

## Unit 1-3: The history and vision of rural development policy in Japan

### Chapter 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Historical background of rural development policy

In Japan, when agriculture were the center of the industry and agriculture was the occupation of the major part of the population in rural villages, knowing agriculture meant knowing rural villages. Today, however, when the mixed-state of agricultural households and nonagricultural households is remarkable and old rural villages have evolved into new rural villages, rural villages play different roles than they used to play. Because of this, it is not easy to talk about rural development policy as a whole from an ancient period until now. This unit shows the background of rural development policy that was developed in response to the backgrounds and changes of social economy and the tasks of agricultural policy during a long history.

Since the definition of “Rural development” has a broad meaning, here we narrow down the meaning to the transition of the agricultural land systems and agricultural water systems from the viewpoint of agricultural land and water utilization. In addition, since agriculture itself was deeply involved in rural villages in Japan, here we mean “Rural development” as “Agricultural rural development.”

#### 1.2 Characteristics of rural society in Japan

This section briefly touches on and gives a better understanding for the rural societies and communities in Japan, which is the foundation of the transition of agricultural land systems and agricultural water systems, before we get into the main subject about the rural development policy in Japan.

##### 1.2.1 Rural society in Japan

The rural family systems in Japan are characterized by the formation of a group as a “*ie*.” These remarkable aspects can be shown by the succession to paternal line, the primogeniture, the direct three-generation living together, or *ie*-group-owned agricultural land as their symbol of property. The basic structural unit of the rural society is an agricultural household that has maintained this “*ie*” as the main body.

On the other hand, rural villages in Japan have formed communities since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. 90% of the communities were formed before the Meiji period. The communities described here was different from the administrative village of local government systems. They are local communities that arise spontaneously, and “*ie*” is related to and connected to territory and blood

relationships; therefore, it can be said that they are collections of groups in social relationships. Most of the “le” is the production unit that engages in small paddy agriculture. The group consists of approximately 10 neighboring “le.” The each group elects a representative person and these representatives form the administrative authority. As of 2005, there are 119,000 such communities.

Agricultural households in the community carry out various common activities in order to produce agricultural products, but in order to do these activities, a “Yoriai<sup>1</sup>” is held by each community unit. At the meeting, they discuss community event plans, supervision of agricultural facilities, and activities that relate to agricultural production. During the high-growth period, joint operation, cooperative cultivation, group farming, etc. arose, and rational and functional groups were formed between agricultural households. Even though a new organization was formed, each “le” is a basic unit and it has a great influence on this organization.

From the above standpoints, a basic unit for the formation of a rural village is a community which was formed spontaneously. As a result, the rural village builds a strong community spirit that is bound together by territorial connections and blood relationships between houses. This custom can be seen and is deeply rooted in the group works and mutual aid (e.g. “Yui<sup>2</sup>” or “Koh<sup>3</sup>”) in both aspects of production and living.

As described above, it is very important to understand that agricultural households and communities have comprehensively dependent relationships in rural societies in Japan.

### 1.2.2 Patterns of community in Japan

Basically, Japanese communities spontaneously developed in places where it was easy to maintain drinking water and avoided natural disasters; however, they grew to be formed systematically in accordance with the dispersal of agrarian civilization. In the middle of the sixth century, many systematically zoned communities (*Jori* communities) which were basically set out in a grid were formed based on the *Jori* system<sup>4</sup> in the Kinki region by conducting the law for distribution of farmland<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, from the Sengoku period to the Edo period, the communities that had newly-developed rice fields were formed by the development of new rice fields which were conducted by feudal lords. These communities are currently divided into four categories, which are the scattered community, the community of scattered houses, the community of concentrated houses, and the community of dense houses.

(1) Scattered community: Agricultural communities in which houses are separately situated among several valleys, or groups of several houses are separately situated over a valley. It can be seen mainly on the south side of mountains.

(2) Community of scattered houses: Agricultural communities in which there are agricultural fields between neighboring houses. It can be seen mainly on flat ground.

(3) Community of concentrated houses: Agricultural communities in which houses are situated in one certain area and their sites are very close each other. It can be seen on both the south side of mountains and flat ground.

(4) Community of dense houses: Agricultural communities in which nonagricultural households exist between agricultural households, and houses are continuously situated near to urban areas. Also, the houses are densely distributed. It can be seen mainly in more urbanized area.

## **Chapter 2 Historical Development of Rural Development Policy of Japan**

In this chapter, we will, in providing explanation about rural development policy, consider the agricultural land system and the water utilization system, two important systems and the circumstances where, for the first time after the war, control of the agricultural land and utilization of water have shifted from landowners and the State to plowmen under the enactment of the Land Reform Act.

### **2.1. Rural Development as seen from the Perspective of the Agricultural Land System**

In this Chapter, we will provide an outline of the history of the agricultural land system.

#### **2.1.1. Ancient Times, Middle Ages and the Period of Civil Wars between Rival Daimyo (About the First Year of the Christian Era – the 16th Century)**

Rice cultivation is said to have started in 3 centuries BC. Rice paddies in the last part of BC were made in back sloughs or marshy land in the valley that had developed in the lower reaches of comparatively bigger rivers. Around the first year of the Christian Era, ironware came into wide use, making it possible to construct ponds and ditches and irrigation farming started. However, planned use of land and orderly stationing of settlements were yet to be seen at that time.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Taika Reform<sup>6</sup> was carried out, the public land and civilian system<sup>7</sup> were adopted, improvement and expansion of agricultural land and agricultural utilization of water were promoted and the Jori Land Readjustment System established itself.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when permanent ownership of the land had come to be authorized for a person cultivating it under the Law Permitting Permanent Ownership of Newly Cultivated Land<sup>8</sup>,

the Shoen System<sup>9</sup> where the aristocracy in the central metropolis with a big capital, wealthy people of temples and shrines and in the localities possessed private land of a large scale emerged. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century the Shoen System made a significant progress. The Kamakura shogunate at the time stationed shugo<sup>10</sup> in every province and jito<sup>11</sup> in every Shoen and pushed forward with development of irrigation in the Kanto Plain as well as in the basin of the Kisogawa, Shinanogawa, Kamogawa and other rivers. However, in the Muromachi Era (about the 14<sup>th</sup> century) the authorities of Shugo were reinforced and there were increasingly more intervention of Shugo in the control of Shoen and shogunal demesne.

With the arrival of the Period of Civil Wars between Rival Daimyo (about the 15<sup>th</sup> century), the shogunate became little more than a mere name, Shoens were misappropriated, and the Shoen System virtually collapsed. Warlords pushed forward with development of river basin scale, with an aim of expanding their economic base. On the other hand, if we look at villages, village communities became increasingly more independent in the latter period of the Kamakura Era, and saw the birth of organization of village autonomy called "soh." Agricultural laborers strengthened their regional association with apportionment of water-use, repair and construction of canals and roads, disputes on boundaries, self-defense against warfare and robbers as motivating such association. Village gradually formed itself with residences increasingly detached from cultivated land and houses getting together. Such village which was formed by all (pronounced soh) constituents living within such boundary came to be called soh-son (village) or soh.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, warlords<sup>12</sup> strengthened their control of the entire surrounding region, increasingly depriving soh-son of their autonomy, From the latter period of the Kamakura Era to the Muromachi Period.(from the beginning to the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century), paddy farming system of the Japanese type where a paddy field was developed by a feudal lord, terminal water-use was controlled by "soh" and manure was self-supplied by iriai<sup>13</sup> (a group exercising the right of common in a district) established itself.

Towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the area of agricultural land and farmers across the country came to be grasped by confirmed land ownership (cadastral surveys instituted by Hideyoshi Toyotomi<sup>14</sup>) and the system of farmers bearing the burden of the land tax in kind was established. This caused the association form "soh" to extinguish but autonomous character of "soh" has been partly inherited by villages in the early modern times.

