
Chapter 1 An Overview of Agricultural and Rural Development

1-1 Significance of Agricultural and Rural Development and Conditions in Recent Years

Many people in developing countries are engaged in agriculture and a large number of them remain in poverty. Agriculture holds an important position in the national economies of those countries.

In many developing countries, people who are engaged in agriculture account for more than half of their entire populations and many of them remain in grinding poverty. In addition, the agricultural sector plays a vital role in the national economies of developing countries. Because of these reasons, cooperation in agricultural and rural development is important in enabling developing countries to tackle the key issues of food security,¹ poverty reduction and economic development. Following, on the basis of this perspective, is a basic summary of the issues that are considered in this approach.

Food security is a prerequisite for bringing about economic and political stability.

1-1-1 Stable Production and Supply of Food (Food Security)

Providing stable supplies of food people need (food security) is a prerequisite for bringing about economic and political stability. In many developing countries, frequent food shortages are impairing the health of a portion of their populations and creating hunger. The exodus of refugees into neighboring countries is disrupting order in the international society, forming the background of regional conflicts. For food-importing countries, the stable production and supply of food are extremely serious economic issues also in efforts to prevent a foreign currency drain. The stabilization of food supply in developing countries is important for Japan's food security as well.²

The profitability of agricultural production in many food-importing developing countries, especially those in Africa, has deteriorated drastically in recent years as a result of the falling domestic prices of agricultural products stemming from the opening of their markets under the conditionality of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, subsidized grain exports by advanced countries and also from declining international prices brought about by the exports of low-priced grain by advanced developing nations.

¹ In this approach, no distinction has been made in the use of words "food" and "staple food," and "food" has been used throughout. Needless to say, more emphasis is placed on "staple food" (main food crop) in discussions of agriculture in developing countries.

² The Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas (Law No. 106 enacted on July 16, 1999) stipulates in Section 2, Article 20 concerning policy on securing stable food supply that the State shall endeavor to promote international cooperation, including technical and financial cooperation for the development of agriculture and rural areas in developing countries as well as food aid, in order to contribute to the long-term stability of the world's food supply and demand.

Nevertheless, the stable production and supply of basic food is the foundation for “human security,” and assistance for efforts to maintain a certain level of food production as a national responsibility is a moral and political issue for the international community. Thus, continuous assistance for such efforts is considered to be extremely important.

Developing countries in search of food security are seeking aid not only for the strengthening of their production base, dissemination of production technology, and research and development, which all have formed the pillar of technical cooperation in the agricultural sector to date, but also assistance in a variety of other areas including market distribution, the promotion of food processing and sales as well as agriculture-related policies. It is also required to promote “agriculture in rural development” with an emphasis on poverty reduction, that will be discussed the next reaction, or food production from this viewpoint of pursuing “human security.”

Cooperation in rural development is an important component for poverty reduction.

1-1-2 Responses to the Poverty Issue (Rural Development)

Cooperation in rural development is an important component for poverty reduction. There are three major reasons for this: 1) many of the poor in developing countries are residents in rural areas, 2) many of the urban poor are laborers who have migrated to cities from rural areas or former farmers who have left rural areas, and improvements in the living and income standards in rural areas will help curb the flow of people from rural to urban areas and will contribute to the improvement of social environments in urban areas, and 3) the stability and development of rural communities will serve as a social safety net at a time of recession and is essential for the stability of society in developing countries.³

The rapid urbanization in developing countries itself is a symbol of inequality between rural and urban areas in a variety of development opportunities. It is also a result of the priority that has been lavished on urban areas in the allocation of resources. Furthermore, even though residents in rural areas are supposed to utilize natural resources as well as protect and manage the natural environment in a sustainable way, there exists a vicious circle in which the destruction of the environment stemming from population pressure is further exacerbating conditions in rural areas of many developing countries that have already been debilitated by these social malaise.

The development of rural areas in developing countries as a whole is an international challenge that has to be met in order to put a stop to the vicious circle of poverty and environmental destruction, to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner and thus to ensure the security of people in rural areas through food production for maintenance of life. In other words, it is an

³ During the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-1998, for example, many people in Indonesia returned from cities to their home villages in search of new opportunities, and a program to help them find work was initiated as a safety net.

important development issue from a standpoint of the scale and the potential impact it entails.

Africa has been constantly mired in civil wars and other conflicts, and rural development designed to promote the resettlement of refugees or former soldiers and to bring rural areas back to life for indigenous and socially disadvantaged people as part of national reconstruction has become an urgent task.

