

PN AB4-280

94343

**PILOT PROJECT FOR  
FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKETING**

**A REVIEW OF THE "AGDERUMKA"  
FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL GROUPS**

Submitted to:  
Agency for International Development (AID)  
Chad

Submitted by:  
Agricultural Cooperative Development International  
(ACDI)

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November, 1992

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## SUMMARY

This report documents the development and functioning of the Association for the Rural Development of Mani and Karal (AGDERUMKA), a Federation of agricultural groups. In this report, four aspects of the federation are examined in detail; background and development, structure and function, the financial situation, and the prospects for the future.

The federation is an agriculture oriented, grass-roots organization dedicated to improving the well-being of farmer members. ACDI/Chad has been substantially involved with the creation and development of the organization and has worked closely with the federation in the implementation of the project interventions. ACDI has recognized the importance of the Federation in addressing many farmer problems and has focused many of its resources on strengthening the Federation and leading it toward organizational and financial sustainability.

### Background

The first generation of agricultural groups in the zone were formed in the early 1980's. These groups were seen by area farmers and recent migrants as a vehicle for procuring food aid and gifts. Unfortunately, these agricultural groups were beset by malaise, misadministration and outright embezzlement. The Catholic Relief and Development Association (SECADEV) has since worked to give these groups a development focus. Paralleling the development of agricultural groups is the increasing importance of dry season vegetable cultivation. As vegetable production began to exceed local consumption demands, farmers turned toward the markets in N'Djamena.

At the end of 1990, ACDI initiated the construction of a vegetable storage and processing facility on the outskirts of the village of Karal. Some 61 groupements comprising just over a thousand farmers agreed to participate. These groups later became federated under the acronym, AGDERUMKA, and undertook the creation of a member owned and operated wholesale warehouse in the Cholera Market in N'Djamena.

### Structure

The existing management structure of the Federation has largely been created by the farmers themselves in response to their felt needs. Its foundation is the General Assembly where important decisions are arrived at through traditional methods of consensus. The General Assembly elects a board of directors which is actively involved in the day to day activities of the Federation.

The single most significant Federation venture is the construction of a point of sale warehouse in the Cholera Market. A sub-committee of the board has been formed to supervise the warehouse operations. The responsibility of daily operations falls to the General Manager, which is currently the only remunerated position within AGDERUMKA.

The Permanent Secretary carries out most of the day to day business conducted at the Federation headquarters in Karal.

### **Finances**

The financial situation is surprisingly strong considering the newness of the organization and the lack of accounting experience by its members. It has been plagued by a lack of sound accounting procedures, but the ACDI project has been providing training and the officers responsible have responded with enthusiasm. The accrued debt is small and can be easily covered with available assets. The revenues from the warehouse operation are meeting operating costs, but financial sustainability cannot be determined until the Federation has operated throughout a complete vegetable cropping season.

### **The Future**

AGDERUMKA is a young, unproven organization that faces a number of obstacles to its continued operation. The issues of its financial viability, the effective use of members resources and the participation of all agricultural groups are ones which the Federation will have to address. In the short term, the coming vegetable season will be an important test of the appropriateness of the Federation. The Federation will be attempting to establish itself as the major supplier of vegetable seeds and the major outlet for marketing of fresh and dried produce for the farmers in the Karal area. In the long term, AGDERUMKA must develop the capacity to exist as a self-supporting institution able to operate independently of outside monetary and management support.

Member farmers see the ultimate purpose of the Federation as improving the quality of life. They speak of the Warehouse and other enterprises as not only providing agriculturally related services to the area, but also as being a profitable business venture which will enable them to develop the area. They plan to invest profits into projects and programs such as water supply, education, and health. Within this framework, the most effective role for outside assistance is that of institutional capacity building.

## BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEDERATION "AGDERUMKA"

As of October 1992, the Association for the Rural Development of Mani and Karal (AGDERUMKA) is less than a year old and has yet to play an active role throughout an entire agricultural season. As such, this report is as much an examination of the forces that lead up to the creation of the Federation as an account of the Federation itself. The enterprises undertaken by AGDERUMKA are even more recent than the Federation which created them, and it is far too early to draw any definitive conclusion on their success or failure. The strengths and weaknesses of AGDERUMKA, along with the opportunities and threats it faces, that will be examined and discussed.

