

NARRATIVE REPORT OF ICA - AFRICA

1st January to 31st December 2005

PREAMBLE

2005 stands as the first operational year of the newly established ICA Africa Regional Office. 2005 has been marked by the continuation of previous programmes initiated by the two former regional offices and the search for a more unified programme for the continent.

While continuing the former programmes, a lot of reflection has been carried out, trying to define the mandate of the new office, develop a single strategic plan (SP) for ICA Africa, and looking at ways and means to mobilize funds for the implementation of the SP to the benefit of members continent wide.

2005 has also marked the weakening of the office financial potential with the phasing out of former long term partner, Norges Vel, that pulled out of West Africa and discontinued its support to the office at the end of 2004.

1. SITUATION OF THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN AFRICA

Although cooperatives are recognised as strong vehicles that can be used to effectively economic and social development in Africa, their potential is not fully exploited in Africa. They are yet to be developed to be able to fully play their role as private economic enterprises and development agents.

Despite some successful cases such as the Cooperative Bank and the Cooperative Insurance Society of Kenya, FECECAM in the microfinance sector of Benin, and FENACCOOP in the consumer sector in Cape Verde, the movement is in need of a strong support to address its multifaceted problems, ranging from poor organisational, institutional and financial capacities, to poor human, governance and business abilities.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the movement has been seriously affected by the war and as a result, the cooperatives in the coffee/cocoa sectors as well as the cotton sectors are performing poorly, from production to marketing.

However, the cooperative movement has recently been attracting attention from the international community – The African Heads of States, at a special meeting on poverty reduction and job creation in 2004 acknowledged the positive role of cooperative in Africa's development.

DFID-ILO have funded a major project on "Essential Research for a Cooperative Facility for Africa" which aims to assist African and international cooperative movements to explore the possibilities of "*devising a medium to long-term investment and technical assistance mechanism for coordinating, strengthening and scaling-up their actions*".

SCC of Sweden and CCA of Canada continue to support the Regional Office to implement its Strategic Plan.

The private sector is more and more considered by international development institutions such as the World Bank as an effective engine that can drive development in the developing countries. Cooperatives, being part of the private, should be given the capacities and allowed to play their part in promoting economic and social development in Africa.

Even some national governments are beginning to commit themselves to let cooperatives play a new role in the development of the country's economy – Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia, South Africa and Sierra Leone can be quoted as examples of such countries.

We hope that this international and national mobilisation in favour of cooperatives will result in the strong programmes aiming at developing the capacities of cooperatives so that they can fully play their role as

2. THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The development programs implemented in 2005 to support and consolidate the development of cooperatives and to promote ICA in Africa could be summarized as follows.

2.1 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN WEST AFRICA

Development activities carried out in West Africa in 2005 are on-going activities implemented with funds received in 2004.

2.1.1 CO-OPERATIVE BUSINESS AND HRD DEVELOPMENT

FOCAL PROBLEM

A critical issue identified by ROWA members in the implementation of their activities is the lack of funding. It appears, after reviewing the situation that the lack of money mainly has to do with the inadequate share capital, the poor services to individual members, and the weakness of the business activities. In the main, contributions from donors in the form of loans or grants are higher than own resources earmarked for development activities. This is per se a major obstacle to the efficiency of business co-operatives. This is also coupled with the market competition and the lack of competent, skilled staff and leaders to efficiently tackle these problems.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the competitiveness of goods and service delivered to members
- Contribute to increase co-operative human resources and self-financing capacities
- Carry out a feasibility study to set up an inter cooperative commodity exchange.

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

At the national level, the following members benefited from the activities of this program:

SCAGBO / Agboville - Cote d'Ivoire : Training of 23 staff members on four different modules:

- management of coffee/cacao marketing (buying and selling)
- financial analysis
- training on an accounting software – SAARI
- cash management

These training sessions reinforced the capacities of the beneficiaries to better make strategic financial decisions, and upgraded the cooperative's capacity to centrally manage its accounts and monitor the cash flow from the various units.

