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Congress Increases Funds for International Co-op Development

(Washington, D.C.) After weeks of intense negotiations, the U.S. Congress passed an omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2017 that increases funds for cooperative development. Congress added \$1 million to the international Cooperative Development Program (CDP) grants, bringing the total available in FY17 to \$12 million.

The CDP supports public-private partnerships between U.S. cooperatives and cooperative development initiatives in the developing world. The program, which started in the early 1960s, has created thousands of jobs, leveraged hundreds of millions of private funding and positively affected the lives of hundreds of millions of cooperative and credit union members.

Through the CDP, USAID supports international cooperative and credit union development programs and projects implemented by 10 U.S. cooperative development organizations.

“The members of the U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC) are pleased that Congress understands the importance of cooperatives in international economic development and the impact this public-private partnership between the U.S. government and the cooperative sector has on global stability,” said Paul Hazen, OCDC executive director. “Our members’ current cooperative development programs focus on food security, savings and loans, democratic organizations, health, telecommunications and electrification, which link U.S. cooperatives to those in the developing world.”

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. 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, National Cooperative Business Association/CLUSA, NRECA International and the Worldwide Foundation for Credit Unions.

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