

## China's aid through UN system changing lives in Africa

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(<http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/files/2017/03/RICE-FARMER.jpg>)

Rice farmers in Budaka district, eastern Uganda learn how to use agriculture machinery to prepare their gardens for planting/XINHUA

By XINHUA (<https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/author/xinhua/>), KAMPALA, March 13 -The rainy season has set off and in the swampy villages of Budaka district in eastern Uganda, Joyce Nabejja tills her hybrid rice field in anticipation of greater yields.

Nabejja is one of the thousands of Ugandan small scale farmers benefiting from an agriculture project that is run by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Ugandan government and China.

The two million US dollar project, which is in its second phase, is run under the FAO South-South Cooperation program. It was set up to help developing countries share knowledge and expertise so that all can benefit from innovations and good practices that have been tried and tested in countries facing similar conditions and challenges.

This program is part of China's move to channel its aid to Africa and other parts of the world through multilateral organizations like the UN.

In September 2015, China made major pledges in foreign aid, including two billion U.S. dollars to support South-South cooperation and debt relief for least-developed countries.

Also among the pledges is a 10-year, one billion dollars peace and development fund to support the UN.

These pledges have started exerting a positive influence on Africa, one of the major beneficiaries.

Farmers in Uganda are being trained by Chinese agronomists on better farming skills. The scientists have introduced Chinese hybrid rice Foxtail millet, apple farming, and irrigation among others.

From rice field to the classroom, China is also helping to boost Africa's education sector to promote social development.

About a week ago, the Chinese government through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) donated equipment to three teacher training institutions in Uganda.

Figures from the Chinese embassy here show that 137 tutors were trained and 272 pieces of Information Communication and Technology, and studio equipment were donated.

The tutors were skilled on how to integrate technology with traditional methods of training, according to Beatrice Byakutaga, head of Shimon Primary Teachers College, one of the three beneficiary institutions in Uganda.

Other African countries like Ethiopia, Namibia and Cote d'Ivoire are benefiting from the same scheme of skilling teachers and trainers.

China has in the past decade been in the front line of supporting UN peacekeeping efforts in Africa, with more than 2,400 Chinese blue helmets currently on duties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Liberia, Sudan, South Sudan and Mali. The troops carry out security, engineering and medical work.

The Chinese military engineers in the DRC have been involved in road renovation, bridge construction, landmine detection and airport maintenance, while the medical personnel have been providing treatment for local people.

China is the biggest contributor to UN peacekeeping forces among the five UN Security Council permanent members.

In 2015, China also pledged to provide military aid worth 100 million dollars to the African Union to support the African Standby Force, Africa's peacekeeping troops. ■

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