### Setting and Early History

The area south of Lake Chad, from which the membership of AGDERUMKA is drawn, is historically one of the regions of Chad that is culturally and linguistically Arab<sup>1</sup>. The Kanembou and the Hausa also have long standing ties to this area and form a significant minority within the Arab milieu. Nomadic populations of Arabs, Fulata and Goran (Kreda) with accompanying livestock periodically pass through this region as part of the normal pattern of transhumance.

In the early 1980's, Chad witnessed not only considerable political instability and civil unrest, but also the effects of a severe, protracted drought throughout the Sahel. The resulting famine prompted mass migrations from devastated peripheral areas toward the relatively well supplied capital city of N'Djamena. In an effort to halt the mass in-migration of dislocated peoples, the GOC and various NGO's (most importantly CARE Chad) established feeding centers and various Food for Work schemes. As a direct result of the success of these interventions large numbers of non-arab peoples from the north and central regions of the country settled permanently along the southern shore of the lake. This radically altered the demographic makeup of the region and has socio-political ramifications which continue to influence organizational dynamics.

The creation of formal, locally based agricultural groups was initiated by CARE and Chadian National Office of Rural

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<sup>1</sup> While Chadian Arabic is the market language of north and central Chad, most people speak it as a second language, conversing among themselves in a distinct local language and identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group. In contrast, the majority of inhabitants of the region around Karal speak Arabic as a first language and identify themselves as ethnic Arabs.

Development (ONDR) as part of resettlement efforts beginning in 1982-1983. In the eyes of area farmers and recent migrants, these agricultural groups were seen (with some justification) as a vehicle for procuring food aid and similar gifts. With the expectation of handouts as the principal motivation for joining a group, it is hardly surprising that this first generation of agricultural groups was plagued by malaise, misadministration and outright embezzlement. Into this scene the Catholic Relief and Development Association (SECADEV) began working to address the organizational problems of the agricultural groups and to reorient them away from relief efforts and toward development concerns. By 1986, this reorientation was well underway and all of the agricultural groups which are now a part of AGDERUMKA had been formed.

### **Fruit and Vegetable Cultivation**

Paralleling the development of agricultural groups is the increasing importance of dry season vegetable cultivation, especially tomatoes, melons and okra as cash crops. Local legend has it that tomato cultivation began in 1980 when a local female merchant obtained some packets of 'Libyan' seeds. Whatever the origin, tomato production was widely adopted. By the mid 1980's tomatoes were regularly cultivated in rain depression and recession lake bed fields. As production exceeded local consumption demands, farmers began increasingly to orient themselves toward the lucrative and undersupplied wholesale market in N'Djamena. By the late 1980's, increased production resulted in peak season saturation of the N'Djamena wholesale market. During the 1992 season, the farm gate prices that the producer in the field received for his produce often fell below production costs during the peak of the season.

### **Project Assistance in Fruit and Vegetable Marketing (ACDI)**

A concept paper outlining what was to become the Pilot Project for Fruit and Vegetable Marketing was submitted to USAID/Chad in March 1988 by Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI). The Karal project site was to focus on post-harvest techniques, transportation, storage and marketing. Project implementation in Karal began in September 1990, with the arrival of an ACDI Product Engineer.

The first activity undertaken was the construction of a project site on the outskirts of Karal adjacent to an FAO financed grain storehouse operated by Karal area agricultural groups. Agricultural groups from Gredaya in the east to AmDerabye along the Chari river in the west were encouraged to associate with the project and contribute toward the construction of the Karal Facilities. Some 61 groups comprising just over a thousand farmers agreed to participate with a cash contribution of 16,980 CFA from each group for a total contribution of 1,035,780 CFA,

about \$3,350. The money collected was used to construct a conditioning and processing room, two fresh produce storage rooms and two rooms to accommodate visitors.

Through a combination of miscommunication and misinformation, farmers understood the conditioning and processing room to be a small factory for canning tomatoes, and thought the cool storage rooms would be used for refrigerating or freezing their produce. Many farmers believed that their fresh tomatoes could be stored for three months and then would be sold when the market was more favorable.

