

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ICA Regional Assembly for Asia and the Pacific

Seoul, Korea, 27-29 October 1998

Progress Report  
of the ICA Regional Director  
Robby Julus



International Co-operative Alliance  
Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific

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# Regional Director's Progress Report

JULY 1996 – OCTOBER 1998

**“The two years covered by this report saw a number of absorbing realities in this region, and also notable shifts within the ICA (ROAP)”**

## INTRODUCTION

Over the last 30 years, East Asia achieved the single greatest spurt of economic growth in the history of mankind. But overnight, the gloss has worn off the miracle. Immense pressure has been exerted on countries around the world for conformity in macro policies. Asia was the first region that fell victim of such pressure when its economy took a free fall since July 1997. Thailand, Indonesia and Korea were punished as they deviated from this global norm. Punishment took the form of capital flight. This “Asia Flu” has recently spilled over to other regions as well. Popular belief has it that the mobility of capital, which is regarded as the engine of economic growth, was all too free and unregulated. This free movement of capital was co-opted by speculators and investors in pursuit of their own (selfish) interest, which led these “invisible hand” to generate a significantly high social and economic cost to society.

ICA ROAP cannot afford to remain passive and simply watch and take the economic downturn as granted. The fast and far-reaching changes in the region – while considered as a threat also offer a host of opportunities for the ICA.

ICA ROAP and its members must remain optimistic as we believe that several strong fundamentals still exist in Asia: high saving rates, enterprising and hardworking peoples, increasing levels of education and a generally pro-business environment, and with the grassroots aspiring for more democracy and good governance. To remain optimistic and resume growth in the long term, we must first survive the present.

## A PARADIGM SHIFT

“Through innovation and conduct”.

- ❖ Being member-led, yet catalytic in nature, ICA ROAP took some innovative steps this past two years to bring value-added services to members. Aware that its strength rests in providing the best **SERVICES** to, and facilitating the **interchange among**, its **MEMBER organizations**, ICA ROAP took two fresh initiatives to respond to the changing environment in spite of its meager financial resources.
- ❑ These two initiatives were, namely: (a) Review of the “ICIS” (ICA Co-operative Identity Statement) held in August 1997, and (b) Establishment of a “CTTC” (Co-operative Think-tank Consortium) in February 1998. Pragmatism was the keyword as ICA ROAP took the opportunity to provide added value by making co-operatives more competitive and business-oriented without losing its identity and values.
- ◆ The above two activities were considered timely to also boost the **IMAGE** of co-operatives by showcasing the co-op resilience and successful practices in spite of the economic crisis. It also provided the needed **network** mechanisms where specialized sectors can interface with other sectors to **communicate** the “co-operative difference”. Leadership values, and the importance of lobbying and advocacy, also highlighted the discussions.

In addition to the above, direct contact and consultations with leaders from member organizations were carried out more intensively over the past two years. Members' diverse aspiration and needs were documented and identified. But due to the vastness of the region, random visits and regional meetings were the most efficient, though not necessarily the most effective, means of intensifying contacts and consultations with members. The diverse needs of members, both real and perceived, have been carefully translated into no less than **57 program activities** as can be seen in **appendix I**.

In spite of the deserving sectoral focus of ICA ROAP program activities in trying to fulfil member needs, as well as down to earth practical services rendered to members, more integration of these specialized efforts will be undertaken in the future.

- The development task of ICA ROAP could only be made successful if complemented by appropriate policy work (representation) as well as a changed management process. Therefore, as a member-led organization, ICA ROAP also concentrated in following up on the Asia Pacific Regional Assembly and other ICA governance meetings. This work in the policy front is complemented and fine-tuned by providing development services that best meet the aspiration and needs of members. And in order to do so, the management structure and operations within ICA ROAP was made conducive to fulfilling members' needs through the building of effective working teams which have exercised optimum cost efficiency.

A narrative on the results achieved in undertaking the **policy, development, and management fronts** is enclosed in **appendix II**.

- ❖ A review of ICA ROAP's four-year development plan took place in November 1997, and six key result areas have been identified. A summary of the **perspective plan** is enclosed in **appendix III**.