## 2.1.2 Edo Era (the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century)

In the Edo Era, the Tokugawa Shogunate<sup>15</sup> established the control of land by Daimyo and a firm class system, apportioning a specified crop (kokudaka) to the cultivated land and making it its economic and financial base to collect rice as land tax (in kind). Under this system, the

shogunate promoted a large-scale cultivation of a new paddy field with an aim of increasing revenue of land tax in kind. Large-scale development of wetlands in the middle reaches of the Tonegawa River and Minuma Substitute Irrigation Channel as the large-scale irrigation system may be cited as a representative example. This cultivation of a new paddy field has increased the area of a paddy field which was 160ha in the beginning of the 17 century to 300ha a hundred years later. This cultivation of a new paddy field has nearly constituted a foundation for the current type of cultivated land. As there was an increasing number of farmers who sold away their fields due to famine, the shogunate issued a decree permanently prohibiting the sale of fields<sup>16</sup>, prohibiting the sale and purchase of agricultural land in order to prevent segmentation of peasants in different classes by concentrated ownership of land by fewer peasants and stabilize revenue of land tax in kind. However, this law that did not prohibit peasants from mortgaging land to others for a loan made it more popular for peasants in poverty to put their land in pledge, increasing the cases where possessive rights to agricultural land were shifted to others by the land becoming a pawnbroker's property under foreclosure. At this time, enhanced productivity of farming and shift from economic sufficiency to a commodity economy expanded cultivation of commercial farm products and further disintegrated the peasant stratum. Further, under the policy of developing a new paddy field, there was increasingly more concentrated ownership of agricultural land and more formation of large land-owners.

### 2.1.3. Meiji Era (1868-1912)

When the feudal regime<sup>17</sup> of the Tokugawas came to the end and the reign of the Meiji Government started, the Government found the basic resources on which to base its finance in the land tax. The Meiji Government considered that in aiming at a modern state and pushing forward its plan for building up "a rich country with a strong army," imposition of different tax rates in provinces and the yield of produce collected that depended on the weather would not bring stable government revenue. Therefore, it enforced the Land Tax Reform<sup>18</sup> which bases taxation standard on land value instead of yield, and changed the terms of payment from payment in kind to payment in cash. The Government also authorized private possession of agricultural land and imposed duty to pay tax on land owners. It also annulled a decree permanently prohibiting the sale of fields, legalized sale and purchase and lease of land and authorized the free exercise of rights on the land. However, this reform of the system did not fundamentally change the agricultural land ownership structure that existed among conventional landowners and tenant farmers. Combined with a change in taxation standards from those based on yields to those based on land value, this further accelerated tendency of concentration of land under the management of landlords, dissolution of petty landed farmers'

groups as well as tendency of their becoming petty tenant farmers.

#### 2.1.4 Prewar Period (Taisho Era – End of the Second World War: 1912 – 1945)

Subsequent to the enforcement of the Land Tax Reform, freezing of land prices in spite of a rise in the rice price virtually increased the share of landlords, which resulted in an increase in dispute between landlords and tenant farmers. Measures were then taken to enhance the rights of a plowman by stipulating leasing right as an obligation but due to superiority of possessive right over leasing right, this effort did not improve the past relationship that existed between a landlord and a tenant farmer. Since the end of the Meiji Era, a policy to establish landed farmers (financing project) had been put into execution with an aim of fostering landed farmers but this project failed to liberate petty tenant farmers and lead them to be landed farmers and the conventional relationship between a landlord and a tenant farmer remained to exist.

During this period, after the First World War, there was a rice shortage and the Government promoted its policy to increase production of foods. This policy included commencement of grant for paying a fixed rate of interest on loaned operational expenditure under Law on Reclamation Subsidy<sup>19</sup> and subsidizing 50% of operational expenses for Prefectural draining improvement works that bring profits to more than 500 ha of area under Official Guidelines for Subsidy for Irrigation and Drainage Improvement Works. About the time of the Sino-Japanese War, Irrigation and Drainage Projects bringing profits to area of 500 ha or less were also subsidized by the State Treasury. In 1941, the Agricultural Land Development Law that abolished these laws and guidelines and integrated and compiled them into a single work was enacted and subsidy of 60% came to be given for development and improvement of state-operated agricultural land.

Thus, the prewar days were the age when the relationship was maintained between a landlord and a tenant farmer from the micro point of view while from the macro point view, the State promoted the development of farming village to make a country stronger.

#### 2.1.5. The Postwar Period (1946 and after)

During the period from the end of the war to 1960, democratization of farming villages were advanced under the occupation of GHQ<sup>20</sup>. In other words, administration of agricultural land was directed towards maintaining and developing the landed farmers under the reform of agricultural land. The reform of agricultural land aimed at disorganizing the landlord system and building up agricultural land ownership structure with emphasis on ownership of agricultural land by landed farmer realized through sales and purchase of agricultural land by the State. It was decided in the first Reform that a farm rent be paid in cash and level of controlled agricultural land price be determined. In the second Reform it was further decided that the State

was to directly purchase agricultural land and to sell it to farmers with plans and practical business to be carried out by Municipal Agricultural Land Commission. Percentage landed farmers own agricultural land in Japan has increased to 90% and the structure where plowmen are owners of agricultural land has established itself. As far as it is viewed from the perspective of ownership of agricultural land, a rural society has been almost standardized but creation of homogeneous petty landed farmers on a wide scale has preserved structure of small-scale farming.

After the agricultural land reform, Agricultural Land Act was enacted in 1952 to protect the rights of plowmen, prevent the landlord system from reviving and to maintain what the agricultural land reform has brought. This has served to establish legal system that safeguards ownership of landed farmers, having as its principle to bring up solid landed farmers and maintain what the agricultural land reform has brought. The Act controlled transfer of agricultural land for use for non-agricultural purposes but it contributed, through maintenance of rigid system of holding agricultural land, to retaining agricultural structure on petty farming and putting a restraint on enhanced productivity and fluidity of agricultural land. Contrary to what the Government intended in developing the landed farmers and promoting stable agricultural administration, this very period saw the transition of the country's economy from postwar reconstruction to high growth, which expanded disparity in revenue in the agricultural and the industrial sector and accelerated outflow of manpower from farming villages, development of farm mechanization and conversion of agricultural land to other uses, widely exposing conflicts of petty farming.

In order to increase agricultural productivity again amid the ever-declining structure of petty landed farmers in the period of high economic growth, the Government promoted lease of agricultural land through the revision of the Agricultural Land Law in 1970.

**Table 2.1 Sales and purchase and change in tenant land under agricultural land reform**

(1) Sales and purchase records (nationwide: 1952)

		Agricultural Land	Pasture
Law on establishment of landed farmers	Purchased area	1,803	373
	Transferred to agricultural land under the jurisdiction of the State	186	76
	Total	1,994	449
	Sold area	1,975	410
Transfer Ordinance	Transfer by reporting	55	6
	Transfer to the Government	20	2
	Total	75	8

(2) Change in tenant land ( ): Percentage of tenant land in the whole land (%)

	1945	1950
Nationwide	2,368.2 (45.9)	514.7 (9.9)
Hokkaido	353.6 (48.7)	45.8 (6.1)
Other Prefectures	2,014.6 (45.5)	468.9 (10.5)

(Source: 2005 Meeting of Chiefs of Agricultural Civil Engineering Subsections [2006] "Agriculture and farming villages as seen from the perspective of changes")

This revision was designed to ease the framework of the principle of landed farmers it set forth in its efforts to make more effective agricultural use of farmland. In 1975, it revised the Law on the Improvement of Agricultural Development Area (ADA Law). This ensured the return of the leased agricultural land and enabled the Government to envisage expanded utilization of farming land. Further, in 1993 development of efficient and stable agricultural management and concentrated utilization of agricultural land<sup>21</sup> for the supporters were expanded, with an aim to strengthen foundation of agricultural business under the Farm Management Base Strengthening Promoting Law. This Law made it possible to enter a lease contract of agricultural land without getting a permission under the Agricultural Land Act. It also enabled a lessor to enter a contract with security as the agricultural land is returned upon the expiry of the contract term, thus promoting concentrated utilization of agricultural land. Further, in 2000, entity of a joint-stock company type has come to be authorized as agriculture production corporation, bringing a major change in the past framework of ownership of agricultural land by farmers.

