

## **Testimony and Service**

**Memorandum about the cooperation  
of the Protestant Ministries and ICCO abroad**

**MDO 09-02**

## Inhoud

1	Profile Kerk in Actie abroad: Mission – World Poor Relief – Development Cooperation	3
1.1	Mandate	3
1.2	Vision	3
1.3	Discipleship	3
2	Characteristics of Kerk in Actie	4
2.1	Ecclesiastical character	4
2.2	Partnership	4
2.3	Mission and Poor Relief	4
2.4	Mutuality	4
2.5	Communication	5
2.6	International cooperation	5
3	Kerk in Actie and ICCO	6
3.1	Cooperation	6
3.2	Interim report	6
3.3	The status of affairs	6
3.4	Identity	7
3.5	Mission	8
3.6	Hendrik Kraemer Institute (HKI)	8
3.7	World diaconal work and development	9
3.8	Together	9
3.9	Interactive	10
3.10	Impulsis	10
3.11	Ecumenism	11
4	New steps in the cooperation	12
4.1	ProCoDe	12
4.2	Kerk in Actie and ProCoDe	12
4.3	A new road to walk on	13
4.4	Opportunities	13
4.5	Organization	14
5	Final remarks	15

# **1 Profile Kerk in Actie abroad: Mission – World Poor Relief – Development Cooperation**

Memorandum about the cooperation of the Protestant Ministries (Kerk in Actie) and ICCO (Dutch NGO organization) abroad

## **1.1 Mandate**

The mandate of the program Kerk in Actie is to support and partly execute – on behalf of the general synod of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands and with that of the 1800 congregations and their 2.1 million members - the world diaconal- and missionary work of those congregations. Kerk in Actie is, with an approach of its own, part of the broad movement of (protestant) Christians which want to share faith, hope and love with others. Kerk in Actie applies itself for the most vulnerable people, for people in need and for a more righteous world. Parts of the work are executed also on behalf of ten smaller ecumenical churches and organizations.

## **1.2 Vision**

Kerk in Actie derives motivation and inspiration for the work from the liberating and life-renewing Gospel that God made Himself known in Jesus Christ. We believe that God makes Himself known to people over and over again in the world and across all sorts of borders. We find the basis and the means for our work in the alliance with the community and the movement of the faithful, which is of all times and all places. Fundamentally the purpose of our work is to be witnesses of the coming Kingdom of God. Allied with others we may make something visible of the life and the world as we believe it was intended by God.

## **1.3 Discipleship**

Kerk in Actie works in discipleship of Jesus Christ. We are aware to be supported by the power of the Holy Spirit which calls us to testimony, to love our fellowmen, to compliance and to advance justice. In mission work we direct ourselves for people to get to know Jesus Christ and become His followers. We apply ourselves for people in their own context to experience liberation, reconciliation and encouragement from the Gospel and build bridges over borders to others, individually as well as together. In the diaconal work we are involved with people in their social circumstances and with the world and the society in full. In the religious diaconal tradition purpose and direction of this involvement are concisely put into words as: compassion, justice and stewardship. In this people are essential and also the careful protection and preservation of the entire creation, including animals and plants.

## **2 Characteristics of Kerk in Actie**

### **2.1 Ecclesiastical character**

Characteristic for the work of Kerk in Actie is that we are part of an international network of (protestant-Christian) churches, religious organizations and organizations allied to churches. By preference we cooperate with organizations in this network. The strength of the network is that it is branched worldwide into small villages and in a multitude of organizations and passes into all layers of the population. By means of employed staff Kerk in Actie stays in direct contact with a number of these churches and organizations. Within this network religious congregations can have direct relations with partner-congregations, often in small-scale projects. The responsibility the partners want to have in their own environment with great involvement of volunteers provide the work with a basis that reaches beyond one administration-period. The relations in this partner network are in the first place of an ecumenical character and are deeper than merely financing projects. They are however variable in intensity, which means that we do not execute missionary or world diaconal projects with all partners in each administration period.