An active response to these issues is consistent with the aim of concerted action called for in the DAC New Development Strategy and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that have expressed a determination to strengthen assistance to the poor, from the perspective of “human security” as well as from the perspective of achieving a more stable development of the international community.

<p>Recent developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress in globalization - Reduction in aid - Comprehensive approaches - Decentralization of authority

1-1-3 Recent Conditions Surrounding Agriculture and Rural Areas

In the post-Cold War world, several important changes have occurred through market-based economic liberalization and globalization. Not only in advanced countries but also in many developing nations, farming that had no comparative advantage because it was under policy protection has been exposed to the giant international market. As a result, developing countries, where the agricultural sector occupies a disproportionately large share of their economies and more than half of their populations depend on agriculture for living, sought to switch from self-sufficient to commercial agriculture in an effort to cope with the impact of the international market. Meanwhile, the number of poor people has increased and the gap between rich and poor has expanded as small farmers started contract production under large farm owners or as they loose their farm land to become tenant farmers or farm laborers – the results of the negative impact of globalization.

One of the important factors behind the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals is a decline in the amount of development aid to LLDCs after the Cold War, by about 30% by West-Bloc countries and by some 50% if assistance by East-Bloc countries is included.

Also, many developing countries are preparing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in return for receiving financing from the World Bank (IDA). This indicates that they now face a situation where they find it extremely difficult to come up with their own visions of development just by dealing with individual development issues; they have no option other than to introduce more comprehensive approaches.

We should also take a look at how various institutional reforms linked to international aid organizations, especially those in sub-Saharan developing countries in Africa, are going on. They have made progress only for a short

period of time on a provisional basis. In particular, administrative reforms including decentralization of authority that is important for comprehensive rural development have got off the ground only recently and improvements in local administration are still too insufficient to enable rural areas to effectively deal with the issues they face.

The needs of developing countries have changed as a result of the progress in development and shifting social conditions in rural areas, and approaches and targets in providing aid have become correspondingly diversified. We are now expected to think that these varying needs require not only a simple diversification of aid projects but also an implementation of more strategic projects that will adequately respond to the challenges that have become more sophisticated and complicated.

Japan's ODA policy, as related to our approach under consideration here, is exemplified by Japan's Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance (August, 1999) and by Japan's Official Development Charter which was reviewed and revised in August, 2003. In dealing with the poverty issue, the former emphasizes "a fair distribution of the results of economic growth and implementation of cooperation focused on aid to the poor as its direct goal." It also points to the importance of "support for poor rural areas in remedying regional disparities, along with aid for basic education, health and medical care, safe water supplies as well as support for women in developing countries. The latter, while proclaiming the "importance of stressing Japan's national interest," also emphasizes "human security."

Box 1-1 Food Security in Developing Countries

Food shortages and malnutrition are concentrated in developing countries. As of October, 2003, 38 countries in the world are facing serious food shortages – 24 in Africa, 5 in Asia, 2 in the Middle East, 5 in Central and South America, and 2 in Europe. Most of them are developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴

Meanwhile, 842 million people in the world are found undernourished (1999-2001), with 798 million of them believed to be in developing countries.⁵ Some 75% of them live in rural areas, but food supplies in cities have also been fast deteriorating because of rapid urbanization.⁶

The population of undernourished people in the world and in developing countries increased following a slight decline in the first half of the 1990s. Countries with a dwindling population of undernourished people reported higher economic growth than those that showed an increase in the number of such people. They also registered higher paces of growth in agricultural production, lower rates of population increase and HIV infection as well as extremely few cases of critical food shortages.⁷

⁴ FAO Japan Office (2003); for original data, refer to FAO (2003a)

⁵ FAO (2003b) p.6

⁶ FAO (2003c)

⁷ FAO (2003b) p.8; details on the world food and agriculture situation (FAO (2003b)) are available in the materials concerning the FAO general assembly held in Rome between Nov. 29 and Dec. 10, 2003. Also the Japanese translation provided by the Japan FAO Association (2004) pp. 4-15.

