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IDE RECEIVES SECOND GRANT FROM BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

New grant to have significant impact on rural poverty in India

[Winnipeg] – Winnipeg-based International Development Enterprises (IDE) today announced a grant of \$27 million over four years from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in support of IDE’s micro-irrigation programs for Indian smallholder farmers.

Bill Gates, co-chair of the foundation, announced the project as part of a package of agricultural development grants at a press conference with Amos Namanga Ngongi, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), and World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

The project aims to directly affect up to 250,000 smallholder farm families—1.75 million people—in 14 diverse states of India, increasing farmers’ income by a minimum of \$400 per year, and boosting the agricultural economy by \$300 million at the grassroots level. To accomplish this goal, IDE will employ its proven, creative approach to manufacture, market, and distribute affordable, scalable micro-irrigation systems through a newly-created private sector supply chain; train farmers to use micro-irrigation; and link them to high-value crop markets, using little more than their own existing resources.

“If we are serious about ending extreme hunger and poverty around the world, we must be serious about transforming agriculture for small farmers—most of whom are women,” said Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “These investments—from improving the quality of seeds, to developing healthier soil, to creating new markets—will pay off not only in children fed and lives saved. They can have a dramatic impact on poverty reduction as families generate additional income and improve their lives.”

The grant to IDE, announced as part of a package of grants totaling \$306 million, nearly doubles the foundation’s investments in agriculture since the launch of its Agricultural Development initiative in mid-2006. The initiative, part of the foundation’s Global Development Program, is focused on a range of interventions across the entire agricultural value chain—from planting the highest quality seeds and improving farm management practices to bringing crops to market. The foundation believes that with strong partnerships and a redoubled commitment to agricultural development by donor and developing country governments, philanthropy and the private sector, hundreds of millions of small farmers will be able to boost their yields and incomes and lift themselves out of hunger and poverty.

(more)

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This grant comes just one year after the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded IDE a \$13.4 million grant to develop and promote its innovative methods for the rural poor in Africa and Asia.

Winnipegger Al Doerksen, who played a key role in developing the India project said, "This grant provides the basis for enabling significant 'trickle down' access by poor farmers to the strong gains the Indian economy has been enjoying in recent years."

In addition to income generation, the project has the potential to reduce environmental impact—significantly cutting hydrocarbon emissions associated with traditional diesel-based irrigation systems by 308,000 tons over four years, offering water savings of 30-50 percent per family, and mitigating soil erosion through drip irrigation's highly targeted water use.

Facts about the project:

- The project will be carried out in 14 states in India and will include the installation of 160,000 foot powered water pumps ("treadle pumps") and 90,000 drip irrigation systems.
- Overall, the project will create \$300.3 million in additional income for small farm families, landless laborers, and suppliers; a ratio of \$12 generated to every \$1 from the grant.
- The grant will provide funding for the development of an expanded product line of micro-irrigation technologies including water storage devices, low pressure sprinklers, and solar- and wind-powered pumps.
- Major project activities will include technology development; development of manufacturing and retail supply chains, social marketing initiatives, and dissemination of technologies development and strategies developed more globally; and micro-credit.

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IDE Canada gratefully acknowledges funding support from the Governments of Canada and Manitoba through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH) and the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC).

About IDE

Since its founding 26 years ago, IDE has enriched the lives of more than 17 million people and facilitated the creation of more than 10,000 micro-enterprises around the world. For more information about IDE's innovative solutions to alleviating global poverty, please visit our website.

www.ide-canada.org

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, the foundation is led by CEO Patty Stonesifer and co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett. For information about the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, go to <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>.

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