FENACOOOP –Cape Verde: Organization of a study visit to Portugal: 5 cooperative leaders from FENACOOOP Cape Verde visited a number of cooperative societies in Portugal, namely FENACOOOP, PLURICOOP, CONFECOOP, COOP-LISBOA and INSCOOP. The purpose of the study visit was to learn about cooperative experiences in Portugal and establish a strategic alliance with FENACOOOP who is also active in the same sector. The visit yielded the following outputs:

- signing of a memorandum of understand between the two FENACOOOP
- lessons learned on approaches to develop business concurrently with social commitment (serving members and the community)
- networking with other sectors
- promoting social solidarity
- prospective collaboration with INSCOOP for the organizations of business events (fairs, exhibition, tourist packages)

This visit has opened doors for FENACOOOP who is yet to take advantage of them.

2.1.2 PROMOTION OF GENDER AND POVERTY REDUCTION

FOCAL PROBLEM

Women represent more than half of the population. They are very active in agricultural production work, in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, yet, they are left out when it comes to enjoying the fruit of their work and are the most affected by poverty. In addition they are playing a very important role in the social issues like health, children education specially the girl one.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- Improvement of the economic and financial status of women
- Improvement of women and children's health status
- Promotion of gender equity within grassroots cooperatives
- Mobilization of internal resources
- Dissemination of poverty alleviation best practices in the region

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

URCBAM – Burkina Faso: Funding of: a) sensitization and training activities for 26 women groups and 228 individual members with the view to establishing solidarity and mutual help groups to undertake savings and credit activities; b) funding of income generating activities . 228 women

were given out loans ranging from 25.000 CFA to 150.000 CFA. ICA's financial support was used to cover long term yielding activities not suited to the savings activities.

FENACOOOP –Cape Verde: Organization of a study visit for women leaders to UNCAS Women's Committee in Senegal. The purpose of the visit was to learn about UNCAS Women's experience and replicate it within the FENACOOOP's network. The experiences visited ranged from income generating activities (community shops, salt production and marketing, food processing, poultry farming, cattle and sheep fattening), to community health mutuals and an efficient institutional set up.

FECECAM—Benin: Consolidation of the Small Credit to Women (TPCF) project through the production of training material and visual aids. These materials are used for training sessions for loan beneficiaries to ensure that they have credit management skills before cashing their loan. This activity is on-going in about 30 primary cooperatives.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

2.2.1 PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

This project funded by the Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) is a four-year project which started in 2002. Its coverage is the former ROECSA region.

FOCAL PROBLEM

Agricultural cooperatives in Africa face the crucial problem of access to markets, and the fluctuation of commodity prices on international markets. It is a serious problem which impede the business development of agricultural cooperatives in the region.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The development objective of the Project is to ensure that small-scale farmers in formal and informal groups get substantially higher benefits from joint purchasing of production inputs and marketing of their produce than if they acted individually.

The specific Objective of the project is that Co-operatives and farmer groups, together with the development partners that support the development of agricultural marketing generate and use the information and techniques they require in order to be effective.

Achievement of Outputs and their Contribution to realization of Project Objectives.

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Results</i>
1.Efficient and effective project implementation	This output was realized through the input of the Regional Director at the ICA Regional Office towards the planning, directing and controlling of activities and through the availability of financial resources.

<p>2.Establishing a well functioning Network</p>	<p><i>Annual Network Workshops</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Two regional workshops of the network members were held in 2005 on the following issues: standards and quality in agricultural marketing, cooperative movement's opportunities under the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement, international Trade and Market Access. ✓ Holding two study visits for Network members in Zambia and Uganda ✓ The Network interim board, adopted the membership approval process document, the membership application form and fees and the logo of the network ✓ The Network members adopted in Kampala a framework to promote inter coop trade activities in 2006. ✓ Publications of two regional workshop reports, of the constitution and the marketing brochure of the Agrimat-Africa Network, of a faire trade new bulletin. ✓ Collection, processing and dissemination of information on the following topics: national and regional markets; the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement;
<p>3.National Projects implementation</p>	<p>Three national workshops have been carried out in Lesotho, South Africa and Tanzania in the topic of Co-operative Data Analysis System (CODAS). CODAS was developed by ICA Africa as an integrated data management and analysis system to monitor the status of the cooperative societies in any countries.</p> <p>About 60 participants attended the three seminars mainly drawn from cooperative movements, Ministries of Cooperatives, cooperative colleges and many other stakeholders. Following the three national workshop and at the request of stakeholders, ICA Africa will supported in 2006, CODAS implementation projects in Lesotho, South Africa and Tanzania.</p>

EFFECT AND IMPACT ON THE PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project objective is that cooperatives and farmers groups, together with the development partners that support the development of agricultural marketing generate and use the information and techniques they require in order to be effective.