**Table 2.2 Change in the Keynote of Agricultural Policy**

	1945	1960	1990
Period	First Period	Second Period	Third Period
Policy Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased production of foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of living</li> <li>• Optional expansion of agricultural production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained development of agriculture</li> <li>• Secured stable supply of foods</li> <li>• Display of multifarious functions</li> <li>• Development of farming villages</li> </ul>
Policy Instrument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various measures for increased production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased productivity</li> <li>• Remedy of disparity of standard of living between farmers and artisans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farming structural policy</li> <li>• Foods policy</li> <li>• Improvement of rural environment</li> </ul>
Keyword	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods of good quantity than those of good quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods as normal goods</li> <li>• Agriculture as an industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods of safety and satisfaction</li> <li>• Agriculture that can display multifarious functions</li> <li>• New values of farming villages</li> </ul>

(Source: JICA Tsukuba [ 2006 ] "Technical cooperation contents – Community Development with life improvement approach –")

## 2.2. Rural Development seen from the Perspective of Change in the System concerning Irrigation Water

In this paragraph, we provide an outline of the system concerning irrigation water which is another important system in rural development policy.

History of development of irrigation water is divided in 4 periods

First Period: the period of ancient burial mounds (about the 3<sup>rd</sup> century – about the 7<sup>th</sup> century) – Period when the ancient state established itself (the 7<sup>th</sup> century – the 8<sup>th</sup> century)

Characteristic of Irrigation from ponds and small rivers and the Jori Land Readjustment System

Second Period: the Period of Civil Wars between Rival Daimyo (the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century – the 16<sup>th</sup> century – the Edo Era (the 17<sup>th</sup> century – the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century)

The age when irrigation from bigger rivers and land reclamation by drainage

established itself

Third Period. The Meiji Period – about the end of Taisho Era (1968 – 1920 ca.)

In this period, irrigation and drainage projects have become prevalent as adjustment of cultivated land and flood prevention works developed mainly among landlords.

Fourth Period: End of Taisho – Prewar days – the Present day (about 1920 – the Present day)

Period when large-scale dams and irrigation and drainage projects under administrative investment and, in the postwar period, comprehensive development projects has been promoted.

However, for the convenience of explanation, we will consider the changes in the irrigation system in the following 3 age divisions

#### 2.2.1 Ancient Times – Middle Ages – Edo Era (About the First Year of the Christian Era – Middle of the 19th century)

After the introduction of rice cultivation, development of irrigation water such as an irrigation pond started in the period of ancient burial mounds (about the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century – about the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century). During the period from the Shoen Age (that started in the Nara Era (710 – 794)) to the Period of Civil Wars between Rival Daimyo (the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century), use of rivers of small and middle scale developed to strengthen national power and construction related to an irrigated rice field such as irrigation facilities, spillways for irrigation, ditches, reservoirs started. At the same time, flood prevention works were advanced in the efforts to increase rice production. Thus, irrigation in Japan developed centering around paddy field farming that that was done near rivers of small and medium scale.

However, until the Edo Era, irrigation remained at a level of self-conserving construction at limited parts of the country and extensive and large-scale river repair works had not been even planned. This was because irrigation that draws water from large rivers required sufficient flood control or river engineering.

Since the ancient times, administrative organs of the times have participated in utilization of irrigation water to a certain degree and made adjustments. As water was utilized for development of new paddy fields during the times from the Period of Civil Wars between Rival Daimyo to the Edo Era, a communal society for production and living such as so-called Igumi or Mizugumi that was organized for each region came to control river water, etc. Thus, utilization and maintenance/control of irrigation water were conducted under autonomous management of villages. These communal societies formed social irrigation order through disputes over irrigation, etc. among them. Adjustment on water utilization was worked out by autonomous negotiations of those who utilized water on the basis of traditional order of irrigation water

utilization<sup>22</sup> which had been formed in this way. There was tendency that the administrative organ, even daimyo evaded intervening in it. This common law was endorsed as it was under the old River Law. This method of management was subsequently taken over by Suiiri Doko Association System.

### 2.2.2 Meiji Era (1868 – 1912)

In reality, most of the supporters of the management of river water at the time were irrigation associations called Igumi or Mizugumi<sup>23</sup> that had been organized in the Edo Era. Utilization or maintenance/control of irrigation water was carried out under autonomous operation of villages.

After the Meiji Restoration, a new village which came into existence by consolidation of old villages had to play a role of administering agricultural utilization of water in the region but there were significant differences among the old villages in their irrigation facilities and in their practices related to expenditure, water supply, etc. and it was extremely difficult to adopt and implement a uniform rule for all the villages. This has resulted in the birth of the system of “Suiiri Dokokai Association<sup>24</sup>,” based on the traditional Igumi and Mizugumi, apart from the administration of the municipality which came into existence under the Law on Ward, Town and Village Assemblies. Under this revision, Suiiri Dokokai Associations were established in various places. Many of them inherited the organization of an irrigation association in feudalistic regime and their supervisors were mostly heads of former villages. For this reason, efforts have been made to incorporate management of the then-existing irrigation facilities into the local administration across prefectures/counties/municipalities that were in the process of having been formed since the Meiji Restoration.

However, a Suiiri Dokokai Association was a mere legislative organ and water supply and other services remained to be operated in a village-association way by the traditional Igumi and Mizugumi. This way of operation inherited under the postwar “Land Improvement Law<sup>25</sup>” by the organization of “Land Improvement District<sup>26</sup>.” When the municipality system came into operation in 1888, as the former villages began to cease to exist, it became difficult for Suiiri Dokokai Associations that had been operating on the basis of those villages to maintain themselves and this led to the enactment of 1890 Water Users Association Ordinance, and 1908 Water Users Association Act.

While Suiiri Dokokai Associations were organizations equivalent to former villages, in Water Users Association Ordinance, the municipality, which was an administrative organization were legally detached from an irrigation association albeit imperfectly and each was established as an independent organ. A water users association stipulated by Water Users Association Ordinance was classified into an ordinary water users association and a flood prevention association<sup>27</sup>. However, their constituents were landowners only and tenant farmers who were

plowmen were legally excluded from them.

On the other hand, Water Users Association Act was enacted to replace Water Users Association Ordinance as preventive measures against floods that frequently occurred at the time. This Act did not contain provisions concerning utilization of water, but only regulated observation of common law and restricted its membership only to landowners. It was in many cases the mayor concerned that was appointed as the supervisor of a water users association who was its representative and he was granted enormous authority. In the middle of the Meiji Era, full-scale farmland irrigation administration was developed with an aim of conducting more productive and more rational agricultural management instead of pursuing mere cultivation policy. The Arable Land Readjustment Law was enacted. An association for adjustment of arable land was assigned a role to implement readjustment works while the law assigned the role of maintaining and managing irrigation facilities to be implemented subsequent to the completion of the works to an ordinary water users association. However this enactment of this law brought administrative inconsistency in that the works were under the dual jurisdiction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce presiding over the former works while the latter works were in the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In 1896, “The former River Law” was enacted. This Law provided for the idea of the control of public water, water rights to be granted and conventional water rights but it placed emphasis on prevention of flood and contained few and very insufficient provisions on utilization of water. The Water Users Association Act enacted in 1908 was instituted as a countermeasure against floods which occurred very frequently at the time and it was to be evaluated as a regulatory law of an irrigation association from the standpoint of prevention of floods, making ordinary water users associations and associations for prevention of floods as object for regulation.

