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Performance and Challenges of the Policy of Improving Quality of Life

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- "KREI Agricultural Policy Focus" relates to analysis and description of the trend of and policy for agriculture and rural areas.
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◇ Abstract ◇

- After the enactment of the Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life in 2005, the 1st and 2nd Improvement Plans for Quality of Life were established and are now in the course of implementation.
 - The Improvement Plans present hopeful visions for agricultural and fishing villages based on the pan-government cooperative system.
 - As part of the plans, the government has introduced and implemented advanced institutions including the rural services standard and the rural proofing.
- The government has achieved expected results including the improvement of infrastructure thanks to the increase in the budget allocated for the policy of improving quality of life.
 - Diversified support measures have been provided for the health, welfare and education sectors, along with the enhancement of infrastructure.
 - Economic performances have been achieved with sales growth and job creation in local community.
 - The ratio of rural residents who are satisfied with the quality of life in rural areas has been on the rise.
- Some parts of the plans need to be improved: the Life Quality Improvement Committee has limited functions as the control tower; the plans need more participation of government institutions; and the establishment and implementation of rural-sensitive policies are insufficient.
 - The current policies are implemented focusing on performance and policy providers while rural residents cannot experience actual benefits of services.
 - High value-added projects in the field of economic activities have shown insufficient performance, and attempts to build agents' capacity and promote environment conservation in rural areas have also led to unsatisfactory results.
 - The inspection and evaluation of policies have a weak binding force, and there is no method to provide incentives based on results of the evaluation.
 - It is difficult to approach the plans comprehensively at local government level as local governments have little interest in the policy of improving quality of life, and working groups in charge of each agricultural item are dealing with tasks related to the plans.
 - Employed advanced institutions including the rural services standard and the rural proofing are hardly realistic and effective.
- The direction of the 3rd Improvement Plan for Quality of Life should be decided by comprehensively identifying performance and problems of the previous plans.
 - Considering the consistency with the government agenda, the authorities should develop policy goals that enhance the awareness of rural residents, and strengthen the policy transmission system.
 - The government should also consider a mid- and long-term policy paradigm including the preservation of the multifunctionality of agriculture and rural areas.
 - The rural services standard needs to be reformed focusing on the key items based on the national minimum criteria, and these key items should be connected with the seven sectors of the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life to successfully accomplish the goal.
 - The system and methods of the implementation of the rural proofing should be reformed to effectively respond to timely issues.
 - The authorities should develop projects that require interdepartmental cooperation under the leadership of the Life Quality Improvement Committee, and run the committee constantly by organizing subcommittees of key themes.
 - The authorities should gather opinions from rural areas by organizing and running the nationwide Life Quality Monitoring Group.
 - The government should design plans to provide incentives to local governments based on their performance of the policy of improving quality of life.

1. Implementation Status of the Policy of Improving the Quality of Life of Farmers and Fishermen

The Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life was established in 2005, and the 1st Five-Year Improvement Plan for Quality of Life was designed through pan-government cooperation.

○ After the enactment of the Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life of Farmers, Foresters and Fishermen and the Promotion of Development of Agricultural, Mountain and Fishery Areas (hereinafter referred to as the Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life) in 2005, the 1st Five-Year Improvement Plan for Quality of Life was developed and implemented through pan-government cooperation.

- A total of 15 central administrative agencies including the Life Quality Improvement Committee (chairman: the Prime Minister), the Life Quality Improvement Working Committee (chairman: the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs) and the executive office (the Rural Policy Bureau of the MAFRA) participated in the implementation of the plan.
- The 1st plan was appreciated as an innovative and advanced attempt to present a hopeful vision of improving the quality of life in rural areas and establish a pan-government implementation system.

During the implementation of the 1st plan (2005-2009), the authorities used a comprehensive approach, aiming to realize “agricultural, mountain and fishing villages as a complex space for settlement with a harmony of life, rest and industry.”

○ The plan was aimed to establish life infrastructure of small and medium-sized cities in agricultural and fishing villages and maintain the

population of rural areas to account for around 20% of the total population of the country.

