



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For more information contact:**  
**Paul Hazen, executive director,**  
**(202) 261-3558**  
**Patricia Miller, communications**  
**(612) 822-5967**

June 11, 2014

### **Sustainable development: It's what OCDC does**

(Washington, D.C.) On July 5, Americans still will be caught up in the celebration of Independence Day. But globally, another celebration will be getting underway — International Cooperative Day, which takes place on the first Saturday of July. This year's theme is "sustainable development for all."

News stories are rife with calls for ensuring that international development projects are sustainable, that they're grassroots, not top down, that they'll survive along after the aid organizations have packed their bags.

For the members of the U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC), these calls are merely a reminder to keep up the good work. OCDC brings together organizations committed to building a more prosperous world through cooperatives. Its mission is to champion, advocate and promote effective, sustainable international cooperative development, with particular emphasis on food security, economic development and democracy building.

The organization's members are: ACDI/VOCA, Global Communities, Communications Cooperative International, Cooperative Resources International, HealthPartners, Land O'Lakes International Development, NCBA CLUSA, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and the World Council of Credit Unions.

With projects in more than 70 countries, and annual development budgets of more than \$200 million annually, these organizations lead the world in cooperative development.

What does sustainable international cooperative development look like? Here's just a sampling:

- **Electrification of Bangladesh.** Delivering power to more than 45 million people through 70 electric distribution cooperatives.
- **Revitalization of Uganda's dairy industry.** Improving the livelihoods of 15,000 dairy farmers through the formation of 88 primary milk collection centers and seven cooperative unions.
- **Creation of access to financial services in Afghanistan.** Developing Islamic investment and finance cooperatives (IIFCs) to serve small- and medium-scale business owners, farmers, women and low- and medium-income households.
- **Rebuilding of Haiti's fishing industry.** Helping fishermen earn three times as much as they did before through membership in a fishing cooperative.
- **Support of East Timor's coffee industry.** Lending expertise to establish the country's largest farmer cooperative — the largest single-source supplier of certified organic coffee in the world — provides greater income to 30,000 members.

"Our members really do build sustainable businesses and organizations," says Paul Hazen, executive director of OCDC. "But they don't do it alone. Our members collaborate with each other, not only on specific projects, but also on identifying best practices in international development and helping promote a favorable legal and regulatory environment for cooperatives in countries around the world."

Neither are OCDC members alone in their efforts to combat poverty, improve food security and health, generate employment and growth through cooperatives. “We’re united in the same goals and values through the international cooperative community,” Hazen says. “We’re working together to accomplish the same thing: to build a better world through cooperative enterprises.”

To learn more about OCDC’s cooperative development work, visit [www.OCDC.coop](http://www.OCDC.coop) and [www.clarity.coop](http://www.clarity.coop).

OCDC brings together organizations committed to building a more prosperous world through cooperatives. Its mission is to champion, advocate and promote effective international cooperative development. OCDC members are global leaders in cooperative development in Africa, Latin America and Asia. With projects in over 70 countries, OCDC members implement the largest portfolio of cooperative development programs in the world. Members are: ACDI/VOCA, Cooperative Resources International, Global Communities, HealthPartners, Land O'Lakes International Development, NCBA CLUSA, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and the World Council of Credit Unions.