**Table 2.3 Change in Modern Organization of Water Utilization**

Age	Organization	Details
<b>Edo Era</b> (17th - 19th century)	Managed by an irrigation association organized per unit of village, etc., under the control of Shogunate Government	• Except for a large-scale construction works at the time of a disaster, operation of day-to-day management of facilities and apportionment of water-use; a small-scale repair to be carried out by “an organization called Jifushin <sup>28)</sup> ”;
1890	Water Users Association Ordinance enacted A water users association	• A water users association is now composed of individual landowners while a irrigation association in the early modern times was composed of villages;

	established in various places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In reality, could not be divided in a unit of an individual and a large-scale irrigation channel was managed by many villages in common, for the reason there was no change in the structure of the water-use system as a whole and water was, after all, water for the village</li> <li>• Such structure and character of a water users association were virtually inherited subsequent to the enactment of Water Users Association Act and were further inherited in the organization of land reform districts under Land Reform Act;</li> </ul>
1908	Water Users Association Act enacted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divided into ordinary water users associations and flood prevention associations and water users organization of the Japanese type established;</li> <li>• Ordinary water users associations were controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs through Department of Home Affairs of Prefectural Government and they were a nucleus to carry out improvement works of the facilities in the virtual water users administration organization.</li> </ul>
1909	Law on Improvement of New Cultivated Land enacted “facilities or construction related to irrigation and draining” added to the purposes of works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural water users administration were divided in two: water users association for the management of irrigation water under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs and cultivated land improvement association for reorganization of land under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce.</li> <li>• It was for the specific big irrigation water that an official water users organization was organized and a number of water users associations remain to be in existence as an optional organization for small-scale irrigation water.</li> <li>• In addition to this organization, some service associations (municipal association) exist in relation to water-use.</li> <li>• Even for large-scale irrigation water, many of terminal structure of the organization are virtually villages and structured on the foundation of residual form of villages in the early modern times.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such form was inherited until establishment of land improvement districts accompanying the conclusion of the postwar Land Reform Act.</li> <li>• Regulations on Ordinary Water Users Association based on Water Users Association Act and Regulations on Association for Improvement of Cultivated Land based on Arable Land Readjustment Law were abolished accompanying the enactment of the same law.</li> </ul>
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(Source: 2005 Meeting of Chiefs of Agricultural Civil Engineering Subsections [2006] “Agriculture and farming villages as seen from the perspective of changes”)

### 2.2.3 From the Taisho Period, via the End of World War II, to the Postwar Period ( From 1912 to the Present Time )

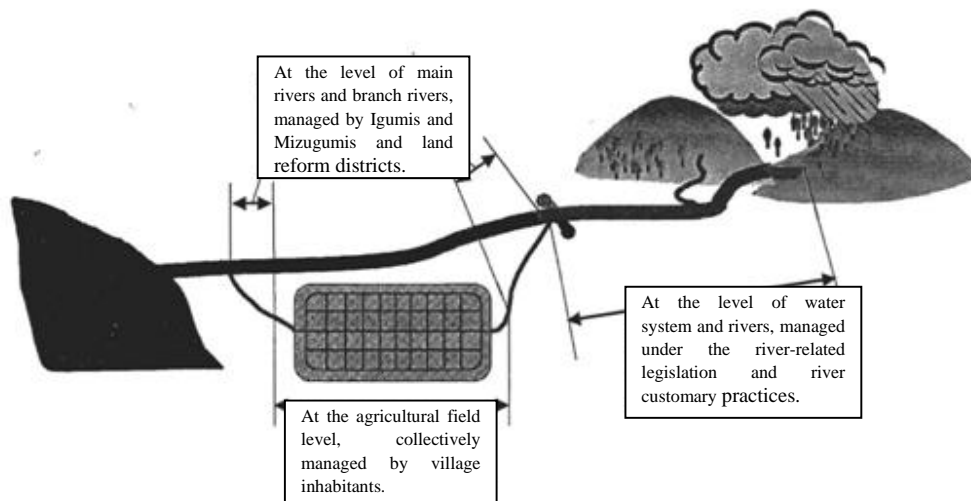
In the process of the industrial development from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, water for agricultural use came to compete with water for non-agricultural use such as industrial water including water for power generation and city water including water for water service, which resulted in legislation with their respective positions taken into account of. The coordination of water utilization, however, continued to be conducted based on autonomous consultations among water users so that no law or regulation, in this regards, was developed.

After World War II, while the former River Act governed flood actions and flood control measures, with regard to water utilization, development of irrigation and drainage was implemented under the Land Reform Act, the Electric Power Development Promotion Law, the Industrial Water Law and other various water utilization systems.

The enactment of the 1949 Land Reform Act established land reform districts as a system for water utilization management, and, at the same time, achieved the transfer of water control from landlords to farmers’ own hands through the change of land ownership in agricultural village society caused by the land reform.

The new River Act established in 1964 provided that one river system should be managed as a link for control and utilization and important rivers should be under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Government. It also stipulated that, with regard to the permission of the water right, to protect vested water rights, coordination among water users should be ensured. What’s more, to acquire a new water right, the applicant should obtain the consent of relevant users of the river, which meant that the coordination of water utilization was, in effect, conducted among interested parties.

Fig. 2.1 Multilevel structure of irrigation order



(Source: FY 2005 Meeting of Assistant Managers for Drainage and Reclamation Engineering[ 2006 ], "Changes in Agriculture and Rural Villages")

### Box 2-1 Japan's Agricultural Water Rights

Most of Japan's agricultural water rights are customary water rights. Almost all of the customary practices for water utilization had been established under the shougnate system in the Tokugawa period (between the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Large-scale undertakings for water utilization were implemented in the alluvial parts of rivers to develop new fields and fierce battles fought between vested water rights and new water rights brought irrigation orders, which gained social approval and, thereafter, have taken root in the communities up to the present.

Japan's agricultural water rights usually have priorities established based on customary practices. Such priorities vary from place to place, such as old fields coming first, upstream priority, downstream priority and equal use. Historically considered, the basic idea is that old fields came first. This means that vested water rights are prioritized. Accordingly, there is a condition, as a general rule, of avoiding