### **Creation of AGDERUMKA**

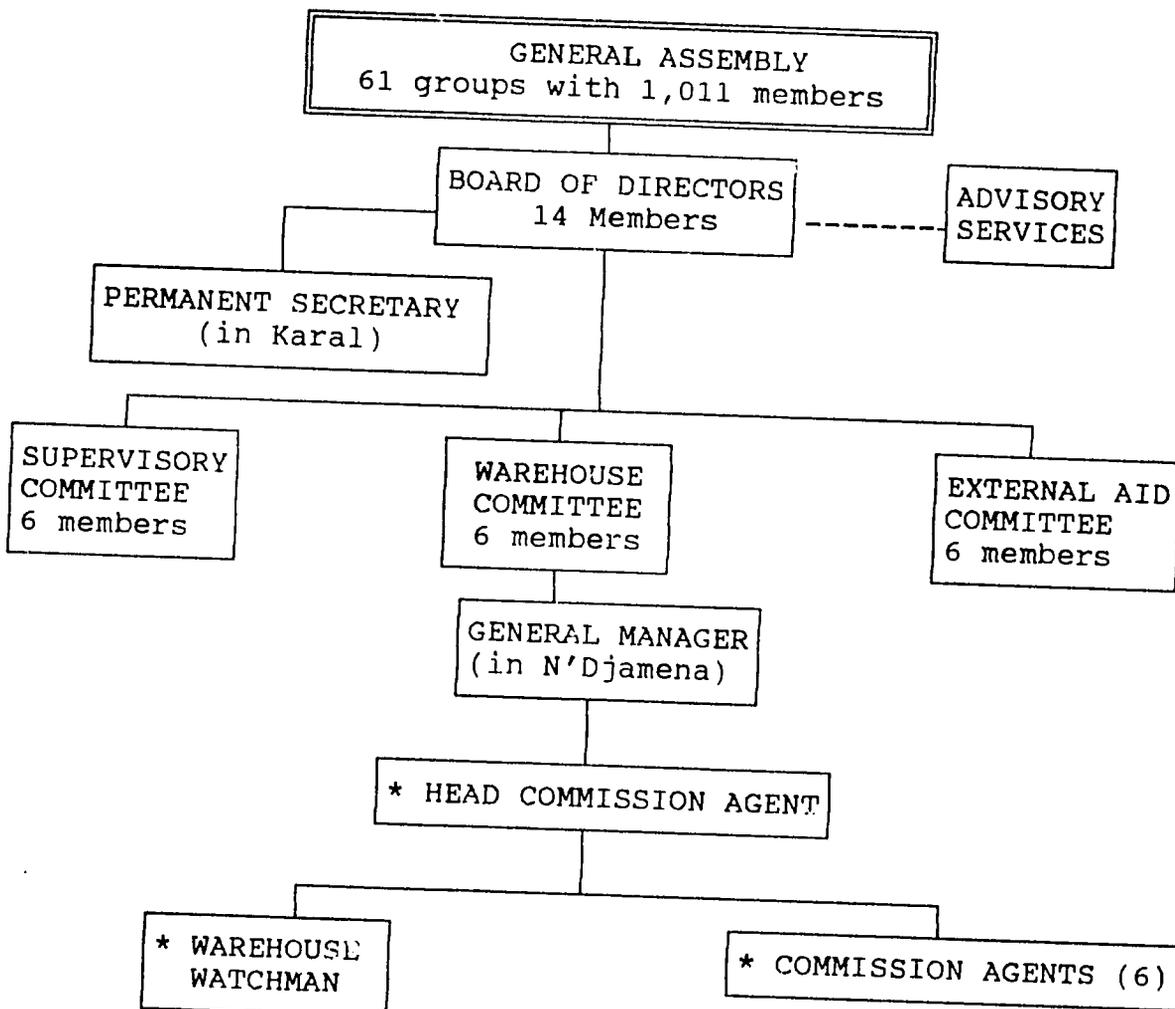
In August 1991, the ONDR and SECADEV agreed with ACIDI's proposal that the groups participating in the construction should be federated in a formal umbrella organization. After a general meeting, the representatives of the groups involved approved the creation of AGDERUMKA. In October 1991, a Board of Directors was elected and formal statutes and interior regulations were adopted. AGDERUMKA was legally recognized as an agricultural group by the Ministry of Trade and Industry in January 1992.

