

## With Aid Effectiveness and Capacity Building as Our Guiding Lights, We Can Share Prosperity And Wellbeing with the International Community

In order to effectively implement aid work, the international development community has launched successive reforms over the past decade aimed at aid strategies and methods.

The UN Millennium Declaration, for example, specified eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a 2015 deadline. Each MDG serves as an indicator of the effectiveness with which resources are invested.

Subsequently the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) issued the Paris Declaration at the Second High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, putting forward five guidelines for carrying out aid work, together with 12 performance indicators. The OECD has also continued to address ways in which partner countries can build self-reliance, as well as ways of improving aid effectiveness and conducting timely development interventions.

In 2009, Taiwan published its first White Paper on Foreign Aid Policy, establishing the nation's core aid strategies. The following year, the promulgation of the International Cooperation and Development Act clearly defined the content, objectives, and operating principles of the nation's international cooperation and development affairs, echoing the trend toward effective international aid and putting into practice President Ma Ying-jeou's directive to seek proper goals, act lawfully, and exercise effective administration.

As Taiwan's specialist development assistance organization, the TaiwanICDF helps promote the nation's official development assistance (ODA) work. Since 2010, the organization has introduced a series of reforms that cover implementing strategy, transforming technical cooperation models, promoting project ownership, expanding the use of existing national management systems in partner countries, and taking a more project-oriented approach toward operations.

Over the past four years, the TaiwanICDF has undergone two rounds of organizational restructuring, rebuilding its organizational framework and conducting a root-and-branch reformulation of workflows and standards. A design and monitoring framework (DMF) has been introduced for projects, with tailor-made tools for aid work developed around international practices. By integrating all resources effectively and becoming more results-oriented, the organization has made great strides toward its goal of delivering effective aid.

### **Emphasizing Ownership and Capacity Building, Fostering Aid Results**

Looking back on 2013, it would seem that the global economy finally turned a corner, and that international cooperation and development were in the ascendancy once more. Yet the world was still confronted with a number of destructive political conflicts and natural disasters. There was a chemical weapons crisis in Syria, a second coup in Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, a third round of nuclear testing in North Korea, civil war in South Sudan and mass opposition-led demonstrations in Thailand. There were also several natural disasters, among which Typhoon Haiyan, a Category 5 super typhoon which struck the Philippines, signified the continued progression of climate change. Environmental sustainability has become a pressing problem for the international community, and when economic hardship and other negative factors, such as shortages of resources, are tallied in, the impact on development in developing countries has been substantial, highlighting the urgency of development assistance work.

Taiwan was once a recipient of aid. Having since developed and prospered, we have an obligation as a member of the international community to promote international cooperation and development, fulfill our international responsibilities, and give something back to the world.

In keeping with the principles set out in the Paris Declaration, the TaiwanICDF is implementing development assistance with an emphasis on ownership, capacity building, and the transfer of technical skills. Local governments are being encouraged to participate in defining problems and planning project content during the initial stages, so that projects can meet local development needs. Following this, cooperation involves assisting local governments in capacity building, and then on transferring technical skills, which reduces partner countries' dependence on donors.

For example, the TaiwanICDF has been conducting its Strengthening the Control of Huanglongbing and the Implementation of Integrated Pest Management in Citrus Project in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras,

Nicaragua and Panama due to an outbreak of Huanglongbing, or citrus greening disease, in the region. The project marks a departure from past approaches in that, instead of being responsible solely for teaching planting techniques to partner countries, the organization is empowering its partners to jointly promote the project.

Split into two phases, the project provides local farmers and technicians with a better understanding of disease prevention and management training, and provides further training for specialists in production and management systems. We have helped furnish partner countries with the systematic capabilities they need to root out problems, safeguard agricultural production, and increase the value of agricultural trade. As their capabilities grow, national organizations can spread their newfound technical skills locally, effectively disseminating know-how to the people who need it most.

### **Continuing to Pursue Effectiveness, Becoming The Best Partner for Sustainable Development**

With 2013 behind us, the deadline for the MDGs will expire in one year's time. The next phase of global development looks set to continue through a program of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

While the MDGs have focused on low-income countries, a glance at the SDGs and the content of the post-2015 agenda reveals that, in addition to the ongoing fight to eradicate extreme poverty, emphasis will be on inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmentally sustainable development, and peace and security.

These adjustments aside, what will not be changing in terms of international development assistance is the focus on promoting the effectiveness of development projects, and the increasing placement of partner countries at the heart of matters, in accordance with their needs.

To this end, since international circumstances remain turbulent and Taiwan's current position continues to present diplomatic difficulties, I hope that the TaiwanICDF can act in accordance with the principles set out in the Paris Declaration, pursuing efficiency and effectiveness in the aid it provides, and continue to improve its level of professionalism and results-based approach toward development and cooperation. I also hope it will support ROC foreign policy by making the most of the limited resources available and by drawing on the advantages provided by Taiwan's own experiences.

To sum up, by making aid effectiveness and capacity building our guiding lights in working with international organizations, and through multiple bilateral and multilateral channels, the government can work with nongovernmental partners to utilize Taiwan's comparative advantages and respond to our partners' needs, becoming the international community's best partner for sustainable development.



林永樂

David Y.L. Lin  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the TaiwanICDF