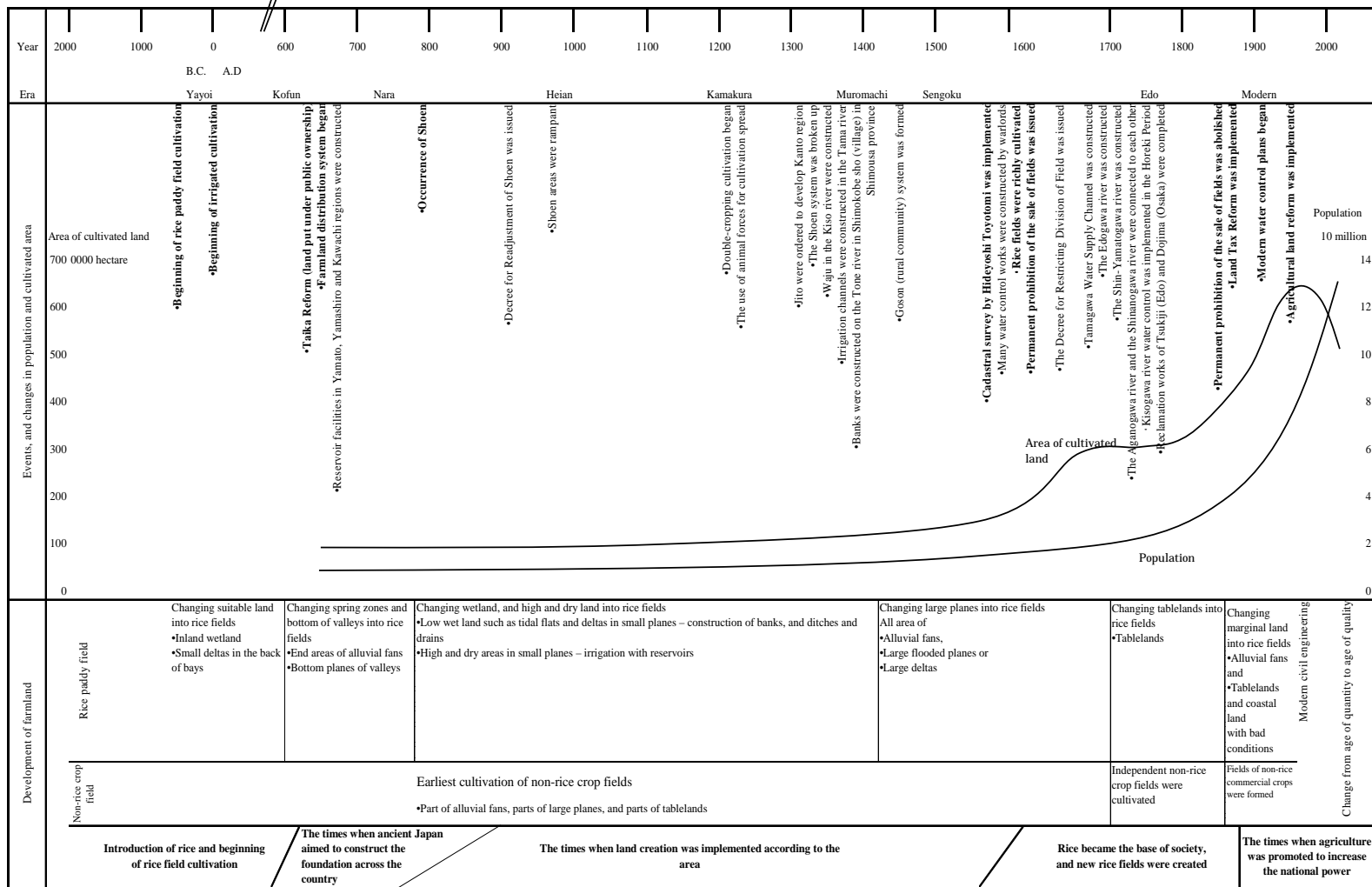


Table 2.4 History of agricultural and rural development in Japan

(Source: excerpt from A Whole Picture of Formation and Enhancement of Agriculture and Rural Communities – Explanation revised in 1992, fifth edition, under supervision of Construction Department, Agricultural Structure Improvement Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (1993))

## 2.3 Creation of land reform districts

This section, building on the changes in the agricultural land system and agricultural water utilization system dealt with in the previous section, describes the establishment of the Land Reform Act which achieved the transfer of the management of agricultural land and agricultural water from the governments and landlords to farmers' hands and allowed agricultural land and agricultural water to be controlled in an integrated manner.

### 2.3.1 Water utilization before the Land Reform Act

Before explaining the Land Reform Act, we quickly review management of agricultural water facilities before the Act. In the Edo period, facilities for agricultural water were conducted by *Igumis*, while branch river waterways or small-scale water facilities by villages or organizations consisting of the local villages. However, facilities for main rivers such as the Minuma substitute for waterway along the Tone River were under direct jurisdiction of the Tokugawa government, and major divisions of water such as the Miyagawa service water were placed under control of Domains and reconstruction of important facilities for agricultural water use was borne by the Tokugawa government and Domains.

After the Meiji period started (in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), the Meiji government, amidst historical backdrop of wealthy nation and strong army, decided not to bear the burden of management of agricultural water use facilities and agricultural water use organizations were reorganized as a part of local government agencies. In this period, organizations called *Suiridoko-kai*, which were, in reality, former *Igumis* under the different name, sometimes managed facilities for agricultural water utilization. In such cases, however, their management was limited to the facilities which towns, villages or coalitions couldn't manage. Beneficial farmers were not entitled to appoint managers so that conflicts arose between managers and beneficial farmers.

The Water Users Association Ordinance was enacted in 1890, under which ordinary water users associations and flood disaster prevention associations were formed. The Ordinance, however, continued to leave facility management to cities, towns or villages, in principle, and stipulated that water users associations were allowed to be established only under unavoidable circumstances. Because of the concern that changing customary practices for water utilization by law to a large extent could cause social disorder, the Ordinance also had a mechanism to tend to maintain former *Igumis*' real practices.

Even after the Taisho period started (in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century), the basic nature of the Water Users Association Ordinance remained unchanged and conventional practices for water use persisted. The national government never put actively public money in the undertakings for irrigation and drainage, while it was difficult for water users associations to carry out large-scale

improvement work. Meanwhile, arable land readjustment associations implemented improvement work for drainage facilities, of which government subsidy accounted for only around 15%, and, in most cases, large-scale work could not be delivered by arable land readjustment associations alone.

As described above, customary practices for water use were still preserved and large-scale work could not be conducted at the local level, resulting in stagnant soil productivity in regions.

### 2.3.2 Enactment of the Land Reform Act and creation of land reform districts

In this context, after World War II, agricultural land reform achieved the transfer of land ownership from landlords to owner farmers. It can be said that this means, that, when land and water are considered inextricably linked, the control of land and water has been transferred from landlords' hands to owner farmers' hands. In addition, opportunities for developing management and improving productivity have been given to farmers themselves by enjoying the benefits brought by land and water.

After the agricultural land reform, such reform was, in connection with utilization and management of land and water in an integrated manner, conducted in terms of legislation. In 1949, the Land Reform Act was established, under which land reform districts were formed.

Before World War II, there was a two-layered legal system, that is, the Arable Land Readjustment Law and the Water Users Association Law, in Japan, lacking a system for large-scale undertakings such as government managed undertakings and local prefectural government managed ones. In addition, the system was established entered on landlords.

The Land Reform Act, therefore, provides that an undertaking for improving land shall be implemented based on the consciousness of those who have an interest in beneficiary place of the undertaking and the expenses arising out of and in connection with said undertaking shall be borne by such people. It also stipulates that the implementation organization playing a central role in such undertaking shall be a land reform district which consists of farmers, beneficiaries. Land reform districts have the conventional functions of an ordinary water user association combined with the functions of an arable land readjustment association, in which both of the execution of work and the management of the resulting facilities for water utilization, etc. are carried out. The division of ordinary water users associations and arable land readjustment associations, which had been caused, until then, by different governances, was eliminated and the governances were integrated into the land reform service by the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry, resulting in a desired condition for the management of facilities for agricultural water utilization.

The features of the Land Reform Act are as follows:

1. With many more owner farmers created by the agricultural land reform, the system centered on landlords was reformed to focus on farmers.
2. Arable land readjustment associations formed under the Arable Land Readjustment Law and ordinary water users associations under the Water Users Law were integrated into organizations called land reform districts.
3. Prefectural government managed undertakings for drainage main river improvement which had traditionally been implemented and large-scale undertakings for water utilization by the Agricultural Land Development Corporation are defined, respectively, as local prefectural government managed and national government managed undertakings for land improvement.
4. It is decided that land reform undertakings should be, in principle, based on an application of beneficiaries.

In addition, the name of organizations for implementing undertakings is changed from “land reform associations” of which name has a personal nuance to “land reform districts” which imply territoriality and territorial connection in order to suggest that a land reform undertaking cannot be performed personally but implemented under territorial jurisdiction. This is also a feature for it reflects a reality of agricultural villages which are formed centered on paddy fields.