The first project initiated and directed by the Federation was the creation of a member owned and operated point of wholesale outlet. The construction of a warehouse at the Cholera market in N'Djamena was financed by the members' capital of 2,000 CFA per member and a one time fee of 4,000 CFA collected from each of the groupements. In April 1992, the 300 square meter tin roofed, earth brick warehouse began functioning as a point of wholesale in the Cholera Market of N'Djamena. Members had originally hoped to establish a point of sale in the Central Market, which is the largest and most important of the daily markets in N'Djamena, where almost all the tomatoes in the city are sold at wholesale. The Federation was unable to obtain space in the crowded central market and settled instead on the Cholera Market which has traditional ties to Karal area producers.

## STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION

The management procedures of the newly created AGDERUMKA are at a stage of growth and creation where the overall structure and day to day functions are just now beginning to become part of a defined and planned routine. Chadian cooperative legislation is currently in flux as a result of the recent change in governments. The Ministry of Trade and Industry at the moment provides only the most general guidelines for the organization of cooperatives. The existing structure of the Federation has largely been created by the farmers themselves in response to their felt needs.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF AGDERUMKA**



\*Denotes non-members

## **The General Assembly**

The General Assembly meetings, where at least half of agricultural groups must be represented, forms the base of AGDERUMKA and is the final arbitrator in all matters. In theory, decisions are made by the general assembly on the principal of one member, one vote, majority rule. In practice most decisions are arrived at through the more traditional method of consensus. It is usually only when prompted by development agents that actual up/down votes are taken. This process of informal consensus insures that decisions taken are more likely to be followed since everyone and not simply a majority has adopted the decision. However, this tends to exclude from the decision making process younger, lower status members and women who are unlikely to contradict the sentiments of the older high status men who are the core decision makers. In practice, younger low status men are present only in small numbers and the nine women's groups are rarely represented.

Though required to meet only twice a year to review the activities of the Federation, the general assembly is presently meeting the first week of every month. The meetings are held at different villages on a rotational basis. One of the results of the frequency of these meetings is that the general membership has the opportunity to have an active voice in the actions taken by the Federation. However the logistical support required to gather together 60 or more farmers from 9 different villages each month has so far only been carried out with the use of SECADEV and ACDI vehicles. If the members were forced to rely on non-project transport such a schedule of meetings would be difficult if not impossible. In addition to providing logistical support representatives from SECADEV, ONDR, and ACDI have been present at each meeting of the General Assembly.

## **The Board of Directors**

Elected directly by the General Assembly, the Board of Directors has played an active role in all the activities of the Federation. The Board of Directors usually only meets formally at the monthly, general assembly meeting or to receive outside guests interested in AGDERUMKA such as USAID or SECADEV officials. Informal meetings often take place on major market days or on the occasion of important social events such as Islamic holy days or dignitaries' funerals.

As a whole, the directors have displayed commitment and determination in attempting to mold AGDERUMKA into a viable enterprise. None of the directors receives monetary compensation for their work and all spend extensive time away from their personal fields on Federation business. Much of what the organization has been able to accomplish is a direct result of the work of the Directors.

The President in particular has taken a very active role in daily operations. His role as President is one that he takes very seriously and he has a strong personal commitment to the success of AGDERUMKA. When the Federation has been unable to promptly supply the cash needed to operate their Warehouse he has stepped in with his own funds to fill the gaps.

### **Supervisory Committee**

This newly created committee is charged with auditing the federation and regulating disputes which might arise. It has yet to meet or take any formal action.

### **External Aid and Transportation Committee**

Created at the same time as the supervisory committee, the External Aid committee has as its primary task the coordination of transport during harvest periods. During the last vegetable harvest, the Federation attempted to implement systematic tours to regulate the transport of fresh tomatoes to the N'Djamena wholesale market. For the coming season, the External Aid committee will take the lead in designing and attempting to enforce the tour schedule.

This committee is also responsible for encouraging farmers to abide by AGDERUMKA's request requiring all members to wholesale their produce in the Federation operated Cholera Market warehouse. Enforcement of this proved problematic during the 1992 season as the Federation had no effective sanctions to penalize violators and it wasn't until well into the season that the warehouse was functioning as a point of wholesale. Understandably, many area producers were reluctant to switch in mid-season from known markets and trusted commission agents to the untested Federation facility. Whether area producers will be willing to bring their produce to the warehouse this year depends largely on the AGDERUMKA's ability to establish the warehouse as a credible market with a significant and reliable clientele.