- As part of the plan, a total of 133 policy projects were implemented in the four areas including education, welfare, local development and complex industries.
 - Expanding the public education service, reducing the burden of education expenses, and increasing the number of talented teachers
 - Reinforcing the social safety net for those engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishery, enhancing the public health care service for rural areas, and strengthening the welfare service for the elderly and women
 - Improving basic living conditions in rural areas and building each local area's independent capacity for development
 - Fostering local inherited industries, vitalizing rural experiences and tourism, and utilizing rural amenities as income resources

- A total of KRW 22.8 trillion of investment and loans (112% of the planned amount) were put to the 1st plan.

□ In the 2nd Improvement Plan for Quality of Life (2010-2014), the four policy sectors were subdivided into seven sectors and the two advanced institutions were introduced by improving the problems of the 1st plan and reflecting the changed conditions of rural areas.

- The vision of the 2nd plan was to realize “happy agricultural and fishing villages with a harmony of life, work and rest.”
 - The plan was aimed to establish agricultural and fishing villages with basic living infrastructure, groundwork for welfare and diversified advanced industries that anyone would love to visit and live in.

- The four policy sectors of the 1st plan were expanded to seven sectors in the 2nd plan, and the key points including culture, environment and capacity-building were particularly specified by reflecting changed conditions of rural areas.
 - The seven policy sectors include enhancement of health care and welfare, improvement of educational conditions, expansion of basic living infrastructure, diversification of economic activities, enhancement of cultural and leisure conditions, improvement of the landscape and environment, and reinforcement of capacity for local development.

- The two advanced institutions including the rural services standard and rural proofing were introduced and implemented.
 - The rural services standard refers to the minimum service items and levels required for residents to lead an ordinary life and maintain basic living conditions. The government manages the attainment rate every year to meet the minimum criteria in terms of 31 service items in any rural areas.
 - The rural proofing is a system that evaluates and complements national policies or institutions in the course of policy-making to eliminate any unfavorable effects of policies on rural areas in advance.

- A total of 133 projects were included in the 2nd plan, and KRW 34.5 trillion of investment and loans were put to the plan, which was 55% up from the amount of the 1st plan.

Figure 1. Vision, Goal and Strategy of the 2nd Improvement Plan for Quality of Life (2010-2014)

Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Realizing happy agricultural and fishing villages with a harmony of life, work and rest ○ Agricultural and fishing villages with basic living infrastructure, groundwork for welfare and diversified advanced industries that anyone would love to visit and live in
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Goal of Each Sector	1. Enhancement of health care and welfare	Securing healthy and stable life for rural residents
	2. Improvement of educational conditions	Strengthening the influence of education by expanding the groundwork of education with the characteristics of rural areas
	3. Expansion of basic living infrastructure	Creating pleasant and convenient living conditions in rural areas
	4. Diversification of economic activities	Fostering competitive rural industries and creating various jobs
	5. Enhancement of cultural and leisure conditions	Establishing a joyful atmosphere in rural areas where residents can enjoy culture and leisure
	6. Improvement of the landscape and environment	Creating the beautiful environment by preserving soil, water and life and laying the groundwork for green growth
	7. Reinforcement of capacity for local development	Cultivating talented human resources who would lead the development of rural areas and strengthening cooperative development

Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Introducing the two advanced institutions to enhance quality of life ○ Rural services standard, rural proofing guidelines ▶ Establishing the sustainable development system led by each local area ○ Autonomy and creativity of local areas, the increase of private participation ▶ Reorganizing the implementation system of the policy of improving quality of life ○ Strengthening the function of the executive office and consolidating local plans
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- **Both actual and symbolic performances were accomplished through the 10-year policy of improving quality of life.**
 - The policy presented new, advanced, hopeful visions for agricultural and fishing villages, and served as an opportunity to set comprehensive policy goals and strategies for the entire rural areas.
 - Visions related to quality of life and happiness of rural residents were presented.
 - The policy implementation framework was established, and it was led by the comprehensive committee, in which the entire government agencies cooperatively work on issues of rural areas and attract participation from the private sector.
 - The framework was developed so that the authorities design action plans each year and evaluate performances to reflect the results on plans for the following year.