The established indicators for the project objective were met or partially met.

- Three mechanisms to generate and exchange information and techniques exist. The first one is the Agrimat network which gather together cooperatives, farmer groups and development partners. In 2005, 34 supporting organizations and farmer groups from 13 countries were

active in the network. During the year 2005, the members met twice during the workshops organized by the project and two times in conjunction with the ICA Africa regional meetings. The various surveys on relevant issues and the regional workshops generated information, data, best practices which have been disseminated and used by network members.

- The second mechanism is the Cooperative Data Analysis System (CODAS) which was developed to collect and analyse data at country level. Kenya, Lesotho, South Africa and Tanzania are using or will use this system.
- The third one is the various surveys, workshops, consultant reports and the Website which generated and disseminated information and data on relevant issues. Information and data on the following topics have been collected and disseminated: fair-trade, value addition, HIV/AIDS, national and regional markets (opportunities and challenges for cooperatives and farmer groups), international trade and market access for agricultural cooperatives, standards and quality in agricultural marketing, the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement (challenges and opportunities).

EFFECT AND IMPACT ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION, OD, CAPACITY BUILDING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OR HUMAN RIGHTS.

The following achievements of the project contributed to the poverty alleviation, OD, capacity building, community development and human rights:

- The establishment of market information system (market surveys, CODAS) empowered the farmer organizations, enhanced their leverage and bargaining power vis a vis better organized private enterprises dealing with the same products. The final result is better product sale and the increase of farmer income;
- Promotion of AGRIMAT Network is enhancing synergies and value because of the collaboration and exchange sharing with the members and other stakeholders;
- Strengthening of the human resource capacity, the awareness among agricultural cooperatives to undertake by themselves, various activities for poverty alleviation.
- Better organizational development and capacity building within agricultural cooperatives thanks to the acquired knowledge, new concepts and ideas; enabling members to better understand and control their cooperatives;
- By understanding and practicing cooperative values and principles, the agricultural cooperative members are learning the democracy values and principles at grass root level. By strengthening the social and organizational structure of the small farmer cooperatives, the project is promoting human rights by empowering the individual members who are not more isolated but members of a horizontal and vertical linkages at regional and country level;
- The ultimate goal of the agricultural project is to contribute to provide more income, more profits to the small farmers through the strengthening of their cooperatives. This profits and income increase together with awareness and education mean better education and better health for children, better social stand and probably change of mentality vis a vis gender equity for the small farmers that is a positive impact to the community.

THE BENEFICIARIES AND PARTICIPANTS

The ultimate beneficiaries are small-scale farmers particularly in disadvantaged or remote locations. The indirect beneficiaries are Primary Co-operative Societies, Farmers' Associations and Informal Marketing Groups.

The direct beneficiaries are: Organisations within and outside the co-operative sector that support group agricultural marketing.

BUDGET AND FUNDING

The SCC approved budget for the project in 2005 was 66,900 US\$. The overall budget utilization for 2005 was US\$ 67,895.63 and the difference of US\$ 995.63 is as a result of exchange rate difference.

ICA provide in-kind contributions including the Regional Director, the Finance Assistant inputs, office space, furniture and local transport.

Participants and partners in projects activities like workshops and study visits were required to meet some costs like air tickets or accommodations or local support staff.

2.2.2 PROMOTION OF RURAL FINANCE

The project was funded in 2002 by the Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) for four years. The coverage of this project was the former ROECSA region,

FOCAL PROBLEM

The focal problem addressed by the project is the lack of appropriate and cost-effective financial services which the poor can use in their economic activities to increase incomes and reduce poverty. Its impact is severest in rural areas where agricultural is the main source of livelihood for the population.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Development Objective

Co-operative and Co-operative-like Organisations (CCLOs) provide effective and efficient financial services to low income rural people, thereby contributing to increased income-generating capacity of the people and to poverty alleviation.

