



## **Brief Information about the ILO Project on Essential Research for a Cooperative Facility for Africa**

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and the International Labour Office (ILO) have joined forces to enable poor people to *cooperate out of poverty* through a *Global Cooperative Campaign* ([www.ica.coop/outofpoverty/](http://www.ica.coop/outofpoverty/)). It aims to strengthen the capacity of cooperatives to make a significant contribution to poverty reduction by enabling poor people to cooperate out of poverty particularly with regard to the international objective of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015.

The *Essential Research for a Cooperative Facility for Africa* (ERCFA) project is one of the first initiatives of this campaign. Funded by the UK government (DFID), this 12-month preparatory project aims at assessing the contribution and potential of cooperatives and group-based enterprises to create decent employment, economic activities, basic social protection and voice and representation in the rural and informal sector of African economies.

In September 2005, a research conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya to launch the project and eleven consultants were briefed and commissioned to carry out case studies on cooperatives in their respective countries. These case studies will be integrated into a forthcoming publication entitled “Cooperating Out Of Poverty, The Renaissance of the African cooperative movement”. This book quantifies current and potential contributions of cooperatives through the presentation of the eleven country case studies<sup>1</sup> covering – employment, social protection, voice and representation. It also provides overviews of the five cooperative traditions<sup>2</sup> which have emerged in Africa with regard to their history, legal forms, administrative structures and differing associative arrangements. This analysis provides the necessary fact-based evidence and background information. Thanks to the various reports and discussions between stakeholders, key factors of success, hindrances to overcome and type of support expected for the cooperative movement have been identified.

A second research conference took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 March 2006. It was the opportunity for the Researchers and their development partners to present the different reports and their findings.

For further information do not hesitate to contact Guy Tchami ([g3coop@ilo.org](mailto:g3coop@ilo.org)).

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<sup>1</sup> 11 Case Study Countries: Cape Verde, Egypt; Ethiopia; Ghana; Kenya; Niger; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; South Africa; and Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> The 5 traditions are: Anglophone; Francophone; Lusophone; Central Africa (former Belgian colonies); and South Africa and Namibia.