

THE MADISON PRINCIPLES

Professional Standards for Cooperative Development Practitioners

Written by the members of CooperationWorks! in Madison, Wisconsin, 1995

- 1. Individuals providing technical assistance subscribe to the highest level of ethics and shall declare any conflict of interest, real or perceived, so that they can be a credible source of objective feedback and an articulate advocate of the project as needed.**
- 2. Cooperatives are tools for development and should promote both social empowerment and economic goals.**
- 3. Applied appropriately, cooperatives have value to all population groups and for all businesses and services in the public and private sectors.**
- 4. Each cooperative responds to its unique economic, social and cultural context; as a consequence, each cooperative is different.**
- 5. There are essential steps that must be taken in a critical path to succeed.**
- 6. An enthusiastic group of local, trustworthy leaders is a prerequisite for providing technical assistance. The effective cooperative development practitioner nurtures that leadership by helping them shape a vision that will unite members and provide ongoing training.**
- 7. Cooperatives only work when they are market driven; the development practitioner seeks to ensure that accurate market projections precede other development steps.**
- 8. Member control through a democratic process is essential for success.**
- 9. Success also depends on the commitment of the member's time and financial resources.**
- 10. There must be tangible economic benefits for members.**
- 11. The cooperative's products and services must generate sufficient revenue so that the effort can be financially self-sustaining. Provisions must be made to share any surplus equity.**
- 12. Market opportunities exist throughout the world. Cooperatives and market development should transcend national boundaries.**
- 13. Successful, established cooperatives should assist emerging cooperatives to develop. New and emerging cooperatives should be encouraged to communicate with and learn from successful cooperatives.**