils. However, no situation was identified in which the Guidelines were systematically introduced and utilized by LCs.

The Project has achieved its Overall Goal only to a limited extent because the Guidelines' dissemination activities were not implemented by the MLGRD after the Project's completion.

#### 3.2.2.2 Status of Continued Project Effectiveness

Of the five target District Councils, only BDC continued to utilize the Guidelines developed by the Project (Table 3). At the time of the ex-post evaluation, 18 years had passed since the promulgation of the Local Government Act (2004), during which time the promotion of decentralization in Sierra Leone was the subject of many interventions by donor agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, European Union (EU), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). As a result, at the time of the ex-post evaluation, compared to the time when the Project was launched (2009), the work was being carried out to some extent in accordance with the mechanisms and roles set out in the Local Government Act (i.e., the Guidelines), although there were differences in the degree of implementation among the councils. Therefore, it was difficult to determine the continued use of the Guidelines based solely on information about the status of each council's project implementations.

Based on these conditions, the criteria for determining the continued use of the Guidelines at the time of the ex-post evaluation are as follows: 1) each District Council is implementing development projects based on the Guidelines to a certain extent (e.g., holding community sensitization meetings, conducting development needs assessments with community participation, collaborating with MDAs, disclosing procurement information to the public); 2) multiple officers at each District Council are able to explain the Guidelines (usefulness of the Guidelines, etc.); and 3) the Guideline documents are stored in the office environment (readily available for reference) (Table 3).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> It was considered to use the additional Project Purpose indicator, the Capacity Assessment Checklists, to check the status of continued effectiveness, but this was not done due to the complexity of the checklists (94 items in six categories) and the inaccessibility of the evidentiary documents.

Table 3: Continued Use of Guidelines in the Five District Councils

	KDC	PLDC	BDC	TDC	KoinDC
Conduct Operations in Accordance with the Guidelines	YES (In line with the LGA)	Somewhat (Different evaluation methods)	YES (In line with the LGA)	YES (In line with the LGA)	YES (In line with the LGA)
Understanding of the Guidelines	No	YES	YES	No	No
Guidelines' Accessibility at Office	No	No	YES	No	No
Status of Continued Use of Guidelines	No	No	YES	No	No

Source: Most recent *DDP* and *AWP* for the five District Councils. District Council officers' interviews. Interviews with Chief Administrator or Deputy Chief Administrator.

The District Councils had a low level of understanding of the Guidelines in the five target districts at the time of the ex-post evaluation because the former counterparts who worked on the Project had been transferred to other districts, and the MLGRD did not conduct any dissemination activities for the Guidelines after the Project's completion and did not provide technical guidance to the new officers in the Northern Region.

### 3.2.2.3 Other Positive and Negative Impacts

#### 1) Impacts on the Natural Environment

This Project is classified as Category C<sup>33</sup> under the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (2010). At the time of the ex-post evaluation, no negative impact on the natural environment was observed based on the interviews with facility maintenance organizations and community residents as well as site visits.<sup>34</sup>

#### 2) Resettlement and Land Acquisition

The newly acquired land for the Pilot Project's construction of facilities is either owned by the community or has been transferred to the facility maintenance organization under the agreement of the landowner, and no problems have occurred.<sup>35</sup>

#### 3) Gender Equality, Marginalized People, Social Systems and Norms, Human Well-being, and Human Rights

<sup>33</sup> Category C: Projects are likely to have minimal or little adverse impact on the environment and society (JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> In the first field visit, the evaluation team visited 20 facilities in the five target districts, interviewed 20 facility managers, and conducted group interviews with facility users and nearby residents (approximately 100 people, 70% of whom were male and 30% female).

<sup>35</sup> Source: Terminal Evaluation Report (2018) p52, p.64.



Several positive impacts from the facilities constructed in the Pilot Projects were identified. For example, the health facilities contribute to health promotion and safe childbirth opportunities for the residents, educational facilities (schools) provide learning opportunities and a hygienic and safe learning environment for children, wells provide safe drinking water for the communities, road facilities revitalize economic activities in the village, and rice-processing facilities shorten agricultural work. These positive impacts were confirmed from the stakeholders' interviews and the field visits.



