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# CITIC Construction sowing seeds of success in Angola

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(Xinhua)

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The development of the farming sector has been high on the agenda of the Angolan government for the past few years as it diversifies its oil-dependent economy.

CITIC Construction, a Chinese civil engineering company and one of the key players of the post-war reconstruction process in the country, built the \$3.5 billion satellite town of Kilamba Kiayi in southern Luanda.

Now, it has moved into the agricultural sector and introduced modern farming technologies into the southern African country.

CITIC Construction, which is part of the CITIC Group, a Chinese State-owned conglomerate, runs two farms, each with an area of 10,000 hectares in the Uige and Malanje provinces. These projects serve as a development showcase.

"Angola has plentiful rainfall and we are trying to restore its status as one of the main grain producers on the African continent," Liu Guigen, general manager of CITIC Construction, Africa, said.

The CITIC farm in Malanje, which is 380 kilometers east of the capital Luanda, is the most modern and advanced farm in the country.

Equipped with the latest agricultural machines, the farm yielded more than 10,000 tons of grains and beans in the last harvest season.

The other farm in Uige, which is a provincial capital city in northwestern Angola, is just as up to date but it also raises cattle.

As for the bigger picture, Angola needs about 4 million tons of grains each year. Since it produces only 1.5 million tons, the country has to import from Brazil, Namibia and other countries to patch up the deficiency.

"The only way out to achieve self-sufficiency is to establish and develop a modern farming sector," Liu said.

The farms at Uige and Malanje are only pilot projects and CITIC Construction is in talks with the Angolan government to open another 30,000-hectare farm in the central Bie province.

The plan is to plant rice with the help of financial support from leading Chinese banks.

"Obviously there is a long way to go to develop the farming sector in Angola, but we are on the right track," Liu said.

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