### **2.2 Partnership**

We want to be a reliable partner and want to remain present in politically and religiously sensitive areas and complex situations where there are fractures in society and changes can not be realized at short notice. The network of our religious partners enables us to be present there and do the work for which other organizations or the governments have no opportunities. This implies that the mutual discussion with (religious) partners is sometimes on a critical or prophetic note and that we learn from each other. It remains a task for challenge for Kerk in Actie to meet this challenge in cooperation with ICCO in the years ahead. The policy of the Dutch government is aimed at limiting the number of countries being assisted with its government subsidies. Financing by Kerk in Actie resources may help solving some bottlenecks.

### **2.3 Mission and Poor Relief**

Characteristic for our work is the attention with respect to content for the connection between mission, world poor relief and pastoral work. The impact of our work is reinforced by it. For example the battle against poverty and exclusion profits from reinforcing the community and contesting prejudice by pastoral work at the same time. Religion is an important factor in our work, for example in dialogue and working on peace and reconciliation in conflict areas.

### **2.4 Mutuality**

A shifting took place in the mission- and diaconal work and as well in the development work during the past century, in which critical reflections on partnership, mutuality, conceptuality and alliance influenced the policy. There is more awareness of equality, of the necessity for a critical dialogue and of the necessity to work and to think in a shared responsibility of the various partners and with various actors striving for the same goals. Partnership and mutuality are essential features of our work. We realize this in our programs. In the support of local

congregations it takes shape in direct involvement, encounters, sympathy and exchange. These are of great importance for realizing the diaconal and missionary calling and for the recognition of the work in private fundraising.

## **2.5 Communication**

Kerk in Actie works by order of the Protestant Church and its congregations. It is of great importance that the congregations recognize themselves in the work and can actively participate in the scope of mutuality. A condition for that is good communication. Further we want to interest people outside of this circle for and involve them in the work. Therefore we also aim for those who want to shape their Christian inspiration in the 'service to the world', but who have no formal connection with the church. The challenge is further to show the value and the quality of our work to the complete Dutch society. In various campaigns we aim as well for the religious rank-and-file as for the broader Dutch public. Part of our work is dedicated to information, equipment and education and the broadening of the basis.

## **2.6 International cooperation**

Kerk in Actie looks for broad cooperation with congenial partners and also with other partners which concur with us on policy and procedure. We stimulate our partners in the ecclesiastical network also to enter into these forms of cooperation in their own context. The conviction that each person is a creation of God breaks down the impediments for cooperation. It means that we acknowledge the fundamental human dignity of each man and respect everyone's integrity including his or her religion.

## **3 Kerk in Actie and ICCO**

### **3.1 Cooperation**

The General Synod of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands approved the cooperation of the Protestant Ministries (Kerk in Actie) with ICCO on November 17, 2006. The board of the Ministries and the board of ICCO subsequently agreed on a cooperation-covenant 2007-2010. As of January 1, 2007 the combined foreign department of ICCO and Kerk in Actie was set up. The administration of relationships of the two organizations was joined (with exception of the Near East because of the sensitivity of the issues). The mission department has a slightly different position: being part of the combined foreign department it is owned by Kerk in Actie. It is independent from other programs, is funded by Kerk in Actie and is Kerk in Actie-staffed.

In the cooperation a new operating procedure was established different from what both organizations were used to: the work is executed by way of programs in which Kerk in Actie and ICCO cooperate. This required flexibility from staff; however the cooperation in the combined foreign department proved to be worthwhile.

Next to this cooperation in the combined foreign department both organizations participate in a Strategic Alliance. This Alliance submitted a joint policy plan 2007-2010 to the Dutch Government's Department of Development Cooperation. The Department subsequently awarded funding.

