

Caledonia Centre for Social Development

Summary of the Centre's 2004 Activities

April 2005

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Introduction

The Caledonia Centre for Social Development is a small virtual NGO based in Scotland. Membership is drawn from those actively working in the field of social development. The activities of the Centre are focussed on a limited number of programmes and projects agreed by the Board of Directors. The Centre has no paid staff and its activities are all carried out voluntarily or as part of the self-employed business of its members. During 2004 members financial tithes to the Centre amounted to £1,385 GBP while labour tithes amounted to 102 days. Labour tithes were donated to the following activities: Who Owns Scotland project - 38 days; Web-publishing and management – 40 days; peer review, consultations and project development – 24 days.

Co-Govern Project: An Africa – Europe Exchange on Common Property Rights

During 2004 Caledonia participated in *Co-Govern*, a 3-year European Union-funded project in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (www.iied.org) and five other organisations (3 African and 2 European). The project has three main objectives:

- ◆ to examine the changing status and availability of common property resources (CPR) in three regions of Africa – East, West and Southern;
- ◆ to engage with decision-makers to discuss policy options for the use and management of common property resources in the light of current processes of legislative and policy change; and
- ◆ to communicate ideas on common property resources management through networking, exchange, dialogue and analysis.

The principal activity during the year was participation by Andy Wightman in a workshop in Nakuru, Kenya in October with colleagues from partner organisations. A full report of the meeting will be available in 2005. This project comes to an end in May 2005. The Centre has agreed to host the website of the network for one year thereafter.

Common Property Rights – Commonweal of Scotland Project

In early 2002 the Centre launched its *Commonweal of Scotland* project. This initiative seeks to document and publish a series of working papers on aspects of common property rights and their management in Scotland. In recent years the topic has received little attention from researchers, civil society and policy makers.

During the year IIED published in its *Securing the Commons Series: A Brief Overview of Common Land in Scotland* (Wightman, Callander & Boyd). The document is available at: <http://www.iied.org/drylands/pubs/pastoralres.html> and <http://www.caledonia.org.uk/commonweal>

On-going work by David Reid to prepare a case study on the Dornoch Firth Mussel Fisheries an ancient common resource pool management venture.

The Centre continued to develop proposals for taking forward the next stage of its work on common property rights which will include a preliminary assessment of surviving commons in Scotland under a sub-project entitled *Mapping the Commons*. One aspect of this sub-project that has been advanced during the year is work relating to Burgh Commons or Common Good Land. The Centre is assisting in the planning of a conference in May 2005 on the topic and will be initiating preliminary research into surviving Burgh Commons following the coming into force of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. In addition, the Centre continues to collate information from various sources on possible surviving commons.

Web Publishing

The Centre runs 2 of the largest UK-based land reform web sites. One of the sites is devoted to: *land reform and land tenure issues* – www.caledonia.org.uk/land - while the other site – www.caledonia.org.uk/socialland - features articles, ideas and case studies relating to the growth and development of social land ownership – *non-profit distributing property associations*. The two web sites were launched in June 1999 and continue to receive a modest but steady stream of visits.

Both sites are focused on gathering and publishing grey and popular literature on land reform and social ownership. During the course of the year some 49 new articles were published on the land reform site – 41 of which were Scotland-related while 3 were UK-related and 5 international. 4 new articles were published on the socialland site.

The Centre on its main website – www.caledonia.org.uk - carries feature articles and material on: *the co-operative and social economy; poverty reduction; popular participation; new localism; and countervailing power*. This year 29 new articles were published – 19 articles on cooperative and credit union issues; 5 on hegemony/countervailing power; 4 on participatory development/research and 1 on

policy popularisation. In addition a whole new links page on national cooperative research institutions was prepared and published on the website.

Both the main Caledonia website and the land reform site operate *updating newsfeed sections*. The service provides a global selection of breaking and on-going news coverage about *poverty reduction, international development and land reform activities, issues and events*.

Who Owns Scotland Project

During the year, the Centre continued its involvement as a partner in this major project to document the ownership of land in Scotland. The www.whoownsscotland.org.uk website is being developed by one of the Caledonia Directors, Andy Wightman, and continues to attract widespread interest from across the world. As of 31 December 2004, the website was continuing to attract an average of over 4,000 visitors per week.

During 2004, we published a further 227 holdings on the site covering a total of 367,000 hectares. A total of 1,267 private land holdings are currently on the website. This accounts for just over 2.8 million hectares of rural land (43 percent of all privately owned land).

Land Rights Programme

During 2004, work continued to design a Land Rights Programme to promote the new land rights being conferred on rural communities by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Following commencement of the Act on 14 June 2004, we monitored the uptake of the legislation. In the Autumn we refined our proposals for delivering a programme of awareness, support and advice and built a pilot website to deliver this at www.landreformact.com. In December we submitted an application to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for funding to take the project forward.

