

## **Country Development Cooperation Policy to the Republic of Sierra Leone**

April, 2019

### **1. Objectives of Development Cooperation to Sierra Leone**

After eleven years of civil war, Sierra Leone has conducted four peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections since 2002 and experienced two changes of government parties in 2007 and 2018. It is extremely important for Sierra Leone to maintain peace and stability for realization of country's future development.

Repeated civil wars and the Ebola outbreak depleted human resources for prospective administration, which is one of the causes of the present weakness of administrative capacity of the country. Limited government revenue, economic structure largely dependent on exploitation of mineral resources such as diamond, a high youth unemployment rate, inadequate economic infrastructure such as electricity and roads, and an increase of urban-rural inequality, among others, are challenges impeding Sierra Leone's development. Supporting Sierra Leone's efforts to overcome these challenges is important for the stability and development of the country and the West African region.

Sierra Leone remains at the lowest level in global developmental indexes. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Index (HDI) in 2017, Sierra Leone ranks 184 out of 188 countries, indicating its dire situation. To assist Sierra Leone in raising itself in these developmental indexes meets high priority of Japan's ODA Charter, which attaches importance to "poverty reduction".

To cope with these challenges, the Sierra Leonean Government has identified eight areas of major development challenges (education, health, water and sanitation, macroeconomic development, energy, agriculture, anticorruption and security) in order to formulate a five-year development plan. Japan will provide support in line with this development plan in order to foster trust and to strengthen bilateral relations including cooperation in the international arena.

### **2. Basic policy of Japanese ODA: Formation of social and economic foundation for progressive development**

Sierra Leone has high potential for exports of mineral resources and commodity crops. However, due to the decline of international prices of natural resource, civil war and the Ebola outbreak, its social and economic foundations have been weakened. As a result, its economic growth has declined, and poverty has remained as serious problem. From the perspective of human security, the consolidation of political stability and peace, economic development, and poverty reduction are important for the stability and development of the West African region.

Japan contributes to strengthening the social and economic foundation necessary for Sierra Leone's economic development.

### 3. Priority areas

#### (1) Strengthening the social foundation

Japan aims at strengthening human capital development and improving development conditions in the following areas:

##### a) Health and nutrition

Japan aims to improve administrative capacity and the health and sanitation environment to improve health indicators, such as life expectancy, under 5 mortality ratio, maternal mortality ratio, and malnutrition-related indicators.

##### b) Education, vocational training and administrative capacity building

The Government of Sierra Leone aims to provide free quality education at basic and secondary school levels. While providing free education, there is a great need to improve the quality of education. Japan contributes to improving the quality of education and strengthening administrative capacity in order to develop human resources for strengthening the social foundation.

#### (2) Strengthening the economic foundation

##### a) Promotion of agriculture and food security initiatives

Rice is the staple food crop in Sierra Leone and the per capita rice consumption in Sierra Leone is one of the highest in Africa. Sierra Leone is a member country of Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) Initiative for promoting rice production in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Government of Sierra Leone considers rice as a priority crop and aims to improve self-sufficiency rate and productivity.

Utilizing its knowledge and technology, Japan provides support for establishing and promoting appropriate rice cultivation technology for improving productivity and profitability of farmers, particularly small-scale farmers.

Food assistance is to be provided based on the situations in support of food security.

##### b) Development of basic infrastructure

Basic infrastructure essential for economic growth and public service is still fragile due to the civil war and other causes. Japan supports Sierra Leone's development of basic infrastructure such as power sector, building on Japan's past cooperation experience through the reconstruction process and Japan's technology.

### 4. Points to note

- (1) Japan does not possess a residence Embassy in Sierra Leone and the limited resources of JICA (currently a field office is in operation). Under such circumstances, Japan's institutional capacity to implement development cooperation has limitations. Therefore, development assistance through international organizations and others are also to be utilized.
- (2) In provision of assistance, Japan will make efforts, exercising comparative advantage of Japan, and further improve aid effectiveness through partnership with other development partners such as other countries and international organizations.
- (3) Japan will make efforts to promote public-private partnership based on such factors as a relatively stable public security in Sierra Leone.

Annex: Rolling Plan