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50 Years:
Retrospective

60s

Departure



70s

Reclamation



80s

Cultivation



90s

Extension



21st

century

Integration



50th Anniversary of International Cooperation and Development

In 1959, Taiwan was still receiving around US\$100 million in annual overseas assistance. However, the country was committed to assisting others and dispatched its first group of agricultural specialists to Vietnam. The following year, a technical mission arrived in Libya. Since those times, Taiwan has transformed from being a recipient of aid to a donor. To date, over 3,000 technicians and staff have been dispatched to provide assistance overseas and make a vital contribution toward international cooperation and development.

Over the past half-century, Taiwan's global footsteps along the path of development and cooperation have crossed Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Pacific island nations, and Central and Eastern Europe. Across these 50 years, Taiwan and the TaiwanICDF have focused on providing technological and financial assistance, and promoted a wide variety of development projects based on Taiwan's own successful development experience. Our cooperative projects have not only fostered greater friendship between Taiwan and its partner countries, but also demonstrated that Taiwan is a responsible member of the international community, and dedicated to creating a better world for everyone.



1959 - 2009

Milestones Marking 50 Years of International Cooperation and Development

60^s

- 1959
- 1960
- 1961
- 1962
- 1963
- 1965
- 1967
- 1968

70^s

- 1971
- 1972
- 1978

80^s

- 1982
- 1986
- 1988
- 1989

90^s

- 1990
- 1991
- 1994
- 1996
- 1998

21st century

- 2000
- 2001
- 2003
- 2005
- 2006
- 2007
- 2008
- 2009

- 1959** • The first group of agricultural specialists arrive in Vietnam, marking the beginning of Taiwan's overseas technical assistance.
- 1960** • Taiwan and Libya sign a technical cooperation agreement — the first such agreement signed by Taiwan.
- 1961** • An agricultural mission is dispatched to Libya, formally commencing technical cooperation in Africa.
- 1962** • The Ministry of National Defense dispatches six military doctors to Libya, marking the beginning of Taiwan's overseas assistance in the health care and medical sector.
- 1963** • An agricultural technical mission is established in the Dominican Republic — the first technical mission in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 1965** • A team of agricultural specialists is dispatched to Saudi Arabia to establish the first technical mission in the Middle East.
- 1967** • Experts participate in a road-building project in Malta, becoming the first team from Taiwan to contribute to European development.
- 1968** • A team of agricultural technicians is sent to Swaziland. This year marks the peak of Taiwanese assistance to Africa, with a total of 29 technical missions working in the region.

- 1971** • The Republic of China withdraws from the UN, and the majority of cooperative relationships with developing African nations are ended due to the severance of diplomatic ties with these countries.
- 1972** • Taiwan seeks to expand technical cooperation with Latin American countries and establishes technical missions in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Paraguay and Haiti.
- 1978** • An agricultural technical mission is established in Fiji, becoming the first Taiwanese technical mission operating in a Pacific island nation.

- 1982** • The Agricultural Technical Mission in Honduras establishes a revolving fund for its hog-breeding project, which serves as a model by which other missions can manage their operations sustainably.
- 1986** • Teams of logistics and printing technicians are dispatched to Saudi Arabia.
- 1988** • The Agricultural Technical Mission in Thailand participates in the Royal Project, in a mountainous, northern region of the country. The project receives the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace and International Understanding for encouraging farmers to substitute cash crops for poppies.
- 1989** • The International Economic Cooperation Development Fund (IECDF) is established as a focus for Taiwanese assistance, particularly in investment and lending.

- 1990** • An agricultural technical mission is re-established in Liberia; a medical mission is also dispatched to the country during the same year.
- 1991** • The IECDF and Malawian government sign a loan agreement for an infrastructure project — the first loan provided by the newly established organization.
- 1994** • The IECDF cooperates with CABI on infrastructure and SME re-lending projects, marking the organization's first case of lending cooperation with another international development organization.
- 1996** • The International Cooperation and Development Fund — the TaiwanICDF — is established. The TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers program commences, and five civilian volunteers depart for a period of service in Swaziland.
- 1998** • The establishment of the International Higher Education Scholarship Programs sees its first group of six students arrive to study tropical agriculture.

- 2000** • The TaiwanICDF cooperates with World Links to promote ICT in education — the first ICT project for the TaiwanICDF.
- 2001** • The first group of servicemen in the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service is dispatched to serve at various overseas technical missions.
- 2003** • The TaiwanICDF and six local universities jointly establish TICA.
- 2005** • The TaiwanICDF cooperates with another international development organization to establish a regional microfinancing fund.
- 2006** • The TaiwanICDF establishes the IHCSA.
- 2007** • The TaiwanICDF launches TICTA, to integrate the ICT work conducted by nearly 50 organizations from the public, private and academic sectors.
- 2008** • The WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures recognizes the exemplary performance of two projects conducted by TaiwanICDF technical missions in Guatemala and Panama, citing work to secure an export market for papayas and pesticide residue testing as examples of best practice in Aid for Trade.
- 2009** • The TaiwanICDF implements pilot projects in environmental protection and clean energy.

Greening the Desert, Sowing the Seeds of Friendship

Taiwan dispatched its first agricultural technicians overseas in 1959, to Vietnam, and has since offered assistance across all regions of the world. The priority has been to replace subsistence cultivation with intensive, modern methods that stabilize and boost production. Once this has been achieved, we encourage partners to diversify their crop portfolio before progressing toward food processing and export-oriented agribusiness.