### **Chapter 3      Current Rural Development Policies in Japan**

The Land Reform Act was established after the war and the act allowed rural cultivators to manage farmland and agricultural water in an integrated manner. This section describes how the agricultural policies and the rural development policies have been changed in Japan that has achieved the rapid economic growth since the Land Reform Act was established.

#### **3.1      Japanese Agricultural Policies after the Establishment of the Land Reform Act**

The purpose of Japanese agricultural policies established after the war (until 1960) was to increase the food production, and technologies for increasing the yield were popularized due to the establishment of the Land Reform Act. At the time, quantity was emphasized over quality.

In 1960s, the income gap between agriculture and industry became apparent. Therefore, the improvement of the agricultural structure was demanded to correct the gap. The improvement of the agricultural structure was made by expanding the scale of agricultural production and increasing options of agricultural products. During the years of the steep economic growth, the income gap widened between urban areas and rural areas, so that

outflow of rural population and the increase of the part-time farm households became apparent. Therefore, improvement of agricultural labor productivity and modernization of farm management were required. The Agriculture Basic Law was established in 1961 and the agricultural structure improvement project combining improvement of agricultural infrastructure with development of facilities for modernizing the farm management were carried out.

In 1970s, urban areas increased due to the high economic growth and the competition between urban land use and agricultural land use occurred. Therefore, many agricultural lands were converted. The law on maintenance of agricultural land required for modern agriculture, and promoting public investment in rural areas in a planned manner was established. The project for improving life environment in rural areas that lagged behind urban areas was also carried out. Thus, the integrated rural improvement era improving agricultural production infrastructure and maintenance of living environments in rural areas in a comprehensive manner started. The Land Reform Act was amended in 1972 and the amendment promoted the creation of the land for non-agricultural use required for improving living environments with land substitution<sup>29</sup>, and the control of land use.

At this time, excess production of rice and mandarin orange became a problem. Rice was overstocked due to the increase in the procurement price and unit crop, and the decrease in per-capita rice consumption. Therefore, the policy encouraging the crop rotation was implemented.

In 1980s, import liberalization of agricultural products was promoted and changes in price policies on agricultural products were required. The price of domestic agricultural products was reduced and the pressure regarding the import of agricultural products was increased due to appreciation of the yen against the dollar, so that the country's food self-sufficiency ratio became less than 50 percent in late 80's.

In 1990's, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was established. With the establishment of WTO, a new sense of values on agriculture and rural areas was created since the agricultural legislations were reviewed and the "Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas" was established.

In recent years, projects for improving natural environments in rural areas and emphasizing amenities in rural areas have been carried out. Rural development policies creating rural areas that are comfortable to farmers and community residents have been developed as well as development of agricultural production infrastructure and maintenance of living environments in rural areas.

### 3.2 Changes in Agricultural and Rural Development Policies

#### 3.2.1 Rural Development by Development of Agricultural Production Infrastructure (from

the viewpoint of improvement of agricultural productivity)

The agricultural production infrastructure project plays a large part for accomplishing tasks relevant to agricultural administration, such as increasing the total production of agriculture, improving the food self-sufficiency and agricultural productivity. This section describes the development of the agricultural land development project, agricultural field development project, and irrigation development project.

The agricultural land development project has been played a large part for improving the local agricultural structure by rationalizing expanded the agricultural land. In recent years, agricultural environments have been rapidly changing due to depopulation and aging of rural areas, and price slump of agricultural products. Therefore, the project intended to rejuvenate the local area with the creation of non-agricultural land by restructuring the land use in a planned manner while executing the integrated development of agricultural land and unplowed land has been carried out.

The agricultural field development project has been played a large part for increasing the unit crop and the total production of agriculture by enabling the introduction of large-size and medium-size machines by readjusting and leveling the agricultural field, and making the well-drained paddy field through the pipe drain, etc. while improving the labor productivity. If conditions of agricultural fields are improved by the agricultural field development project, the momentum for borrowing and lending agricultural lands is developed and it largely contributes to the liquidity of agricultural lands and promotion of agricultural work entrustment. The system of the agricultural field development project has been largely expanded in order to support the enhancement of the liquidity of agricultural lands.

The irrigation development project has been performed in collaboration with the agricultural field development project to reduce the labor for water management to enhance the liquidity of the agricultural lands while improving the current productivity. In recent years, the special project for the drainage measure was established for urgently implementing the drainage measure for establishing crop rotation and generalizing agricultural lands in order to actively support the production adjustment measure for rice.

### 3.2.2 Rural Development by Maintenance of Living Environments in Rural Areas (from the viewpoint of transportation, information and telecommunications, education, medical and sanitary affairs, culture and improvement of the welfare)

Rural areas in Japan have been facing problems, such as depopularization, aging and urbanization since many young people moved from rural areas to large cities during the period of high economic growth, and non-farm households have moved to suburban rural areas. On the other hand, the development of living environments in rural areas is normally delayed in

comparison with urban areas, and residents in rural areas are requesting the development of basic living environments. Therefore, it is an important task to meet the needs of residents in rural areas by developing conditions for settling in rural areas, maintaining and developing rural areas as stable and beautiful places.

Based on the characteristics of rural areas that agricultural production and agricultural life are closely associated, the integrated rural improvement project that improves agricultural production infrastructure and maintenance of living environments in rural areas in a comprehensive manner has been carried out.

Recently, the importance of rural areas as the living place for non-farm households including newcomers has been reviewed due to the development of coexistence of rural areas and changes in sense of values in Japan. Rural areas have gotten a lot of attention as a place of recreation and relaxation surrounded by nature. The integrated rural improvement project developing rural areas locally while bearing in mind the rural landscape and hydrophilicity, and rejuvenating rural areas by creating rural spaces that is an open environment to urban areas started in 1990.

### 3.2.3 Rural Development by Conservation and Maintenance of Agricultural Land (from the viewpoint of disaster prevention of agricultural land and maintenance of facilities)

Japan is a disaster-prone place since the rainfall is high throughout the year, landscape in Japan is precipitous and has wide variety, and geotechnical condition is weak.

On the other hand, deterioration of agricultural land due to depopularization of rural areas has caused disasters. Due to the increase of coexistence in plain rural areas, the outlet flow increased and it has caused waterlogging, and contamination of water quality and waste dumping have been disturbing the management of drainage. In addition, subsidence caused by pumping out groundwater has caused the dysfunction of agricultural water facilities.

Based on the current situation, the project preventing agricultural land and agricultural facilities from being damaged by disasters, and conserving environments and national land in rural areas by repairing deteriorated dams, developing the hydrophilic equipment and the purification facility, improving the agricultural water facilities in order to solve the overflow caused by the increase in the flow of rainwater due to the land development, etc.

### 3.2.4 Rural Development Policy Under the New Basic Law

To respond to changes in the situation of food, agriculture and rural areas, and expectations of the nation for agriculture and rural areas, the "Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas" (new basic law) consisting of (1) sustainment of the provision of food, (2) fulfillment of multifunctionality of agriculture, (3) sustainable development of agriculture, and (4) development

of rural areas was established in 1999. Since this law was established, policies putting the emphasis on consideration for conserving and restoring rural landscape, characteristic rural development that is set by rural areas, cultivation of agricultural management entity, and needs of regional agriculture have been carried out as the agriculture and rural areas development project in order to fulfill the above 4 basic concepts.

The agriculture and rural areas development project has been developed as the project for conserving and maintaining resources, such as rural areas and agricultural water, and conserving and forming rural environment as well as development of production infrastructure.

## **Chapter 4 Conclusion**

The figure 4.1 summarizes descriptions in all chapters. The following part summarizes this unit based on the figure.

