



## Africa

While the global economy has staged an upturn over the past decade, Africa's economic growth has remained in low gear. Most African nations are far from reaching the MDGs of cutting poverty in half by the year 2015. External debt and dire poverty are also leading to the spread of disease, impacting the region's development. In 2002, the African Union drafted the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The plan listed core goals,



including maintaining seven percent GDP growth for the next 15 years, reducing the number of persons living in poverty by half, providing universal education to reduce illiteracy, promoting gender equality, providing comprehensive health services to reduce infant mortality, and bolstering environmental protection. To help meet these goals, TaiwanICDF projects in the region focus on stimulating economic growth and promoting social equality for the ultimate purpose of alleviating poverty.

### **Promoting Agricultural Development**

Agriculture is undoubtedly the most important and productive sector in the economies of most African countries. In

addition to providing on-farm or non-farm employment, the sector is crucial in ensuring a stable society. A steady supply of food is a fundamental requirement for the safekeeping of

people's lives. Promoting modernization of the agricultural sector and providing assistance on using natural resources and organic materials properly can help these countries set a foundation for sustainable development. One of the TaiwanICDF's key strategies in the region is to boost the output of staple foods and improve farm productivity.

Africa's traditional farming model lacks basic infrastructure and productive capital. Furthermore, the agricultural sector relies heavily on favorable weather conditions. Due to these conditions, farmers often lack flexibility in adjusting crop production and face difficulties in achieving commercialization. As a result, despite the large number of farmers, production value in agriculture is relatively low.

The TaiwanICDF has technical missions stationed in the region to assist in the production of staple foods. The missions introduce high-yield varieties, help farmers utilize high-efficiency, low-cost methods for production and land reclamation, and introduce organic compost and sustainable farming models. These measures boost output, conserve resources, help farmers achieve self-sufficiency in staple foods, and enable them to sell surpluses at local markets, which helps spark economic activity

in the region. Based on the specific characteristics of each country, the TaiwanICDF also provides food-processing technology for suitable crops. In Senegal, for example, the mission has focused on vacuum frying and dehydration processing for mangos, and in The Gambia, a corn-grinding industry. Processing of bumper crops extends their shelf lives and boosts their added value, helping farmers to generate cash incomes, thus improving the quality of their lives.

In addition to providing technical assistance, the TaiwanICDF cooperates with international organizations to carry out large-scale hydro-engineering projects, creating environments that favor farming and helping farmers to increase their competitiveness. The TaiwanICDF also cooperates with outreach financial institutions to provide micro-credit to farmers, helping smallholders, who would not qualify for loans from commercial banks, access the capital they need. This promotes the commercialization of agricultural production and diversified agricultural financing services, sparking MSE development throughout the region.

### Human Resource Development

Research from the World Bank indicates that strengthening local





workforces and raising production and investment in Africa are the prerequisites to reduce poverty. African leaders commonly agree that education and agricultural development are priority areas when receiving foreign assistance from the international community.

To promote human resource development in the region, the TaiwanICDF introduces the advantages of Taiwan's development experience, focusing on tropical agriculture and aquaculture in its agricultural assistance. The Fund invites government officials and specialists from each nation to come to Taiwan for short-term training courses. In addition, the TaiwanICDF provides scholarships to support graduate and post-graduate studies in Taiwan, training people who will be vital to their home

countries' development. These programs enable individual from Africa to become familiar with Taiwan's agricultural development policies, advanced agricultural technologies, and MSE managerial concepts. The TaiwanICDF also provides vocational training courses in host nations and sends experts from Taiwan to local vocational institutes and technical schools to train seed teachers. This strategy provides the foundation to supply trained personnel needed for key industries in each country and ensure its sustainable development.