Over the past 50 years, these initiatives have been replicated time and again, with the dedication of Taiwanese agricultural missions being motivated by one, simple thought: Everyone has the right to food. The TaiwanICDF is committed to assisting partner countries overcome whatever challenges may arise during the course of their agricultural development.

Taking the “Taiwan Experience” to the World

Each of Taiwan’s partners is unique, so our technical missions make a point of working to the requirements of local conditions.

In countries where the supply of food is sporadic, the priority is to achieve self-sufficiency in production and improve infrastructure, with national self-reliance being the ultimate goal. In countries that are heavily dependent on a single industry or sector, emphasis is placed on helping to diversify partners’ economic activities; and in countries where the economic fundamentals are already stable, the focus is on advancing technological capacity in order to strengthen economic prospects.

From Production to Promotion

Staff at Taiwan’s technical missions know how essential it is to work with partner countries on building technological capacity in order to improve competitiveness and increase incomes for farmers and fishermen. They also know it is equally important to introduce concepts such as supply-chain management to those same farmers and fishermen, if they are to move from being producers to becoming agribusiness professionals.



The Foundations of Growth

By taking three key ingredients of industrial production into account – capital, technology and human resource – the TaiwanICDF draws on Taiwan’s own history of development when assisting partners to meet their specific needs. By helping to grow the private sector in partner countries, Taiwan aims to help realize steady and sustainable development.

SME Re-lending and Credit Guarantee Programs

Capital is key to the development and growth of private businesses. Working with financial institutions in developing countries, we offer re-lending and credit guarantee services so that SMEs can gain reliable access to funding.

Small But Efficient

Over the years, the TaiwanICDF has initiated numerous microfinancing programs. Working in vast developing countries and small island states, we give loans to individuals and groups, as well as to nomadic peoples. In addition to reaching out to the poorest households, we also offer a helping hand to small businesses, providing the

support that keeps them afloat in tough times. The services provided by partner microfinancing institutions also give economic migrants the chance to remit surplus earnings back to their homeland, which family members and friends can use to realize their own aspirations for development.

Industrial Consultation and Advisory Services

To spur progress and technical innovation we assign specialists to partner countries, where they share their practical experience, provide strategic guidance and counseling services, and offer technical instruction and training.

Cultivating Professionalism

Through various seminars and workshops, TaiwanICDF specialists and participants from partner nations are able to exchange their experiences in developing SMEs, helping to steer a steady course through the highs and lows of business. Meanwhile, the TaiwanICDF offers technical and vocational education and training programs in addition to scholarships, all of which nurtures the skills and specialties that partners need to develop their economies and become competitive at an international level.

Connecting the World

The revolution in ICT has seen advances that promise unprecedented opportunities for jump-starting the economies of developing nations; yet too many people in these nations still remain disconnected, literally and figuratively. The benefits of ICT can be incorporated right across the board, from infrastructure projects to aiding human resource development. ICT can cut through bureaucratic red tape and simplify regulation, and underpin commercial and private sector growth.

The digital divide is characterized by an imbalance in the application and distribution of ICT resources. By making ICT an integral strand of its development projects, Taiwan aims to bridge the existing gap between its partner countries and the rest of the world, and help to foster social and economic development in turn.

Promoting Integrated Software Solutions

We work to upgrade equipment, improve communications and install network and computer systems in laboratories in developing countries; we also incorporate ICT into TVET programs.

Fostering Public and Private Partnerships

We established TICTA in 2007, which pools private sector resource and directs Taiwanese expertise toward ICT development in partner nations.

Investing in "E-Government"

We assist partner governments to build well-connected networks of online applications, which boost their capacity to serve citizens and increases national competitiveness.

Establishing Digital Opportunity Centers

We build Digital Opportunity Centers (DOCs) in partner countries, introduce best practices in management and provide training programs to maximize the benefits of cooperative ICT projects.



Gender Equality, Gender Autonomy

Each and every one of us has a fundamental right to equality and choice, regardless of gender. Enhancing women's status and opportunities for development is a priority we share with other international organizations. By investing in rural infrastructure, we are getting more women into education than ever before; and by making microfinancing more accessible we are also helping women to start their own businesses, offering a firm foothold on the path toward social and economic parity.

Education: Lifting Women Out of Poverty

In Latin America and Africa, the TaiwanICDF sponsors training programs to help women learn handicrafts such as sewing. We also offer loans, making it easier to enter the job market.

Our water supply projects also give an extra boost to women. Free from the burden of drawing water from miles around, there is more time to take care of a household or produce handicrafts, and girls have the opportunity to receive the education they really deserve.

The TaiwanICDF also sponsors a Workshop on Women's Development that focuses on diversifying job opportunities for women, and the economic benefits

and prospects that starting a business can generate. Collectively, our contributions are raising the social and economic status of women in developing countries.

Putting Women at the Economic Heart of the Household

Women in rural areas account for more than half of the world's food output, and 60-80 percent of food output in the developing world. The momentum for economic development in most developing countries is still centered on the countryside, and women represent the majority of those driving development via agricultural production.

Helping women to boost output in rural communities helps the whole household, since mothers tend to spend their earnings on improving living standards for their families. Self-sufficiency leads to independence, and steady expansion for business concerns; that is, stable development from the bottom up. Recognizing this, we have formally incorporated consideration for gender issues into projects aimed at boosting food output, reducing poverty, enhancing health care and public hygiene, and developing human resource.

Microfinancing : The Beginning of a Dream

Microfinancing first emerged in the 1970s, offering a means for poverty-stricken households to obtain financial assistance. In developing countries, even a relatively small loan can help low-income families to buy a simple tool or piece of equipment that will earn them a living. By having a genuine opportunity to become self-employed, people will be able to stand on their own two feet and walk away from poverty.

