

CRDA and its Partners hold a one-day round table meeting

July 2, 2007 CRDA held a round table meeting of its partners. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the 4th three years program plan of CRDA which covers the period 2008-2010. Partners from abroad and those within country attended along side the CRDA Board and Secretariat. Some of the partners include, ICCO, Trocaire/CAFOD/SCIAF, EED, CORDAID, Ireland Aid, Sida, etc.

Since 1997/98 when CRDA made a major shift in its activities, the organization has taken long strides in representing the NGO sector and the wider civil society in policy dialogue and advocacy. In drawing up its 3rd three years program CRDA went on to make further changes of improvement where the membership believed it was time to stand as one vibrant civil society.

Accordingly, the coming program plan has been designed to reflect this. The program tries to indicate that the activities of the Association are mainly membership driven and encourage the flourishing of a vibrant and outspoken civil society.

Conducting a rapid assessment of especially its 2005-06 program implementation, CRDA was able to identify areas of strengths and challenges that served as important input for the design of the 2008–2010 Program. Because of the shared strategic direction, the 2008–2010 Program is a continuation of the 2005-2007 Program trying to build on the latter’s achievements and addressing challenges observed to date.

Emanating from the CRDA Memorandum of Association, the major focus areas of the 4th three years program plan include:

- Joint action and pursuit of common goals, among the CRDA membership and partners,
- Dialoguing and exchanging learning among members and partners,
- Speaking in a coherent and collective voice with and on behalf of its constituencies,
- Enhancing institutional, leadership and organizational capacity of members, and
- Enhancing the CRDA Secretariat’s capacity towards making meaningful contributions.

During the meeting partners expressed their appreciation for the work done. They also expressed some of their concern they wished to be addressed in the document.

The Partners stated that their interest to work with CRDA was beyond funding: they had interest to work jointly on research, policy influencing, implementing public policy and lobbying and advocacy at international level.

In line with this, it was noted that more partner agencies will be opening up regional offices in Ethiopia and this will be an advantage for CRDA. Taking advantage of partners’ presence at this meeting the Round Table discussed this issue at length.

Overall, having fruitful discussions, partners were able to confirm their continued interest in working with CRDA where some even stated that they consider CRDA as their “strategic partner”.