Project Objective

The two project objectives are;

- a) To design a CCLO microfinance model and disseminate it widely in the region and have it implemented through at least ten projects executed by partners under the former ROECSA sub region.
- b) To ensure that co-operatives and co-operative-like organizations together with development partners supporting co-operative rural microfinance generate and use the information they require to provide effective and efficient rural financial services.

Achievement of Outputs and their Contribution to realization of Project Objectives.

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Results</i>
1.Establishment of Capacity at ICA Regional Office	During 2005, the capacity of ICA-ROECSA to implement the project was maintained through the retention of a full time Project Manager who was responsible for ongoing planning, co-ordinating, controlling, implementing and monitoring project activities.
2.Production of Model Manual for Promotion and Operation of CCLOs	<p>A total of four draft model policy manuals were produced in 2005 in the following areas ;</p> <p>a) Governance and Membership, b) Savings and Credit, c) Strategic and Business Planning and d) Accounting and Fin</p> <p>It is hoped that the final versions will be finalized and made available for use in early 2006.</p>
3.Establishment of a Regional Network	<p>The network serves as the mechanism for the generation and exchange of information necessary for provision of effective and efficient financial services by CCLOs.</p> <p>During 2005, the member application and approval process was finalized, and a legal opinion on how to formally register the network obtained. The interim board approved registration in November 2005.</p> <p>Activities undertaken around this output during 2005 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Holding two regional network workshops addressing diverse issues affecting financial co-operatives ✓ Initiating and facilitating, exchange visits involving 5 countries ✓ Administration of the Regional Office website. ✓ Collecting operational and performance data of rural SACCOs in four countries. ✓ Responding to requests for information on financial co-operatives from stakeholders ✓ Designing a network logo and marketing brochure
4.Creating Awareness about the need for development of New Products	A key constraints to provision of efficient and effective financial services by CCLOs that was addressed by the Project was related to the design and pricing of their products. The Project equipped financial co-operatives and their promoters with knowledge and tools for developing appropriate products through Product Profile Surveys, Product Development Case Studies and a New

	Product Development Guide.
5.Establishment of functional and beneficial linkages with broader non-co-operative microfinance stakeholders	During 2005, beneficial linkages were maintained with a number of players in co-operative and non-co-operative microfinance. Key organizations with which linkages were maintained through participation in their local and regional events were ; AFRACA, WOCCU, INAFI, Association of Microfinance Institutions of Kenya among others

ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS AND IMPACTS OF THE RURAL FINANCE PROJECT ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING.

The project's impact on poverty alleviation will be manifested with more certainty and less attribution in the post implementation period, possibly two to three years. Nevertheless, some impact and effect analysis can be attempted at this stage. The project has contributed to poverty alleviation in the region indirectly through facilitating the provision of efficient co-operative financial services by financial co-operatives. Through its outputs like the model operating policies and the New Product Development Guide the Project will enable financial CCLOs to increase their efficiency, outreach and social relevance. They provide products and services demanded by the marginalized part of communities. As more people obtain access to a wide range of these financial services they are able to invest in income generating activities and save for productive purposes and use financial services to obtain vital social services including health and education.

IMPACT OF THE RURAL FINANCE PROJECT ON ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING OF ORGANISATIONS.

The Project positively impacted the Organisational Development of financial CCLOs by increasing their capacity to adapt and better respond to changes in their operating environments. This was through design of model operating policies and increasing capacity to design and offer relevant products.

As at the end of 2005, the impact on OD and Capacity-building can be envisaged as follows.

Using key Project outputs like the Strategic and Business Planning Manual, financial CCLOSs will be in a better position to accurately define the identity of their organizations through statement of their Vision, Mission Values and Strategies. When these have been clearly and methodically stated and pursued then the likelihood of OD being achieved will be higher.