Elementary School built by the pilot project (left, Port Loko) and Health Post (right, Kambia)  
Source: Photo taken by the evaluator.

Because this Project has only achieved its Project Purpose and Overall Goal to a certain extent, the Project's effectiveness and impacts are moderately low.

For the Project Purpose, it is mostly achieved since targeted District Councils and WCs were able to operate community development projects in accordance with the Guidelines. However, with regard to the Overall Goal, due to the fact that post-completion Guideline dissemination activities were not carried out by the MLGRD, it was not possible to determine that local development projects were being implemented in accordance with the Guidelines in the LCs of the Eastern and Southern Regions, in addition to the Northern Region.

### 3.3 Efficiency (Rating: ③)

#### 3.3.1 Inputs

A comparison of planned and actual Inputs by the type of input is shown in the table below.

Table 4 Plan and Actual Inputs

Type of Input	Plan	Actual
(1) Experts	(Initial cooperation period) 379 million yen (Long /short term and MM* are not stated) (Extension period) 39.4 MM	(Initial cooperation period) • Long-term experts: 5 • Short-term experts: 11 (Extension period: January-April 2016) • Japanese experts: 5 (Extension period: April 2016 onwards) Japanese experts: 9 (46.1 MM)
(2) Trainees received	(Initial cooperation period) No number of people listed (Extension period) No information	(Initial cooperation period) 20 participants (group/Project-specific training) (Extended period) 12 participants (Training in Japan)
(3) Third- country training	(Initial cooperation period) unscheduled	(Initial cooperation period) 13 participants (Uganda, Ghana)
(4) Equipment	(Initial cooperation period) unscheduled (Extension period) No information	(Initial cooperation period) Vehicles, audiovisual equipment for training, office equipment, heavy machinery, etc. Approx. 36.54 million yen (Extension period) Office equipment, etc. Approx. 2 million yen
(5) Expenses for project activities, and pilot projects	(Initial cooperation period) 418 million yen (Extension period) No information	(Initial cooperation period) Approximately 193.81 million yen (Extension: from January 2016 to end of October 2017) Approx. 49.3 million yen
Japanese Side Total Project Cost	Total 1,156 million yen.	Total 1,305 million yen
Sierra Leone Side Total Project Cost	No amount stated (Counterparts personnel costs, provision of land and facilities, and costs of implementing community development projects)	No information on the amount (68 counterparts in total, 4 Project offices and furniture, equipment, electricity and water expenses, travel expenses for counterparts, meeting expenses, and partial payment of fuel for vehicles)

Source: Ex-ante Evaluation Sheet for the initial cooperation period of the plan and the Terminal Evaluation Report for the extension period. The initial cooperation period for the actual results is the First Terminal Evaluation Report (2017) conducted in 2014 and the extension period is the Second Terminal Evaluation Report (2018) conducted in 2017. The planned and actual total project costs for the Japanese side are from the data provided by JICA.

\* MM stands for man month.

Note: The breakdown of the total project cost plan for the Japanese side is 797 million yen for the initial cooperation period and 359 million yen for the extension period.

### 3.3.1.1 Elements of Inputs

Japanese Experts were dispatched with the intention of creating a virtuous cycle

of policy institutional support to promote decentralization at the central level and field demonstration at the local level, with a Chief Advisor (long-term expert) assigned to the central government and technical experts (short-term expert) assigned to the District Council offices. As a result, the knowledge of practices from the Pilot Projects at the local level was utilized in policy discussions and institutional development at the Ministry. These activities also helped to build trust with the senior management of the MLGRD, including the Minister and Deputy Minister. However, during the extension period after the resumption due to the Ebola outbreak, Japanese experts could not be stationed at the central level due to budgetary constraints and the scale of work of the Ebola recovery Pilot Project. As a result, activities related to the Ministry and sector coordination at the central level were limited.<sup>36</sup> Regarding the cost of Project activities, the Project emphasized fostering ownership by counterparts and sustainability of activities and limited the payment of daily allowances to counterparts to a minimum. As a result, active participation in the Project was sometimes hampered by the activities of other donors who paid a daily allowance.<sup>37</sup>