### **Medical Care and Public Health Improvement**

Poverty and insufficient staple foods have created a situation in which one-third of Africans are malnourished. Poor



❶ The Vocational Training Cooperation Project in Malawi ❷ Farmers inspect a tractor for the Rice Yield Increase Project in Chad ❸ The Taiwan Medical Mission in Chad conducts an outreach clinic in the countryside

nutrition coupled with unsanitary environments and the lack of medical resources cause diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis to become endemic. To address these problems, the TaiwanICDF implements projects to improve the continent's medical systems and public health standards. Given the fragility of medical systems in many countries, short-term medical services are often insufficient. To overcome this problem, the TaiwanICDF has assigned medical missions to African nations. The missions provide general clinical diagnostic services and guidance in specialized techniques. They also train local medical personnel and help to upgrade the quality of medical care. Mission members also regularly visit remote areas, schools, and orphanages to offer free medical care and to stage public health campaigns.

The medical missions endeavor to strengthen the medical systems and institutions of the host nation, by, for example, implementing the "Bamako System," which introduces the concepts of a revolving fund with minimal user fees. The missions also work to develop the managerial skills of the local medical personnel, thus ensuring long-term sustainable operations for the medical institutions.

By providing Africa with basic infrastructure, human resource training, and financing in various forms, the TaiwanICDF has created positive synergies within host countries. In 2004, TaiwanICDF continued to implement agricultural, human resource development and medical service projects. Experts and members of the Taiwan Overseas Volunteers and Taiwan Youth Overseas Service helped in carrying out 26 technical cooperation projects in seven countries. Credit operations were primarily focused on micro-credit services, helping to promote agricultural and private sector development. In addition, a delegation was sent to Swaziland and Senegal during the year to hold regional conferences on utilizing digital opportunities. This fact-finding mission collected information that will be used in designing future projects to reduce the digital divide. Lastly, 87 people from African nations came to Taiwan during 2004 to attend seminars, and the TaiwanICDF completed preliminary planning for three vocational education projects to be staged in the region.





## Key Projects

### ❖ Swaziland Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project

#### Goals and Benefits

To help farmers in the dry Lower Usuthu region and due to the success of a similar program in the northern Komati region, the Swaziland government seeks to raise the quality of irrigation infrastructure with this project. Better irrigation systems will help Lower Usuthu farmers raise the quality and competitiveness of agricultural products and improve overall sanitation within the region. Overall, up to 15,000 people are expected to benefit from the project.

#### Status

The Swaziland government and six other international organizations are participating in the project, which includes the construction of reservoirs and irrigation canals, agricultural commercialization, environmental improvement, and project coordination and management. About 11,500 hectares of land will be irrigated. The TaiwanICDF and the DBSA are financing the construction of the 46-meter high Mhlathuzane Reservoir. A Groundbreaking Ceremony was held on September 23, 2003, while screening of detailed hydro-engineering plans was completed in 2004. Various employment and community development seminars are already being held in the Lower Usuthu Basin. To ensure that the project is implemented smoothly, all stakeholders regularly hold meetings to review the state of construction. The TaiwanICDF has commissioned hydro-engineering experts to provide their opinions on various technical issues, inspect construction, and discuss various designs.

### ❖ Tropical Agriculture and Aquaculture Graduate and Post-graduate Degree Scholarship Programs

#### Goals and Benefits

To meet the needs of host nations in generating highly trained agricultural personnel, the TaiwanICDF in 1998 initiated the M.S. Program for Foreign Agriculturalists with National Pingtung University of Science and Technology. In 2001, a three-year program to attain a doctorate in agriculture was also established. In 2003, cooperation with NTOU was initiated to develop an International Graduate Program in Aquatic Sciences and Marine Resources. This program provides Taiwan's aquaculture technology and management concepts to students from other nations.