2. Performance and Limitation of the 2nd Improvement Plan for Quality of Life in Rural Areas

2.1. Policy Performance

The implementation of the 2nd plan led to the improvement of the performance indicator of each field and successful results

- During the implementation of the 2nd plan, the policy sectors to be covered were expanded and the budget also increased, providing diversified support measures for rural residents in the fields of health care, welfare and education.
 - The authorities established emergency medical service institutions in 40 counties to resolve emergency medical service issues, and have run Agricultural Safety and Health Centers at designated institutions.
 - The welfare support measures are also in the course of implementation, offering pension premium and health insurance premium for farmers and fishermen.
 - The government also cultivated school models that were specialized for rural areas, including public boarding high schools, rural schools and yearlong total care schools.

- The overall infrastructures were improved as water and sewage facilities and roads were repaired and the foundation of informatization and culture and sports facilities were established.
 - The installment rate of waterworks in *myeon* (township): 36.2% (2004) → 55.9% (2010)
 - The number of small libraries in rural areas: 93 (2009) → 148 (2012)
 - The number of sports complex facilities in rural areas: 28 (2009) → 43 (2012)

- In terms of economic activities, sales and the number of jobs increased through the 2nd plan, and various types of economic entities emerged in local communities of rural areas.
 - The annual sales of businesses, which were provided with the support program of utilizing rural resources in complex industries, grew by 28.6% in 2011 and by 28.1% in 2012.
 - The number of employees in agricultural industrial complexes increased from 129,800 in 2010 to 140,000 in 2012.
 - The number of recreational villages with rural experiences increased from 544 in 2009 to 803 in 2013, and the number of rural community companies also increased from 219 in 2009 to 720 in 2012.
 - As of 2012, urban-rural complex-type cities have an average of 6.9 economic entities that are based on local community, including social enterprises, community businesses and community interest companies, while counties have an average of 4 economic entities.

□ The introduction of the rural services standard led to the improvement of public service.

- The rural services standard was introduced as the national minimum criteria of the provision of public service, leading to the increase in the budget for related government institutions.
 - The annual budget for projects of the government institutions in charge of 32 items of the rural services standard was estimated to be around KRW 3.42 trillion as of 2013, 11.6% up from that of the previous year (KREI 2013).
- Several local governments set the goals of meeting the rural services standard as their major policies.
 - In Chungcheongnam-do, the local government included the rural services standard system in its key policy of three agricultural

innovations, while the Chungcheongbuk-do local government established fire stations in two counties, which used to have no fire stations before, based on the evaluation results of the implementation status of the rural services standard.

- The level of the public service included in the rural services standard was improved.
 - Out of 32 items in the rural services standard, 21 items showed the improvement in the goal achievement in 2013 compared to 2011, while 1 item was in stagnation and 5 items recorded less performance.
- Rural residents seemed to experience the effect of the enhanced public service included in the rural services standard.
 - Residents responded that an average of 32.1% of 32 items of the public services included in the rural services standard improved compared to three years ago, while 9.9% was considered to degenerate and 58.1% was considered similar.¹⁾

□ The ratio of residents who consider the quality of life to be improved has increased.

- The public awareness of the overall conditions of quality of life tends to be improved (see Table 1).
 - According to the result of the KREI's annual survey on public awareness of agriculture and rural areas, the satisfaction level of rural residents of living in rural areas has been on the rise.

1) The statistics are based on the result of the survey targeting 700 rural residents on the improvement level of 32 public service items included in the rural services standard. (K.S. Kim et al. *Monitoring the Implementation of Rural Services Standard of 2013*. KREI. 2013)

- An increasing ratio of rural residents thought that the level of living conditions was improved compared to five years ago, and the ratio of residents who expected further improvement of living conditions in the next five years also increased.
- Although these positive opinions are not solely attributed to the implementation of the policy of improving quality of life, the policy efforts to improve the conditions of settlement in rural areas and increased budgets seemed to have an effect on the successful outcome.

Table 1. The Ratio of Rural Residents with Positive Response to the Questions on Quality of Life

Classification	Unit: %		
	2004	2009	2013
Satisfaction rate of living in rural areas	10.9	25.6	31.3
Improvement rate of living conditions compared to 5 years ago	20.3	28.6	27.9
Prospect of living conditions after 5 years	7.8	14.5	25.2

Note: The figures are the ratios of positive responses to questions on each item in the survey targeting those engaged in agriculture.