Strengthening the Microfinancing Environment

In recent years, microfinancing has been a crucial element in our bid to reduce poverty and generate sustainable development in partner countries. Emphasis is placed on nurturing a stable financial environment where local lenders of microfinance and recipient enterprises can flourish, particularly by way of technical assistance.

Since 2005, a number of TaiwanICDF volunteers have been seconded to financial institutions in partner countries, acting as consultants. Meanwhile, an ongoing series of workshops have given special consideration to financial policy and institutional reform. Our goal is to help partners develop the depth and breadth of financial services being offered to those who need assistance the most.

Two-tier Financing Schemes

The TaiwanICDF launched its first financing scheme aimed at small-scale farmers in 1998. Under an innovative two-tier framework, our technical missions offer financial services in parallel with long-term technical guidance that passes on meaningful, practical knowledge. Households that have already acquired agricultural skills are given access to start-up capital or financing for expanding an existing enterprise. This form of microfinancing is specifically designed to foster agricultural production.



A Global Outlook Generates Global Partnerships

With globalization comes growing interdependence among the international community. Over the years, we have forged diverse partnerships with a number of international development organizations, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), CABI, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the EBRD. Establishing cooperative platforms and joint development programs with these organizations has enabled us to develop initiatives that reflect global trends.

Working with these partners and others, including NGOs, is a means of facilitating global development. At the TaiwanICDF, we participate in a spirit of equality, and strive for mutual benefit. Constructive dialogue strengthens coordination and ensures that the allocation of resources is right and proper, so that we are able to achieve substantial results even when resources might be limited.

Human Resource Development: For the **Common Good**

Human resource is a prerequisite for economic development, as it was for Taiwan. Our human resource development projects take advantage of Taiwan's insight into this process, and offer a valuable reference point for our partner countries.

Training citizens in our developing partner nations will help them to break free of a vicious cycle of poverty, and reduce inequity. Creating an abundant pool of human resource is a crucial stepping stone toward economic and social development.

Adapting Industrial Development to Meet Partners' Needs

In partner countries, TaiwanICDF experts are able to make feasible proposals by evaluating how well existing TVET systems are linked to industrial development. Financing is set aside to cultivate competent instructors and produce teaching materials that suit local conditions, while student loans smooth the progress of human resource development further still.

Tailoring Training to Local Conditions

Taiwan's technical missions draw a distinction between their different training partners — be they farmers and fishermen, local officials, or private sector entrepreneurs. The appropriate specialists from our missions conduct on-the-spot technical guidance and relay their own experiences in their particular field of expertise.

Our workshops and seminars offer the best advice on a range of subjects such as agronomy, horticulture, aquaculture, animal husbandry, food processing, SME development and ICT development.

Providing Scholarships

The TaiwanICDF launched the International Higher Education Scholarship Programs in 1998, aiming to consolidate human resource in partner countries by inviting talented students to pursue their higher education in Taiwan. To date, 16 public and private universities have united under our banner to offer 24 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs relevant to contemporary development issues.

We also offer scholarships within partner countries, so that increasing numbers of younger children are able to attend elementary and high schools.

Training for Overseas Partners

We host a number of workshops where the comparative advantages gained during the "Taiwan Experience" are promoted alongside wider trends endorsed by the development community. Senior and mid-ranking officials from partner countries are invited to participate in programs that cover a broad spectrum of topics such as trade facilitation, agribusiness strategy and management, community development, human resource management, SME development, women's development, natural disaster management, and health care management.



Expanding Horizons, Serving the People

International cooperation and development is a humanitarian concern that succeeds through expertise and the application of technology. It takes the combined efforts of specialists from all walks of life to maximize the benefits of any one development project.

We know that the Taiwanese people are our greatest asset, and we know that with our support, the Taiwanese people can become ambassadors for Taiwan. We believe it is imperative that the very best from the Taiwanese community are encouraged to contribute to our programs, and we believe that young students should be given greater incentive to volunteer for overseas service.

TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers

The TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers program launched in December 1996, when five civilian specialists traveled to Swaziland with "development" as their objective.

Over the past 14 years, 451 short- and long-term TaiwanICDF volunteers have served in 34 countries.

Distance is no barrier to the passion and devotion of these "ordinary" Taiwanese citizens, who have helped to cement the deep and sincere friendships that Taiwan enjoys with its partner countries.

The Taiwan Youth Overseas Service: A Different Type of National Service

In November 2001, Taiwan's first group of alternative military servicemen embarked for 21 partner countries, marking a milestone for Taiwan's endeavors in international development. Following in the footsteps of this original group, eight more teams of servicemen have departed for the Pacific, Latin America and Africa over the past eight years. By developing new friendships via a new channel, the youth of Taiwan is helping to spread our culture and development experience far and wide. Living and working in some far-flung corners of the world has also broadened their own horizons, offering opportunities otherwise impossible to imagine.



Sustaining our Blue Planet

Preserving the Earth: A Duty Shared by All

Climate change poses a huge challenge to humanity. Over recent decades, the need for sustainable change has become a common thread binding the international community together, and a major priority for those engaged in international development. In response, we have fine-tuned our project cycle: Appraisal increasingly focuses on how our programs will impact the environment, and the potential implications for conserving resources and reducing carbon emissions. We have sought to incorporate technologies that generate clean energy into our projects, as with our Solar Power Systems Project in Nauru. We have also exploited the potential of Taiwan's Formosa II satellite as a driver for GIS applications, so that partner countries can plan for and lessen the impact of natural disasters, and engage in environmental monitoring practices.