Although the Inputs on the Sierra Leone side were largely carried out as planned, personnel absences occurred among District Councils' officers due to frequent personnel changes and the handling of other donor projects.<sup>38</sup> WCs and local traditional leaders contributed to avoiding problems and resolving issues with residents in implementing the Pilot Projects.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.3.1.2 Project Cost

The planned amount of the Project cost on the Japanese side increased due to the additional Outputs of the Ebola recovery after the resumption of the Project. The planned amount, 1,156 million yen, which includes the increased amount for the extended period, against the actual amount, 1,350 million yen, slightly exceeded the plan (113%). The initial cooperation period was 120% of the plan, and the extension period was 91% of the plan. The reason why the amount exceeded the plan in the initial cooperation period could not be confirmed due to the lack of records at that time.<sup>40</sup>

### 3.3.1.3 Project Period

The Project period was temporarily suspended due to the Ebola outbreak and then

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<sup>36</sup> Source: Interview with the former Japanese expert.

<sup>37</sup> Source: Interview with former counterpart. It should be noted that while the salaries of civil servants in the Sierra Leonean government are very low, the government highly expects donor to pay allowances.

<sup>38</sup> Source: Final Report, p.7-14.

<sup>39</sup> Source: Terminal Evaluation Report (2018) p.21, Interview with former WC members and facility managers/users.

<sup>40</sup> Several former Japanese experts were interviewed but nobody could identify any event or the expenditure items which could directly relate to the exceeded amount.

extended until July 2018 due to additional Output related to Ebola recovery. The Project period at the time of resumption (April 2016) was planned (November 2009 to July 2018), and the actual results were from November 2009 to February 2019, which slightly exceeded the plan (107%). The reason for this was due to the delay in the completion of the facility construction due to the lack of management of the contractor for the Ebola recovery Pilot Project.

Therefore, efficiency of the Project is high.

### 3.4 Sustainability (Rating: ③)

#### 3.4.1 Policy and System

Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023, in strengthening decentralization, local governance, and regional development, has as its strategic objectives strengthening the capacity of LCs to deliver services and building local governance with a strong and comprehensive coordination and collaboration mechanism. One of the three key targets (indicators) for specific achievement goals is "By 2023, operationalize the Guidelines in all 22 local councils," which specifies the use of the Project's Guidelines.<sup>41</sup>

The Decentralization Policy (2021)<sup>42</sup> also declares LCs as the highest sociopolitical and development authority in the locality and specifies that they are responsible for public service delivery, local economic development, protecting the welfare of the population, and taking an inclusive and participatory approach to development.<sup>43</sup>

From the above, it has been determined that the sustainability of the Project's policy aspects to keep its positive effects is high.

#### 3.4.2 Institutional/Organizational Aspect

The new government has brought about significant personnel changes in the MLGRD as well as in the restructuring of ministries involved in rural development. The Rural Development Directorate (RDD), formerly under the MLGRD, is now under the newly established Ministry of Planning & Economic Development (MoPED).<sup>44</sup> However, the officials of RDD under MoPED recognize the usefulness of the Guidelines and welcome the collaboration with the MLGRD for the Guidelines' dissemination.<sup>45</sup>

The implementation system for Guideline dissemination did not function after the

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<sup>41</sup> Source: Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023, p.130-132.

<sup>42</sup> The Decentralization Policy (2010) was formally revised with Cabinet approval in July 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Source: National Decentralization Policy (July 2021), p.36.

<sup>44</sup> MoPED aims to promote the formulation of strategies and the coordination of national development policies for effective and sustainable socioeconomic development; under MoPED, the RDDs have a mandate to improve regional development policies/plans and coordinate relevant local development agencies (Source: MoPED website and interviews with MoPED RDD officials).

<sup>45</sup> Source: Interviews of MLGRD and MoPED officers.

Project was completed, and no dissemination activities were conducted. However, the successor Project has now launched the Guidelines Advisory Team (GAT) as a new dissemination system, and GAT members have started training trainers to teach the Guidelines in each LC.<sup>46</sup>

From the above, it has been determined that the new Guideline dissemination system is being established through the support of successor Projects and that the sustainability of the organizational aspect is high.