Source: Summary of KREI's annual survey on public awareness of agriculture and rural areas

2.2. Limitation and Challenges

- Rural services are provided without sufficient consideration for rural residents as the S/W is offered with an approach focusing on facilities and poor accessibility to services.**
- Policy goals (performance indicator) are only focused on quantitative expansion of service and accomplishment of performance. Also, there is limitation on improving the awareness of residents due to provider-oriented policy implementation.

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- The plan does not sufficiently reflect the qualitative aspect including the improvement of satisfaction through residents' actual experience of rural service.
 - For instance, road networks are sufficiently secured while the traffic services to meet the demand of residents are hardly operated.
 - In addition, as newly introduced lifelong learning programs are conducted mostly in *eup* (town) areas without considering the service accessibility, the elderly residents who are engaged in agriculture and fishery and live in remote villages have little opportunity to participate in these programs.

□ There is limitation on entering into the implementation stage of high value-added and sustainable projects.

- The attempts to enter into the high value-added stage with complex industry policies have been unsuccessful.
 - Although the number of urban residents who participate in rural tourism has been on the rise, the authorities have failed to deal with consumers' demand for high quality rural tourism.
 - In 2012, only 14% of urban visitors to rural areas stayed at rural guest houses, down from 32.6% in 2003.
- As a result of the quantitative expansion of the policy without systematic support for capacity-building of the private sector, the authorities have failed to secure the sustainability of the projects.
 - The participation of residents in the projects is limited, and several facilities established as part of joint community projects have been privatized.
 - Most public facilities established as part of the projects are not properly utilized, and become idle or underused.
 - Only about 40% of villages actively use the facilities including informatization centers, education and experience centers and guest

houses, while a higher ratio of villages do not utilize these facilities actively.

The result of the project to preserve rural environment and nature is also limited.

○ The current policy framework is not sufficient to embrace the value of the preservation of rural environment and nature and enjoyment of cultural life in rural areas.

- According to the result of KREI's annual survey on public awareness of agriculture and rural areas in 2013, only 53.7% of the respondents consider multifunctionality and public values of rural areas to be positive, the ratio which dropped from 63.4% in 2008 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Public Awareness of Multifunctionality and Public Values of Rural Areas

Classification	Unit: %		
	2008	2010	2013
Totally a lot (A)	21.6	6.8	10.1
A lot (B)	41.8	49.1	43.7
Some	28.5	35.7	33.5
Little (C)	7.4	7.2	12.1
Not at all (D)	0.6	1.2	0.7
Don't know/non-response	0.1	-	-
A lot (A+B)	63.4	55.9	53.7
Little (C+D)	8.0	8.4	12.7
Total	100	100	100

Source: Summary of KREI's annual survey on public awareness of agriculture and rural areas

The pan-government cooperative framework has limited functions of policy coordination.

○ Despite the symbolic outcome with the expansion of policy sectors and establishment of the pan-government framework, the policy of

improving quality of life has been restrictively carried out in the framework.

- The Life Quality Improvement Committee under the leadership of the Prime Minister is only one of multiple committees under the Prime Minister's office, with difficulties in securing adequate status and limited coordinating functions in the pan-government framework.
 - The committee holds only one meeting a year to perfunctorily discuss an agenda, hardly performing its functions as the control tower of the policy.
- The evaluation and assessment of the implementation status of the policy are carried out each year, but the evaluation only focuses on tangible performance rather than meaningful outcomes and has no method to provide incentives based on the result of the implementation.
- Due to the absence of the system related to budget including the incentive provision system, it is fundamentally difficult for government institutions to connect and coordinate with each other and reflect the result on follow-up measures.
 - Eventually, there is no practical assessment system except the perfunctory evaluation focusing on tangible performance.
- It has been challenging to implement the policy of improving quality of life at local government level.**
- Since the central government has led the implementation and assessment of the Improvement Plans for Quality of Life and action plans, few local governments have interest in these projects.
- The policies of improving quality of life of local governments only imitate the project items of the central government rather than reflecting actual conditions and characteristics of each local area.

- In most cities and counties, working groups in charge of each agricultural item are dealing with improving quality of life, and local governments have limited capacity to use a comprehensive approach to improve the quality of life in rural areas.
 - Although the Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life specifies the foundation of the Life Quality Improvement Committee in each city, province and county, most local governments have shown little activities.
 - According to KREI's survey in 2012 targeting 274 civil servants of local governments of cities and counties, only 1.8% of the respondents considered the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life as a desirable measure established by local governments, and only 40% of the respondents were aware of the Improvement Plans of their governments.