- ❑ **Networks** with national and international organizations continued to be pursued in earnest. ICA ROAP continued to strengthen its ties and strategic alliances with ongoing international partners such as CCA (Ottawa and Asia offices), DID, MAFF, as well as ICA member development partners such as JCCU, JA-ZENCHU, and NACF. In addition, ICA ROAP also tried to augment its collaboration and contacts with the NSW Government of Australia, ADB, SCC, CCD, AARRO, and UN organizations. Work with the ILO in the HRD and Gender areas had been positively enhanced, work with FAO by way of NEDAC has yet to be further consolidated, and work with WHO has started to gain momentum since the International Health Promotion Conference in Jakarta in August 1997.

In short, a **paradigm shift** has taken place within ICA ROAP. “Focus on focusing” will continue in earnest to bring more business results through the provision of tangible and practical services to members, while at the same time strengthening our cooperative identity.

Before proceeding with the item on “development chronology”, ICA ROAP must not fail to mention the invaluable support received from member organizations in this region, the ICA Board members from Asia Pacific, President Roberto Rodrigues, Vice President Yang Deshou, Director General Bruce Thordarson, and all Head Office staff in Geneva. The support received constitutes a tremendous boost that has made the shift in paradigm possible.

#### **ICA ROAP development chronology: 1996-1998**

The following chronological account (1996-98) is meant to portray more succinctly the work accomplished by ICA ROAP:

- The Second Regional Assembly in Kuala Lumpur in 1996 created a fresh turning point for the ICA ROAP.

The Advisory Committee produced a set of recommenda-



tions which galvanized the ICA leadership in this region to become more interested and involved in guiding the growth and development of co-operatives in Asia and the Pacific.

- ❖ The Assembly gave rise to the formation of a Standing Committee and a renewed role of the Executive Council. The Regional Director of ICA ROAP changed hands from Mr. G.K. Sharma to Mr. Robby Tulus in October 1996 through a smooth and constructive transition.
- A participatory planning workshop, involving all staff from ICA ROAP and those from ICA Head Office, was held in November 1996 to take stock of the ROAP institution and to set in motion a job evaluation process aimed at creating more streamlined operations and increased efficiency. Key result areas identified were:
  - a. **Policy development and Legislation;**
  - b. **Leadership & (Value-Based) Professional Management;**
  - c. **Fair Trading and International Co-operative Trade Networks;**
  - d. **Agriculture (with focus on Food Security and the Environment);**
  - e. **Gender Mainstreaming;**
  - f. **Specialization and Integration (i.e. sectoral priorities of key development partners such as in Consumers, Youth, Health, etc.)**
- ❖ The Asia Pacific Regional Consultation held in December 1996 saw that far-reaching social and economic changes were happening in the region. An early detection of rapid growth, but with less equity, was cause for alarm among participants at the Consultation. The subsequent Fifth Co-operative Ministers' Conference held in March 1997 reaffirmed this trend.

Participants foresaw the ominous social and economic

decline in the region due to excessive capital inflows and rent-seeking practices in many ICA member countries, which real cause is explained at the beginning of this report.

- In conjunction with the Ministers Conference, the ICA ROAP Standing Committee met on March 19, 1997, addressing various policy and technical issues aimed at advancing the work of ICA ROAP. The President and the Director General of ICA stood committed to the strategic directions evolved by the Standing Committee, which were subsequently endorsed by the Executive Council the next day. A unanimous decision was taken by the Council to nominate Mr. Yang Deshou as Vice President of ICA from the Asia Pacific region.
  - ❖ A workshop of the “practice of the ICA Co-operative Identity Statement (ICIS)” was organized in August 1997 to give way to an honest reality check. Dr. Ian MacPherson and Dr. Peter Davis were key catalysts who inspired all participants to evolve an initial guideline for the application of ICIS, based on practical input from participants.

The obvious lack of management in the formulation of ICIS was debated in earnest. Dr Ian MacPherson has been requested to sum up the “best practices” in applying ICIS during this Third Regional Assembly in Seoul, Korea.

- The ICA General Assembly in Geneva, September 1997, saw many interesting changes within the ICA leadership structure. The number of members on the Board increased from 16 to 20 persons. Mr. Roberto Rodrigues succeeded Mr. Graham Melmoth as President of the ICA. Three additional board members from Asia were elected at the Assembly, namely Hon. Senator Rahaiah Baheran (Malaysia), Mr. Hiroshi Kohno (Japan), and Mr. Churll Hee Won (Korea). Mr. Yang Deshou was confirmed as Vice President from the Asia Pacific region, whereas Dr. Yehudah Paz and Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan were re-elected.