Other project outputs like the Governance Manual, Financial Management and Accounting Manuals and the Savings and Credit Policy manuals when applied will enhance improved organizational performance of financial CCLOs and consequently contribute to their organizational development.

The Project has contributed to capacity-building of organizations promoting or providing co-operative financial services through workshops and study visits. Several apex organizations in the region have reported introduction and adoption of new systems and products to their members based on knowledge and techniques exposed to them during project activities.

Similarly, several Co-operative training institutions actively engaged with the Project were able to redesign the training curricula to incorporate some of the new best –practices of co-operative microfinance provision based on knowledge accessed from the project.

THE EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

The positive effects of the project have included:

- a) increase level of interest in issues of co-operative rural finance within the region
- b) an increased recognition and acceptance of financial co-operatives as an integral part of the financial sector
- c) new policies and laws regulating the financial sector take cognizance of the role played by financial co-operatives and seek to integrate them into the overall financial system
- d) more multilateral and bilateral agencies approaching the Regional Office to access information on co-operative sectors, enhancing the Regional Office's profile.

THE BENEFICIARIES AND PARTICIPANTS

The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are rural women and men in the low-income strata of the rural population who are unable to access the services of banks and other formal financial institutions. Typical beneficiaries are small-scale farmers, off-farm micro-entrepreneurs and farm workers, other low-income wage and salary earners in the formal and informal sectors of the economy. The indirect beneficiaries of the project are those organizations involved in the direct provision or support the provision of co-operative rural financial services.

2.2.3 PROMOTION OF ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CO-OPERATIVES (EEP).

This project which is support by the Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA) began in 2004 for a three years term.

FOCAL PROBLEM

The past decade of structural adjustment, economic liberalisation and policy reforms has been a challenging tie for co-operatives in Africa. From independence through the 1970s and 80s, many co-operatives had grown accustomed to, and comfortable with, the prevailing systems of state management of the economy and state guidance of the co-operative systems.

As a result, many co-operative systems were unprepared both as enterprises and as members of civil society for the sweeping changes of the past decade.

The co-operative model is still a significant and relevant model for the development of Africa in the new environment. Co-operatives to make the contribution that they can to the processes of national development and poverty reduction, the legal and policy framework governing co-operatives must be designed with understanding of co-operative principles and best practices. Even in cases where policy and legislation has been reformed for the better, there is often inadequate understanding of these reforms and their implications for the future amongst co-operators. There are a number of macro-level policy reform initiatives within Africa that will have a major impact on cooperatives and in which co-operatives interests are generally not represented. As such, the current project proposes a series of interventions to address these issues.

PROJECT GOAL AND STRATEGIES

The goal of the project is to secure an improved environment in which co-operatives can serve their members effectively and grow as sustainable enterprises. The long-term impact of that will be improved livelihoods and wellbeing of co-operative members and their families.

The project aims at further strengthening the impact of co-operatives in shaping national, regional and international policies leading to the attainment of effective social and economic improvements for members and the community.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. To promote the implementation of EEP in 5 countries namely; Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Ethiopia and Kenya through signing partnership agreements or memoranda of understanding with the national apex co-operatives in each country.
2. To review project proposals developed by the apex organisations resulting in an agreeable work plan and budget; this forms the basis of project implementation.
3. To consolidate the country plans and budgets into a semi annual plan acceptable by CCA/CIDA as basis for further release of funds to facilitate project implementation
4. To outline a concept paper and work plan for the implementation of research on the contribution and issues facing co-operatives in the region.
5. To monitor the progress of EEP implementation in each country and give feedback, make reports to CCA and advice on the way forward.
6. To promote networking and collaboration on a wide range of issues related to co-operatives

PROJECT'S ACHIVEMENTS

At the national level

Swaziland

Objective

1. To review the co-operative Act in order to make it relevant to current situation
2. To popularise the co-operative Act through simplification, translation into siSwati and its publication.

Achievements

The Enabling Environment Project for Co-operatives referred to as EEP produced a simplified Laypersons Guide of the co-operative Act that will enable members and primary societies understand and therefore make use of the Act in forming and strengthening co-operatives. It is also recognised that most members of the primary co-operatives may not understand the English language and EEP further supported the translation of this Laypersons Guide into Siswati, the local language used by most people.