### **3.2 Interim report**

When the General Synod in 2006 decided on the cooperation it stipulated that an evaluation should be submitted to synod in spring 2008. Special attention should be paid to:

- Transparency concerning the distribution of responsibility of the combined foreign department and the mission sub-department;
- at the minimum: consolidation of the contributions from the congregations as appreciation for the work of Mission and World Relief;
- the identity of the Protestant Church must be recognizable in the cooperation;
- the relations with ecumenical partners have to be kept up.

A small committee chaired by the Hon. G. van Maanen performed this evaluation and concluded: "things are well; however there is room for improvement". The report of this committee was discussed by Synod in April 2008. The report was in nature an interim-report and focused on the points of interest indicated by the General Synod. The recommendations and conclusions of the report were instrumental for the issues of improvement that were dealt with subsequently.

### **3.3 The status of affairs**

The cooperation-covenant expires in 2010. According to Article 1 the covenant is to be evaluated and decisions are to be made in 2009. The evaluation meanwhile has taken place. An internal working group in the first quarter of 2009 submitted a report based on documents, written questionnaires and oral interviews with a substantial number of staff from both organizations to the board and the directors. The conclusion starts with the statement: "in general we can say that the cooperation from Kerk in Actie en ICCO goes well". Internal

procedures and other issues are being addressed, making clear that in the past years there has been substantial progress in the cooperation, benefiting the work. The result is more than simply adding two departments doing related work. The level of the work as a whole was raised. Every cooperation has to meet time and again new challenges and do find solutions to problems. At first it was not quite clear how the policy of Kerk in Actie, fixed by decisions of the Synod, should be continued. Meanwhile the Synod has adopted a new policy plan for the Protestant Ministries. Based on this annual plans are established in which the program manager Kerk in Actie decides on policy in detail and related to the budget. The International Program Director (ICCO-appointed) subsequently can translate this data in the working plan for the combined foreign department.

Communication did not prove to be easy at all times. Contacts from the combined foreign department with the communication departments of the Ministries and ICCO were difficult sometimes, because both communication departments were not used to cooperate. This situation has improved and at the moment we explore the possibility of bringing Kerk in Actie and ICCO in the area of communication and fundraising to take further steps. The Ministries department of Finance & Control is consulting the corresponding departments of ICCO in order to optimize the accounting. Divergences in ICT-systems and changes of staff sometimes have not made it easy to get sufficient information in time. This situation has improved and the processes pass off smoothly.

### **3.4 Identity**

When the General Synod discussed the proposal for cooperation in 2006 the subject identity was dealt with extensively. The expectation was expressed that cooperation would strengthen the part and value of churches and ecclesiastical identity organizations in the development process in the global south. Cooperation would result in larger expertise in working with "Faith Based Organizations" and to a common organization where the inspiration by Christian faith could be recognized. In the mission and organization of the work faith has a more active, central and guiding role for Kerk in Actie than for ICCO. This has everything to do with the position of Kerk in Actie as the organization executing the missionary and diaconal work of the Protestant Church.

Although ICCO also has numerous religious contacts and is linked to the Protestant range of ideas, as an organization for development cooperation in the scope of co-financing one can not keep busy with mission and neither has ICCO the wish to do so. Kerk in Actie and ICCO are complementary, reinforcing each other and recognizing each other's profile and private alliance with the identity and rank-and-file. ICCO increasingly has paid attention to the role of religion and churches in development work. In the organization the interest for the role of Faith Based Organizations, churches and religious groups has grown. The question for the meaning of religion for development work is addressed by ICCO and Kerk in Actie; the mission department has a special contribution in this regard. As a result Christian identity, inspiration and values are more on the agenda than in the past. In the ICCO Alliance attention to identity is paid as well. In April 2009 the Alliance published a "Manifest of opportunities" with a common vision on core beliefs as justice, compassion and stewardship.

