

Do you think that the future of India Africa cooperation lies in deeper engagement in Agricultural sector? Comment

India has always espoused African solutions for African problems. Africa like India has high population growth rate that is estimated to peak at 1 billion in 2030. With over 65% of world's uncultivated arable land left untapped Africa is reeling from poverty, malnutrition & hunger deaths. So naturally agricultural sector needs to be the future of India-African relationship.

So far politicians & think tanks have been engaging Africa from the prism of energy & strategic security. Instead more importance should be placed towards capacity building and knowledge sharing. It is not to say that India has neglected agrocooperation, there are both institutional & individual & subregional cooperation taking place. For example the Indian-African Institute for Agriculture & Rural development in Malawi. Commercial development & contract farming by Indian Entrepreneurs and the developing of Africa-kollam Cashew brand.

Areas that need for cooperation

- ① Providing Quality Seeds..
Africa if properly developed will be the food basket of the world. However they suffer from non availability of quality seeds. India which has much experience in seed technology can collaborate with African counterparts in the supply of quality seeds.
- ② Augmenting Imports
India has a well developed (from certain point of view) food processing & value adding chain of industries, Africa can be

developed to supply our Agro Industries. According to reports by International organisations Agricultural growth alone can bring Africa out of poverty especially the sub saharan regions. Like with cashew nuts India can jointly develop global brands in Coffee, Rubber & spices

③ Water management techniques

Water management is a big issue in Africa, India which has learnt valuable lessons from our Green revolution can share drip irrigation technology & water harvesting methods with African countries. Setting up of solar power pumps will also give a boost to the ISA, which India cosponsored.

In conclusion, India which is being increasingly cornered in the International forum by China has a huge opportunity to balance the scales by developing significant ties with Africa. Care must be shown not to exploit Africans but mutual development for the betterment of all.