Concepts of rural development in Japan vary depending on the historical backdrop, self-reliance and taxation were main concepts until the Edo Period (- the 19th century). The agricultural infrastructure centering on rice was developed by the Rituryo<sup>30</sup> system (ancient times), the Shoen System (medieval times) and the Daimyo chigyō system<sup>31</sup> (medieval and modern ages). These systems were developed for land use and land arrangement, and the purpose of these systems was taxation. Steady tax revenues results in steady national income. In medieval and modern ages, the rural development was also carried out to enhance national strength. The rural development in medieval and modern ages includes the improvement of cultivation techniques and development of the production infrastructure by developing the irrigation network and cutting a channel and cultivation. The development of agriculture was important to support the rapid development of industries and rural areas were promoted as a place for increasing the food production and providing food. After the war, the biggest goal for the rural development was to increase the food production in order to recover from the devastation of the war. However, the goal was almost accomplished about the time that the high-speed growth era begun, so that rural development based on various concepts, such as sustainment of the provision of food, fulfillment of multifunctionality of agriculture and sustainable development of agriculture.

In the history of rural development, agricultural lands were occupied by local lords or landlords until the war ended. Due to the postwar agricultural land reform, many independent farmers appeared. As for the agricultural water use, facilities were actually managed by the agricultural settlement even though the custodial right for the facility was owned by the public sector or landlords. Ownership of agricultural land and management of agricultural water use were moved to rural cultivators when land reform districts were created due to the

establishment of the Land Reform Act. However, outflow of farmers to urban areas and renunciation of lands started about the time that the high-growth period began even though the right for management of agricultural land and water was given to rural cultivators. Nowadays, however, it is getting hard to secure agriculture workers. Rural development closely related with agriculture will be an important task since agriculture will continue to exist as the source of food from the point of view of self-reliance even if the social climate and community structure change.

As described above, rural development policies in Japan have been dramatically changed in medieval and modern ages. These changes occurred based on knowledge and experience regarding agricultural land system and water use system accumulated for a considerable length of time, and formation of the settlement utilizing the knowledge and experience, as well as flexible response by governments at the time. Due to the infrastructure, the ownership of agricultural land and management of water use were smoothly moved from landlords to rural cultivators when the agricultural land reform was carried out and the Land Reform Act was established after the war ended.

In many developing countries, agriculture is the main industry and many people in a country engage in agriculture. The main concept for engaging in agriculture is to establish the commercial agriculture for self-reliance and production of cash crops. Although policies for solving problems are important, approach to rural development including the agricultural land system and the water use system carried out for solving problems have originality and universal value.

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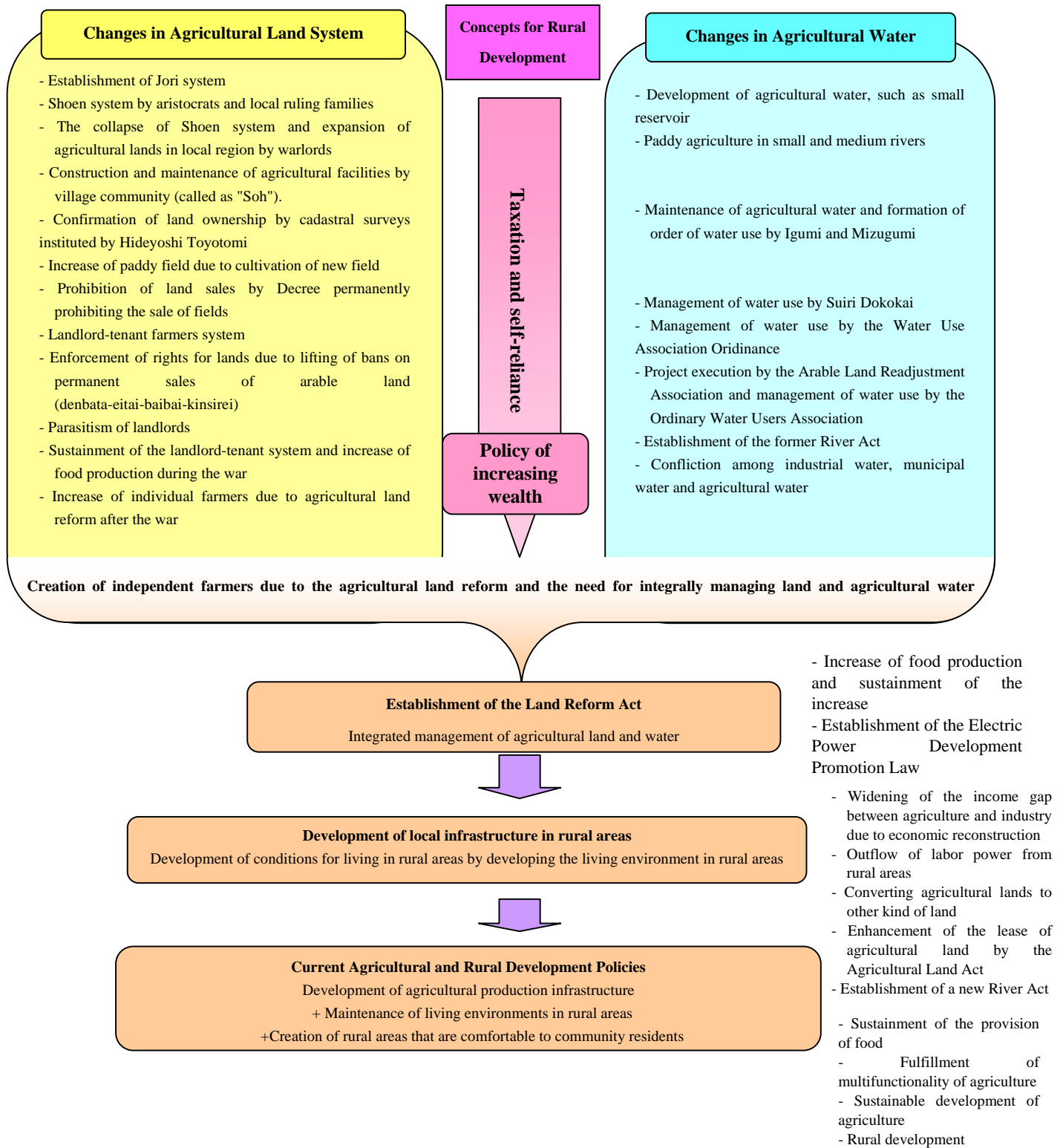
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Figure 4.1 Summary of this Unit



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<sup>1</sup> *Yoriai*: An autonomous meeting of farmers in a rural village in medieval and pre-modern Japan where they discussed traditional village festivals, use of natural products of commons land, and allocations of land taxes.

<sup>2</sup> *Yui*: A customary practice of a whole community, a group of neighboring families or a group of relatives of reciprocally providing labor between community members, families or relatives respectively in rice planting or rice harvesting.

<sup>3</sup> *Koh*: A mutual help group organized for members to save or borrow money through it.

<sup>4</sup> *Jori* system: The *Jori* system is an ancient land division system. Land was divided into squares each with a width of about 654 meters. Such squares as extending east-west was called *jo*, and those as extending north-south *ri*. A square area with each side of about 654 meters was called *ri*, and each side of *ri* was divided by six, so *ri* was divided into 36 *tsubo*. The location of such a piece of land was then indicated by some *tsubo*, some *ri*, some *jo*, some *gun*, some *kuni* (province). Communities that were created on a planned system according to this land division system were *jori* communities, most of which were distributed in western Japan, mainly in the *Kinki* region.