- ❖ The first Co-operative Think Tank Consortium (CTTC) took place in Manila, February 1998, to bring value-added services to stakeholders.

Stakeholders were composed of ICA member organizations from this region, international partner organizations, and co-operative academicians and advisers. This is a shift from past practices where meetings with partners were mainly confined to “project discussions”, missing the critical analysis of the socio-political and socio-economic framework in the Asia Pacific region under which these stakeholders operate (see booklet, available at minimal cost during this Assembly).

Concurrent with the CTTC was a meeting held with the President of the Asian Development Bank, Mr. Mitsuo Sato. As a result, a Co-operative focal point at the ADB has been appointed, and an important milestone was also created with the explicit inclusion of ICA as reference for “best practices” in the delivery of micro-finance.

The ICA Board members from Asia-Pacific met in Tokyo in April 1998 to discuss the crucial issue of streamlining the regional structure for ICA in Asia and the Pacific. Recommendations from the Standing Committee for such change would already have been discussed at the time this report is presented at the Assembly.

#### **Future activities (in summary):**

*At the ICA Board Meeting in Paris that ended only ten days ago, the Director General of ICA reported as follows:*

*“During President Rodrigues’ visit to Singapore in April 1998, ICA discussed the possibility of opening a Business Office (project office) which will concentrate on business development activities in the ASEAN region. The Singapore National Co-operative Federation, and particularly its chairman Mr. Tan Kin Lian, were very supportive during our discussions, and after follow-up talks with him*

*it has been agreed that this new office (which SNCF will provide for three years) will begin operations in June 1999.*

*It will, of course, be an integral part of the Regional Office based in New Delhi. As many ICA members have long requested such a business office, meetings will be held in Paris, and later in Seoul/Korea, to discuss additional financial support for these activities)".*

The business office will definitely serve to boost trade and business linkages among ICA member organizations, particularly in the ASEAN countries, not to mention the potential linkages with other regions such as the Americas. Plans are in the making to have the Regional Consultation, and probably Specialized Committee Meetings, to coincide with the opening of the Business Office.

- ❖ The big highlight for 1998 will be the Fifth Co-operative Asia Pacific Ministers' Conference, scheduled to be held in Beijing from October 11 to 16, 1998, and hosted by the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC). This event, which the ACFSMC has prepared with so much care and also well ahead of time in close cooperation with the Government of China, will be held at the famous Friendship Hotel. A number of sub-regional Workshops, including a Second Critical Study under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hans Munkner from Marburg University, will also be conducted.

The Regional Consultation, scheduled for June 1998 in Singapore, will be a precursor for the Ministers Conference, at which tangible and doable recommendations will be fleshed out by co-operative chief executives and the Permanent Secretaries of their corresponding governments.

- ♦ Innovative programs on Value-Based Management and HRD will also highlight next year's activities, with the hope that

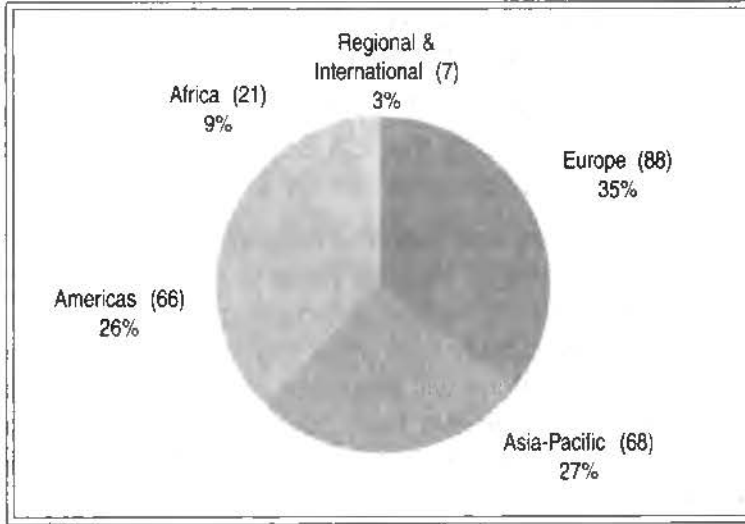
competitive strength of member organizations could be enhanced to once again produce the “co-operative difference”.