Box 1-2 Poverty and Hunger in Rural Areas of Developing Countries

Poverty and hunger are closely entwined in rural areas of developing countries, with each influencing the other. It is difficult for poor farmers to produce enough food since the means of production including land, water and improved seeds are limited and they often cannot acquire technology or credit they need.⁸ Non-farming residents in rural areas cannot purchase food. Meanwhile, people suffering from hunger, unable to work like others and more liable to become ill, often find themselves at an economic disadvantage and, dreading failure, cannot make wise investments. Furthermore, children born from parents suffering from malnutrition are inherently small, incurring unfavorable conditions almost from birth.⁹

In agriculture, people often go through vicious circles: they cannot buy seeds or fertilizer necessary for agricultural production which forms the core of economic activity in rural areas because of poverty; they are weak and tend to become ill and, when they do, cannot maintain the physical strength they need to work because they are unable to receive medical treatment; they have difficulty understanding and using new technologies because of their lack of education and, because of the resulting low agricultural production, can neither acquire enough food or income nor pull themselves out of poverty and hunger.

In rural areas, low agricultural productivity, hunger and poverty are one and the same thing. It is important, therefore, to promote rural development and improve agricultural production simultaneously, as if they were a pair of wheels, from a micro standpoint involving individuals, groups and regions and also from a standpoint of "human security."

From a macro standpoint of food security including urban areas, it is important to establish a system for the distribution and supply of food as well as to improve agricultural production.

1-2 Definition of Terms

In this approach, "agriculture" means crop farming and livestock farming.

Agriculture

The word "agriculture" includes forestry in a broader sense and, at times, fishery as well. In the approach under consideration here, however, it is defined as a limited primary industry centering around the sub-sectors of crop farming and livestock farming. Crop farming is an industry to grow useful plants such as grain, vegetables and garden products by tilling land. Livestock farming is an industry in which daily necessities like milk, meat, eggs and furs are obtained by keeping livestock and poultry and by producing fodder and feeding them with it.

"Rural area" is a relative concept in contrast with that of the urban area that differs from country to country and from region to region.

Rural Area

This is a concept that is used generally in contrast with that of cities. In reality, however, the use of this term differs very widely from country to country and from region to region. Generally, it is understood to refer to areas where many residents are engaged in agriculture in a broad sense. However, it is more

⁸ FAO (1996b) Paragraph 2

⁹ FAO (2003c) Paragraph 7

appropriate to use the term as representing a concept relative to that of cities in social, economic and natural conditions.

“Agricultural development” means development that is primarily aimed at production or an increase in production of agricultural goods.

Agricultural Development

This refers to development whose main purpose is bio-production and an increase in bio-production, involving living things and production environments and considering people, land and capital as production resources or means of production. Agricultural development includes not only activities directly involved in the production of agricultural goods but also a wide range of other activities. Among them are research and development of technology, improvement of agricultural promotion systems and infrastructures, market distribution, agriculture-related laws and systems, agricultural policy as well as production and supply of food.

“Rural development” is development of rural areas that include a broad range of activities like agriculture, health and sanitation, education and social infrastructure.

Rural Development

In the approach under consideration in this report, “rural development,” in addition to agriculture as a primary means of earning a living for rural residents as well as agriculture-related industries, refers to the development of rural areas that includes healthcare and sanitation, education, environment, social infrastructure improvement and empowerment of community members.¹⁰ However, healthcare, sanitation and education will be discussed only in connection with the characteristics they show in rural areas since separate, issue-specific guidelines have been set for them.

“Rural development” is development of rural areas that include a broad range of activities like agriculture, health and sanitation, education and social infrastructure.

Poverty

JICA’s “Issue-specific Guidelines – Poverty Reduction” (2002a) defines poverty as “a condition in which human beings are deprived of an opportunity to develop their potential capacity to spend a basic life as human beings and are excluded from the social and development process.”¹¹ Also, the “the poor” in referring to the goal for cooperation means people below the poverty line, or a specific level set by each country in accordance with its prevailing conditions on the income for purchasing the basic necessities for life or spending.¹²

“Undernourished population” is the number of people whose intake of calories from food is below the levels set for countries and races.

Hunger and Undernourished Population

Hunger means “to starve because of lack of food” (the Dai Jirin Dictionary, Second Edition), but FAO defines the undernourished population as the number of people whose intake of calories from food is below the standard

¹⁰ In recent years, the term “rural development” is used to refer to a more limited range of actions including development aimed at the sustainable improvement of life among the poor or an approach to the development of poor rural areas. This is because the poor in rural areas, or the increasing poverty in those areas, has become an important development issue.

¹¹ JICA (2002a) p.10

¹² For details on poverty and poverty reduction, refer to JICA (2002b)

calculated for each country or race to enable them to maintain a certain body weight when they undertake a certain amount of labor.¹³ It is used as an index for reducing the number of undernourished people in poverty eradication efforts.^{14,15}

Food security is a condition in which all people have access to appropriate food at all times.

