

Marc Noël, International Co-operative Alliance

Dear Mr. Koen Doens, many thanks for your presence in today's policy dialogue.

Dear colleagues,

Intro

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) has been established in 1895, and constitutes the only organisation uniting and representing cooperatives worldwide. Today, we represent over 300 cooperative member federations in 110 countries.

a) Since 2016, we have signed with the EU a political partnership and an action grant under the form of an FPA. Having a great record of impact, and acknowledging our role as independent development actor, we call therefore on the EU to continue strengthening the role of global and regional networks that operate at macro and meso level, and which can support their national members at micro level.

We recommend therefore that FPAs with global and regional networks SHOULD continue working as a complementary financial mechanism with in-country programs.

b) Further, acknowledging the key role of EU delegations at EU partner country level, we call upon EUDs to institutionalize multi-stakeholder spaces - such as the PFD – at in-country level, for an effective engagement with CSOs and LAs,

AND

we would like to insist on the inclusion of cooperatives in the consultations for the EUD Roadmaps and the programming phase as legitimate CSO actors – confirmed as well in the EC Communication, 2012.

c) Last but not least, we would like to welcome the EU's priority on "Economies that work for people". We strongly believe that economies should look beyond GDP, promoting decent work and protecting the planet. Thus, they should be driven by sustainable and inclusive businesses, such as cooperatives.

Cooperatives are indeed owned and controlled by their members, placing members' interests ahead of the organization's short-term financial return. Cooperatives can guarantee an economically sustainable development that is translated in local spending, local resilience, local employment and local resource mobilisation.

We propose that the External Investment Plan should primarily focus on local and sustainable businesses, creating the conditions for cooperatives and like-minded organisations



to thrive.

Many thanks for your insights on our proposals, recommendations and requests.