

Consultative Meeting on the Establishment of the Africa Agricultural Co-operative Federation (AACF)

Concept Note

Theme:	Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives in Africa
Aim:	To consult with The International Co-operative Alliance, Africa (the Alliance Africa) members, partners, (including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), and collaborators on the current priorities that face African farmers and how a regional federation of agricultural co-operatives could address their challenges while contributing to zero hunger ¹ in Africa.
Date:	23 May 2017
Venue:	Casablanca, Morocco
Duration:	1 day
Targets:	the Main target group is National and Regional Agricultural Co-operatives whose main purpose is agriculture (fishery, crops and livestock, etc) as the main economic activity and while financial co-operatives such as saving and credit co-operatives or co-operatives banks which support agricultural co-operatives to access finances are the secondary target groups.

Background

The International Co-operative Alliance (The Alliance) secured funding from the European Commission to implement a project entitled “*Co-operatives in Development: People-Centred Businesses in Action*”, whose overall objective is to strengthen the Alliance, and their regional offices organized in four geographical zones: Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia & Pacific.

Specifically, the project aims to strengthen and enable 187 co-operative federations in 75 EU partner countries and their regional and global umbrella organizations to promote, develop and advocate the co-operative enterprise model at national, regional and global levels on behalf of their members. Activities related to strengthening the Alliance network will contribute to reinforce the regional and global structures, facilitate the development of a common identity, support policy dialogue and

¹ SDG 1 and Agenda 1 of Agenda 2063

advocacy, and thus promote greater impact of the co-operative movement worldwide on development.

As one of the geographical zones of the Alliance, the Alliance Africa has a significant role to play in the implementation of the EU project in collaboration with the other geographical zones of the Alliance.

Consultative Meeting

The members of the Alliance in Africa Region met in May 2014 in Nairobi (As the report on our website) and discussed the progress made by each country present in the implementation of the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2013-2016. The Africa Agricultural Commodity Exchange Platform and other agricultural co-operative initiatives were also discussed. Among them and as a first step, there is a need to better understand the current landscape of Africa agricultural co-operatives with the following objectives:

1. Understand the historical challenges of agricultural sub-regional and regional organisations in Africa.
2. Identify the need for an Africa Agricultural Co-operative Sectoral Organisation.

The Alliance proposed to undertake a feasibility study, in consultation with partners including FAO and others, on the establishment of an Africa Agricultural Co-operative Sectoral Organisation that would reach out to organisations of smallholder farmers in the Africa Region, in particular agricultural cooperatives.

The aim of this consultative meeting, specifically targeting African agricultural co-operatives, is to revive the above-mentioned discussions, and evaluate the proposal for a feasibility study on the establishment of an Africa Agricultural Co-operative Sectoral Organisation with a view to seeing how to move forward, by collecting views and buy-in from the Alliance Africa members directly involved in agricultural co-operatives, as well as from partners including FAO and other stakeholders. **Draft Terms of Reference for the study is attached for discussion in the consultative meeting.**

It is envisaged that through this consultative process, a renewed impetus for African agricultural co-operatives to work together will be restarted where existing partnerships will be consolidated and new ones established for the purposes of enhancing knowledge sharing and exchange of information, contributing to a strengthened agricultural sector.

Proposed Schedule of Events

23 May 2017		
08:00 – 08:30	Registration	Facilitator
08:30 – 08:45	Introduction, opening remarks and rationale behind the meeting, including presentation of the idea of a feasibility study for an Africa Agricultural Co-operative Sectoral Organisation	Dr Chiyoge B. SIFA, Regional Director, The Alliance Africa
08:45 - 09:00	The ICA-EU Partnership Project: A brief presentation	Mr Marc NOEL, International Development Director, The Alliance
09:00 - 09:30	Questions and Answers	
09:30 - 10:40	<p>Taking stock: Panel discussion on the status of agricultural co-operatives in Africa: achievements and challenges for food security and zero hunger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Mr Arnauld Aganze ZOZO (Central Africa) ii) Mr Shimelles TENAW (Eastern Africa) iii) Mr Obi Ezenwa, Managing Director, Pine Global (Western Africa) iv) Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development, Zimbabwe (Southern Africa) v) Two or three testimonies of cooperatives in the fields of agriculture, crafts and the environment 10 minutes per speaker 	Prof. Esther GICHERU, Director, Research, The Co-operative University of Kenya (CUK) and Chair of the Alliance Africa Research and Gender Committee
10:40 - 11:00	Questions and Answers	
11:00 - 11:30	Health break	

11:30 - 12:30	<p>Round table discussions on strategies for supporting agricultural co-operatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) First Name LAST NAME, European Union Delegation Morocco ii) First Name LAST NAME, Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Water and Forests: Agricultural Cooperatives iii) Mr Bukar TIJAN, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, UNFAO iv) Simile ESIM, International Labour Organisation (ILO) v) Dorothy KiPSANG, Global Co-ordinator, Financial Inclusion, We Effect Regional Office for Eastern Africa vi) James MWAI, Director of Policy, Research and Advocacy, Fair-trade Africa vii) Pauline KAMAU, AGRA / FOSCA 	<p>Prof. Faustin BEE, Vice Chancellor, Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU)</p>
12:30 - 13:00	Questions and Answers	
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break	
14:00 - 14:15	Brief presentation of the feasibility study concept	Dr Chiyoge B. SIFA, Regional Director, The Alliance Africa
14:15 - 15:15	Discussions in working groups by 5 sub-regions: analyse the draft TORs of the Africa Agricultural Federation of Co-operatives feasibility study and propose modifications (elements to include, exclude or revise).	Dr Rose KARIMI, Africa Nazarene University
15:15 - 15:30	Health break	
15:30 - 17:00	Feedback from the sub-regional working groups in plenary - discussion and key recommendations	Dr Rose KARIMI, Africa Nazarene University

17:00 - 17:15	Way forward / next steps	Dr Chiyoge B. SIFA, Regional Director, The Alliance Africa
	Meeting communiqué: Overall summary and evaluation	Caroline SEKYEWA Project Manager, The Alliance Africa
Closing		

Additional information

Founded in 1895, the **International Co-operative Alliance (The Alliance)** is a non-governmental co-operative federation representing co-operatives and the co-operative movement worldwide. The Alliance unites co-operatives worldwide; it is the custodian of co-operative values and principles and makes the case for their distinct, value-based economic business model, which provides individuals and communities with an instrument for self-help and influence over their development. The Alliance advocates the interests and success of co-operatives, disseminates best practices and know how, strengthens their capacity and monitors their performance and progress.

The International Co-operative Alliance Africa (The Alliance Africa) is one of the regional offices of the Alliance; it serves, unites and represents the Alliance member organisations in Africa by promoting and strengthening autonomous and viable co-operatives throughout the region.

In October 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the President of the Alliance and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Together, ICA and FAO jointly shared their convictions that: eradicating hunger sustainably will require a significant increase in agricultural investments and an improvement in their effectiveness.