#### Status

About half of the students in the program come from allied African nations such as Senegal, The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Chad, Malawi, and Swaziland. Twenty-one students from these countries are in the master's



▲ Foreign students attending class at National Pingtung University of Science and Technology's Graduate School of Tropical Agriculture and International Cooperation

program and six in the doctorate program. Eight students are presently in the aquaculture scholarship program, six of whom originate from Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Malawi. As of December 2004, 14 students from Africa had obtained master's degrees in Taiwan, and six of these have continued to post-graduate programs. The other graduates have returned to their home countries where they have made outstanding contributions in the public sector.

### ❖ São Tomé and Príncipe Medical Assistance Project and Malaria Eradication Project

#### Goals and Benefits

The medical mission in São Tomé and Príncipe provides clinical diagnosis services at Centro Policlínico De Agua Grande. It also offers assistance in medical techniques and the establishment of management systems, as well as holding outreach services in remote areas. Since malaria is the leading cause of death in São Tomé and Príncipe, the Fund has used Taiwan's successful experience in eradicating malaria to design a similar program for the country. The project is controlling the spread of the malaria-carrying mosquito and is providing therapy for malaria sufferers. The goal is to reduce the prevalence of malaria and the deaths caused by the disease.

#### Status

The medical mission has helped to overhaul equipment at the Centro Policlínico De Agua Grande. In addition, the mission has implemented a system by which users must pay for services rendered, as well as a pharmaceutical management system, enabling the hospital to be the first one in São Tomé and Príncipe to operate its own system. In order to improve operations at the grassroots level, clinics in the provinces of Lobata and Lema have also received equipment and technical assistance from the medical mission.

To begin the malaria eradication process and better understand the environment in which the disease-carrying mosquito thrives, experts first carried out an ecosystem survey in São Tomé. Afterwards, pesticide and spraying tests were conducted to determine which method was best suited to fight the mosquito. In 2004, large-scale spraying was held on the island of Príncipe. Within two months, hospitals saw a noteworthy decline in malaria patients. Experts are also carrying out medical tests and epidemiological studies to find the most appropriate malaria treatment to prevent carriers from spreading it and to avoid re-infection.



▲ A laboratory for the São Tomé and Príncipe Malaria Eradication Project



## Cooperating Countries and Projects in Africa



### 1 Senegal

- Rice Extension Project
- Vegetable Extension Project
- Aquaculture Project
- Vocational Education Project
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service

### 3 Burkina Faso

- Bagré Right Bank Farmland Reclamation Project
- Upland Rice Cultivation Extension Project
- Food Processing Technical Assistance Project
- Farmland Development Assessment and Research Project
- Aquaculture Project
- Medical Assistance Project
- Rural Credit Project
- Taiwan Overseas Volunteers
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service

### 5 Chad

- Rice Yield Increase Project
- Vegetable Production Marketing Team Project
- Medical Assistance Project
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service



### 6 Malawi

- Grain Development and Extension Project
- Horticulture Development and Extension Project
- Vocational Training Cooperation Project
- Small Sized Corn Grinding Factory Project
- Taiwan Overseas Volunteers
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service



### 7 Swaziland

- Small Farmer Corn and Sweet Potato Project
- Royal Project
- Handicrafts Training Project
- Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service

### 2 The Gambia

- Paddy Rice Yield Increase and Agricultural Machinery Center Project
- Vegetable Yield Increase and Extension Project
- Food Processing Technical Assistance Project
- Micro-financing and Capacity Building Project
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service

### 4 São Tomé and Príncipe

- Vegetable Yield Increase Project
- Livestock Development Project
- Medical Assistance Project
- Malaria Eradication Project
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service



### Regional Cooperation Projects

International Conference on Digital Opportunities/Workshop on ICT Policy Evaluation and Bridging the Digital Divide

TaiwanICDF Scholarship Program — Thirteen students from three countries in the region are studying for masters or doctorate degrees in the fields of agriculture, aquatic sciences and marine resources, and international workforce education and development etc.

International Human Resource Development Workshops — Eighty-seven participants from 10 countries in the region attended 12 workshops including the Taiwan experience, SME development, community development and the tourism industry, and aquaculture.