<sup>5</sup> The law for distribution of farmland: The law in the *Ritsu-Ryo* system (the legal system) to distribute farmland to people. On the model of *Kindenho* (the system of equal division of farmland) of the *Tang* dynasty in China, this law was established after *Taika* Reform. This law provided that farmland would be allocated to people every six years, specifically about 20a of farmland to each ordinary male person six or more years old, two third of that area size to each ordinary female person or each person of *kanko* and *kannuhi* (upper and lower outcastes, respectively), and one third of the area size given to an ordinary male or female person to each male or female person of *kenin* and *shinuhi* (privately owned outcaste people), respectively. Lots were allocated to people according to the family registers prepared every six years. Each person was allowed to use the allocated lot through his or her life, and the lot was returned to the state when he or she died.

<sup>6</sup> *Taika* Reform: Political reforms that Prince *Naka no Oe* and *Nakatomi no Kamatari* led in implementing, beginning with the overthrow of the Soga clan in 645. They aimed to construct a centralized state with a public land and civilian system on the model of the *Ritsu-Ryo* system (the legal system) of the Tang dynasty of China. The Emperor's reformation decree was issued that would abolish the private ownership of land or people of the Emperor's clan and other powerful clans, establish local administration systems, implement the law for distribution of farmland, implement a uniform system of taxes such as *so*, *yo*, *cho* (taxes in kind or service), and so on.

<sup>7</sup> public land and civilian system: A system where all the land and people were owned by the state, but no private ownership of land or people was allowed. This system was declared in the *Taika* Reforms, and since became a doctrine of the *Ritsu-Ryo* system (the legal system) of Japan.

<sup>8</sup> Law Permitting Permanent Ownership of Newly Cultivated Land: A land law promulgated in 743, which permitted the permanent ownership of land on some conditions. It was a start point toward the *Shoen* system.

<sup>9</sup> *Shoen*: A form of private land ownership, or privately owned land, of noblemen in the capital city, Buddhist temples or Shinto shrines that existed from the *Nara* era through the *Sengoku* (civil war) era (8<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries). *Shoen* land expanded because individuals reclaimed land or land was contributed to such owners. Since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *Shoen* land had been illegitimately taken by *bushi* (*samurai*) people, and finally disappeared with the cadastral surveys instituted by *Hideyoshi Toyotomi*.

<sup>10</sup> *Shugo*: A position of *samurai* established by the *Kamakura* shogunate (1192-1333) and the *Muromachi* shogunate (1336-1573), which was a military leader and also administrator assigned to each *kuni* (province). In 1185, *Minamoto no Yoritomo* first appointed his powerful subjects to *Shugo* for each province by obtaining the Emperor's decree to do so. They had the military and police power for their respective provinces and were in the position to maintain peace, order and security for them.

<sup>11</sup> *Jito*: A position established by the *Kamakura* shogunate (1192-1333) and the *Muromachi* shogunate (1336-1573) to control and rule *Shoen* areas and state-owned areas. This position was established at the same time *Shugo* was. In 1185, *Minamoto no Yoritomo* institutionalized this position by obtaining the Emperor's decree for it. It was assigned to *Shoen* areas and state-owned areas across the country with the authorities to control land, collect taxes and had jurisdiction. Some lords in the *Tokugawa* Shogunate era (1603-1867) were also called *jito*.

<sup>12</sup> Warlord: Powerful rulers held their spheres in provinces in the *Sengoku* (civil war) era (8<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries). They organized samurai people who ruled small local areas into their subject groups to rule their own provinces or domains economically and politically.

<sup>13</sup> *Iriai*: A custom where inhabitants in some area have a shared use of natural products of a mountain area,

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woods or wild land that none of them privately owns. They can take grass or trees for firewood or charcoal material there.

<sup>14</sup> cadastral surveys instituted by Hideyoshi Toyotomi: Country-wide cadastral surveys and surveys on rice yields that *Hideyoshi Toyotomi* implemented in 1582. Through those surveys, he unified weights and measures, classified rice or other crops fields into four grade categories, and registered a farmer for each lot of cultivated land into register books to decide who should pay taxes for it. Those surveys re-established the ownership of land that had been in the *Shoen* system, so they established a base for the pre-modern feudal system.

<sup>15</sup> Tokugawa Shogunate: A *samurai* government that *Ieyasu Tokugawa* established in *Edo* (Tokyo) in 1603, also called the *Edo* shogunate. It continued until 1867 for 265 years with 15 *shoguns*.

<sup>16</sup> Decree permanently prohibiting the sale of fields: A decree that the *Tokugawa* Shogunate issued in 1643 with the aim to prevent fields owned by farmers from being transferred or concentrated. However, fields were actually transferred in the form of pledging and forfeiting. It was abolished in 1872.

<sup>17</sup> feudal regime: In this context, this means a feudal ruling system consisting of the *shogunate* government and *han* (local governments of feudal lords) under the former's control. It was a hierarchical system with *Shogun* as the top, and feudal lords who collected rice as a tax in kind from farmers.

<sup>18</sup> Land Tax Reform: Reform of the land and taxation system that the *Meiji* (modern era) government implemented. This reform would recognize the private ownership of land, and require that 3% of the land price be paid in money as a tax. The tax rate was such high a rate as to maintain the tax in kind in the preceding *Tokugawa* era, and there occurred farmers' uprisings to ask for reduction around the country.

<sup>19</sup> Law on Reclamation Subsidy: Explained in the text.

<sup>20</sup> GHQ: The General Headquarters of the Allied Forces in Japan after World War II headed by Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander. It made the Japanese government implement its occupation policies, It was abolished in 1952 when the Pease Treaty was put in force. Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers.

<sup>21</sup> Concentrated utilization of agricultural land: Concentrating pieces of agricultural land to improve the productivity for farmers who would like to manage agricultural operation efficiently and stably, to improve the base for rice paddy field rice agriculture.

<sup>22</sup> For the customary order of irrigation water utilization, refer to Box 2-1.

<sup>23</sup> *Igumi* or *Mizugumi*: An association to manage water for agricultural use. It was not only an association for agricultural water use, but also a basic unit organization for rice paddy field agriculture. Particularly since the pre-modern era of Japan, rural communities developed each around an irrigation channel to draw water from a large river. Such communities used, maintained and controlled irrigation water. They became unit organizations of *Igumi* or *Mizugumi*. Even now they works as sub-organizations for some agreements under the Land Improvement District system.

<sup>24</sup> *Suiri Dokokai* Association: This is a type of irrigation channel or *Igumi* organization that was permitted by the revision of the District, Village and Town Law in 1884. It implemented irrigation works and improvement across the boundaries of administrative areas.

<sup>25</sup> Land Improvement Law: Explained in 2.3.2.

<sup>26</sup> Land Improvement District: Explained in 2.3.2.

<sup>27</sup> Ordinary Water Users' Association and Flood Prevention Association: An Ordinary Water Users' Association is a public association established to implement irrigation or drainage projects. The members of such an association are restricted to land owners. A Flood Prevention Association is a public association established to implement flood prevention projects. The members of such an association are restricted to the owners of land or houses in a region where floods are expected.

<sup>28</sup> *Jifushin*: Construction works, such as repairs of banks for flood control, restoration from flood disasters, or excavation for irrigation channels, that were permitted by the request, and implemented at the cost, of a local lord or inhabitants.

<sup>29</sup> Land substitution: An administrative process according to the Land Readjustment Law where, for all the area under a land substitution plan, the old owners of housing lots there may be allocated with pieces of land or compensated with money.

<sup>30</sup> The *Ritsu-Ryo* system (the legal system): A centralized political system of ancient Japan based on the *Ritsu-Ryo* system as the basic laws. *Ritsu* means a criminal code and *Ryo* a code of general administration that covered politics and economy.

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<sup>31</sup> *Daimyo Chigyo* system: A system where daimyo (feudal lords) were entrusted with, and managed, domains for taxation. Feudal lords managed *han* (domain) and gained actual revenues coming from those domains.