

Business and Industry Intervention
CSD 16
Multi-stakeholder Dialogue session 4.30 – 6 pm, 9 May 2008

Thank you Mr. chairman. My name is Annik Dollacker. I am speaking on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce, ICC the International Agri-Food Network, IAFN and its associated industry federations and companies.

Business supports partnerships as one of the most practical means of delivering sustainable development outcomes. Partnerships make good business sense. They are an integral part of doing business because combining resources will invariably prevail over isolated approaches. The partnership approach is a fundamental one which companies around the world have been developing for many years, sharing their expertise, experience, managerial skills and knowledge with governments, NGOs and local communities to build markets and better lives.

All business operations are ultimately 'local' - with local markets and customers, employees and managers, communities and neighbors. Hence our partnerships are local. They address local issues at stake such as those relating to knowledge sharing, technology transfer and capacity building, human rights, and many others. Local partnerships are the fundamental basis for partnership approaches at all levels.

Business works to create long-term partnerships for sustainable development, including the creation of sustainable livelihoods. Business is very action and results oriented. The business contribution is therefore measured by partnerships that deliver solutions and concrete results in terms of outcomes or improved access to food security, water, , , education and others. In this context joining forces clearly means to define mutually accepted goals and measurable outcomes that all partners can subscribe to.

Let me highlight some points that are critical for successful partnerships:

- first – increase of ownership at the local level
 - Businesses working in the agricultural sector have representatives on the ground i.e. “in the field”. These local people know best how to reach out to rural communities and can avoid making mistakes that many times occur in partnerships that have no knowledge of the cultural and social contexts in which they operate.
- second – the combination of expertise and interest leads to synergies.
 - Those partnerships that have worked best are those where diverse stakeholder bring their complementary expertise to the table. It is not simply the value of financial contributions that matters. More holistic value chain approaches have developed in recent years bringing more value for partners and especially farmers.
- thirdly – the added value of partnerships (incl. PPPs) are their higher level of sustainability
 - Take the example of capacity building and outreach to farmers. In India alone there are 600 million farmers. Reaching out to them is not a task that one stakeholder can do on its own for one year. Joining forces is crucial. On matters such as capacity building long term approaches are required. These need to include the provision of financial mechanisms to addressing the partnerships' sustainability.

Let me conclude by saying that: business and industry is convinced that partnerships are an effective framework within which all stakeholders can join in a collaborative effort to address the pressing issues relating to sustainable agriculture and farmers livelihood improvement.