In small island Pacific nations, Taiwan's technical missions make a point of promoting organic fertilizers

to improve coral soil, which makes it possible to grow a wider variety of fruits and vegetables. This environmentally friendly approach is not just about making prudent use of limited natural resources: A varied and balanced diet makes for a healthier people.

Taiwan is proud to be ranked among the world's top three countries for its rate of both waste reduction and recycling, and we believe we can introduce these positive practices to our partner countries. We have worked to assist in reducing household solid waste, and on mitigating the negative effect that plastics have had on coastal ecology and fisheries.

To support waste reduction efforts in Tuvalu, we also sponsored a drawing contest for school children on the islands. Four winning works were selected and made into "green shopping bags." Having been personally involved in a worthy cause, Tuvaluans were soon using the environmentally friendly bags instead of plastic ones.



Uniting the Taiwanese Community to Build Bridges to the World

Development is a complex, long-term endeavor requiring the concerted effort of government agencies, private businesses, civic groups and NGOs. The injection of capital, introduction of technologies and cultivation of skilled human resource must be integrated effectively, in order to maximize the assistance that partner countries receive.

Taiwan International Cooperation Alliance

Education has a value of equal significance to the empowerment of individuals and to the long-term development of nations.

In 1998, we launched our International Higher Education Scholarship Programs, which offered opportunities for the citizens of partner countries to pursue graduate study in Taiwan; doctoral programs followed in 2001. Two years later, the TaiwanICDF and six public and private universities involved in this scholarship program went a step further and established TICA, creating a platform from which the academic sector can play an expanded role in international cooperation in education.

TICA's ranks have now swollen to encompass 16 members offering 24 programs, with the TaiwanICDF providing full scholarships to students from partner

countries for the duration of their undergraduate, graduate or doctoral course in Taiwan.

International Healthcare Cooperation Strategic Alliance

The pivotal role that health care plays in international assistance has long been seen as a key to securing development for all. As a responsible member of the global community, Taiwan is committed to giving back the health care assistance received during our own period of development, and has taken action to help partner countries enhance their public health and medical services.

In 2006, the TaiwanICDF brought together some of Taiwan's leading medical institutions to establish the IHCSA. Under the banner of this alliance, professionals from various fields form MMMs in response to partners' medical needs that shift with time and place. To maximize the benefits of their assistance, these Taiwanese specialists work side by side with local medical professionals, sharing recent developments in the medical world and training their colleagues in cutting-edge techniques. To date, 37 Taiwanese medical institutions have become members of the IHCSA.



Love Without Borders: Taiwanese Medical Care

Very often, vulnerable citizens in remote communities endure unsanitary conditions, have no access to clean drinking water and suffer from chronic nutritional deficiencies. A paucity of even the most basic of health care services can exacerbate their plight, resulting in a pernicious cycle of poverty and disease that is hard to break.

Taiwan's first foray into overseas medical cooperation began in December 1962, when six military doctors were sent to Libya to help improve medical technology and contribute toward the organization of the country's military medical service. Since then, Taiwan has sent medical missions to administer services in many other African countries, such as Niger, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Chad, São Tomé and Príncipe, Malawi and Swaziland.

The transformative effect that the "Taiwan Experience" had on our own health care sector remains a formula for success elsewhere. Over the years, Taiwan has accumulated a wealth of experience in administering public health and medical services, which we pass on to our partners.

A Multifaceted Approach to Health Care and Medicine

In 1965, the World Health Organization officially declared Taiwan to be free of malaria — an accomplishment that must be attributed to the long-term assistance granted to us. This achievement has provided a blueprint for assisting São Tomé and Príncipe in its own fight against the disease.

In addition to stationing permanent medical missions in Africa, we regularly coordinate the dispatch of MMMs to Asia-Pacific and Latin America, which are complemented further by short-term programs carried out by medical professionals and specialist volunteers. We also sponsor internships so that medical personnel in partner countries can take training courses and attend workshops in Taiwan. This comprehensive framework of solutions represents our firm commitment to delivering health care assistance with an international outreach.

Mobile Medical Missions: Treatment On The Move

The provision of medical assistance and its aspiration to realize universal health and well-being is central to the work of the international development community. With this vision in mind, the TaiwanICDF initiated its MMM program in 2005.

Highly versatile and relatively inexpensive to get off the ground, these roving missions have proven to be the most appealing way for Taiwanese medical professionals to work; mindful of balancing their drive to help out abroad with existing commitments at home, staff find it easier to adapt to short periods of service. Just as importantly, a mission can be drawn up and fit to travel at a moment's notice, fully equipped to address medical shortages in even the most remote locations.

Between 2005 and the end of 2009, the TaiwanICDF dispatched 72 MMMs, benefiting in excess of 120,000 people.



The Gift of Care and Compassion

Taiwan's compassion for those in distress has compelled us to take an increasingly active role in international humanitarian assistance. As a member of the international community, it is our solemn obligation to assist countries afflicted by natural disasters or similar emergencies, and the TaiwanICDF is well placed to provide the appropriate materials and funding. We are always ready to mobilize our technical missions or join forces with other international organizations to help partner countries undertake post-disaster reconstruction, or launch programs that tackle the roots of poverty.

The Spirit of Humanitarianism, With Love From Taiwan

The TaiwanICDF also contributes to international humanitarian aid initiatives by working with both domestic and overseas NGOs. Love from Taiwan knows no bounds; the TaiwanICDF is dedicated to helping those struck by disasters anywhere in the world, and ensuring that they are able to build a better future for themselves and generations to come.