### 3.4.3 Technical Aspect

In the five target District Councils, the BDC, TDC, and KoinDC had former counterparts and maintained the knowledge and skills to implement development projects using the Guidelines. However, many former counterparts had moved to other districts; therefore, new officials rarely inherited those knowledge and skills.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, in case where the Chief Administrators of LCs were not former counterparts, their understanding of the usefulness of the Guidelines was limited, and they were less interested in actively using them. However, because the former counterparts are now serving in LCs in other districts and are recognized as GAT members as mentioned above, their knowledge and skills in Guideline dissemination and Guideline revision work will be maintained.

Skills in the maintenance of facilities and provided equipment in the pilot project were maintained by the maintenance manager and maintenance committee<sup>48</sup>.

From the above, the technique of continuing the Project's effectiveness was maintained with the support of the successor Project. However, there was a lack of understanding of the Guidelines among the newly appointed Chief Administrator and LC officials, which presented somewhat of a challenge.

### 3.4.4 Financial Aspect

The MLGRD's budget for Guideline dissemination activities has not been secured. There are no plans to budget for dissemination during the term of the successor Project (until 2025). The MLGRD will consider allocating the necessary budget for the dissemination of the Guidelines when the successor Project comes to an end, based on the status of the dissemination of the Guidelines.

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<sup>46</sup> The GAT is composed of three teams: the Central, Southern, and Eastern regions. Central members include MLGRD and MoPED officials. The South and Eastern regions have about seven members each, mostly former counterparts (as of April 2022). Source: Documents provided by the successor Project. Interviews with Japanese experts and GAT members in the successor Project.

<sup>47</sup> However, more than two former counterparts are working in BDC, and technical advice is being provided to new staff.

<sup>48</sup> Source: interviews with maintenance committee members and community residents of 20 facilities of five districts and site visits.

It was envisaged that the LCs' budget for carrying out development projects in line with the Guidelines would be secured from either government funds or their own resources. In the budget plan of the annual work plan of the five target districts, each District Council had a certain amount of budget for community visits and development project monitoring activities (daily allowance, travel expenses, fuel, motorcycle/vehicle maintenance, etc.). In addition, some budgets for community sensitizations, needs assessments, and joint monitoring activities with MDAs were also allocated, although they varied by each council.<sup>49</sup>

Table 5: Portions of the budgets of the five target district councils and WCs for 2020 and 2021

(Unit: million SLL)

Council	KDC		PLDC		BDC		TDC		KoinDC	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
fiscal year	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Grant for WC	124	136	151	170	113	127	156	176	N/A	109
Administrative expenses (unconditional grants) <sup>50</sup>	379	414	454	442	178	78	1,067	329	N/A	227
Own revenue	734	808	1,533	1,653	1,182	1,071	2,063	2,063	N/A	1,542

Source: KDC Budget 2020-2022, PLDC MTEF Budget 2020-2022/ 2021-2023, BDC MTEF Budget 2020-2022/ 2021-2023, TDC Budget for FY 2020/ FY 2021, KoinDC MTEF Budget 2021-2023.

However, because government grants are frequently late or not paid as budgeted<sup>51</sup> and it is difficult to collect taxes from District Councils' own revenue,<sup>52</sup> some said that there was limited budget for activities that was in line with the Guidelines.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, opinions were divided on how strictly to implement the activities outlined in the Guidelines, and there was no unified view on the minimum budgetary requirements.<sup>54</sup>

The above shows that there are financial sustainability issues at both the central and local levels. However, there is a prospect for improvement because the dissemination activities will be carried out until 2025 by the successor Project, and the work to revise the

<sup>49</sup> Source: DDP and AWP in the five target districts; interviews with district council officials.

<sup>50</sup> A portion of the government's Unconditional Block Grant can be spent on operational and administrative costs at the discretion of the LC. Resident briefing and monitoring activities are paid for from the grant or own revenue (Interview by the district council officials).

<sup>51</sup> Source: Reviewed Tonkolili District Council Development Plan (2021-2022), Port Loko District Council MTEF Budget 2020-2022FY.

