

## Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

### Estonian development assistance to African countries

Since 1998, when development co-operation was first planned and initial projects were implemented, this sector has been an increasingly important foreign policy instrument for the Republic of Estonia. Estonia spends about 0.09% of its Gross National Income (GNI) annually (2006) on development co-operation and intends to steadily increase its share as well as to advance its status and role among other international donors.

The strategic objectives of Estonian development co-operation are (1) to contribute to reducing global poverty and human development in developing countries, (2) to support peace and stability, the granting of human rights, the development of democracy as well as the promoting of good governance practices in developing countries, (3) to support economic development and the liberalisation of international trade system and (4) to support environmentally sustainable development. Development of the ICT-sector and e-governance issues will be a horizontal field.

Estonia as an emerging donor has not yet any bilateral programmes in Africa. However, through voluntary contributions, Estonia regularly supports the operations of several United Nations agencies active in Africa, such as the UN Development Program (UNDP), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations and the UN Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. A number of specific projects, like protecting children's rights in the North Caucasus through UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) or OSCE Voluntary Fund for Activities Related to the Removal and Destruction of Russian Military Equipment and Ammunition from Moldova have also been supported.

Estonia is a member of and a donor to the International Red Cross Committee and several other internationally active organisations committed to promoting global peace and security. First voluntary contributions to the international organisations were made already in 1996.

As a member of the European Union Estonia is also financing the activities of the European Commission in African countries. In 2004, Estonia supported a small project directed to the development of the information society in the Fayoum region of Egypt. Since 2005 Estonia funds the working of Estonian volunteers in developing countries, including Africa. This program called GLEN (*Global Education Network of Young Europeans*) is implemented in cooperation with the German organization ASA-InWent.

In addition to supporting the economic and social development of partner countries, Estonia renders assistance to the countries of the world inflicted by natural disasters or armed conflicts. In order to relieve the situation of the refugees of the Darfur region, Sudan, Estonia has made for several years earmarked contributions through the UNHCR and WFP; in order to improve the situation of children of the Democratic Republic of Congo, who have suffered in violent conflicts, Estonia contributed in 2006 to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).