Food Security

The Plan of Action of the World Food Summit stipulates that “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”¹⁶

1-3 International Trends

The approach and concept in the development of rural areas of developing countries is closely related to changes in the conditions that surround them. The concept of rural development has undergone many changes in parallel with shifting historical backgrounds and priority issues that attracted attention at different times. Following are major trends in its history.¹⁷

Emphasis on commercialism (1950s - early 1970s)

(1) Emphasis on Commercialization (1950s to early 1970s)

This was an approach that emphasized commercialization like the introduction of cash crops. This approach was criticized later as inducing differences between regions where conditions in agricultural production were favorable and those where they were not.

BHN Approach (late 1960s-1970s)

(2) Emphasis on Social Aspects (BHN Approach: Late 1960s to 1970s)

This approach was symbolized by the “Nairobi Speech” on the eradication of poverty which World Bank President Robert McNamara delivered in 1973. Its direct objective was the expansion of social services among the rural poor who were beyond the reach of “trickle-down” benefits. Despite its effectiveness as a short-term aid measure, this approach often fell short of achieving sufficient medium- and long-term results.¹⁸

¹³ FAO (2002a)

¹⁴ For example, the Rome Declaration issued at the World Food Summit held in 1996, states: “We pledge our political will and our common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an on-going effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015.”

¹⁵ While starvation as indicated by the number of undernourished people mainly represents a chronic condition, hunger means a shortage of food resulting from a temporary but extremely poor harvest.

¹⁶ “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” FAO (1996b) Paragraph 1

¹⁷ The following sentence is revised and added to on the basis of JICA (2001b) pp. 1-3.

¹⁸ The following main causes are cited: In reality, it is politically difficult to narrow the target down to the poor (Political parties or local governments to represent them do not often exist) and it entails technical costs to identify the poor. It was difficult to find the engine for short- and medium-term economic growth and attempts to attain such growth often did not have fiscal support. Even when the living standards of the poor slightly improved, the wealthy accumulated profits two or three times as fast because of top-down policies of donor countries and, as a result, the gap between rich and poor expanded further.

Emphasis on food self-sufficiency (1975-)

(3) Emphasis on Food Self-Sufficiency (Production System) (1975-)

The hunger in the Sahel and Ethiopia as the result of a drought that had devastated the regions since the 1970s led to an increase in the interest in food security, spawning a trend that focused on another antithesis, namely food security (production system). In reality, however, this policy was carried out to provide inexpensive food to urban areas and did not result in many cases in a rise in rural incomes.

Incidentally, the Green Revolution, which has spread since the mid-1960s to achieve dramatic increases in high cereal grain yields, introduced an agricultural production process that applied science for continuous, uninterrupted improvements in crops. Throughout this period, irrigation systems and agricultural infrastructures were improved, in addition to the introduction of high-yield varieties and production assets like chemical fertilizer and agricultural machinery. And production of staple food like wheat and paddy rice increased dramatically. “The Green Revolution” had the effect of transferring the modern growth process to agriculture and agricultural societies in developing countries and had a revolutionary impact on those countries and the “Farming System Research,” a study of regional agricultural and farm management systems, has developed.

Structural adjustment policies (1980s)

(4) Structural Adjustment Policy – Change in the Approach to Sustainable Development (1980s)

Changes like declining primary-product prices and stagnation in demand stemming from a slowdown in the economies of industrialized countries brought to the surface structural problems that had remained largely unnoticed behind the economic growth. Beginning in the 1980s, debt problems prompted the introduction of structural adjustment policies.

Structural adjustment benefited the poor by holding down inflation, improving overseas competitiveness through lower foreign exchange rates and invigorating farm markets through privatization of state-run agricultural corporations. In the short term, however, criticism grew that it brought unfavorable results especially to the poor, such as the abolishment of food subsidies, rising costs of public services including public transportation and cuts in education and medical budgets. Higher food and other prices tended to trigger a political crisis arising from simmering dissatisfaction among urban residents, while confusion in government policies served to delay the implementation of structural adjustment measures.

Residents’ participatory approach (1990s)

(5) Resident-Participatory Rural Development Approach (1990s)

As financial aid to developing countries dwindled, more effective rural development methods were explored, with those involved in aid projects learning from the past mistakes and experiences. For instance, as a result of the

fostering of ownership by residents and governments, support for measures to improve residents' awareness of their problems and to strengthen planning and implementation capabilities and promotion of plans for decentralization of authority, the division of roles for different organizations has progressed, with central governments formulating and adjusting policies and local governments implementing them.