### **3.5 Mission**

One of the consequences of the cooperation is the coming into being of a separate mission department. In the former Kerk in Actie Abroad-situation the relation administrations of Mission and world diaconal work were integrated. This has changed now because the world diaconal work and ICCO have been joined together. The Mission department is however part of the combined foreign department in order to preserve the bond between Mission and world diaconal work. On the Mission ground we have invested in developing new policies and intensifying the contacts with the congregations.

The cooperation gives the Mission program opportunities to explore possibilities for further cooperation and cross-fertilization of ICCO and Kerk in Actie. The mission department looks for connections with other programs in the combined foreign department; this has resulted in several forms of cooperation. Some countries have projects for world diaconal work and projects for mission. We execute those programs in connection with one another and if possible with one secretary. Sometimes the mission department takes over parts from programs that cannot be funded by government or do not fit into the programmatic approach. The mission program is leading for Kerk in Actie whenever in the concerted work themes come up like religion, spirituality, church and theology.

Even though the mission program is part of the combined foreign department the execution of the program is different: partly different countries, different partner organizations, different policy and funding, a multitude of small projects. Mission profits from being part of a larger unit, e.g. by input with programmatic working methods. The mission program has the ambition to increase the number of missionaries abroad in the future.

### **3.6 Hendrik Kraemer Institute (HKI)**

The HKI became part of the combined foreign department as of January 1, 2007. The outcome fell short of expectations that the HKI could carry out more work for ICCO in a natural way. In the last years we have seen a substantial decrease of the number of missionaries and other staff sent from the Netherlands within the framework of Mission, World Relief and Development. This decrease caused for the HKI a reduction of work in education and training. There was a decrease in demand for language training as well. Therefore reconsideration of the position and the duties of the HKI became necessary; if the policy would not be modified there would be adverse financial effects.

In the final months of 2008 the language department of the HKI was closed. It was decided in June 2009 to reposition the HKI in the Kerk in Actie program of the Protestant Ministries again. In the future the HKI will focus on its primary responsibility (according to the Church Order): to support the mission work of the Protestant Church and its partners. It will concentrate its efforts on:

- Support of the Mission program and the work of Kerk in Actie as a whole;
- activities in the area of Immigrant Churches in the Netherlands and Multicultural Ministries;
- training and facilitating missionary and intercultural communication, with focus on themes related to identity.

In real terms the expertise of the HKI proves to be required increasingly in facilitating and accompanying policy development as well. The HKI in consultation with other bodies has developed a concept for decentralized training of Immigrant Churches staff linked to training of native pastors in Multicultural Ministries. The board of the Immigrant Churches Organization finds the proposals to be promising and wants HKI to elaborate the submitted materials. The

HKI finally will dedicate itself to policy development regarding identity of ICCO and Kerk in Actie in the new working organizations in the regions in different parts of the world from the point of view of its specific expertise on intercultural communication. The HKI furthermore will assist congregations and classical assemblies in visiting partner organizations or help them to host delegates from abroad.

### **3.7 World diaconal work and development**

In the 2006 memorandum concerning the cooperation of the Protestant Ministries and ICCO it was said that the execution of policy will be improved by the mutual broadening of knowledge and expertise. The work is being executed in three programs:

- Access to basic services and provisions (AB);
- democratization and peace education (DP);
- sustainable and just economical development (ED).

The combination of efforts in the cooperation already proves to be profitable. Clear choices have been made in the field of choices, themes, countries, projects and funds. In some cases Kerk in Actie and ICCO work with the same partner; relation management could consequently be simplified. In other cases programs were complementary and we could broaden our commitment. In the combined foreign department perspectives and experiences are actively shared in thematic working groups, the pooling of partners and joint learning initiatives. Bringing together different backgrounds and forms of expertise has proved to be fruitful. Both ICCO and Kerk in Actie profit from increase of knowledge. Kerk in Actie funds provide opportunities for ICCO and ICCO funds do likewise for Kerk in Actie.