- ◆ Results of our members’ efforts to promote sectoral integration will also be carefully monitored and interchanged.
- ◆ We will continue to be part of, and follow the directions given by, those processes led by the ICA Board in their search for strengthening the co-operative identity and IMAGE.
- ◆ Next year’s Congress and General Assembly of ICA in Quebec City on the theme of “Adding Value to members” augurs well for the Asia Pacific region. Attempts currently made by ICA ROAP to work closely with other regions in adding value to member organizations will empower all of us to communicate forcefully “co-operative best practices” not only to the development and business communities, but also to the public at large.

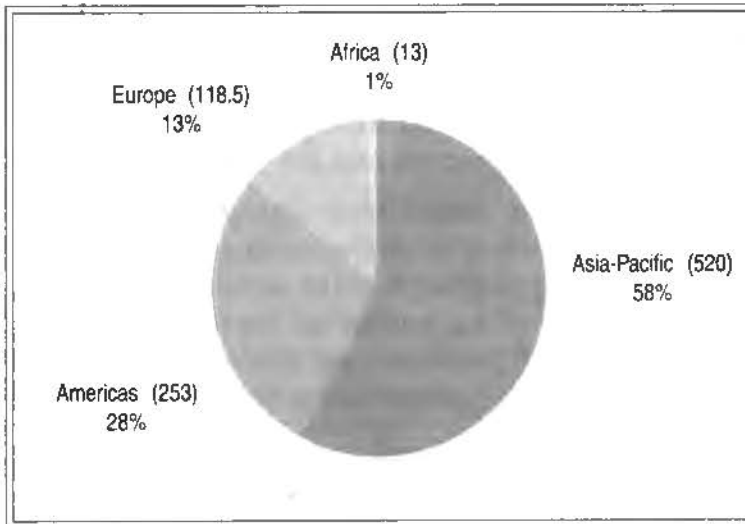
**Robby Tulus**

Regional Director – Asia Pacific region  
International Co-operative Alliance.

*Number of Member Organisations by Region*



*Number of Individual ICA Members by Region (in millions)*



## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Highlights of ICA ROAP activities from July 1996 to October 1998 can be registered as follows:

01. The ICA Consumer Committee through ICA ROAP sponsored a Training Programme for a group of Singapore Fairprice Store Managers in Kobe in July 1996. They spent 10 days attached to coop stores in Kobe studying retailing, store layout, labelling, re-ordering and self-service systems.
02. Under the Exchange Programme of the Consumer Committee, four women leaders of consumer coops from Indonesia were invited to visit Japanese Consumer Cooperatives in Tokyo, Kobe and Hyogo Prefectures. The JCCU hosted the group. The group spent one week in July 1996. They observed the functioning of HAN group and workers collection as well as studied store operations.
03. The ROAP in collaboration with NCUI organised a Symposium on Coop Banking in Goa from 4-7 August 1996. 15 participants from seven countries attended the Symposium. The Symposium drew up recommendations to the Regional Consultation in the field of cooperative competitive strength as they relate to cooperative banking and financial intermediation, for eventual presentation at the 4th Cooperative Ministers Conference to be held in Chiangmai from 18th to 22nd March 1997.
04. A national workshop on Gender Integration in Nepal was organised from 16-20 December 1996 in Kathmandu. 27 participants attended the workshop and drafted the national action plan for Gender Integration in Nepal.
05. The Asian Regional Conference of Top Level Women Farm Leaders in Agricultural Cooperatives was jointly organised by the ICA ROAP; JA-Zenchu; IDACA and AARRO in Tokyo from 20-26 October 1996. 104 participants from 25 countries and five international organisations attended the Conference. At the closing session held on 23rd October, the participants unanimously approved a Resolution.