<sup>52</sup> Actual performance against District Councils' own revenue budget for the first half of FY2021 is KDC 49%, PLDC 31%, BDC 52%, TDC 53%, and KoinDC 94%. Source: Public Financial Management Reform Report Semi Annual 2021, Ministry of Finance.

<sup>53</sup> Source: interviews with district council officials.

<sup>54</sup> Source: interviews with former counterparts and District Council officials. It should be noted that work is underway to revise the Guidelines in the successor Project and that the scope of activities in the Guidelines is being reconsidered.

Guidelines is underway.

#### 3.4.5 Environmental and Social Aspect

Through the Pilot Project, the participation of women and youth was confirmed.<sup>55</sup> Based on the document review and the results of interviews from LC's officials, facility maintenance organizations and community residents as well as site visits during the ex-post evaluation, no negative environmental and social impacts were identified from the time of planning to the time of the ex-post evaluation.

#### 3.4.6 Preventative Measures to Risks

Although there was a change in structure at the central level with the new government (RDD moved under MoPED), relationships are established that allow for collaboration and dissemination of the Guidelines under the new structure. In addition, although the LCs and WCs are not functioning well during the election period, the communities have the mechanisms and skills to continue the facilities' maintenance.

With regard to collaboration with other donors, the coordination meeting to support local administration at the central level, which was proposed at the completion of the Project, has not been held. Specific collaboration with other donors has not progressed, and the uncertainties regarding the donors' use of the Guidelines have not been adequately addressed.

#### 3.4.7 Status of Operation and Maintenance

It has been confirmed that the facilities constructed by the Pilot Projects are organized by the facility maintenance committees or the management representatives composed of facility personnel and facility users. Also, the daily and periodic maintenances of the facilities are being carried out.<sup>56</sup> Eighty percent (16 facilities) of the 20 facilities that were visited during the ex-post evaluation were used in good condition.<sup>57</sup>

Slight issues have been observed in the technical, financial, and preventative measures to risks; however, there are good prospects for improvement through the successor Project's work. Therefore, sustainability of the Project effects is high.

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<sup>55</sup> Sources: Final Reports p.4-19, 4-21, A-219; interviews with former counterparts.

<sup>56</sup> Source: Visits to 20 facilities in five target districts, on-site inspections, and interviews with facility management/users.

<sup>57</sup> Four facilities had issues regarding deterioration of their facilities and malfunction of their equipment and left without being repaired.

### Box. Operation and Maintenance through Community Participation

The “District/Rural Development Model” under this Project was excellent for the maintenance and management of facilities through community collaboration. Specifically, user groups responsible for maintenance and management were identified prior to the facility construction, the construction status was monitored with community residents during the construction, and when the facility was handed over after completion, the user groups were instructed on the techniques and provided with simple tools for facility maintenance and management. Through these activities, residents’ ownership of the facility was fostered.

As a result, the pump well, built 10 years ago (2012), was still maintained on a daily and regular basis solely by the residents. Although many wells in rural Sierra Leone have been broken and abandoned or have dried up due to inappropriate construction work, the residents were proud of the fact that they could maintain and manage their own wells by themselves. This is an example of sustainable development by the community, which was the goal of this Project.



A pump well maintained by the residents (left, Robombeh Village, Kambia District). Maintenance tools provided under the Project (right, Sendugu Village, Kambia District)

## 4 Conclusion, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusion

This Project was undertaken in the Northern Region of Sierra Leone with the aim of enabling LCs and WCs in order to carry out their functions and roles in accordance with the Local Government Act (2004) and to manage district development projects efficiently and effectively.

The objectives of the Project are consistent with the decentralization and development policies of the Government of Sierra Leone and are consistent with development needs, except during the EVD outbreak. The objectives of the Project are also consistent with Japan’s development cooperation policy toward Sierra Leone, and the collaboration between LCs and MDAs was facilitated through JICA’s health and agriculture projects in the region. In collaboration with other donors, the Project worked to revise the Guidelines to make them more practical and suitable for dissemination. Therefore, the Project’s relevance and coherence are high. The Project mostly achieved its purpose at its completion, as the targeted



