

## Letter of Intent

participation in the network of agri-agencies

### Considerations

Agri-agencies, the Non-Governmental Organisations for Development Co-operation with structural links to the farmers' and rural members' organisations in their home countries, have met regularly during the last year. They agreed upon a common "vision and mission statement", and they formulate the following considerations that support an option for enhanced co-operation:

- Developing country farmers' and rural people's organisations demand that donors treat them in a coherent manner, using the same procedures, criteria for result measurement and reporting requirements.
- They expect to be facilitated in broad contacts with the representative organisations of farmers and with relevant economic initiatives and co-ops in the industrialized countries. Agri-agencies can improve their efficiency and performance on this point, when the contacts are not confined to one "northern" country.
- The (young) farmers' unions, rural womens' organisations and cooperatives of developing countries demand capital investments and support for their organisations, projects and enterprises, far beyond the possibilities of individual agri-agencies.
- Efficiency and effectivity are becoming more important issues in development co-operation. The agri-agencies acting on their own will be too small to realize economies of scale that will make them attractive for major back donors.
- The challenge, in terms of interests of farmers, of organisations, of cooperatives... in developing countries all over the world, is enormous. Agri-agencies can increase their overall impact through geographical complementarity and through specialisation on sectors and themes.
- Participation of agri-agencies in related international federations, such as the IFAP, but also eventually in ACWW and ICA, oblige the agri-agencies to formulate a coordinated answer to the wish of these federations to actively support their members in developing countries.
- The "global" community of development NGO's (non agri-agencies) has a growing impact on public opinion and international negotiations and institutions (WTO, WFS, FAO, UNCTAD...), and does not necessarily reflect the interests of all stakeholders in developing countries. Alliances of the farmers' organisations from developing countries with the representative organisations of the industrialized countries, and with the farmer-controlled economic sector of the "northern" countries, are essential elements for a stronger lobbying capacity of developing country farmers' interests. This is an important part of our job as agri-agencies, to be tackled at a global level.

### Intention

Recent meetings between agri-agencies allowed for an enquiry into the possibilities for enhanced co-operation, and an option has been taken to

- Make an inventory of ongoing programmes, actual partnerships, and available human as well as financial resources.
- Establish direct links between country representatives and country programme officers, dealing with the same developing country, development issue or partner organisation.
- Compare policy statements with the purpose to develop a common policy framework.
- Compare procedures with respect to all aspects of development co-operation, including selection of partners, project monitoring and evaluation, recruitment of experts, promotion of international exchanges at grass roots, regional, national level.
- Focus on the potential for geographical as well as thematic or sectorial specialization between agri-agencies.
- Set up a common international platform, and create an international association of agri-agencies, being an international non-profit association and non-governmental organisation.
- Contact other agri-agencies and invite them to join the process.

By signing this letter of intent, the representative of the organisation confirms the intention

- (a) to participate in this process of enhanced co-operation;
- (b) to become a member of the new international alliance of agri-agencies, and to contribute actively to the completion of the legal process of constitution of this new organisation.

Leuven, 29<sup>th</sup> Januari, 2002.

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Name of the agri-agency

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Name of representative

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Signature