Agricultural Cooperation

Emerging from Colonialism and the Cold War

By 1960, Taiwan was emerging from the chaos of the Chinese civil war. Through an influx of foreign aid and the efforts of the government and its people, the economy was resurgent and the country grown ever more stable. As domestic circumstances improved, Taiwan was keen to lend a helping hand to Vietnam and to Western African nations, which were emerging from the shadow of colonialism and entering a new era of independence.

Of all the know-how that Taiwan had gained via development programs and aid during this period, it was perhaps progress within the rural economy that had counted most significantly — including improvements to farmers' capacity for production, the introduction of higher-quality varieties of produce, better and well-managed distribution of land, and the diversification of crop portfolios.

This agricultural and rural development model that had proven to be so successful within Taiwan provided a base from which we could share our experience, to help partners in Africa boost food production, and introduce the technology needed to raise livestock. The goal was for these nations to become self-sustainable in the production of healthy, nutritional food for all. Our programs were successfully replicated in Asia, before going on to form the foundation of further initiatives in Latin America and the Pacific.

Economic Development and the Transformation of Rural Communities, 1980-2000

By the 1970s, the influence of the Cold War was

waning and global trade was taking off. Economic growth was quickening in our African and Latin American partner countries. At that time, Taiwan's agricultural assistance and cooperative initiatives were addressing certain practical, development goals, including:

Becoming a Key Source of Outstanding Seed:

The agriculture sector in most of our partner countries had been generally limited to producing tropical agricultural goods. In order to meet demand, these countries were relying on various imports that could not be produced locally in sufficient quantities. In an effort to address this problem, Taiwan's overseas missions began to plant varieties of disease-resistant, high-yield and drought-tolerant crops. Technicians went on to cultivate outstanding seed stock to match local environmental conditions, which boosted output and mitigated the previous dependence on imports.

Linking Research and Development to Production in the Field: Agricultural development in Taiwan had long-benefited from achievements in research and development conducted by agricultural research and extension stations, and research laboratories. With agricultural technology and superior strains being developed at these sites, output in our rural communities really began to take off. From that point, human resources were freed up to move into a rapidly growing manufacturing sector.

Taiwan was not long in adapting these research achievements to practical measures that could be passed on to partner countries. The role of Taiwan's overseas missions was shifting from agricultural production conducted solely "in the field" to much wider forms of technical assistance. To this day, the TaiwanICDF continues to introduce cutting-edge technology to its partners, which has boosted output year by year.

Refining Agricultural Management Concepts:

The development of successful Taiwanese agricultural enterprises was not simply a matter upgrading technology. The establishment of production and processing teams, cooperatives, and agricultural marketing teams proved invaluable to the task of stabilizing rural communities, and paved the way for further development. These various groups and organizations helped to coordinate production and sales, became a source of information on market pricing, and provided training for farmers. Moreover, returns accrued by agricultural cooperatives were re-invested in the sector, so fortifying rural communities against the operating risks associated with market fluctuations and weather events.

In order to replicate the organizational framework of Taiwanese farms, including their systems of agricultural financing, our overseas missions began to set up and assist similar cooperatives within our partner countries. Preferential loans for smallholders were arranged from a variety of sources, with a particular emphasis on purchasing cutting-edge tools and working materials. The same smallholders also received complementary training in production and marketing strategies from the technical missions. With access to capital and the requisite know-how, smallholders slowly but surely began to scale up production, demonstrably improving quality of life for themselves and their families.

The Commercialization of Agriculture, 2000-2009

Since 2000, trade negotiations concerning agricultural produce at the Doha Rounds have been obstructed and stalled by developed nations in North America and Europe. Over this same period, more and more regional trade agreements have been negotiated, with the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) being signed in 2005, for example.

Although free trade presents opportunities for developing countries, it also presents challenges. Agricultural products are inevitably the first to feel the blow. Developing countries — and particularly those that are at a competitive disadvantage due to the type or quality of produce they turn out — often take an initial hit from these trade accords, which can seriously impinge upon rural development and farmers' livelihoods.

Farmers in developing countries have little capital or marketing technology at their disposal, and seldom have the backing of organizations capable of competing with large

multinationals. However, regional trade agreements often allow developing countries to export agricultural produce to developed nations under preferential conditions. In this context, the creation of a competitive environment in which farmers in partner countries have access to capital and distribution networks is an increasingly vital issue. In recent years, the TaiwanICDF has provided guidance on sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, introduced systematic pesticide residue testing and conducted associated training, and supported marketing projects that have opened up export markets. Opening up new markets and creating farming cooperatives allows farmers to form a united front in response to the challenges associated with free trade.

Food Security and Sustainable Development

The past three years have seen a marked increase in cases of extreme climate change, which have seriously threatened underdeveloped nations and those with fragile environments. Unseasonal weather patterns, droughts and violent weather have had an adverse effect on agricultural output and farmers' livelihoods, proving time and again that stable production and a stable climate are two sides of the same coin. Volatile weather reduces production, giving rise to famine, malnutrition, and urban and rural poverty.

Concern about what we eat is not simply a question of agriculture. It is increasingly apparent that problems associated with low output cannot be surmounted simply by introducing or upgrading agricultural technology; eventually, diminishing returns will cause output to plateau. Rather, these issues are connected to a whole host of broader topics such as the environment, renewable energy and sustainable development. Problems must be tackled from as wide a perspective as possible.