Responses to Government Consultations

During the year the Centre responded to one Government consultation and assisted the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Cooperatives Branch to develop a concept paper for presentation to the Under Secretary of State for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

Cooperative Development Agency Consultation – Scottish Executive June 2004

In the Centre's view the major policy and institutional obstacles for a Cooperative Development Agency (CDA) are not lack of public or private business interest but discrimination and neglect by state actors and institutions operating in support of business development, employment training and regeneration activities. These actors and institutions in the past have not worked pro-actively or in tandem to create an enabling and non-discriminatory environment for member-controlled enterprise. In fact over the last several decades the leadership of these public institutions has often held strong negative attitudes towards cooperatives characterising them as *“old style development and thus a form of dependent state enterprise”*.

Scottish ministers, civil servants and other interested parties promoting the CDA will require to firmly tackle these systemic discriminatory policies and the staffs entrenched investor-controlled ideological attitudes. This requires that perspectives

about what the CDA can achieve in the short-term (3 to 5-years) need to be focussed and realistic given the extent of these obstacles in publicly funded enterprise support institutions. In addition greater consideration requires to be given to how the CDA can be funded over the long term so as not to be subjected to the whims of short-term public policy fashions and shrinking public funding.

The Centre considers that three particular features will ensure that the proposed CDA is fit-for-purpose and enjoys popular support from a broad range of stakeholders. These features are:

- ***International policy guidance*** on member-controlled enterprises provides a sound basis for inclusive and forward looking legislation, regulation and support to all forms of member-controlled businesses. Progressive international policy places member-controlled enterprise on an equal footing with investor-controlled enterprise through advocating for the removal of all forms of discriminatory barriers. This should be a key policy objective of Scottish ministers and the CDA.
- ***Incorporation using the Limited Liability Partnership form*** provides for a wide range of stakeholder involvement and a sound structure capable of adapting to future needs with the minimum of legal change. It also provides the basis for alternative longer term funding by enabling social banks and other types of financing to become stakeholders in the organisation - cooperatives, investors both corporate and individual, investment banks, trade unions, etc.
- ***Parliamentary regulation*** is necessary to enable the CDA to proof and challenge Scottish Enterprise's (SE) & Highlands and Islands Enterprise's (HIE) strategies, targets and financing policies with regard to all forms of member-controlled enterprise. In addition the CDA should have the specific mandate of advising and in some instances of delivering to the Enterprise Networks continued professional learning for their staffs on all forms of member-controlled businesses.

Concept Note on Partnership Working between Cooperative Development Agencies for Poverty Reduction, Wealth Creation and Decent Work.

At the request to the Cooperatives Branch of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) assistance was provided by Caledonia in the drafting of a short concept note. It identified three areas which lend themselves to international cooperative development agencies undertaking joint working:

- *A Cooperatives for Africa Facility;*
- *A Cooperative Resource Centre; and*
- *A Global Cooperative Research and Policy Observatory.*

The concept note was presented to Gareth Thomas MP, UK Under-Secretary of State for International Development (DFID) who expressed interest in collaborating with the ILO on undertaking the initial feasibility work on a *Cooperative Facility for Africa*.

Technical Cooperation Partnerships

Tanzanian Technical Cooperation Partnership on National Policy Popularisation

The Centre is providing technical assistance to an innovative Tanzanian social justice NGO – Hakikazi Catalyst (www.hakikazi.org). Hakikazi works to promote the use of plain language in the popularisation of national policies. This is cutting edge policy popularisation work with countrywide coverage. During 2004 this has included work on a range of illustrated plain language materials dealing with:

- Agriculture Sector Development Strategy
- National Forest Programme
- National Beekeeping Programme
- National Trade Policy
- Small and Medium Enterprise Development Policy
- Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP)
- “How policies are made in Tanzania” link
http://www.hakikazi.org/plain_language.htm

The Centre has also worked with Hakikazi Catalyst in developing its web presence and in the production of a volume of development cartoons from the inspired minds of Ally Masoud (Kipanya) and Nathan Mpangala.

“No more broken promises?” (an illustrated plain language guide to the *Millennium Development Goals - MDGs*) was produced with Hakikazi Catalyst for UNDP in 2003. The Guide, in draft form, was distributed electronically to over 3,000 people within the UN system and has been translated in parts into French, Portuguese and Russian. There are plans to have a printed version ready for a major UNDP Summit in 2005. Draft 4 is available online at www.srds.co.uk/mdg.

Other Caledonia related activities and assignments

Assistance with the production of a set of in-house guidelines for linking World Bank /IMF *Poverty Reduction Strategies* (PRSs) to the International Labour Organisation’s (ILOs) *Decent Work Agenda*. This work undertaken with ILO Geneva.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/integration/departme/national/prsp/download/prsrefmanual.pdf>

Completed work on *“Auditing Poverty in Tanzania – a joint approach at local government level”* and an associated online training compendium. (www.srds.co.uk/uapp2) - (With the Urban Authorities Partnership Project within the President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG), Tanzania)

Assistance with the design of plain language advocacy materials for *Early Childhood Development*. This work was undertaken for the AMANI Foundation, Tanzania.