Kerk in Actie participates mostly in AB and DP. Participation in ED is less. The work of "Kinderen in de Knel" (a Children Relief Program) is executed in AB (education) and DP (children's rights). The climate plan is part of ED and has been branded FairClimate. This program due to changes in staff and unclear positioning did not work out as well as we hoped. A steering group from ICCO and Kerk in Actie develops new initiatives. On the one hand companies and civil authorities are approached with information about climate compensation. On the other hand at the grass roots level church groups are assisted in the fields of careful stewardship and CO2 compensation.

Because of the cooperation of Kerk in Actie and ICCO it has become possible to use government funding next to church-based funding. This broadens the sphere of action for Kerk in Actie. The government's condition of 25% private funding enables Kerk in Actie to tell congregations and donors: thanks to your support for Kerk in Actie we can help four times as much because of additional government funding. Kerk in Actie did not yet participate in the preparation of the 2007-2010 planning for co-financing. Kerk in Actie does participate actively in the preparations for the 2011-2015 plans and can make a valuable contribution to it.

### **3.8 Together**

This program was born in 2005 from a common idea of Kerk in Actie and ICCO and has been developed since. A staff coordinator was appointed in 2006. It now has become a joint program for young people with three main features:

- Togetthere-world groups. Young people travel during a few weeks in countries where projects are supported from the Netherlands. Many special encounters take place. After their travel the young people become ambassadors for ICCO and Kerk in Actie. In cooperation with “Interactief” (3.9) young people from classical assemblies and congregations get the opportunity for exposure visits. A trip will be arranged for young people during the Lent campaign;
- Togetthere – world volunteers. Young people are going to work on a volunteer basis in one of the projects of ICCO and Kerk in Actie for a period of six to twelve months. They live and work in the project, quite often with people from other cultures, e.g. young people, orphans, disabled persons, homeless people, elder people, refugees;
- Young Professionals. Young graduates from Higher Vocational Education or young people with a university degree or with job experience are given the opportunity to get work experience in a developing country. They contribute as “Starter” or “Junior Expert” to the work of local organizations. In this manner new expertise on development cooperation is created. Sending young people builds new relationships of young, educated Dutch people and their organizations and contexts with people in developing countries.

Kerk in Actie is quite involved in this program and 60% of the volunteers have a church background. Togetthere pays much attention to the part churches in the global south are playing.

### **3.9 Interactive**

Within a few years this program had developed its quality and has been positioned clearly in the work of Kerk in Actie. The purpose of Interactive is to promote the awareness of ownership of and financial responsibility for the Kerk in Actie-work in congregations. Being joint owner entails partnership and mutuality, in which partners there and here may serve one another and learn from one another. In this framework direct involvement and contacts from Dutch classical assemblies and congregations with Kerk in Actie partners and projects abroad are possible. The staff of the Interactive program together with the relation managers of the combined foreign department plays a mediating part between congregations and partners and projects. They support congregations, and collect and provide information. The contacts from Interactive-staff people with the relation managers in the combined foreign department are progressing well. The new decentralization (chapter 4) involves a new problem in getting information across; however it provides new opportunities. The Interactive program since its inception in 2007 is progressing well. An increasing number of classical assemblies and congregations has now a direct relationship with a partner and takes up financial responsibility for a Kerk in Actie-project. This kind of relationships widens the perspective of a congregation on the worldwide work and intensifies often the life of the congregation. Intercultural reading of the Scripture, study and mutual exposure visits result in relationships in which the profit exceeds the costs quite substantially.

### **3.10 Impulsis**

This program is a kind of office-window where private initiatives for small projects in development cooperation can approach Educes, ICCO and Kerk in Actie for support. Foundations, schools, companies and other organizations being active in development projects or supporting local initiatives in the global South may come to Impulsis for advice, expansion of

their networks, expertise and financial support. Impulsis wants to build up an equal and long-term partnership with the initiator. Distribution formulae have been established on staff and financial responsibilities. Kerk in Actie participates in this program in order to serve congregations that have their own projects. Kerk in Actie makes a limited financial contribution, however the supply more than meets the demand from the church.

