

AgriCord Board meeting
 Montréal 26 September 2008
 Agenda nr. 6

Conclusions of the meeting of agri-agency directors
 Montréal 25 and 26 September.

Operational issues

1. On levels of expenditure in general, and on low levels of "other backdonors" contribution to FFP, agri-agencies indicate that real contributions are higher than reported for 2007. Agri-agencies agree to introduce all relevant projects with full budgets in AIN. All projects, accounted for within FFP, must pass through the PC.
2. On PO budgets and special services linked to PO budgets (70/30): we will keep monitoring both types of support to PO's, and register what is really happening. No partial registrations. This will allow us to discuss how we organize our development cooperation, with respect to the different approaches (close vs. more distant or delegated support), and to define specific situations justifying one or the other approach. Whatever the approach, the important is to reach the proposed targets.
3. Agri-agencies will be invited by DGIS-coordinator Agriterra to react upon the 2007 report for the results (targets reached) per work area, and indicate how this will/should influence project and work area management. Some of the most striking observations by the Agriterra-team:
 - WA 01: lack of results for the core business of FFP being participatory processes. Not enough policy processes identified and approved, too much money spent on a too high level (IFAP linked).
 - WA on banking and insurances : lack of proposals.
 - WA on grassroots' involvement: numbers ok, but no linking up.
 - WA financial management impresses for its approach.
 - WA Chain development also perceived as important.
 - WA processing no real proposals at the moment.
 - WA on HIV/AIDS needs intensifying.
5. In terms of added value of agri-agencies, the farmer –to-farmer cooperation is the major item. A shared mobilization of farmers' experts (AgriPool) is an issue.
6. A major extra effort is needed on M&E, and will be based upon the conclusions of the recent comparison of approaches by SCC. Agri-agencies clearly have different but complementary approaches. M&E are a core task for the central office of AgriCord, and will focus on the impact on poverty.
7. Agri-agencies are able to deal with the funding planned to be available within FFP. The further 2008, 2009... planning figures will take into account 2nd, 3rd ... years budgets of projects already approved. This exercise is ongoing.
8. Management of larger amounts of funds
 - UPA DI can follow an extension of activities.
 - AFDI will probably remain at the current level, linked to existing and new partnerships.
 - Trias has mobilized its regional coordinators for increased activities within AgriCord.

- FERT can increase 30% per year. Constraints are linked to initial work at grassroots' level.
- SCC: no problem for growth if impact can be reached. Major expansion planned in Asia.
- Agriterra: further growth should allow other agri-agencies to handle larger amounts of funding.

AgriCord's role as development actor

9. Added value linked to farmer-to-farmer mobilization remains core value. Based upon existing material of agri-agencies, a new common vision/mission statement will be formulated. Agri-agencies will communicate on this joint statement internally and externally. The following key considerations have been discussed as part of this statement: agri-agencies consistently focus on PO's, on farmers' expertise, on longer term commitments towards and between PO's, on openness and transparency, etc.
10. Agri-agencies will concentrate on support to PO's to enable them to deal with other development actors (IFAD, EU...). This will preferably be done independently from these other development actors.
11. Agri-agencies will mobilize academic research on the issue of the economic importance of family farming, in relation to organized farming ("le poids économique des agricultures familiales en relation avec les organisations paysannes").
12. In general, AgriCord and its members want to intensify their communication on their development strategies, document their approaches, participate in the public debate in development policy issues.

Implications for internal organization and management

13. For the management of work areas (monitoring of activities, follow up of the relevant indicators), the central office plays a central role, and will be reinforced. The central office will improve coordination and pro-active stimulation of all work areas.
14. All agri-agencies cannot be involved at the same level in all work areas. All agri-agencies have the possibility and will take the opportunity to contribute whatever relevant elements to each of the work areas they are interested in. Agri-agency directors will supervise openness and motivation of their work area managers for sharing information. The list of Work Area Managers will be updated.
15. Each agri-agency has its own way of dealing with learning processes within their organization. Some agri-agencies have assigned specific staff members to take this process forward. It is important that these staff members can contribute to the network in a motivating way.
16. The Board of AgriCord examines the performances within the different work areas, determines the management implications and gives them follow-up.
17. The Project Committee operations will be facilitated by improved preparation of PC decisions by the central office. PC members will work on the basis of a proposed conclusions ("grille de lecture").
18. The Managing Director is asked to elaborate a proposal for common AgriCord policy for examination of the eligibility of partner organizations.

18. For the decisional process of larger projects, the PC Chair can request another agri-agency than the supporting agency to support the proposal.
19. Efforts for shortening the assessment of the project will be made. Multi-annual projects can be introduced and decided upon.
20. Agri-agencies reconfirm the basic principle that the PC only considers proposals fully approved by the supporting agri-agency.
21. The Managing Director is asked to examine the different practices of agri-agencies with respect to local presence and representation in developing countries, and to suggest options for cooperation and coordination between agri-agencies (in countries, in regions, with organizations).

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