

Five African Volunteers Give Appreciation to Taiwan's LOVE Rice Aid Across Borders

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The United Nations (UN) and the international societies continue to save the poor and the hungry, and Taiwan has been an active participant in this endeavor. The Council of Agriculture (COA) Executive Yuan said that Taiwan started to donate the public grains since 2002. The ongoing donation of rice does not affect the domestic food security, neither does it affect international trade. The donation of rice has been delivered to the countries suffering from poverty, hunger, and disaster, through the effort of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with international NGOs. There have been 33 countries which have received more than 300,000 metric tons of rice from Taiwan.

Among those rice-receiving countries, volunteers from South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland presented their appreciation to COA in Taiwan via the arrangement of Tzuchi NPO. They submitted the handmade bags made from bags of public grains as "Feed Back Taiwan" from the "Love from Taiwan" rice donation.

COA said that Taiwan started the humanitarian aid projects since 2002 to donate rice to 33 countries in need. The people in those countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia could consume Taiwan's rice as they are in need. However, under the regulation by WTO and WFP of UN, the food aid project should not affect the normal trade activities. Therefore, the international food aid should be conducted under the principle of demand orientation, no exchange, and irrelevance with trade. Such principle avoids the possible export subsidy via a fake name of food aids but impose an influence of international trade.

However, the frequent change of international politics and the special national sovereignty has caused imperfect results of international food aid to countries without diplomatic relations. As a consequence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborates with international NGOs to implement international food aids in those countries with real needs. The NGOs involved since 2002 include Tzuchi Foundation, World Vision, Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation, World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce, Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps, The Red Cross Society of the ROC, Rotary Club, and, World League for Freedom and Democracy. These NGOs distributed more than 300,000 metric tons of rice, with bags printed "Love from Taiwan".

Among the visiting volunteers, Gladys Ngema from South Africa said that they appreciate the delicious polished rice, compared with the African main food of corn or corn flour.

Polished rice is truly a luxury. She brought the handmade bags made from the “Love from Taiwan” rice bag.

According to the statistics of Agriculture and Food Agency COA, between 40% and 50% of public grains have been distributed by Tzuchi Foundation. In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs began to collaborate with World Vision, Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation, and World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce to distribute 17,300 metric tons of polished rice to 18 countries, including Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Jordan, Pakistan, South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Sint Maarten, Honduras, Haiti, El Salvador, and Marshall Islands, with 7,640 metric tons distributed by Tzuchi Foundation.

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