### **3.11 Ecumenism**

The ecumenical part of the international relations management of Kerk in Actie is managed by the department Worldwide. There is close cooperation on programs and projects of the World Council of Churches. The same applies to emergency relief, funded by ICCO and Kerk in Actie and managed by Action by Churches Together (ACT) in Geneva. The unit for emergency relief not only focuses on assistance but on communication and fundraising as well.

## 4 New steps in the cooperation

### 4.1 ProCoDe

In developing new policy in the field of cooperation with partners in the global South we are making progress. World relief and development cooperation do have effect, even if it sometimes seems to be just a drop in the ocean. An increasing number of children get education, even an advanced education. In several countries churches and relief organizations have sufficient capacity and knowledge to execute the work adequately. In world relief and development cooperation the process occurs that took place in mission earlier, when mission churches became independent and as sister churches started to develop their own policy. Consultation, involvement and cooperation become significant within the framework of mutuality and respect for our partners. Moreover partners in the global South can learn from one another and have more effect in their region by combining forces.

ICCO responds to that with the ProCoDe policy. This is a new method in development cooperation with three features:

- Programmatic work;
- co-responsibility;
- decentralization.

In programmatic work partners and other actors together execute the work according to plan within the framework of a commonly agreed program of theme. In this manner we can achieve a better result, share best practices and learn from one another.

Co-responsibility makes people in the South with whom and for whom there is cooperation co-responsible for the policy that had to be executed. There is not a one-way street from North to South anymore. People can get involved and accentuate aspects significant for the own context. The work becomes a certain colour and interpretation because experts from the region contribute their knowledge. This happens in Regional Councils providing advice on the strategic policy. The councils do not have any executive responsibility but contribute materials for policy. Decentralization means that building of the program and management of relations are not centralized in Utrecht anymore but are being dealt with by the Regional Organizations where staff from the region is employed under the leadership from a regional manager. The work is brought close to the people for whom it is intended and they have the opportunity to become more involved.

In 2008 the preparing of Regional Organisations and the establishing of Regional Councils was started in four pilot regions. From January to June the transfer of work to the Regional Organizations took place. Similar developments will take place in four other regions in 2009. There will be eight regions established in total. It is the expectation that the decentralization of work will be completed in 2010.

### 4.2 Kerk in Actie and ProCoDe

These developments affect the work of Kerk in Actie as well. In the combined foreign department of Kerk in Actie and ICCO there is close cooperation. Diverse lines of actions have been brought together. Staff members of Kerk in Actie manage the relations for ICCO in some

countries or regions. ICCO staff members do likewise for Kerk in Actie in other regions and countries. The largest part of the work of Kerk in Actie has together with the work of ICCO been clustered in diverse programs. Much has been accomplished that should be continued but expanded as well. Close consultation of partners always has been a method for Kerk in Actie; co-responsibility is not a new element but a realization of the existing practice. The policy will be decided on by the general synod. The policy of the synod, the involvement of the regions and the advice from the regions can be brought together closely. Participation in ProCoDe is challenging; however it can have a positive outcome for the work of Kerk in Actie.

#### **4.3 A new road to walk on**

The board of the Protestant Ministries decided to explore if a mode can be found in which Kerk in Actie after its own fashion within the framework of ProCoDe continues the cooperation with ICCO. It is important that some distinctive features of Kerk in Actie remain recognizable in the work:

- Ecclesiastical identity (protestant-Christian);
- choice of partners with preference for ecclesiastical organizations or church-linked organizations (there is however space for other organizations having a policy and method corresponding with Kerk in Actie and having sufficient quality);
- in choosing partners attention must be paid to smaller projects and support from the local congregations;
- coherence of mission and world relief;
- interactive contacts of the ecclesiastical basis in the Netherlands and in the global South;
- taking the position of missionaries abroad into account.