Common for this series of steps is a stance to support people in aid-receiving countries to involve themselves from the initial stages in becoming aware of the issues and problems they face and in developing, implementing and monitoring plans to address them on their own initiative. Here, hopes grew that residents' organizations would replace not only governments in recipient countries but also government functions that had been steadily shrinking.

Against this background emerged a participatory approach in which residents identified problems confronting their regions, considered measures to address them, worked out action plans and carried them out. This has become the mainstream approach since the 1990s, regardless of the countries involved and also among donor countries, international organizations and international or local NGOs.

**Response to
progress in
globalization
(2000s)**

(6) Response to the Progress in Globalization (2000s)

Amid the rapid progress in globalization in human and economic activities, inequality among countries and between rich and poor within the same country has widened, although globalization helped spur world economic growth and raise living standards in many parts of the world. Also, the importance of cross-boundary issues like organized international crime and the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as the problems of global warming, destruction of the earth's ozone layers, the environment and energy has grown. Furthermore, the collapse of the Cold War structure has led to frequent conflicts in the world, and the problems of human rights violations, refugees and internally displaced people have become more pronounced.

In the midst of these developments sprang a school of thought that placed emphasis on the importance of protecting individuals from the threats against human survival, life and dignity and realizing abundant possibilities they may possess. In other words, in addition to the traditional way of thinking about the security of a nation, "human security" that values the perspectives of each individual has come to play a more important role.¹⁹ The Commission on Human Security issued a final report in May, 2003.²⁰

Since the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the awareness that poverty in developing countries amid globalization will become a hotbed of terror and will threaten the world's security has rapidly deepened.

¹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2002)

²⁰ Commission on Human Security (2003)

Because of this, the United States and EU countries announced plans to increase ODA at the UN International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March, 2002.²¹

Thus, circumstances involving development and aid have changed along with the progress in globalization.

(7) Major International Declarations

Here, we will briefly discuss international declarations and major reports made in recent years.

At the World Summit on Social Development held in 1995, “the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development” was adopted, setting the goals for attaining social development focused on human well-being and for halving absolute poverty in the world. The declaration refers to the eradication of hunger and undernourishment and to food security as the targets for eliminating the fundamental causes of poverty.²²

The DAC member development ministers of the OECD adopted “Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Cooperation” in May, 1996. The DAC new development strategy called for a 50% reduction in the population of the world suffering from extreme poverty by 2015 from the 1990 level, but it touched on agriculture and food only as the background for discussing poverty.

Meanwhile, “the Rome Declaration on World Food Security”²³ adopted at the World Food Summit held in October, 1996, “reaffirmed the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger” and pledged efforts to reduce the number of undernourished people to half by no later than 2015. The summit also agreed to pursue sustainable agriculture, fishery, forestry and rural development policies as one of its commitments.

The UN Summit (Millennium Summit) was held in 2000 and adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) based on the international development goals that had been agreed upon in the past. One of the MDGs was the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. The summit pledged to halve by 2015 the conditions of poverty and extreme hunger that existed in 1990.²⁴

The meeting held in 2002 as a follow-up to the 1996 World Food Summit reaffirmed the Rome Declaration, admitting at the same time that the goals were insufficiently attained. The meeting expressed its determination to accelerate the implementation of actions to reduce the population of undernourished people by half by no later than 2015. Also, it stressed the needs for the improvement of agricultural productivity and an increase in food production and allocation in

Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995)

OECD New Development Strategy (1996)

Rome Declaration on World Food Security (1996)

Millennium Development Goals (2000)

World Food Summit five years later (2002)

²¹ While the United States cited governance, education, health, economic policy and investment as the target areas for increased aid, the EU made no references to any specific areas.

²² UN (1995)

²³ FAO (1996a)

²⁴ UN (2000)

order to achieve food security and eradication of poverty.²⁵

The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development adopted in August, 2002, at the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development cited food security, along with clean water, sanitation, proper housing, energy and health care, as one of the fundamental conditions for human dignity and expressed a determination to accelerate access to it.²⁶

Further, the final report of the Commission on Human Security submitted in May, 2003, took up hunger as one of the special problems concerning human security and pointed to the need for a long-term approach to sustainable food production as well as to short-term emergency food aid.²⁷

As has been observed above, major international conferences have taken up the eradication of poverty and food supply (food security) as important issues.

