Report comparing circumstances of your country with those of Japan

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1. Regarding agricultural instruction targeted at agricultural workers (based on your observations of Agricultural Improvement Centers and Agricultural Cooperatives)

(1) What kind of impression did you have when you observed the agricultural training systems for agricultural workers in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both superior aspects and areas you thought to be problems.)

(Superior aspects)

- Looking at higher proportion of aging population involved in agricultural practices, the cooperatives seem to be better ways of management and facilitate provision of extension services to the farmers.
- Most of the researches are targeted in solving practical problems of the farmers.
- Irrespective of gender there is a strong involvement of members in execution of their duties.
- Good collaboration among the different stakeholders involved in agriculture. (i.e. extension services, universities, governmental and public organizations, etc.)
- Farmers can relatively stand by themselves in solving some technical problems.

(Areas thought to be problems)

- A lot has to be done to raise the awareness of the youngsters about benefits of agricultural systems and involve the youth in every aspect of production. After all the sustainability of the system relies on the generations to come.
- Decline in agriculture engaged population.

(2) Are there organizations or agencies in your country that carry out agricultural training for agricultural workers? If so, please indicate in the space below the name of said organization, its positioning (in other words, whether it is a national or regional government organization, or a public foundation, etc.), comparing the work its carries out with the situation in Japan. If there is no such organization in your country, please indicate your own opinions about whether such on organization is necessary in your country, and whether it is possible for such a system to be introduced, and so on.

There are organizations that work under the auspices of Ministry of Agriculture like AGARFA, WADU, CADU training center, etc There are also NGOs and public organizations involved in community development. Some of them are involved in developing and disseminating appropriate technologies related to farming like farming machineries, harvesting and post-harvesting mechanisms, biogas development. Most of them train extension service agents from different regions. The programs are not usually organized on the basis of the demands of the farmers. What one can take as a lesson from Japan to be adopted in my country is the close collaboration between the different stakeholders involved in agricultural development and demand driven researches. There is a wide variation in agricultural practices in different regions of my country but because of the few number of training centers region-specific problems are not well treated.

(3) Are there matters that you would like to know more about in terms of the agricultural training system in Japan? If so, please indicate in the space below.

- Was there any turning point that really made a difference in the agricultural practice of the country?
- How is the response of the agricultural society to introduction of new technologies?

2. Regarding the Technology Support Association in the Land Improvement Program (based on observation of the Land Improvement Program Association Federation)

(1) What kind of impression did you have when you observed the Land Improvement Program Association Federation, an organization that carries out technological support for the Land Improvement Program in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both superior aspects and areas you thought to be problems.)

(Superior aspects)

- Significant participation of the community in project cost share is observed. Besides transparency of the financial management is a good initiation for actual involvement.
- The agricultural infrastructure improvement program is impressively planned in the sense that water rights of the users is not violated and it also addresses environmental issues.
- Consultancy services rendered by the Federation are quite vital to the farmers.

(Areas thought to be problems)

- Since some people in the locality even don't know the existence of the LID, it is better to launch an awareness raising programs.
- Urbanization is drastically reducing the land ownership so people dwelling in the neighborhood who are not involved in farming may not take care of the infrastructures (i.e. canals, etc) built.

(2) Are there organizations or agencies in your country that carry out technological support for land improvement programs? If so, please indicate in the space below the name of said organization, its positioning (in other words, whether it is a national or regional government organization, or a public foundation, etc.), comparing the work its carries out with the situation in Japan. If there is no such organization in your country, please indicate your own opinions about whether such on organization is necessary in your country, and whether it is possible for such a system to be introduced, and so on.

Ministry of Agriculture, and different NGOs are involved in technological support to land improvement programs. There are agricultural research centers in different regions. The programs are fragmented ones. They could not win fully the confidence of the users. Farmers do not have much say in terms of their needs. There is overlap of mandate between different organizations. At larger scale different offices administer the water and land resources. From experiences in Japan it can be inferred that incorporating farmers at every phase of land improvement programs is quite crucial. As to the institutional set-up it should be examined whether it can be adopted or integrated into the existing structures.

(3) Are there matters that you would like to know more about in terms of the technological support association in the Land Improvement Program? If so, please indicate in the space below.

How is the interaction among the different organizations (if there are any) involved in this line?

3. Regarding plans and implementation of the Land Improvement Program (based on observation of the Oide and Hojo Dune District of Land Improvement)

(1) What impressions did you have when you observed the Land Improvement Program plans and methods of implementation in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both superior aspects and areas you thought to be problems.