District Councils and WCs in the Northern Region were able to manage community development programs by ensuring that the structure and roles were in line with the Guidelines. However, at the time of the ex-post evaluation, the LCs in the Eastern and Southern Regions had not managed development projects using the Guidelines; thus, the Overall Goal has not been achieved. In addition, the Northern Region has had little lasting effect on the Project due to the transfer of former counterparts. Therefore, the effectiveness and impacts are moderately low. The Project period and Project cost slightly exceeded the plan but not by a large margin. Therefore, the Project's efficiency is high. In terms of sustainability, there is a strong political will in which the operationalization of the Guidelines at the national level is specified in the *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023)*. On the other hand, there are technical and financial challenges in the dissemination and utilization of the Guidelines. However, there is a prospect of improvement and resolution thanks to the successor Project, which will continue until 2025. Therefore, the Project's sustainability of effects is high.

In light of the above, this Project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

## 4.2 Recommendations

### 4.2.1 Recommendations to the MLGRD

- Reinforcement of awareness-raising activities for dissemination of the Guidelines

To ensure that each officer in the LCs implements development projects in accordance with the Guidelines, it is important for the Chief Administrator to fully understand the usefulness of the Guidelines and provide leadership in putting them into practice. However, due to the frequent transfers and changes of the LC officers, some Chief Administrators have no experience engaging in the Project and are not aware of the benefits of the Guidelines. Therefore, the MLGRD should provide an opportunity to all Chief Administrators so that they understand the usefulness of the Guidelines. Because the financial situation of the LCs may hamper their activities, it is also desirable to inform the Ministry of Finance's decentralized departments about the Guidelines' contents to avoid difficulties in allocating budgets. This recommendation should be implemented once the revision of the Guidelines, undertaken by the successor Project, is completed.

- Facilitate donor coordination with the RDD of MoPED

At the time of ex-post evaluation, several foreign donor agencies are working with local development actors in the area of local governance. In addition to avoiding duplication of interventions, it is desirable to identify synergies in resource optimization and interventions and to have a regular forum for consultation to achieve these. It should be noted that the MoPED's RDD is currently responsible for coordination related to local

governance, mainly through the District Development Coordination Committee (DDCC). The MLGRD should have the opportunity to deliberate with the RDD as soon as possible on the promotion of donor coordination through the DDCC framework.

#### 4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

- Supporting the facilitation of donor coordination

JICA should encourage the MLGRD and MoPED to promote use of the Guidelines in all development projects involving LCs. For example, it is advisable to encourage other donors to raise their interest by presenting examples of the use of the Guidelines within other donor projects (e.g., EU Project<sup>58</sup>) at coordination meetings held by the MLGRD and MoPED.

#### 4.3 Lessons Learned

##### Involvement of community representatives in promoting community participation

The Project started in a situation where the LCs had little experience in leading community development projects. Therefore, the WC, headed by a councilor elected by the residents, was asked to act as a bridge between the community and the LC, especially at the beginning of the Project. The fact that the LCs sought advice from traditional leaders (e.g., Paramount Chiefs) also helped them avoid problems with residents and resolve issues during implementation. Therefore, if counterparts have no experience in community-involved projects, it is important to identify stakeholders representing the community at an early stage in order to gain the trust and understanding of residents and to involve them in project activities to an appropriate degree and in an appropriate manner, especially in the first half of a project, after understanding their level of influence and importance.

##### Effects of long-term placement of a Japanese expert in central government

Although the Project was intended to strengthen the capacity of local government agencies in the targeted areas, it was also intended to disseminate the effects throughout Sierra Leone as the Overall Goal. Therefore, the plan was to deploy experts in the central government, which was the lesson learned from the similar project in the past.<sup>59</sup> In line with the plan, a Chief Advisor was assigned to the MLGRD for the initial cooperation period (2009-2014). The effect has been significant, allowing the Project to provide advice as a key member in the formulation of policies and mechanisms for promoting decentralization, facilitating the implementation of local projects from the central level, and easily identifying and consulting

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<sup>58</sup> The EU is currently implementing the Project “Support to Civil Society and Local Authorities for Local Development in Sierra Leone” to support civil society and local government for rural development in Sierra Leone in the districts of Bombali, Falaba, Kambia, Karene, Kenema, and Pujehun.