### **Warehouse and Subscription Committee**

The difficult proposition of turning the new warehouse into a market force is one of the major tasks facing the newly formed Warehouse and Subscription Committee. Until the creation of this committee, the Board of Directors was in charge of overseeing the functioning of the warehouse. In practice, it was the President who took an active hand in almost every aspect of warehouse operations from construction implementation to personnel management.

It is expected that the committee will begin assuming most of the responsibilities that currently fall on the President. Committee members have begun work on the creation of a detailed business

plan for the warehouse that includes the objectives and a budgetary/financial analysis of the facility. After formulating their informational needs in the business plan members have begun to create and implement a simplified accounting system in Chadian Arabic. Work in this area is being undertaken with the consultation of ACDI staff.

### **Warehouse General Manager**

When the General Manager was initially elected to his position by the Board of Directors there was no salary or compensation attached to the position. Consequently, rather than move to N'Djamena with an uncertain income, the Manager chose to stay in Karal and continue working in his fields. After an extended affair during which the Board dismissed and then re-elected the Manager an agreement was reached to remunerate the position at 25,000 CFA per month. As a result of this agreement and repeated assurances that he would in fact be paid, the General Manager moved to N'Djamena and assumed his position in August 1992.

While the salary question was being debated, the Federation was left without a full-time representative at its own warehouse. The predictably chaotic organizational situation that this produced is slowly being brought under control by the General Manager who, despite his initial recalcitrance, has approached his new job with vigor. In the organizational structure, the Manager is directly responsible to the Warehouse Committee and he actively participates with them in the creation of the Warehouse business plan.

### **Commission Agents**

Various people initially assumed the roles of marketing intermediaries after the warehouse opened for business. These original intermediaries have been superseded by 6 professional commission agents under the control of a head agent. Though none have been admitted to membership in the federation, these commission agents have strong familial ties to the Karal area.<sup>2</sup>

All of these agents currently operating in the Federation warehouse were originally employed by a competing, point of wholesale warehouse. After the Federation facility had been functioning for several months they offered their services as a group. This proposition was accepted and now they conduct almost all of the day to day business transactions. They are directly responsible to the general manager.

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<sup>2</sup> The Board of Directors has so far declined to admit any permanent N'Djamena residents as members of AGDERUMKA out of fear of losing control of their operations.

The functions carried out by the commission agents is almost identical to that of commission agents employed in other points of wholesale throughout N'Djamena. The commission agent is a marketing intermediary between the producer/trader and the retailer/client. The agent negotiates the price of sale on behalf of the producer/trader and conducts the actual cash transaction. For each unit sold the agent receives a 250 CFA commission. From this commission the agent pays fees for handling, warehouse use, and a municipal tax.

Intermediary Commission Per Unit		
Commission	250	CFA
Fees Handling	(50)	CFA
Warehouse	(50)	CFA
<u>City Tax</u>	<u>(25)</u>	<u>CFA</u>
Profit	125	CFA

Originally, the fee schedule contained an additional 25 CFA charge destined for the Federation but at the request of intermediaries this fee was later dropped. The waving of this fee may have something to do with the defection of the intermediaries from the private warehouse to the Federation. However, available information indicates that the fee schedule outlined above conforms closely with others in use in N'Djamena. The 50 CFA per unit fee paid by intermediaries and the 200 CFA fee charged for storage over 15 days are presently the only sources of revenue for the facility.

### Permanent Secretary

The need for an established presence at the Federation headquarters in Karal led the Board of Directors to create the non-remunerated position of Permanent Secretary. The member who filled this position has a long history as a respected leader in agricultural group activities. During his short tenure, the position of Permanent Secretary has already taken a series of important roles and responsibilities. The secretary controls the Federation cash box kept in Karal, issuing receipts and recording transactions. He also maintains the membership/dues register. Normally these tasks would fall to the treasurer of the board of directors but the man who hold the position of treasurer is illiterate and lives in a smaller remote village making it difficult, if not impossible, for him to carry out these duties. The Permanent Secretary also oversees the seed supply business

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<sup>3</sup> The '100kg' sack in the case of grains or tubers, or the tea case for tomatoes and melons.

that AGDERUMKA has undertaken in the Karal area. He is also expect to play a role in the dried produce 'banking'.

## FINANCIAL SITUATION

The financial situation of the AGDERUMKA Federation can be summarized by the statement of the secretary "All beginnings are hard." The construction of the warehouse was undertaken with energy and enthusiasm and in the haste to complete the project details such as receipts and accounting were sometimes overlooked. Since the completion of the warehouse, the Federation has made an effort to gather together the relevant information and put in place appropriate accounting and management procedures.