Looking forward, we are seeking to address the challenges of climate change by formalizing the links between environmental and agricultural projects. We are teaching our partner countries to store and utilize water resources more efficiently, use renewable sources of energy, adopt sustainable practices in land use, and embrace modern plowing methods — all of which will make existing resources go further. At the same time as transforming the nature of agriculture in partner countries, we are protecting the landscape and its people. Our pursuit of food security and agricultural growth is complemented by a policy of sustainable and stable development.



Microfinance

Microfinance started off as the simplest of ideas: Provide small amounts of credit to the poor – even to those without collateral – and the most vulnerable sections of society will begin to develop their own businesses and accumulate wealth. The success of this strategy gained momentum over the years, and the international development community began to champion a new and extremely effective weapon in the fight against poverty. 2005 was the UN's International Year of Microcredit; while in 2006, Muhammad Yunus, the celebrated Bangladeshi economist, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work with the Grameen Bank, which kept the spotlight on the sector.

The owners of small businesses need their banks to offer more than just loans. Deposit, insurance and remittance services help entrepreneurs to smooth consumption, cope with unexpected events or save money for a rainy day. Subsequently, those on low incomes are able to exploit a more inclusive system of banking, and acquire a full range of fiscal tools needed to run their businesses.

The Rapid Growth of the Global Microfinancing System

Over the past several years, international development organizations have begun to pursue a systematic approach to microfinancing objectives instead of relying solely on microfinance institutions (MFIs). The realization of an inclusive microfinancing system relies on cooperation between individuals, intermediary institutions, and organizations working at a macroeconomic scale; and it is vital to nurture links between individual MFIs and MFI networks or associations. Meanwhile, a whole host of auxiliary interests – MFI rating institutions, remittance companies, and telecommunications service providers – must be factored into the equation. Likewise, governments must steer policy and establish regulatory frameworks in the broadest possible sense, in order to create an environment conducive to the development of the sector.

Originally, MFIs in many countries were founded primarily as non-profit organizations. More recently, however, MFIs in Latin America have successfully developed

a for-profit business model, leading a number of commercial banks to begin offering microfinancing services. This expansion has been augmented by the work of international organizations, increasing the provision of capital and technical assistance within the sector.

The TaiwanICDF is a long-time supporter of microfinance; such initiatives were among our earliest projects. In addition to running a series of bilateral programs, we have cooperated with international organizations on many projects, gaining and imparting experience and expertise with each new collaboration. Microfinance is one of our core commitments; and by applying the experience we have accumulated, monitoring pro-poor trends in development, and diligently fine-tuning our operational models, we hope bring its benefits to ever greater numbers of people.

Global Footsteps Through the Years

The TaiwanICDF has promoted microfinance across Latin America, the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and Asia-Pacific. Microfinancing has a relatively long history in Latin America, in particular; and in this region, we have participated in the SMME Re-lending Project initiated by CABI, and jointly established the Special Financial Intermediary Development Fund with the Multilateral Investment Fund at the IDB. Commercial banks or MFIs that display the best potential for development – or those that already have an excellent track record – are selected as re-lending institutions or targets for investment. These institutions then receive technical assistance, enabling financial intermediary institutions to access capital for re-lending to SMEs or individuals.

Remittances from overseas compatriots have long been an important source of income for citizens in Latin America. Sub-projects of the Specialized Financial Intermediary Development Fund shore up financial institutions by utilizing remitted funds as a funding source, which forms the foundation of mortgage financing or microfinance.

The EBRD acts as our cooperating partner in Central Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe. Our shared objective is to nurture the growth of MSMEs by re-lending to financial institutions in former communist nations. MSMEs are a driving force behind the transition toward market economies throughout the region.

Most of the financial intermediary institutions patronized by the EBRD are commercial banks. However, the majority of these banks emphasize a core operational

philosophy that respects the importance of socially responsible conduct. For instance, ProCredit Bank operates in 22 nations, including the Ukraine and Georgia. The company has consistently turned a profit despite focusing on loans to MSMEs, and to individuals applying for capital financing or loans for housing improvements.

The TaiwanICDF's microfinancing expertise complements Taiwan's half-century of promoting development through agricultural technology. We provide funding to assist various smallholder, fishing, or cooperative farming ventures, with money being disbursed and overseen by our individual technical missions. Farmers and fishermen receive the initial capital required to get production off the ground or to purchase technology capable of advancing sustainable farming, which boosts output and sets the wheels of financial independence in motion. TaiwanICDF technicians maintain executive control of the programs so that they can supervise production and loan repayments. In the event of a natural disaster, loan repayments are extended by grace periods so that borrowers are able to get through challenging periods without becoming financially crippled. Successful examples of this practice include loans to the Omar Torrijos Cooperative for rice production in Sébaco, Nicaragua; a Fishing Village Development Program in Panama; and Small Farmholders' Financing Schemes in Honduras dedicated to rice and tilapia production. In a relatively short space of time, these programs have helped rural communities to improve quality of life by securing economic and financial independence.

Looking to the Future: Microfinance and Modern Technology

As international microfinancing evolves, recently-developed financial products are drawing on modern technology with increasing regularity. Since this technology enables financial services to reach a greater range of people, the face of microfinancing is gradually changing. In addition to maintaining cooperative relationships with existing partners, the TaiwanICDF is collaborating with new partners. Together with official bilateral institutions and networks of MFIs, we are creating a wider array of microfinancing services with a greater outreach among vulnerable communities. We continue to participate in projects to support MFIs, which promotes stable growth in the microfinance network and ultimately supports even greater economic activity among micro- and small-sized enterprises.