- **The plan lacks methods to practically implement the rural services standard introduced as an advanced institution.**
 - Since the rural services standard is not a mandatory regulation but recommended criteria, local governments have little interest in the standard.
 - The authorities have not allocated a budget particularly to promote the rural services standard.
 - The Special Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Life specifies that the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life shall include the rural services standard, but this provision is not properly observed in the current conditions.

 - The items of the rural services standard also have drawbacks.
 - The rural services standard include too many items as the national minimum criteria, and several items are not appropriate for certain local areas and almost impossible to be accomplished.

□ In terms of the rural proofing, the authorities have failed to accomplish the original purpose of the introduction of the system.

- The rural proofing consists of the expert assessment and the self-evaluation of nine departments and local governments of nine provinces.
 - The self-evaluation is almost nominal since related departments and local governments generally conduct the evaluation without sufficient knowledge of the system.

- The expert assessment has been conducted by KREI over eight policies for three years, but the assessment results have not been reflected on the follow-up measures with little effectiveness.
 - The assessment was nothing but a study project led by the research institute due to the absence of the process of continuously demanding the improvement of the problems and reflecting the assessment result on the next policies.

3. Direction of the 3rd Improvement Plan for Quality of Life in Rural Areas

- **The 3rd plan should be consistent with national goals and designed for rural residents to practically experience the services.**
 - A variety of policies with the consistency with national goals should be included in the 3rd plan by considering the characteristics of the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life as a comprehensive plan for multiple sectors.
 - The national goals of the current government are mostly related to the quality of life of rural residents, including “the revitalization of economy,” “happiness of the people” and “cultural prosperity.” Therefore, the 3rd plan should include specific measures that are consistent with national goals.
 - The plan should focus on policy challenges that help residents actually experience the rural services, rather than the achievement of quantitative performance.
 - Although the provision of facilities and services is important, the 3rd plan should focus on improving the service delivery system which had multiple drawbacks in the 2nd plan.
 - All of the specific improvement plans for seven sectors should encourage capacity-building of local communities and vitalize the role of the intermediary support organization for capacity-building.
 - In order to be connected with the Regional Happy Life-zone Policy presented by the Park’s administration as a part of the local development policy, the 3rd plan should include measures to improve the quality of life of rural residents through cooperation in each life-zone beyond the unit of administrative districts.

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- The local governments in the same life-zone should cooperate with each other beyond the unit of administrative districts to provide facilities and services and raise the satisfaction level of residents.
- The vision and goal of the 3rd plan should reflect the mid- and long-term policy paradigm and the value of agricultural policy.**
- With the 3rd plan, the government should meet the policy demand from rural residents and reflect the mid- and long-term policy paradigm and future values for the development of agriculture and rural areas.
 - As traditional agricultural policies including the price support and the farm input aid distort the production and trade system, advanced countries tend to expand the policies to preserve the multifunctionality of agriculture and rural areas.
 - Major countries including the US, the EU, Switzerland and Japan have recently reinforced the direct payment system to stabilize the income and management of farms and preserve the functions of agriculture and rural areas to promote public interest.
 - In particular, the EU developed the rural development policy for 2014-2020 with multiple environmental measures to preserve species diversity and ecosystems and respond to climate change.
 - The action plans should be designed with the consistency with the existing agricultural policies including the 2013-2017 Development Plan for Agriculture, Rural Areas and Food Industry.
 - The 2013-2017 Development Plan for Agriculture, Rural Areas and Food Industry emphasizes the policy paradigm including happiness of farmers, local community, the 6th industrialization of agriculture and participation and responsibility of local residents and community.

Table 3. Policy Paradigm of the Development Plan for Agriculture, Rural Areas and Food Industry

Classification	Previous paradigm	New paradigm
Purpose	Efficiency	Efficiency, happiness of farmers
Target	Individual company	Emphasis on local community
Policy contents	Dispersive approach of agricultural and food industries	The 6 th industry integrated with production
Approach	Uniform implementation led by the central government	Characteristics of each local area, participation and responsibility of local community and residents

□ The authorities should reorganize the rural services standard and enhance its realizability.