The major events that followed the production of these documents are the education phase commonly referred to as the popularisation of the co-operative policy and law. This is aimed at empowering the members to understand what co-operatives are, how to manage them, use them for services, ensure proper leadership, and the members' rights and obligations.

Tanzania

Objective

Revitalise the co-operative movement in Tanzania and popularise the policy and legal framework for better understanding and enhanced communication.

Achievement

EEP partnered with the Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives (TFC) to simplify in commonly spoken English and translate the Government policy and legal framework aiming at revitalising co-operatives into Kiswahili for easier understanding by majority of Tanzanians. More publications of the policy have been produced and distributed throughout the membership of TFC.

TFC has been supported in this project to install internet connectivity and an efficient email communication system. Webpage design and training of the core staff has been ongoing.

During most of 2005, regional training workshops were held to educate primary society members on the co-operative policy for better understanding

Kenya

Objective

The main focus in EEP is to empower the co-operative movement to a level where they can lobby government for a fresh amendment that restores the co-operative principles within a new policy and enabling Co-operative Act.

Achievements

The Kenya National Federation of Co-operatives (KNFC) as an apex body for the co-operative movement in Kenya has been at crossroads. The staff turnover at the executive level is too fast with 5 CEOs serving between 2004 and February 2006. Most of their programmes stalled and staff become demoralised. This therefore makes it difficult for partnership formation and EEP has only worked through consultants on the production of a Laypersons' Guide to the amended Co-operative societies Act. In recognition that the movement made an effort to influence the current amendment a second document "An Analysis of the Co-operative Act 2004" has also been produced.

More dialogue will continue on what direction KNFC wishes to go, this will include the thinking of related agencies e.g. SCC.

ETHIOPIA and ZAMBIA

In these two countries most of the activities were at the consultation and planning level. This has resulted in a Partnership agreement signed for implementation of EEP in Ethiopia. We however will continue with further consultation with Zambia as the management and board have been slow in responding to issues raised on the submitted Proposal concept and Work Plans.

3. SEMINARS AND CONSULTANCIES

ICA WORKSHOP ON FINANCIAL CONTROL HANDBOOK

ICA Africa attended a workshop organized by ICA HO on the newly designed ICA Financial Control Handbook. The purpose of the workshop was to provide participants with detailed information on the FCH procedures and obtain their commitment to abide by those procedures when handling financial matters. The final purpose of the FCH is to improve financial practices and transparency within ICA.

SYNDICOOP

ICA Africa, as an active partner of ILO Syndicoop project participated to several workshops organized on several issues including increased gender participation in the project, knowledge sharing, etc. ICA Africa also participated in the final evaluation of the programme second phase in Rwanda.

Syndicoop main objectives are "to strengthen trade union and cooperative capacity to organize unprotected informal economy, reduce poverty through improved working and living conditions among informal economy workers and creating decent job opportunities for young women and men, and more inclusive and more participatory PRSP for the informal economy in each country". The countries where the project is being implemented are Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

CLUSA

ICA Africa organized and facilitated a CLUSA financed workshop on "**West African cross border trade and advocacy project**". The purpose of the workshop was to present a pilot cross-border trade project designed by CLUSA and set up a steering committee to run the programme and concurrently develop an advocacy programme for the promotion of cross border trade in the

region. The workshop was held on 29 – 30 August, 2005 and attended by cooperatives representatives from 6 countries.

ILO

ICA Africa has been contracted by ILO on a consultancy basis to produce a report on “the Francophone African Cooperative Tradition” as part of the “Tradition Paper” designed to provide background information for the formulation of the “Cooperative Facility Project” envisaged by ILO. The report was completed and submitted in October 2005.

DRSP CONSULTATION - BF

ICA Africa attended a nationwide consultation organized by the Burkinabè government on its revised DRSP in order to examine ways and means to involve NGOs in the planning and implementation of policies developed by in the DRSP in the various development sectors. The consultation took place on July 14-15, 2005.