On the other hand, there have been no significant references to agricultural production except in relation to the Food Summit. This is also true regarding statements by donor countries. For example, the awareness that poverty in developing countries will create a hotbed for terror that will threaten world security has deepened since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and the United States and the EU declared plans to increase ODA at the meeting on financing held in Monterrey in March, 2002. But the United States set its focus on governance, education, sanitation, economic policy and investment as its target areas and the EU made no references to specific areas.²⁸

1-4 Trends in Japan's Assistance

Japan started providing development aid in the 1950s to replace its post-war reparations²⁹ but cooperation in rice growing played the main role in early stages in its assistance for agricultural and rural development since it was Japan's specialized technical field. In other words, Japan made contributions to food supplies in developing countries by transferring Japanese-style rice-growing techniques.

In the 1960s, as many countries introduced high-yield varieties, Japan

Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (2002)

Final report by Commission on Human Security (2003)

Poverty eradication and food security important issues at major international conferences

Few references to agricultural development at international conferences

Historically, Japan's cooperation oriented toward development of rice-farming and other types of agriculture.

²⁵ FAO (2002b)

²⁶ UN (2002)

²⁷ Commission on Human Security (2003) p. 14

²⁸ In the background, it has been pointed out, are political conditions in major donor countries like the United States, European Countries and Japan. In other words, the United States and European Countries, in effect, regard developing countries as their markets for exporting surplus farm products (54% of US agricultural product exports in 2002 went to developing countries. For data, refer to the USDA website, http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/w/bico/bico_frm.asp). An increase in agricultural production in developing countries could result in competition between their own exports and those (including agricultural products as part of food aid) by industrialized countries, and also in price declines in international markets. Japan's case is opposite of that of the United States and European Countries. Many people in Japan are concerned that agricultural imports from developing countries may compete with locally grown products, pressuring their own agricultural industry. Approaches to cooperation in agricultural development under these conditions will be discussed in Chapter 3.

²⁹ Details on changes in Japan's overall technical cooperation are available in JICA (1999).

In the 1960s-80s, the focus was on an increase in food production through agriculture modernization.

established the form of assistance in which it helped governments in other countries to set up systems for the dissemination of rice-growing techniques by opening agricultural (dissemination) centers and model farms. Also on the rise was Japan's technical aid for the establishment of irrigation systems and the use of pesticides and fertilizer needed to push ahead with the "Green Revolution."³⁰

In the 1970s, Japan attempted to shift the focus of its assistance that had centered until then around agricultural centers to regional agricultural development. Later, it included cooperation in agricultural research out of the recognition that the technical base for agriculture in many developing countries is still not fully developed.

Thus, up until the 1980s, Japan focused its assistance mainly on increasing food production through large-scale government-led projects designed to develop farmland and modernize agriculture and thereby spur economic growth. Its approach rested largely on agricultural development, which included improvements in the infrastructure like irrigation systems to increase food supplies, agricultural technology development, farm management and technology transfers to recipient government organizations. Instances of cooperation that encompassed other sectors from the perspective of developing rural areas were limited.

In the 1990s, rural development promoted mostly by farmers started.

In the 1990s, however, the form of assistance that incorporated social factors in development aid came into growing demand, and a pattern of aid that focused on rural development like integrated agricultural/rural development surfaced aimed at sustainable and varied development promoted mainly by rural residents.

In recent years, aid covers many sectors and local areas.

Japan's aid in recent years has increasingly come to cover different sectors, revolving around assistance like the expansion of aid to local governments in various regions and introduction of participatory development. For effective implementation, it is necessary to carry out varied projects comprehensively, and Japan in recent years has been trying to be more flexible in providing aid.³¹

Target areas for rural development can be varied in size, ranging from villages of several families to 20-30 families and to all areas other than urban centers. For instance, many of JICA's technical cooperation projects and verification studies as a type of development studies have traditionally been targeted at areas made up of a few villages, while a whole country or a wide region can be chosen when it comes to the formulation of rural development plans (master and action plans) as part of development studies.

³⁰ The "Green Revolution" refers to increases in the production of wheat, rice and other agricultural products achieved by Mexico and developing countries in Asia in the 1950s-1960s through the development and introduction of high-yield varieties. Resources like fertilizer and pesticides as well as the supply of water are necessary to produce high-yield crops.

³¹ In recent years, village-level verification studies on a wide range of areas including agriculture, small-scale commerce and industry, health care, life infrastructure and literacy education are often conducted when national- or regional-level agricultural and rural development plans are drawn up in development studies.