- The government should rearrange the rural services standard, which was introduced as an advanced institution in the 2nd plan, with realizability and suitability for the current conditions.
 - The current service standard should be divided into two parts: “key items” based on the national minimum criteria that are easily applied to any rural areas, and “optional items” that local governments can utilize depending on their individual conditions.
 - For example, the UK gradually minimized the previous rural services standard with 14 sectors and 35 items established in 2000 to 8 sectors and 13 items in 2006.

- When the standard is reduced focusing on key items, its possibility of accomplishment can be improved by connecting with seven sectors of the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life.
 - The authorities should attract attention from related government agencies and local governments and increase the budget by utilizing the rural services standard as one of the performance indicators of the seven sectors.

□ Related government agencies should build an intimate cooperative relationship with each other for the stabilization of the rural proofing system.

- As the rural proofing has not settled as an influential institution yet, the authorities should continuously emphasize the characteristics of rural areas and collect base data.
- At the same time, the rural proofing should be implemented in the form of effectively responding to highly timely issues.
 - Diverse ways are needed to politicize policies that can have discriminatory effects on rural areas before policy-making by collaborating with experts and farmers' organizations from various fields and areas.
- More expert groups need to participate in the process of the rural proofing.
 - In order to ask for cooperation from other departments easily, the authorities should establish a cooperative framework with a number of state-run research institutes related to the policy of improving quality of life in the course of the implementation of the rural proofing system.
- In the process of the self-evaluation, civil servants of local governments of cities and provinces select policies to be examined. The evaluation is conducted under the leadership of researchers of cities and provinces with cooperation of the local government, and the results need to be submitted to the Life Quality Improvement Committee.
 - Local governments with excellent performance will be rewarded, and their practices will be recorded in the form of an annual report to be distributed to and shared with other cities and provinces, enhancing the awareness of the rural proofing system.

- KREI will be in charge of the supplement and education of the self-evaluation manuals while the executive office of the Life Quality Improvement Committee will distribute the manual and collect the plans and reports.
- The authorities need to seek for plans to strengthen the function of the Life Quality Improvement Committee.**
- The Life Quality Improvement Committee should take the initiative in developing cooperative projects with other government institutions and actively implement the policies.
 - The results of cooperative projects between government agencies need to be reported to the committee.
 - The performance and outcome of the Improvement Plan for Quality of Life by sector and each government agency's attempts to improve the rural services standard should be evaluated and reported to the committee on a yearly basis.
 - In addition, the committee should encourage government agencies to aggressively implement the policy by releasing each agency's performance and outcome of the policy implementation.
 - The committee needs to organize subcommittees (or expert committees) for each major field for constant cooperation, coordination, opinion-sharing and feedback in the course of the implementation of the policy of improving quality of life.
 - Subcommittees shall consist of members from the private sector and related government officials, and hold meetings frequently depending on issues.

□ The authorities should draw attention and participation from local governments and those engaged in rural industries.

- Local governments deserve incentive systems based on their performance of the implementation of the policy of improving quality of life.
 - The authorities should come up with measures to provide incentives to local governments with excellent performance by evaluating each local government's outcome of the implementation of the rural services standard and the policy of improving quality of life.
 - Based on the outcome report of local governments of cities and counties, the authorities should discuss incentive provision with the Presidential Committee on Regional Development and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance in the budget appropriation of the Autonomous Formulation System for cities, provinces and counties with the Regional Development Special Account, and reflect the result on budgeting of related government agencies including the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

- The authorities should organize and run the nationwide Life Quality Monitoring Group to collect opinions from rural areas about the improvement of the quality of life of rural residents and the policy implementation status.
 - The monitoring group should be operated both in the central and local governments to reflect various opinions from rural areas beyond perfunctory establishment.
 - The monitoring group shall consist of various members including representatives of local community, opinion leaders and activists.
 - The authorities may learn a lesson from the example of the Rural Affairs Forum in the UK, which was organized based in eight metropolitan regions in England.

[Notes] The Rural Affairs Forum in the UK

- The Forum was organized based in eight metropolitan regions in England, as a result of the Rural White Paper project in 2000.
- The Forum is an independent body, connected with the government offices of each region.
- It plays the role of building direct relationships with local residents for ministers to identify the reality of rural areas and policy demands of rural residents, and monitors if government policies reflect the demands of rural areas.

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