Human Resource Development

The fundamental relationship between human resource and wider development is becoming ever more evident. With globalization rendering workforces more flexible and mobile, competitive skills are the key to quality employment opportunities. Improving and expanding the pool of human capital is a sure way of creating a stable job market.

It was the right combination of education and vocational training, as part of the overall industrial development process, that fueled Taiwan's economic transformation from an agrarian society to a commercially driven, high-tech society. For this reason, our human resource development projects set out to boost manpower in partner countries by sharing Taiwan's valuable experience via initiatives covering primary, secondary and higher education; and through an array of vocational training courses and workshops. Our projects aim to boost the quantity and quality of human resources across all social strata, which will reduce economic and social imbalances. The hopes and aspirations of a nation are embodied by its people; human resource spurs national development and

fosters progress on a personal and public level.

Inspiring Talent to Thrive

Soon after its establishment in 1996, the TaiwanICDF began to invite outstanding professionals and talented persons from partner countries to attend a variety of short-term workshops. Earlier on, these workshops tended to concentrate on the "Taiwan Experience," including the comparative advantages that Taiwan had gained during its own development. Coursework focused mainly on policy, long-term development and a variety of broad, strategic issues, equipping students with a comprehensive understanding of contemporary issues. More recently, courses have been designed with an eye toward wider trends in international development, and topics riding high on the global agenda. We have also opened workshops up to offer a greater range of practical experiences: Specialists from local industries and NGOs are invited in to offer hands-on insight into their subject, while field trips offer access to the "real world" and fill out students' understanding with knowledge that cannot be acquired through classroom learning.

The curricula of our workshops center primarily on economics and trade, agricultural technology, community development, human resources, ICT and the "digital divide," SME development, women's development, natural disaster management, and health care management. The comprehensive coursework offered in these short-term workshops has proven to be highly popular among partner countries, with government officials from many nations enrolling each year.

Learning Beyond Borders

The TaiwanICDF is committed to cultivating the talent that partner countries need for development. We established the International Higher Education Scholarship Programs for this exact purpose in 1998. Later, in 2003, we joined forces with several local universities to form TICA, through which we introduced a variety of courses to overseas students from partner countries. Courses originally centered on training high-level talent in agricultural disciplines, and then gradually expanded into other fields. Program design is determined by Taiwan's comparative advantages and the development needs of partner countries.

TICA presently comprises 16 private and public universities, offering 24 courses of study at undergraduate, master's and Ph.D. levels. All students receive supplementary instruction in Chinese language and Taiwanese culture during orientation, helping them to adjust to their new living environment. Plans are now being drawn up to expand scholarships at undergraduate level into other fields associated with the successful development of ICT and high-tech industries in Taiwan, as well as medical management.

In addition to these initiatives in higher education, we also conduct scholarship programs at primary and secondary level within partner countries. Subsidies allow children from underprivileged families to attend school and fund the purchase of educational materials, including textbooks. This reduces the household burden for those struggling to make ends meet, and ensures that children stay enrolled in school and receive a full course of education.

Tailoring Programs to Local Conditions

We offer partner governments comprehensive advice on how they can meet specific development needs by fine-tuning the composition of their national work force. We also explain how to make the most of vocational training, so as to provide workers with the skills required for industrial development. As such, we dispatch permanent

and short-term specialists to provide technical training and introduce new technology and management methods. These specializations are passed on to local individuals. Our overseas technicians also provide technical guidance and practical knowledge through a wide variety of demonstrations or workshops organized for the benefit of farmers and fishermen, local officials or private enterprises.

We are also responding to the challenges of the information age by building and equipping DOCs in rural communities and schools in a number of partner countries. This initiative is helping to reduce the knowledge gap between urban and rural areas, while also raising national competitiveness and improving public education. To date, ICT specialists and volunteers have trained over 1,000 seed instructors. These instructors now have their own opportunity to educate their fellow citizens — from adults whose newly acquired skills will strengthen local commercial sectors, to future generations of computer technicians.

Our work at a local level goes beyond training courses and scholarships. We also offer financing or loans to fund the development of vocational education, including training for local instructors and lecturers, the production of educational materials tailored to local conditions and language, and the construction of laboratories and school buildings. We also provide student loans for TVET. In this way, individuals acquire much-needed skills and an influx of technicians into the labor force bridges shortfalls in local industrial development.

Paving the Way for Sustainable Growth

The TaiwanICDF will continue to promote innovation in the public sphere. In combination with the technology and experience provided by Taiwan, this will build capacity in our partner countries and contribute toward their long-term development.

Our aspiration is for people in our partner countries to obtain the qualifications and expertise required to enter the workforce at any age, and despite any previous lack of formal education. For this reason, our assistance will continue to range from primary to higher education, and embrace diverse practices such as workshops and hands-on demonstrations. In order to cultivate a bright and successful future for both individuals and nations, our work in the human resource sector will maintain its emphasis on educational opportunities for all.



In Step with the Global Community

Globalization and ICT have brought the world closer together and increased our reliance on one another. As we seek to realize global economic growth and a sustainable vision for development, the division of labor and proper coordination of resources between cooperative partners will become increasingly essential.

