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Note to Correspondents

ILO LAUNCHES NEW GRANT SCHEME TO PROMOTE COOPERATIVES IN AFRICA
CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (ILO News) -- The International Labour Organization (ILO) today announced the launch of a new grant scheme through the Cooperative Facility for Africa programme.

Coop^{AFRICA} is a partnership programme implemented by the ILO and funded by the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) to support the development and promotion of cooperatives in Africa. Partners include the International Co-operative Alliance, the UK Co-operative College, the International Trade Union Confederation, the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives, and the African Union.

The new programme will provide assistance, through a competitive bidding process, under three “Challenge Funds” categories, including cooperative support services, cooperative innovations, and cooperative training.

The Coop^{AFRICA} Challenge Funds support projects up to US\$ 150,000. Funding requests in the range from US\$ 50,000 to US\$ 150,000 will be collected twice a year through calls for proposals. Funding request below that amount can be submitted at any time during the year.

Proposals for the following Challenge Funds may be submitted by qualified organisations or institutions:

- **Challenge Fund for Services:** institutions that demonstrate significant technical expertise in cooperative development, and provide technical support to cooperative organisations (e.g. guidance on market information, financial services, business planning, legal issues, etc.)
- **Challenge Fund for Innovations:** members, leaders and promoters of non-traditional types of cooperatives (e.g. shared service cooperatives, social service cooperatives, burial societies, etc.)
- **Challenge Fund for Training:** institutions such as cooperative colleges, cooperative apex bodies, public authorities, social partners, NGO, etc.) that demonstrate significant capacity building expertise for the development of cooperatives (e.g. provision of updated cooperative curricula, staff training, development of training material, etc.);



The ILO invites applications for the three above-mentioned challenge funds. For more information about application form, guidelines, and selection process, please visit the website www.ilo.org/coopafrika.

The deadline for the first call for proposals above US\$ 50,000 is 15 June 2008. The next call will be in September 2008. To obtain a Word version copy of documents, please send an email to coopafrika@ilo.org.