Short Summary of the GAID Focal Point Europe Meeting, 16th of January in Dresden

Around 30 representatives of european governments, companies and NGOs attended the first GAID Focal Point Europe meeting and had lively discussions in the conference rooms of AMD Saxony. After a warm welcome by AMD's Corporate Vice President Dr Deppe, Mr. Schon from the German Foreign Office opened and chaired the meeting. UN Executive Coordinator of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, Mr. Sarbuland Khan, followed with an inspiring statement in view to the role of GAID and the role of GAID Europe. He talked about the importance of involving all stakeholder groups, especially about the engagement of the private sector. He underlined that there must be a changing in mind: Companies of course have their own interests in investments, but if they also create value for people and the economy of a whole region, NGOs and governments should support that kind of engagement. In his opinion common debates, projects and solutions will be the most successful way of reducing worldwide poverty.

The presentation held by Dan Shine from AMD illustrated one good example for making something happen from the industry site and for most of attendees this was the highlight of the meeting. Mr. Shine introduced the AMD social responsibility project "50x15" in a very impressive way. "50x15" means the target of the project, in 2015 about 50% of world population should have internet access. For more information about that helpful initiative we recommend to visit their website: http://50x15.amd.com/ .

During the lunch time discussions were going on. After the break a couple of participants announced further initiatives or dates of meetings and conferences this year. Mr. Schon suggested to establish a GAID Europe website, that should be used for gathering and publishing all proposals, information about other organisations and events and for having one platform to interact.

Seeming all attendees agreed on the need of initiatives to foster development but they agreed also on the fact, that deeds and measurable results are more important than debates and pure resolutions. According to this a suggestion how to avoid the founding of different initiatives for the same problems and goals and so wasting money and human resources was born: Creating a website collecting all worldwide organisations and projects haunting the general aim to reduce poverty and list them in certain categories.
Implementing ICT should be seen as an instrument to strenghten development and not as the basic problem. The main goals are reducing poverty through development and creating security and stability. ICT just can act as a driver and set the infrastracture for reaching the goals.

During discussions to define gaps turned out as one of the most important things. What is needed by developing countries and areas at this time and what can be done by ICT and especially by Europeans? Trying to grow from the bottom was also recognized as effective. That means, it could be more useful to support just a few regions and to concentrate on single projects in the beginning and so bundle all the power that is available to constitute sustainable success. Starting from that experiences good practises should be transformed into next projects in other areas. Regarding the role of GAID Europe, involved european parties should try to connect different networks and ideas and on the other hand to initiate own concrete projects that are supported by european companies.

To start the process of developing an european power inside GAID Mr. Khan supposed to establish a european Steering Group, something like a GAID Europe law, a concept for finding partners from the economy and how to increase and improve the visibility of the social engagement of Europeans. He required more effort and potential partnerships instead of new initiatives and asked for target-oriented research. Regarding the demand for statistical material the suggestion to offer students to compose their dissertations about a GAID issue came up. Mr. Khans call for putting in power into the work of GAID ended with the declaration of a strong influence in the UN system. But he reminded the audience of having no influence to change and no chance to reach (social and commercial oriented) goals without concentrating power.

After the main session Mr. Khan, Mr. Schon and volunteers came together to decide about next steps and how to start the process. In the end they agreed to draft and complete a mission statement of GAID Europe before the GAID Strategy Council meeting in February 2007. Furthermore ideas like the founding of a digital library of R&D abstracts in the field of ICT and social sciences related to ICT as well as an award for publishing the most auspicious paper concerning the definition of gaps in ICT and development crossed the mind.

All in all the first GAID Focal Point Europe meeting came along with the **call for engagement of all european stakeholders**, with the conclusion that there is **no need for further initiatives but for real results** and for **examples of a companies social responsibility work**.