### A Look at the Balance Sheet

As part of their on-going management training, the members of the warehouse committee and general manager worked to draw up an initial balance sheet<sup>4</sup> for the warehouse. An examination of the balance sheet reveals a surprisingly strong financial standing for such a young cooperative enterprise."

- Current assets are more than adequate to cover current liabilities and provide a significant reserve for liquid operating capital.
- The value of the Warehouse land and building is more than 3 times that of the long term debts, giving the Federation a wide margin for future borrowing.
- Members' equity represents some 75% of total assets, meaning that the members share of the cooperatives assets are 3 times as much as the creditors share.

One area of difficulty for the warehouse is in the area of receivables, as a general rule receivables should not exceed 40% of current assets. The balance sheet reveals that 73% of current assets are in the form of receivables. This means that the Federations "cash on hand" isn't on hand and that they are losing potential income by having much of their assets tied up in

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<sup>4</sup> As few accounting terms exist in Chadian Arabic, members of the Federation have had to devise their own terminology. The discussion on what to call the balance sheet is an interesting example of this: The term eventually adopted was 'Mizzania' meaning literally 'in balance' which corresponds quite nicely with the English 'balance sheet' a term with which none of the participants were familiar.

<sup>5</sup> Following guidelines prepared by professor Howard Whitney, The University Center for Cooperatives, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1974)

receivables. The receivables listed under current assets represent uncollected member shares. In order to address this financial shortcoming, and complete the membership roster the warehouse committee has decided to visit all the villages concerned to collect the outstanding monies.

### Turning a Profit

It would be premature at this point to call the warehouse a profitable enterprise. The managers are only just now beginning to have an idea of what normal operating expenses and possible revenues are. The difficult proposition of establishing profitability was compounded at first by the lack of a general manager to keep track of the situation and then by torrential rains in N'Djamena which weakened and caused a partial collapse of the earth-brick walls of the warehouse. In any case, a true measure of profitability would have to include a complete vegetable season when Federation farmers will be marketing the lions share of tomatoes, okra, and melons sold in N'Djamena.

If in fact AGDERUMKA is successful in compelling all or most of its members to wholesale their produce in the warehouse, then the enterprise should see a considerable profit. During the 'off season' the warehouse provided storage space for large quantities of dried grains. The majority of this grain must be sold before January if there is to be enough room to handle fresh vegetables. The general manager has suggested that a strict enforcement of the storage fees, which are now largely uncollected, would go a long way toward both solving this problem and raising revenues.

INITIAL BALANCE SHEET  
CHOLERA WAREHOUSE  
AGDERUMKA

September 12, 1992

CURRENT ASSETS	(In CFA)	(In Dollars) @ 250:1
Cash	40.000	160
Bank Account	200.000	800
Receivables	670.000	2,680
FIXED ASSETS		
Building	1.600.000	6,400
Land	285.000	1,140
Office Equipment	75.000	300
TOTAL ASSETS	2.870.000	11,480
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CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	15.000	60
Loans Payable	100.000	400
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES		
Personal Loan	245.000	980
City Land	235.000	940
CAPITAL		
Members Shares	2.022.000	8,088
Construction Collections	100.000	400
Donations	75.000	300
Other Sources	78.000	312
TOTAL LIABILITIES/CAPITAL	2.870.000	11,480

## THE FUTURE OF "AGDERUMKA"

"In the long run, agricultural improvement depends as much on people working together as it does on their acquiring know-how."

-Ronald Bunch  
*Two Ears of Corn*

"We did not come together to create a small future. We have come together to create a large future."

-AlGoni Issa, Member of AGDERUMKA

Since its origin as a collection of groupements united primarily by their common contribution to the construction of facilities in Karal, the AGDERUMKA federation has evolved rapidly. It has created an operational structure, identified and mobilized its resources, defined objectives and begun activities to further those objectives. The question must now be posed as to whether the Federation is an institution that can respond effectively to the felt needs of area farmers and to overcome their general problems in agriculture and particularly in marketing. The 1993 vegetable season will be a crucial test of whether the organization in its present form is up to the tasks which it has taken on. If the Federation is to succeed, the issues of its financial viability, the effective use of members resources and the participation of all groupements will have to be resolved.