#### **4.4 Opportunities**

The participation of Kerk in Actie in the process of decentralization creates new opportunities. The network of churches that Kerk in Actie represents is an important contribution to the cooperation. Partners in the global South will have more possibilities to cooperate with sister organizations; the work will benefit from that. The management of relations is positioned closer to the region and the regional perspective can be made significant for the work. If staff of the Regional Organisation are sufficiently aware of the partners of Kerk in Actie and the network of churches in their region there will be a direct line to the grassroots in the Netherlands. Smaller partners of Kerk in Actie can keep playing their parts in the programs even if larger and more powerful organizations are leading. Coordinating relation managers of Kerk in Actie (chapter 4.5) in consultation with the regions will pay attention to those aspects.

Mutuality is an important part of the work of Kerk in Actie. Information to congregations can indicate that churches and organizations in the global South increasingly make their own choices and make evident to us what their and our priorities must be. The Interactive program will play an important part here. For Kerk in Actie the possibility of direct involvement of congregations and young people is an important part of the work abroad. Finally the wide grassroots support for Kerk in Actie provides a solid base for the common activities. There are opportunities to link more classical assemblies and congregations with partners in the global South in the framework of mutuality. We need to have consultations with the Regional Organisations in order to plan sufficient time and space in the work.

For a number of staff members from the Protestant Ministries decentralization means a drastic change. They will pass on their work to the Regional Organizations. Some of them will find a working place in Utrecht or in one of the Regional Organizations. For other staff members the consequences of decentralization have to be compensated by reappointment, natural wear or steps in a social plan.

#### **4.5 Organization**

Mission and world diaconal work belong to the core business of the church. They are distinct but should not be separated. To keep the connection of the two responsibilities will in the light of decentralization be a new challenge. The mission program will continue to work from in Utrecht; it will however in the regions where mission activities take place have a good relationship including working agreements with the Regional Organizations. Wherever possible there will be cooperation. In the coming policy plan period we will explore where natural possibilities for cooperation of mission and Regional Organisations occur. If this cooperation proves to show a positive evolution the possibility and desirability of the transfer from the mission work to the Regional Organizations can be explored. There will have to be tailor-made solutions because of the different volume of work in the regions.

The relations management for world diaconal work and development cooperation will be decentralized into regional organizations. In regions where there is a concentration of Kerk in Actie partners and projects a staff member on behalf of Kerk in Actie will have a special responsibility towards the colleagues in the regional organization. However all staff members can execute work for Kerk in Actie.

Some staff members of Kerk in Actie will serve as coordinating relation managers in Utrecht. They will have a supervising and contributing relationship with the Regional Organizations in order to insure that the policy of Kerk in Actie and the issues mentioned in 4.3 will be translated in the actual work sufficiently. In cooperation with Interactive staff and Communications staff they will contribute to the continuing of the information towards the congregations.

Some parts of the world diaconal work of Kerk in Actie are not positioned in programs or they do not fit into Regional Organizations. Nevertheless it can be important for Kerk in Actie to continue to maintain work that transcends programmatic interest. The same applies when ICCO based on new policies by the Department of Development has to dispose of tasks where it might be important for Kerk in Actie to continue the work because of ecclesiastical relationships or policy. Proper solutions will be sought.

## **5 Final remarks**

Continuing and intensifying the cooperation of ICCO and the Protestant Ministries (Kerk in Actie) provides new opportunities to strengthen the work in the service of and cooperating with our neighbours in the global South. The remarks from the memo dated October 2006 are still valid:

“For the further progress of the work two beliefs will be decisive:

the belief that God with his Spirit lets the message of the Gospel take root in the lives of people all over the world and brings them to an active and unselfish commitment for their neighbours;

the belief that churches, Christians and other parties with their appeal on us as Dutch churches and congregations urge us to make courageous and faithful choices in order to support their missionary and diaconal work.”