<sup>59</sup> Ex-ante Evaluation Sheet p.9.

with other donors who support the Ministry. In particular, JICA's support in Sierra Leone at the start of the Project was limited<sup>60</sup> and the relationship with the ministries and agencies of the government had not yet been fully established. Under such circumstances, the permanent presence of a Japanese expert in the Ministry contributed to deepening the relationship of trust between the Government of the recipient country and JICA. On the other hand, during the extension period after 2016, no Japanese experts were stationed at the Ministry as more focus was on activities in the local development. As a result, the promotion of the Guideline dissemination and inter-donor coordination at the center were lacking. Thus, even if the project's direct target area is a rural area, if the effects of the project are to be disseminated over a wide area, long-term placement of Japanese experts at the central government will enable them to work directly on policy formulation and institution building, build good relationships with the central government, and promote donor coordination.

## **5 Non-Score Criteria**

### **5.1 Performance**

#### **5.1.1 Objective Perspective**

None in particular.

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<sup>60</sup> During the implementation of this Project, it was a field office, not the current branch office.

## Appendix 1: Achievement of Results

Output	indicator	Status of achievement at completion
Output 1 The District/Rural Development Model in Kambia and Port Loko Districts is established through pilot and model Projects.	Indicator 1-1: The final Draft of the Rural Development Handbook (final version) is approved. Indicator 1-2: The final Draft of the District Development Handbook (3rd Edition) is approved.	<Achieved> The Rural Development Handbook and the District Development Handbook were compiled into a single volume as the Local Councils' Development Operational Guidelines. <sup>61</sup> The Minister's signed Guidelines were officially released in September 2017.
Output 2 Capacities of District Councils and WCs in Kambia and Port Loko Districts are developed for more effective and efficient District/Rural Development Management.	Indicator 2-1: 100% of participants of training implemented the Action Plan by October 2014.  Complementary Indicator 2-1: Capacity building of WCs  Indicator 2-2: The result of the target two districts in the Comprehensive Local Government Performance Assessment System (CLOGPAS) is improved by October 2014.	<Achieved> Indicator 2-1: Of the 61 KDC and PLDC training participants, 56 developed action plans and all implemented the same. <sup>62</sup> Complementary Indicator 2-1: Capacity building of the WCs was confirmed by observation that the actual role is being played through on-the-job training by the pilot project. <sup>63</sup> Indicator 2-2: CLOGPAS has not been updated since 2015. <sup>64</sup>
Output 3 The system to disseminate District/Rural Development Model to each district is established by MLGRD.	Indicator 3-1: The methodology and frequency of dissemination of the District/Rural Development Model to the country are decided. Indicator 3-2: Annual dissemination plan is made.	<Achieved> Indicators 3-1 and 3-2: Short, Medium and Long term dissemination plans have been developed for the national dissemination of the Guidelines <sup>65</sup>
Output 4 Practical capacities, including the ability to apply into Ebola recovery, are developed in the five districts of the Northern Region.	Indicator 4-1: On-the-job training for all processes in accordance with the Guidelines is provided through the recovery pilot Project. Indicator 4-2: Training on local administration in disaster recovery is conducted.	< Almost Achieved> Indicator 4-1: The Ebola recovery pilot projects in all five target districts were implemented according to the Guidelines as on-the-job training for district councils and WCs. However, due to time constraints, the final step "Project Review/Evaluation" could not be conducted. <sup>66</sup> Indicator 4-2: Training in Japan was conducted twice with the objective of acquiring knowledge and methods on Japan's experience in regional development and disaster recovery and being able to apply them in their own work, and 12 persons (6 persons/times) participated. <sup>67</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Source: Final Report (2019) p.5-5.

<sup>62</sup> Source: First Terminal Evaluation Report (2017) p.11.

<sup>63</sup> Source: Training Plan Expert Report (2012)

<sup>64</sup> Source: Second Terminal Evaluation Report (2018) p.10.

<sup>65</sup> Source: Final Report (2019) p.5-7 to 5-11.

<sup>66</sup> Source: Final Report (2019) p.7-18.

<sup>67</sup> Source: Final Report (2019) p.6-2.