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FAO, China work to boost agriculture in Congo

4/4/2016 - by World Grain Staff

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ROME, ITALY – The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), China and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have signed a two-year agreement worth almost \$1.5 million aimed at increasing food and nutrition security in the conflict-ravaged African nation.

The deal establishes a new South-South Cooperation (SSC) partnership which will make Chinese technical advice and expertise available to the country's agriculture sector. It was developed via the FAO-China South-South Cooperation (SSC) Program, which was created in 2009 and an additional funding boost from China last year.

SSC projects help developing countries share and transfer knowledge and expertise among themselves, so that innovations and good practices that have been tried and tested elsewhere in the global South can benefit other countries facing similar challenges.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a vast country with rich natural resources and economic potential but, as a consequence of instability caused by localized conflicts that have claimed millions of lives, there is an urgent need to tackle malnutrition and food insecurity. The new partnership will help the country improve the sustainable management and use of these resources to reboot the agricultural sector and improve rural livelihoods.

Five Chinese experts and eight technicians will be stationed in the country's capital, Kinshasa, and in the city of Lubumbashi, in the southeast for two years.

Their immediate priorities include improving rice and vegetable production as well as introducing new techniques and technologies such as specialized aquaculture and livestock breeding.



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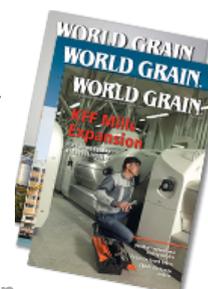
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Some of the biggest challenges they will face are building-up stocks of high-quality seeds, technical know-how, access to land and financing. The Chinese experts will collaborate with local partners to understand the difficulties faced by farming communities and come up with solutions.

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