

IN BRIEF...

Natural Resources and Rural Development in Mozambique

Sida's overall goal is to improve the quality of life of poor people. To reduce and defeat poverty is regarded both as an end in itself and as a means of creating a more secure and peaceful world for both individuals and the global community as a whole.

In Mozambique the majority of the poor live in rural areas. The rural poor are substantially poorer than the urban poor.

Reduction of rural poverty

Improving the living conditions in rural areas is a priority for Sida in Mozambique. In the short term, efforts are concentrating on improving agriculture and trade based on agriculture. In the longer term Sida supports the development of agro-industry and processing based on both specialisation and diversification.

Sida's programme for the development of the private sector, especially in the Niassa province (see links to <Malonda> and <Niassa>), includes micro-credit components such as community banking, agricultural outgrower schemes and small business loans. Joint ventures with private companies have also been created to purchase surplus agricultural products which farmers could only sell with difficulty in the past. These joint ventures at the same time sell certain essential agricultural tools, as the present commercial network is rather weak. The programme has also established an ombudsman for the private sector and supports an existing

faculty of agriculture and agricultural economics within the province.

As one of the EU member states, Sida is involved in a food security programme in southern Niassa. This involves the co-operation of national and international NGOs in an integrated effort to work with local authorities and ministry representatives.

In Niassa many subsistence farmers are still more or less outside the monetary economy and therefore are of no interest to the private sector represented by traders. An exception is the increasing tobacco production with the assistance of the big tobacco trading companies which indicates that farmers are interested in growing cash crops if they can get hold of both inputs and markets.

Even if private initiatives are looked upon as promising in the future, the public administration with its ministerial supporting, regulating and steering interventions is still of importance. The development of a unit for the co-ordination of agri-

cultural research based on zonal centres is being supported. For a long time Sweden has also assisted in strengthening the national directorate of geography and cadastre so as to enable Mozambique to avoid such land disputes as can be seen today in neighbouring countries, while at the same time facilitating investment in rural areas.

Sida's support to the public sector in agriculture is done through the Ministry of Agriculture, via its model sector programme Proagri, together with more than a dozen other bilateral and multilateral donor organisations.

Sida's support to rural development as described above is further complemented by other activities supporting infrastructure such as roads and electricity networks (<Infrastructure>), and its extensive support to basic schooling (<Education>).

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.



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