

Looking Ahead

Aspiring toward Partnerships for Progress and a Future Embodied by Sustainable Development

From Aid Recipient to Aid Provider: Playing To Taiwan's Advantages and Experience

International development aid began in 1947 when the United States proposed the Marshall Plan and the United Nations and other international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were founded. Looking back on the history of our country's development, we see that the Republic of China (Taiwan) received aid from the international community in that very year, and that as a result of the painstaking efforts of our government and people, we were able to rise out of the morass of poverty and in turn create the "Taiwan miracle," a feat commanding the world's attention.

In 1959, Taiwan dispatched its first team of agriculture specialists to Vietnam to assist in its agricultural development. This was the beginning of Taiwan's experience as a provider of international aid. Then, from 1960, Taiwan began sending missions to African partner countries to assist with agriculture via Operation Vanguard. Nowadays, more than 50 years hence, Taiwan's foreign aid efforts are being carried out in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. This sharing of the "Taiwan experience" has yielded fruitful results and serves as a model of success for aid recipient countries as they make their transition into providers of aid.

2015 will be a key year for international development. The completion of the UN MDGs represents a milestone in the achievements of development, leading the world toward the pursuit of a further set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over the next 15 years. The TaiwanICDF is Taiwan's official development assistance organization. Since being founded in 1996, the TaiwanICDF has shared Taiwan's development experience with partner countries to create an abundance of cooperative results, abiding by current practices in foreign aid and remaining committed to development issues of global concern. In the future, the organization will continue to pursue its vision of partnerships for progress and sustainable development, applying up-to-date

strategies in order to carry out its mission, inaugurating a new phase in Taiwan's foreign aid work, and making concrete contributions to the global SDGs.

Gaining an In-depth Understanding of the Needs of Partner Countries, Continuing to Pursue Project Effectiveness

Reviewing our key efforts in 2014, the TaiwanICDF put the guiding principles of its founding charter into practice, following an effective, concrete, pragmatic and feasible development approach as part of the constant pursuit of progress in its designated operational priorities. For instance, in agriculture, even as we remained mindful of boosting production, we also began to consider matters upstream, providing better seeds, livestock, poultry and fish, as well as matters downstream, setting up quality testing systems for fruits and vegetables, and creating a trade system for agricultural produce.

Regarding public health and medicine, we abided by the focal points of international development aid, actively developing maternal health programs, follow-up management for communicable and non-communicable diseases, health promotion and prevention plans, and health care systems. As for education, we focused on how to enhance the curricula of scholarship programs and workshops, and designed integrated, interdisciplinary programs aligned to the development needs of partner countries.

To apply Taiwan's strengths in ICT and meet partner countries' requirements in terms of administration and ease of life, in addition to introducing e-government measures to improve expediency, we also built on the same principles to improve education, medicine, women's empowerment, and government accountability and transparency, as well as other areas. As for environmental protection, we integrated Taiwan's space and remote sensing, geographic information system (GIS) and global positioning system (GPS) technologies to help regional allies in building disaster prevention and relief systems, and we are also cooperating with regional development banks

Amb. Weber V.B. Shih
Secretary General
TaiwanICDF

施文斌



to fund green energy projects, and thereby leveraging the benefits of such initiatives.

Other global efforts that the TaiwanICDF carried out in 2014 in the interest of protecting economies, employment and the right to live in safety (including improving the quality of life in refugee camps) included programs to build sustainable eco-tourism and preserve local cultural assets, as well as humanitarian aid programs involving the resettlement of refugees and post-disaster reconstruction in regions such as northern Jordan, South Sudan, the Philippines and the Solomon Islands.

Complying with the SDGs and Continuing to Upgrade Organizational Effectiveness

In the face of the continually changing state of world affairs, the form taken by international cooperation and development is under constant renewal; in addition, the development of our partner countries continues to advance. In response to the SDGs, the TaiwanICDF is striving to marshal Taiwan's advantages, strengthen capacity building, upgrade organizational effectiveness and consider ways of integrating limited resources in order to enhance the effectiveness of aid programs.

In terms of upgrading skills at our organization, we are continuing to strengthen the foreign aid and project management expertise of personnel, encouraging an in-depth understanding of the history of Taiwan's economic development, as well as the history and development progress of our partner countries. We are also arranging exchanges with other international development organizations, actively cultivating "in-house" specialists, participating in project appraisal and identification, and passing on our experience, all with the aim of helping our staff gain a clearer grasp of partner countries' development needs. As for mechanisms to manage aid work, we are simplifying the TaiwanICDF's project management tools and workflow, setting up overseas project manager and project coordinator positions so as to speed up communication between domestic and overseas units,

allowing projects to be carried out more effectively.

When it comes to project planning, with respect to operational priorities such as agriculture, public health and medicine, education, ICT and environmental protection, the TaiwanICDF will strengthen interdisciplinary integration, incorporating science and technology to upgrade technical cooperation, and leverage financial instruments, such as lending and investment, to strengthen project results. The organization will also build diversified international aid partnerships, all with the aim of overcoming the constraints of limited resources and enhancing Taiwan's advantages and experience.

A Blueprint for Assistance Based on International Development Concepts

Compared with the MDGs, the SDGs focus on three major tasks – development, peace, and human rights – while continuing to work toward the goal of reducing poverty and hunger, and further stressing the issues of biodiversity, multiculturalism and climate change, which are applicable to both poor and rich countries. Furthermore, the number of goals to be achieved has multiplied. Given such wide-ranging involvement and considering the attainability and feasibility of such goals, it will be necessary to carry out discussion and negotiation so that all of the parties concerned can focus and forge a consensus.

Thus, going forward into the post-2015 era, and following its vision of partnerships for progress and sustainable development, the TaiwanICDF will continue to adhere to its guiding principles and the purpose of Taiwan's international cooperation and development goals, and, paying close attention to the development and progress of the UN SDGs, draft a blueprint for international development assistance. By building the closest partnerships with our partner countries via a professional and effective cooperative model, we can jointly enjoy the benefits of advancement and prosperity.