Greening the Sahel

In Burkina Faso, our technical mission designed and applied an inverted siphon technique that can eliminate the need to drill through granite. After eight years of hard work involving the construction of irrigation channels and aqueducts, 1,200 hectares of land on the right bank of the Bagré was brought into cultivation.

Following the reclamation of this farmland, the Technical Mission in Burkina Faso started to work on improving rice yields, while also helping local farmers to adopt sustainable farming methods. Furthermore, the mission assisted villages sited throughout the reclamation area to establish rice mills that would produce a much higher quality of rice. Local farmers now sell the grain in small, attractive packages that have been introduced to the market under the superior Riz de Bagré brand. This product has earned an excellent reputation, thereby increasing farmers’ incomes and returns on investment.
Planting Sweet Potatoes Deep into Local Soil

The sweet potato is a low-cost, high-yield crop that can tolerate infertile soil so long as it is protected from pests and diseases. It can substitute for other staple foods, and therefore play a key role in alleviating food shortages.

In Swaziland, the TaiwanICDF technical mission introduced a two-stage sweet potato seedling propagation system, in some cases yielding three times the tuber output of other local farmers. This sweet potato cultivation system has been eagerly adopted by farmers, and has significantly boosted rural food supplies and income.
Reclaiming Infertile Soils

Many Pacific island nations suffer from acute shortages of fresh water, and little grows in barren soil formed of coral sand.

To redress these problems, TaiwanICDF technical missions used excavation equipment to prepare land and remove sand, and then put down organic material available locally, such as coconut leaves, coir, crop residues and hog manure. The resulting compost was mixed with peat and used to enrich the earth.

Raising the variety and standard of produce by improving growing conditions is part of an all-round drive to improve nutrition among our Pacific partners; we also run cookery classes that encourage islanders to maintain a balanced intake of fruits and vegetables.
A Hog-breeding Success Story

Across our partner countries in Central America, technical missions have established revolving funds that provide loans to farmers for the purchase of hog pens, piglets and feed. Their hog farms have provided inexpensive, well bred piglets, with appropriate supervision helping local farmers raise them to a market-ready age. The missions have also helped farmers to establish meat production and marketing teams.

These hog-raising projects have brought prosperity to farming villages, where much of the assistance has benefited single-mothers with poor economic prospects. These women no longer need to leave their villages to take odd-jobs elsewhere, leaving more time for family concerns. Their example has encouraged other women across the region to turn to hog-raising as a source of income.
Promoting Pesticide Safety and Multinational Technology

In Panama, the TaiwanICDF technical mission applied a testing technique developed in Taiwan – the rapid bioassay of pesticide residues – to help establish a network for assuring the safety and quality of agricultural products. The mission also taught farmers how to improve their pesticide application methods, and promoted good agricultural practices.

Maintaining food safety calls for the management of agricultural products after they leave the farm, and relies on strong links to downstream industries. The promotion of a safety mark for fruit and vegetables within the supply-chain has inspired greater confidence among consumers; this system has directly enriched farmers, while indirectly benefiting consumers.
More Than a Grass

After three years of research, the Technical Mission in Guatemala succeeded in helping a local company turn out dehydrated lemongrass products, which were soon certified for export to Europe and the United States. The mission also assisted in the development of by-products such as lemongrass-flavored drinks.

Furthermore, the mission conducted well-rounded cost analysis to reach an optimal production formula. It also assisted the Guatemalan company to secure international certification, allowing its products to enter the supply chain of the world’s most respected food companies, such as Starbucks. Separately, a full year’s research culminated in the launch of lemongrass-flavored drinks, which went on to win a bronze award in the World Tea Expo in the United States.
Yet More Bountiful Harvests…