(Superior aspects)

- Involvement of the real actors in agriculture, farmers, in the planning and development of land and water resources has contributed in the flourishing agricultural production in the country.
- In the Oide Irrigation channel a good practice of integrating environmental concerns during design can be observed at the headwork where a careful consideration for fish species is made by provision of fish ladder along with the barrage.
- The vigorous efforts made in the Hojo sand dune district to prevent the huge wind drift and practical progresses in the means of water delivery for irrigation is quite impressive.

(Areas thought to be problems)

- Adjacent land improvement districts would benefit if horizontal experience sharing and close planning of projects were carried out among them.
- In the Oide Irrigation channel since it is a long one drainage from upstream feeding channels may carry some high quantities of accumulated fertilizers in it, thus it would be good to establish water-quality monitoring stations along the main channel.

(2) What impressions did you have when you observed the organization and management systems of the land improvement zones that carried out the planning and implementation of the Land Improvement Program in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both superior aspects and areas you thought to be problems.)

(Superior aspects)

- Trust and dedication of members to their duties.
- Operation and maintenance is mainly undertaken by the local community.
- Democratic ways of operation principles.

(Areas thought to be problems)

- Because of the large number of land improvement districts there is large overhead cost involved.
- Charge for water use in the Hojo sand dune district is noted to be on the basis of the area owned but this may not stimulate farmers to use water on the field effectively.

(3) Are there organizations or agencies in your country that carry out planning and implementation of land improvement programs? If so, please indicate in the space below the name of said organization, its positioning (in other words, whether it is a national or regional government organization, or a public foundation, etc.), comparing the work its carries out with the situation in Japan. If there is no such organization in your country, please indicate your own opinions about whether such on organization is necessary in your country, and whether it is possible for such a system to be introduced, and so on.

Ministry of Agriculture and recently Commissions for sustainable agriculture and environmental rehabilitation in different regions of the country are responsible for carrying out such tasks. These commissions identify where there is high priority of concern of drought and carry out planning and implementation of agricultural infrastructure development. Under Ministry of Agriculture the district offices manage soil and water conservation practices. Farmers construct labour-based rural roads. But the management of water resources and land resources is separately undertaken by different offices. It is not an integrated approach.

(4) Are there matters that you would like to know more about in terms of the planning and implementation of the Land Improvement Program? If so, please indicate in the space below.

How does the LIP prioritize the job to be focused?

4. Regarding UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa)

(1) Has your country joined the convention? If so, when did your country join?

Yes, Ethiopia has signed the convention in October 1994 and entered into force in September 1997.

(2) Is your present agency working concerning the convention? If so, what work is your present agency doing?

Academic Institutions are involved in the institutional framework to combat desertification. E.g. Awassa College of Agriculture conducts trials in the semi-arid areas, especially in investigation of the collection and identification of early maturing drought resistant crops and also in the selection of fast growing multipurpose trees and shrubs. The Mekele University College is engaged in dry land management research. And my institute is responsible for conducting research on appropriate irrigation practices in arid and semi-arid areas. One such project is low-pressure drip irrigation project.

(3) Regarding the prevention of desertification, what do you expect of Japan? The report of Japan can be read with the following URL.
(http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/developed/2000/japan-eng.pdf)

This drastic change of climate and desertification is threatening the whole continent. If immediate measures are not taken things may even get worse and reach almost an irreversible stage. The problem should not be left as a worry of certain corners of the globe. In one way or the other countries, which are not facing it now, may start to feel its effect. Involvement of Japan in the combat against desertification should be appreciated. Japan can be a good exemplar in extending reforestation programs in drought-affected countries. In addition to the training given in Japan like in Arid land research center providing training opportunities right on the spot in the countries that have good and long history of combating desertification problems helps.
In Ethiopia more than 70 % of the total land area is arid, semi-arid or dry sub-humid and this amounts to more than 46% of the arable land .In Ethiopia more than 250, 000 square kilometer of land is vulnerable to medium to very high desertification problems (USDA-NRCS world soil resources). So desertification is a real threat here. As to the national action plan for combating desertification it gives good focus to the arid and semi-arid regions in the country and involves different stakeholders. It must be integrated into national and regional strategies to ensure that it gets adequate priority. Japan may also assist by providing financial and technological support in mitigating consequences of desertification. Land degradation is a chronic problem in Ethiopia but an integrated approach has not been launched yet. More money may not always be the solution. Effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms have to be given due emphasis.

5. If you have other opinions or impressions based on site observation, please indicate them in the space below.

The close tie between the academic institutions, research organizations and governmental offices is one of the good collaborations, which can be witnessed here.