

FAO official: China's presence in South-South Cooperation transforming Africa's agriculture

Africa has derived enormous benefits in agricultural transformation from China through its South-South Cooperation, an official of the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has told Xinhua.



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Peter Atimka Anaadumba, South-South Cooperation Program Officer at the African Regional Office of FAO, said China had proven over the years to be a major credible and reliable partner in transforming agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. He was speaking in an interview on Tuesday at a five-day workshop on African Regional Knowledge Sharing on promoting Efficient Rice Farming at Elmina, some 158km west of the national capital, Accra.

"China is a major player when it comes to South-South cooperation in Africa. It's a major partner of FAO. When you look at the Africa region, China gave a grant to FAO in 2009 of about \$30m and recently \$50m, making it \$80m and these funds that they provided are available to support African countries in sub-Saharan Africa to access for them to receive technical expertise from China," he said.

Increased agricultural production

He lauded China for this support which had been yielding high dividends in the beneficiary African countries where agricultural production is on the increase.

"China, for example, has been working in Liberia. Now, Liberia rice production stands at about seven million tonnes. We did deploy about 500 experts. We have been able to develop piggy in Liberia through insemination innovations from China," Anaadumba added.

"So thanks to South-South cooperation, there was huge investment from the private sector in China. Almost around \$200m for Uganda alone."

In Uganda, Anaadumba disclosed that rice production was on the increase, with China sharing their expertise and also developing aquaculture and apple production.

He described the assistance Africa received from China through the South-South Cooperation agricultural development programme run by FAO as very key to the development of the economies on the continent.

"When you go to Tanzania, we have South-south cooperation. There is a center of excellence in the Morogoro region, it's been constructed by China. This center provides training for the youth. It's like an incubation center where people come and learn how to do crop management, crop budget, water management, livestock, poultry, and so on.

Sharing expertise

"China is also contributing by sending in technical experts to Africa to provide support in a lot of areas in the agricultural sector. They are also providing capacity building. The number of training China provides to sub-Saharan Africa in a year is amazing," he noted.

The Regional workshop being held in the coastal city of Elmina, near Cape Coast, has attracted 48 participants from 10 countries in and outside Africa. This year's theme is *Knowledge Exchange on The Promotion of Efficient Rice Farming Practices and Value Chains in Sub-Saharan Africa through South-South Cooperation*.

Bukar Tijani, assistant director general and FAO regional representative for the African region who opened the workshop, noted that through the South-South Cooperation, FAO had been facilitating knowledge transfer in agricultural production between China and African countries. "Let me acknowledge FAO's partnership with China. It is very strong. It (China) is one of the main countries that have a South-South cooperation partnership," he told Xinhua.

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