

Reaping the benefits of South-South Cooperation in Namibia



The South-South Cooperation (SSC) programme signed by three partners, the Chinese Government, the Namibian Government, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is a true embodiment of how development projects can be driven through cross pollination of ideas.

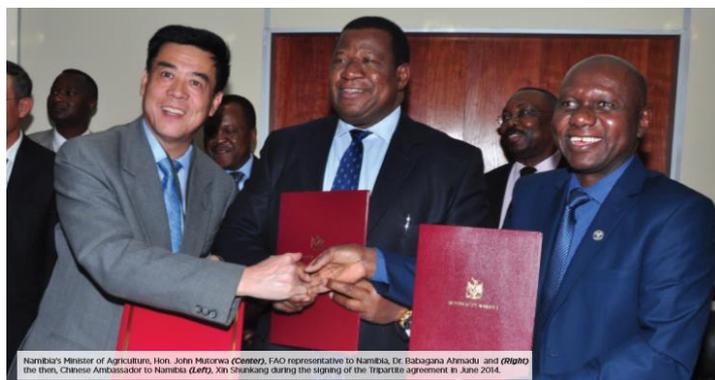
It is our belief that the two year programme went a long way in inculcating a sense of business and entrepreneurial spirit in farmers that were engaged at Etunda Irrigation Scheme, Kalimbeza Rice Project and Omahenene farming projects.

While the outcome of the two year programme shows overwhelming success through its results, it is imperative that continued engagement and implementation of the learned policies and mechanism is a key focal point going forward for the beneficiaries. The programme achieved significant success in terms of complementing Namibia's efforts of increasing agricultural production.

About SSC project in Namibia (2015/17)

In efforts to ensure food security and crop diversification for healthier diets, in the arid southern African country of Namibia, which is characterized by low rainfall, high loss of water from land to the atmosphere, poor soil quality and recurring droughts, in June 2014, a tripartite Agreement on SSC was signed between Namibia, the FAO and the People's Republic of China.

The Tripartite Agreement had an operational budget of USD\$1.5Million and ran for two



years. The agreement was developed within the context of the FAO-China "South-South Cooperation" Strategic Partnership. Projects under SSC are designed to help developing countries benefit from each other in terms of innovation, lessons learned and good practices tried and tested elsewhere in the southern hemisphere – with conditions and challenges similar to their own.

The agreement was formally incepted in April 2015 upon arrival of 15 Chinese SSC experts. The project aimed to support the implementation of Namibia's "Fourth National Development Plan" (NDP4), "Green Scheme Policy" and the development plans of Namibia targeting the improvement of agricultural production and productivity, thereby enhancing and food security.

Farmers benefit from FAO led tripartite skills programme

Farmers in Namibia say they have acquired valuable skills and also immensely benefited financially from the South-South Cooperation (SSC) project which provided technical support to farmers in a bid to improve agricultural production. The SSC project is a tripartite engagement driven by Chinese Government, Namibian Government and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The programme saw Chinese agricultural experts working with local farmers to hasten skills transfer and also create an agricultural system that is driven through latest farming methods and technical capacities which saw many Namibians improving their farming techniques.



Commenting on the project the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry's Permanent Secretary, Percy Misika reiterated the importance of such initiatives in beefing up agriculture production and creating food self-sustenance for the country in the future.

He also added that the project managed to utilize some of the technologies that are suitable for the local climate.

Two farmers who were also beneficiaries of the project, John Haingura and Lukas Mushishi from Etunda Irrigation could not hide their joy adding that the engagement with the foreign experts will go a long way for them in improving their agricultural skills and running their farming projects as viable businesses.

“We have learnt a lot in using methods that save water, especially drip irrigation. However although as farmers we want to use irrigation in improving our production the major challenge has been the high cost of irrigation material Farmers benefit from FAO led tripartite skills programme which is beyond our means,” said Mushishi.