### The Coming Season

The Federation's financial viability depends largely on the success of the warehouse operations as an income generating activity. The Federation has the period of the 1993 vegetable season to convince area farmers that the warehouse in the Cholera market will be an acceptable alternative site for their wholesaling and it is to their advantage to support the Federation. The seed supply operation being undertaken by the Federation in Karal shows considerable potential to provide both a service to members and boost to Federation finances. The members will continue to look for income opportunities to sustain the Federation.

However, revenues alone are not enough to ensure the permanence of the Federation. In order for this to come about, the Federation will need continued assistance in the areas of cooperative management and business skills. Care must be taken to insure that the needed skills are fully internalized by members of the Federation. Although the members are keen to participate in training and are very willing learners, they do not have a tradition of the type of formal management which is necessary to operate an organization of this size and complexity.

An important issue facing AGDERUMKA is the use of the Federation facilities in Karal. It is now clear that the facilities will not be used to can or freeze farmers' produce in Karal and the Federation must now find a use for the buildings they have constructed that is satisfactory to all the groups that have contributed their money. To AGDERUMKA's credit, the building has become a central point for Federation business and meetings. It has also begun to function as a point of sale for vegetable seeds and a storage facility for dried produce. The expansion of these activities in the coming year will go a long way toward efficiently using the facilities at hand. However, much work remains. If it is to avoid becoming a large, well intentioned, white elephant, the building must become a focal point of farmers activities. The question of participation is especially relevant to the nine women's groups that are a part of the federation. If the women's groups and other more geographically remote groups are not brought in to play a more significant role, there will be little reason for them to continue as part of AGDERUMKA. As a first step, the dried produce banking operations that the Federation will be undertaking this season, with the assistance of ACDI, has the potential to involve the women's groups more closely with the Federation.

### **The Long Term**

If AGDERUMKA is able to deal with the immediate issues of financial viability, use of resources, and involvement of member groupements then it will have to demonstrate that it has the capacity to address farmers' concerns. At this point, the question of sustainability becomes paramount. For an institution to be truly self sustaining, it must eventually have the capacity to finance itself. With its lack of management experience in organizational procedures and accounting, it is quite likely that the Federation would not be able to survive. To strengthen the Federation ACDI technical assistance should focus project resources on the building of the institutional capacity and the development of business skills.

If the Federation can develop as a member-owned, agricultural institution, the potential for a positive impact at the grass-roots level is significant. The people associated with the Federation would experience much more than a simple, one time increase in their farm revenues. They would gain a measure of control over their marketing decisions. In the feast and famine world of the rural poor it is often the lack of information about technical and organizational changes affecting marketing and how to effectively respond to it, as much as difficulties of agricultural production which keep farmers locked into their poverty. The seasonality of their deprivation forces them to sell low and buy high. Through institutions such as AGDERUMKA, farmer members of the groups can begin to overcome some of these seasonal pressures. If successful, organizations such as

AGDERUMKA have the effect of empowering their members not only with respect to their marketing decisions, but in a broader social-political sense.

For the rural farmers who make up AGDERUMKA, the world is not neatly divided into categories of agricultural marketing, mother and child health, education or small enterprise development. For the farmer, all of these are woven together in a single cloth. They see the goal of the Federation not in terms of increasing marketing efficiency, or even providing higher farmer revenues, rather the farmers see the ultimate purpose of the Federation as improving the quality of life. They speak of the warehouse and other enterprises as not only rendering agricultural services, but also as providing funds for general development. They plan to invest profits in projects and programs that can address such concerns as water supply, education, and health. An example of this has been AGDERUMKA's interest in the Tubewell Hand Pump, and their willingness to finance the training of Federation members in its construction and installation.

The farmers' holistic point of view has much to recommend it. The success or failure of an institution such as AGDERUMKA cannot be gauged solely by increased revenues for individual farmers or reduced produce losses during marketing, though this certainly is an important part of the measure. In the end, the success of AGDERUMKA depends on the degree to which it provides members with a framework to address their problems, those that exist now, and those that will arrive with tomorrow. The farmers of AGDERUMKA have set before themselves a "large future"; one not to be confined by the limited boundaries of individual donor projects, but to be defined as broadly as needed by the farmers themselves. The technical assistance provided by this and other projects has an obligation to understand this wider view and, to the extent possible, work within it toward goals and objectives that have relevance and meaning to the farmers themselves.