Strengthening the Depth and Scope of Cooperation

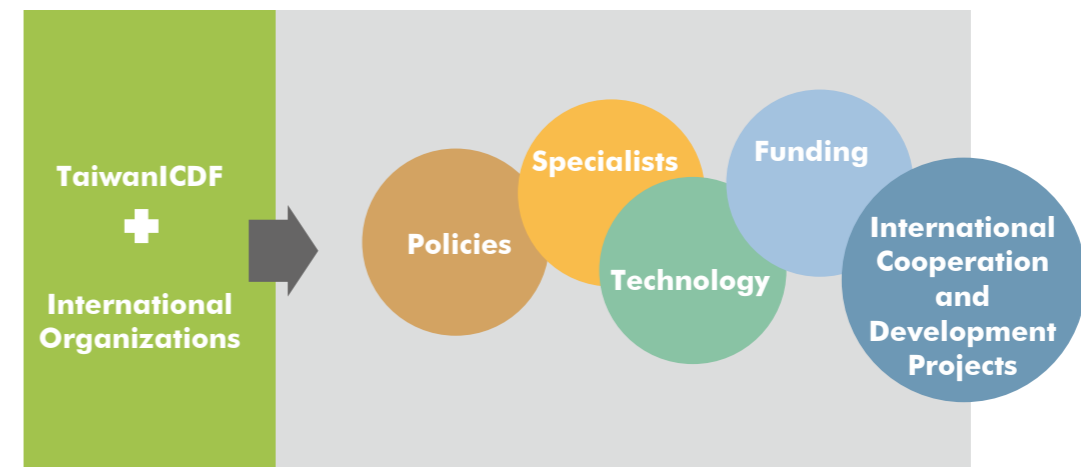
The importance of cooperation in promoting development cannot be understated. Since our earliest days, we have adopted pragmatic methods and emphasized the need to work in sync with the international community, seeking to expand dialogue with development partners. The TaiwanICDF has consistently played an active role in establishing mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral collaboration, and in opening new avenues for communication. Resources for joint projects with international organizations have been allocated toward human resource development, technical cooperation, and investment and lending projects. When working with partner organizations, we have achieved the best results at the best value by making diligent financial preparations, and leveraging our combined resources to maximum effect.

Equally, we are always keen to learn from other experts. Our willingness to listen to the advice of these same partners has helped us to nurture our own world-class specialists and kept us in touch with contemporary global trends.

Our principal partnerships – including with ADB, CABEL, the IDB, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the EBRD – have been formed on the basis of Taiwan's strategic outlook and a mutual interest in development in certain regions and countries. Cooperation usually takes the form of co-financing, and investment and technical assistance — as in, for example, the program for Environmental Pollution in Critical Areas, in El Salvador; the SMME Re-lending Project, the Special Fund for the Social Transformation of Central America—Social Infrastructure Project, and the Specialized Financial Intermediary Development Fund, across Central America; the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project, in Swaziland; and the Trade Facilitation Project, with the EBRD. Joint technical assistance has included the Satellite Markets Program, in Honduras; the ICT Business Development Workshop, for Central and Eastern European entrepreneurs and SMEs; the Talent and Innovation Competition of Americas, with the OAS' Young Americas Business Trust; and a Workshop on the SME Experience for Mongolian Entrepreneurs, with the EBRD. In addition, we have contributed to a fund for Emergency Regional Support to Address the Outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), initiated by ADB; and the multi-donor Early Transition Countries Fund, established by the EBRD.

In recent years we have stepped up efforts to participate in international development forums and conferences, which has led to greater interaction with the international community. Most recently, representatives from

Cooperation Model and Strategy



our organization have participated in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, the WTO's Global Review of Aid for Trade, and the COP15 climate change conference.

Our Commitment to Development at the Grassroots

The influence and standing of NGOs continues to flourish. Although these organizations generally utilize their expertise to support specific causes and underprivileged groups, their work arises from a universal desire to champion collective humanitarian values.

For this reason, we endeavor to engage in bilateral cooperation with NGOs. The enthusiasm and effectiveness with which NGOs have embraced working directly with the public or local agencies transcends the traditional model for development, and has rightfully won these organizations an increasingly central role in the development process. As such, we have strengthened exchanges with NGOs at the project preparation stage to make the most of their grassroots networks and familiarity with rural development. Where appropriate, we have also established more formal, longer-term relationships; and carried out joint assessment, implementation and supervision of projects.

Our work at the grassroots isn't limited to just domestic and international NGOs. We also cooperate with a wide range of research organizations, medical institutions, and local community organizations or cooperatives. Our mission is broad, while the cause of each of these organizations tends to focus on one type of assistance or specialized objective, so we align our resources and role in the development process accordingly. The wealth of experience amassed by these organizations is invaluable – whether it be in poverty reduction, humanitarian assistance,

the medical and health care sector, or in women's and children's development – and has provided the catalyst for positive change across many sectors in developing countries.

Working with internationally renowned organizations such as Mercy Corps and Food For The Poor (FFP) over many years has enabled our development assistance to get to where it is really needed. We have also provided post-disaster humanitarian assistance via domestic NGOs, including the Red Cross Society of the Republic of China, and World Vision Taiwan. We will continue to engage with these and other NGOs, acting as a platform from which Taiwanese resources can contribute to the cause of universal well-being.

Partnering for Success

We intend to maintain our central role in integrating the endeavors and resources of domestic organizations for the good of international cooperation and development. Equally, we are committed to pooling and sharing resources with likeminded local government departments and NGOs from overseas.

During a significant period in Taiwan's recent past, the country relied on the kind assistance of international organizations and multilateral aid. It was this generosity that enabled our country to emerge from poverty and set course for the spectacular economic lift-off that followed.

Today, the TaiwanICDF works in harmony with international organizations and NGOs to address development issues of global significance. This work starts at the grassroots. We believe that by working hand in hand with partner countries and organizations, we can sow the seeds of development faster and farther.