Report comparing agricultural situation of your country with that of Japan

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1. Regarding agricultural instruction for the benefit of farmers (based on your observations of Agricultural Extension Offices, etc.)

(1) What is your impression of the agricultural technological transfer systems for farmers in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both positive attributes and points you regarded as problems/challenges.)

(Positive attributes)
Japan seems to have an efficient system of transferring technology to farmers. There seems to be good linkage between National Government, Local Government, the Land Improvement District(LID) and the farmer. Research centers through extension workers relay technology to the farmers as evidenced by some of the farmers we visited. Apart from cropping techniques, the LID have a good command of water management. The best part is the confidence the farmers have in the LID !
(Points that you regarded as problems/challenges)
The production costs of farming are too high despite the high mechanization. It seem the cash flow analysis of farming would not be viable. Without the heavy Government subsidy farming would not be viable. Farming does not seem to be an attractive business anymore and relies on personal interest or tradition (like a hobby!)As such profit may not be any issue now but the system can not be sustainable.

(2) Are there any organizations or agencies in your home country that carry out technological transfer in agriculture for farmers? If so, please indicate it in the blank below with the name of said organization, its positioning (in other words, whether it is a national or regional governmental organization, or a public foundation, etc.)by comparing their work and the situation with those in Japan that you've observed during Site Observation week. If there is no such organization in your country, please describe your own opinions about whether or not such on organization is necessary in your country, and whether or not there's a possibility for such a system to be introduced, and so on.

Several governmental agencies exist in my country:

1.Agricultural Research and Extension(AREX)(agronomy)
- National Office
- Provincial Office
- District Office
- Substation(on a scheme)
- Blocks

2.Agricultural Engineering(conservation,farm mechanization,farm structures)
- National Office
- Provincial Office
- District Office

3.Agricultural Economics and Marketing(cash flows,setting producer prices,market research etc)
- National
- Provincial

4.Livestock Production
5.Veterinary Sciences
6. Several research stations for individual crops

7.DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION

8.DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FUND (services farmers at Government subsidized rates)
Quazi –Governmental Fund through which assistance is channeled to farmers by Government or NGO's. It comprises of the following sections:

- Tillage
- Water(Dam ,Irrigation design and management ,borehole drilling)
- Roads(construction and maintenance of access roads)
- Plant and equipment(transport)
- Resettlement(land demarcation)

Available at:

- National
- Provincial
- District Level
- Ward Level(in some cases)

9.RDF, Several NGO'S such as Rockerfeller, CIMMYT etc

(3) Are there any information that you would like to know more about the agricultural extension/technological transfer system for farmers in Japan? If so, please state it in the blank below.

Does the on job training experience acquired by LID staff enable them to join the industry and work in related departments should they wish to change jobs?

2. Regarding plans and implementation of the Land Improvement Program (based on observation of the Oide and Hojo Sand Dune Land Improvement Districts)

(1) What is your impression on the organization and management systems of the land improvement districts in the relation to the planning and implementation of the Land Improvement Program in Japan? (Please write your impressions from the perspective of both positive attributes and points you regarded as problems/challenges.)

(Positive attributes)

The LID seems to be operating efficiently and in line with the national Land Improvement Program plans and implementation strategies in Japan.

(Points you regarded as problems/challenges)

The fact that the cash flow analysis from the producers is skewed is a big threat to the continuity of the LID and hence farming as a whole. Subsidized farming may not be sustainable as is evidenced by the decrease in national Government support to local Government for agriculture Ideally the Government should help the LID to establish and then wean them after they start realizing some profits.

(2) Are there any organizations or agencies in your country that carry out planning and implementation of land improvement programs? If so, please indicate it in the blank below with the name of said organization, its positioning (in other words, whether it is a national or regional governmental organization, or a public foundation, etc.)by comparing their work and the situation with those in Japan that you've observed during the Site Observation week. If there is no such organization in your country, please describe your own opinions about whether or not such on organization is necessary in your country, and whether or not there's a possibility for such a system to be introduced, and so on.

1.AREX
-this department is responsible for carrying out extension services to farmers. Its link to the farmer is as below:

Minister
Permanent Secretary
Principal Director (2) – Agricultural Services, Veterinary Services
Agriculture Services – 3 Directors (Engineering, Extension, Irrigation)
Chiefs (Head Office)
Principal, Senior, Engineer
Technicians, extension officers
Farmers

2.Department of Research and Specialist Services (DRSS)
- carries out research for individual crops for hybrids, climate adaptation ,soil type etc.The new techniques are transferred to farmers through the extension services department in AREX.Within the AREX is also an economics and marketing department that is responsible for advising farmers on management, financial budgets ,competitive markets.

3.District Development Fund Water Division and Tillage Section
- it provides assistance to farmers by technical expertise to medium and large scale farmers as well as subsidized or free services such as borehole drilling to subsistence farmers.
-responsible for planning, design, implementation and management of water resources facilities such as dams, irrigation and water supply schemes
-the Tillage section hires out tractors to farmers at subsidized rates

4.Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
-through Government funded projects implements electrification of farming communities

5.Other organizations include the Rural Development Fund which also assist farmer projects with finances but work with technocrats from the District Development Fund and Rural District Councils. Project identification is done through the local Government District Administrator's Office via ward councilors and village chiefs.

(3) Are there any information that you would like to know more about the planning and implementation of the Land Improvement Program? If so, please indicate it in the blank below.

1.Since its formation, has the Government always been subsidizing farmers? 2. What efforts have the Government ever made to make agriculture viable?

3. In case you have any other opinions or impressions based on the site observation, please indicate them in the blank below.

Large scale commercial farming has proved to be more viable than subsistence small scale. Since the irrigation infrastructure in place is so brilliant and the Land Improvement Program so well established, rather than abandoning farming altogether, would commercializing not bring better results than keeping several small holder farmers?