

NEPAD and the African Institute for Capacity Building, supported by JICA, Concluded Partnership Agreement on Collaboration on Capacity Development and Poverty Reduction in Africa

On 4 November 2005, Prof. Firmino Mucavele, NEPAD Chief Executive, and Professor Andrew Gidamis, Executive Director of the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) based in Kenya, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate on Capacity Development and Poverty Reduction in Africa.

AICAD is an autonomous regional training and research institution jointly founded and financed by the governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, with the technical and financial support by the Japanese Government through JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). AICAD has been established as a concrete follow-up to the 2nd Tokyo Conference on African Development (TICAD) held in Tokyo in 1998.

AICAD's mission is "to link knowledge to application within communities in order to reduce poverty in Africa". Main program thrusts are: Research and Technical Development, Training, and Information and Knowledge Sharing, with a focus on agricultural and rural development. It has developed an extensive network, including 15 Universities in the region, to promote collective efforts. AICAD has been offering various training courses, such as rural women's empowerment, strengthening of farmers' organizations and extension services over the years. AICAD's mandates and activities are in line with the vision of NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which advocates the strengthening of African institutions and capacities as well as regional collaboration.

Notably, AICAD has been actively supporting the dissemination of New Rice for Africa (NERICA) through technical assistance to field experimentation and the variety selection by farming communities and knowledge sharing. NERICA is a key commodity being promoted under NEPAD CAADP to increase the food security in Africa.

AICAD facilities include a conference hall, seminar rooms, computer laboratories, library, canteen and hostel. Staff members consist of professionals from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania as well as a team of JICA experts.

Through this MOU, AICAD's resources and the regional network will be made available to further advance the development agenda of NEPAD CAADP.