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“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:
Sustainable and organic approaches to meet human needs”

SUSTAINET - Networking for Sustainable Agriculture to Combat Poverty

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Abstract

SUSTAINET - Sustainable Agriculture Information Network aims to systematically evaluate, communicate and disseminate successful approaches and concepts of sustainable agriculture in selected pilot regions.

In developing countries, 75% of the poor live in rural areas. Agriculture is their main source of income. For the purpose of poverty reduction, agriculture is therefore pivotal. SUSTAINET has identified sustainable examples of good agricultural practices which are capable of bringing about a lasting reduction in rural poverty, and which have the potential for scaling up.

The goals of SUSTAINET are to demonstrate the importance of sustainable agriculture for poverty reduction and global food security; to scale up promising pilot approaches and ensure that they no longer remain one-off solutions; and to engage in political lobbying in order to establish firm foundations and enabling conditions in the national context.

SUSTAINET networks have been established among institutions at local, regional and international level. SUSTAINET is composed of a German network and three further networks in the pilot regions of India, Kenya/Tanzania and Peru/Bolivia.

In Germany, members of the network include both state institutions (the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the German Council for Sustainable Development) and non-governmental organisations (Brot für die Welt, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe and Misereor).

As a first step, the network selected examples of good practices in sustainable agriculture. Its local partners evaluated the pilot projects using a self-assessment tool developed in the course of SUSTAINET. They wrote up their success stories during a Sustainet-Writershop. The results have then been published in a book series: Sustainable Agriculture - A pathway out of poverty for the rural poor (available at: www.sustainet.org).

Furthermore an analysis matrix to assess the scaling up potential of the selected good agricultural practices was developed.

Through SUSTAINET local and international communication structures and networks have been established. These are the basis for the active exchange and strategy dialogue with key actors based in the partner countries or involved in German and international development cooperation.

Keywords: Good agricultural practices, network, poverty reduction, scaling up, sustainable agriculture

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