



3. Cooperation between associations

Professional associations and cooperatives help farmers improve their political and market positions. The bilateral cooperation programme therefore supports the cooperation of farmers' associations and co-operative associations with similar organisations in partner countries. The German Co-operative and Raiffeisen Confederation (DGRV), for example, provides advice to its Brazilian, Argentinian and Kenyan partners on operational and management aspects. In this case the agenda includes, for instance, staff training, good governance such as the strengthening of internal and external audit activities and the development of a cooperative system of services delivered to member cooperatives. The German Farmers' Union advises its Russian and Vietnamese partners on organisational issues, member support and services.

Countries: Brazil including an Argentina module, Kenya, the Russian Federation and Vietnam

In addition there are other specific projects, for instance in the field of organic farming, agricultural vocational training and the promotion of foreign junior staff.

Countries: China, Côte d'Ivoire, India, South Africa, Turkey and the countries of Central Asia and Eastern Europe

In addition to that, the BMEL organises conferences and seminars about different topics of international agricultural cooperation.

Imprint

Published by

Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)
Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft (BMEL)
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As of

August 2015

Layout

design.idee GbR, büro_für_gestaltung, Erfurt

Photos

Uli Sommerfeld, Ekosem Beratung GmbH,
AFC Consultants International GmbH,
BMEL/GFA Consulting Group GmbH

Printed by

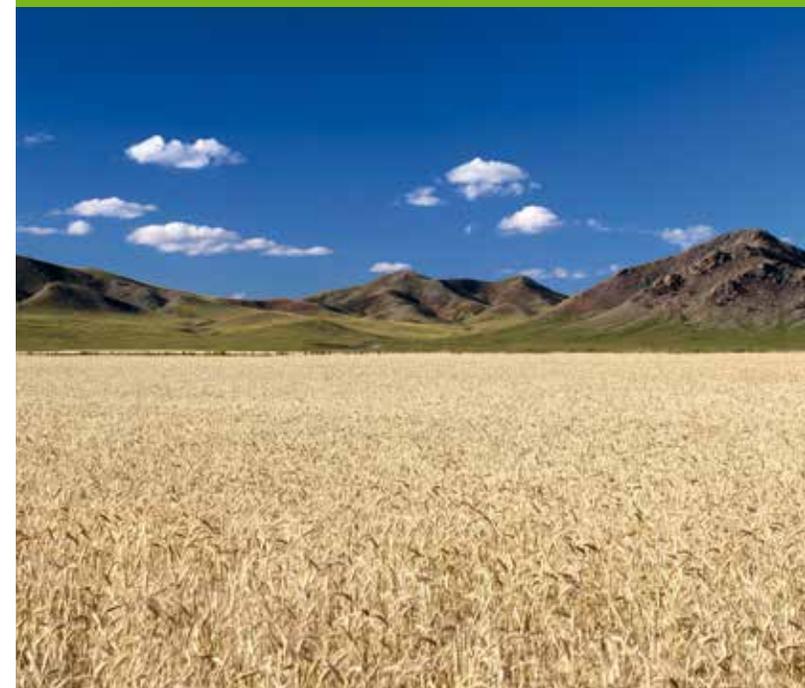
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Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

Bilateral Cooperation Programme of the BMEL



Bilateral cooperation programme of the BMEL

With its bilateral cooperation programme, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) promotes cooperation with other countries in the fields of food, agriculture and consumer health protection.

Until 2007, project cooperation had been targeted at Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2008 the programme has expanded its regional and thematic focus. Projects are currently being carried out with Ethiopia, Brazil including an Argentina module, China, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Zambia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine and Vietnam. The partner countries are actively involved in the projects, and this involvement is instrumental in making the bilateral cooperation programme a success. Beyond that, the project work is also supported by education providers, associations and companies from the agri-food sector.

The BMEL has commissioned a general agent, GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA), to undertake the overall management of the bilateral cooperation programme. The GFA prepares project concepts, generally commissions executing agencies with the implementation of the projects and monitors and evaluates them.

Objectives of the project work

The objective of the project work is to contribute worldwide to making the agricultural sector productive, efficient, and resource-conserving. This is the only way to ensure food security for people in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. In addition, this gives a fillip to agricultural value added and income opportunities in rural areas. The measures are geared towards expanding and improving the legal, organisational and structural conditions for a market-based development of the sector, and towards practical trials and knowledge transfer. Technical and managerial staff are given special training and guidance. In addition, the joint work on projects intensifies the bilateral dialogue.

Project types

Over time, three project types have proved to be particularly sustainable.

1. Agricultural Policy Dialogue: Advisory activities on legislative issues, strategy development and implementation

The advice given to parliaments and governments is demand-oriented and not restricted to specific topics. In the past, topics included agricultural trade policy, land rights, consumer health protection, types of inter-farm cooperation, organic farming, bio-energy and others. The long-term projects thus promote the exchange of information on agricultural policy and economy between the partner countries and the Federal Republic of Germany. The BMEL monitors these knowledge platforms very intensively.

Countries: China, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine



2. Demonstration projects as economic cooperation projects: Technology and knowledge transfer

The shortage of skilled workers is one of the main obstacles to the development of the agricultural sector. In cooperation with the industry and the partner countries, the BMEL provides support for the testing and transfer of efficient and sustainable production methods. Within these demonstration projects, skilled agricultural workers acquire practical skills and theoretical knowledge. This training is demand-driven and deals with technical, organisational and economic issues. The issues to be dealt with may include, for instance, housing systems, feed quality, animal breeding, environmental protection (use of slurry) or sustainable crop farming, soil preparation, variety selection, irrigation, handling and maintenance of technical equipment. German agricultural businesses are committed to providing modern technology and transferring know-how. The partner countries also make their own contributions (e.g. land, buildings, workforce).

Countries: China, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Mongolia, Ukraine and Zambia