INPACOOOP (Intervention Panafricaine dans le domaine Cooperative)

INPACOOOP (A Panafrican Initiative for Cooperative Development) has been conducting a support project for the updating of cooperative development policies in West and Central Africa. Within this framework, a workshop was held in Ouagadougou on 18-20 May 2005, together with the Ministry in charge of cooperatives to analyse Burkina Faso’s current cooperative development policy, identify areas for adjustment and identify a cooperative development programme. ICA attended the workshop as an outside resource person.

4. PROMOTION OF ICA INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

ICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ICA Africa attended ICA General Assembly organized and held in Cartagena, Colombia in September 2005 through the participation of staff members and member organisations. Major events worth noting is the election of Mrs. Aba Smith from Ghana as ICA Board Member and Mrs Esther Gicheru as Member of the Audit and Control Committee. The Regional Director for Africa co-facilitated a workshop on: “Global Solidarity: Cooperating out of poverty”.

REGIONAL CO-OPERATIVE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

ICA Africa held the Regional Co-operative Co-ordination Committee Meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, from 13-14 July, 2005.

The aim of the meeting was to:

- Review progress made on recommendations of the 7th Ministerial Conference held in Kampala, Uganda in 2002,
 - Prepare the 8th Ministerial Conference to be held in September, 2005 in Maseru, Lesotho.
- About 35 Cooperative Leaders, Commissioners, Registrars, Principals of Cooperative Colleges attended the meeting.

THE COOPERATIVE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE.

ICA-Africa organized and held the 8th African Ministerial Co-operative Conference on September 4th-8th, 2005 in Maseru/Lesotho. The conference was attended by about **65** participants including height ministers in charge of cooperatives.

The Conference recognized that ICA has been very instrumental in areas of legislation, restructuring and policy formulation.

The Conference discussed various cooperative related issues and issued a final communiqué in which they commit themselves “to support the implementation of the strategic plan that have been formulated for the period 2006 – 2008 – creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the strategies”. The Ministers present further pledged to “commit budgetary contribution towards the programmes and activities of the ICA-Africa Regional Office.”

Major recommendations include the appeal to all “the cooperative movement to make timely financial contributions towards the budgetary requirements of the ICA Africa Regional Office”

5. THE HUMAN RESOURCES OF ICA-AFRICA

The staff is composed of 9 people, including 4 women and 5 men located in Nairobi or in Ouagadougou as follow:

<i>NAIROBI</i>	<i>OUAGADOUGOU</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Director • The Administrative and Finance Assistance • The Rural Finance Project Manager • The Policy and Research Project Manager • The Driver • The supporting Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Representative • The Administrative and Finance Assistant • The Driver and messenger.

6. THE MEMBERSHIP OF ICA-AFRICA

IN EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. Botswana Co-operative Association,
2. CIC Insurance Ltd of Kenya,
3. Co-operative Bank of Kenya,
4. Coop Lesotho,
5. Mauritius Co-operative Union Ltd,
6. Namibia Co-operative Council,
7. National Cooperative Association of South Africa
8. Central Co-op Union of Swaziland,
9. Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives,
10. Uganda Co-operative Alliance,
11. Zambia Federation of Co-operatives,

IN WEST AFRICA

12. FECECAM (saving & credit) Benin,

13. URCBAM (saving & credit) Burkina Faso,
14. FENACCOOP (consumer) Cape Verde,
15. URECOS-CI (cotton) Cote d'Ivoire,
16. SCAGBO (coffee/cocoa) Cote d'Ivoire,
17. GCC (coop. council) Ghana,
18. UNCAS (groundnut) Senegal.
- 19- CFN (national Coop. federation) Nigeria

7. THE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS OF ICA-AFRICA

The development partners in 2005 were: SCC-Sweden, CCA-Canada, SOCODEVI-Canada, ILO, CLUSA-America, Legacoop and member organizations.

There are many funding sources more and more sensitive to either to cooperatives, farmer organizations, village groups or grassroots development approach. They generally give priority either to bilateral programs through collaboration with Governments, or with local African NGOs or with the Northern Countries NGOs.

The globalization and the competition affect also the development support sector in Africa. It becomes more and more difficult to find funding partners. Most of them prefer having their own projects or their own regional or national development representatives.