06. A Symposium on Cooperative Agri-Business was held in Yangon from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 2nd December 1996. 15 participants from eight countries attended the Symposium. This Symposium succeeded in integrating the results of the Agro-Processing seminar in Dalian to study the competitive edge of some agri-business coops given the changing socio-economic environment.
07. A Regional Consultation on Cooperatives in a Changing Socio-Economic Environment was held in Yangon from 3-6 December 1996. It was attended by 60 delegates from 18 countries. The Consultation reviewed a number of important issues relevant to the proposed Ministers Conference and came up with a number of key recommendations.
08. The Asian Regional Conference of Top Level Women Farm Leaders in Agricultural Cooperatives was jointly organised by the ICA ROAP; JA-Zenchu; IDACA and AARRO in Tokyo from 20-26 October 1996. 104 participants from 25 countries and five international organisations attended the Conference. At the closing session held on 23rd October, the participants unanimously approved a Resolution.
09. A Regional Seminar on Agro-Processing was held in Dalian (China) from 11-22 November 1996. 17 participants from seven countries attended the seminar. A number of project proposals were discussed among the participants to exchange technology. The participants unanimously made 10 recommendations which were incorporated in the recommendations of the Regional Consultation held in Yangon for consideration of the 4th Cooperative Ministers Conference.
10. A Regional Campus Cooperatives/Youth Seminar for Asia and the Pacific was held in Singapore from 21-23 November 1996. 125 participants attended the seminar.
11. A Regional Seminar on Curriculum Development was held in Sri Lanka from 17-28 December 1996 in collaboration with ILO Coopnet. 26 participants from nine countries attended the seminar. The participants prepared country-based curriculum development plans for their cooperative training institutions.
12. A national workshop on Gender Integration in Nepal was organised from 16-20 December 1996 in Kathmandu. 27 participants attended the workshop and drafted the national action plan for Gender Integration in Nepal.



13. The ICA/Japan Training Course for Strengthening Management of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia, being held by the ICA, for the last 11 years with funding support from MAFF entered its 11th year during 1996-97. So far 150 managers of agricultural coops have been trained and 148 project proposals have been prepared by them. The 11th Training Course is being organised in India, Sri Lanka and Japan from 4th April 1996 to 20th April 1997 with 15 participants from 10 countries. The 1st part of the Course from 4th November to 31st December 1996 was held at ROAP and IRMA premises and study visits were conducted to agricultural coops in Delhi, Maharashtra and Gujarat States. The ICA/IRMA Management Modules were held at the IRMA. After the programme in India, participants visited Sri Lanka from 1-9 January 1997 to participate in the study visits programme. The 2nd part of the Course is being held in Japan from 23rd February to 20th April 1997.
14. Six participants, two each from Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan attended the 6th ICA/Japan Training Course for rural women leaders of agricultural coops held in Japan from 20th October to 16th November 1996, funded by MAFF. Emphasis of the Training Course was on role and participation of women in agricultural coop activities in Japan and preparation of a country plan for implementation in their countries.
15. The 3rd Meeting of the ICA ROAP Executive Council was held in Chiangmai (Thailand) on 18th March 1997. Eighteen members and 28 observers attended the Meeting. Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, President of NCUI, was unanimously elected as Chairperson of the Executive Council. The Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee was adopted by the Executive Council. Mr. Yang Deshou was unanimously elected as ICA Vice President from Asia-Pacific region. The next meeting of the Executive Council will be held in the Republic of Korea along with the 3rd Meeting of the ICA Regional Assembly.
16. The International Co-operative Alliance, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP), organised the Fourth Asia Pacific Co-operative Ministers Conference in Chiangmai, Thailand from March 18 to 22, 1997. Ministers responsible for Co-operative Development representing China, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam participated at the Conference. 124 delegates from 22 countries in Asia and the Pacific at-

tended the Conference. In addition, 34 representatives from international organisations took part in the Conference as well.

Recommendations adopted by the Regional Consultation held in Yangon, Myanmar from December 2 to 6, 1996, summary of the Background Papers, and Statements from member country governments and other national and international organisations, became the resource documents for the deliberations at the Ministers' Conference in Chiangmai.

The Conference was inaugurated by His Excellency Sukavich Rangsitpol, Deputy Prime Minister of the Royal Thai government. The Deputy Prime Minister in his speech emphasised that the "ICA should commit to create the co-operative spirit in the region to acquire community support from all nations. The role of the trade and industry committee of ICA should be viewed in such a way that in the future a co-operative trade organisation can be established as a trade forum for the co-operative movement".

Immediately after the Opening Ceremony, the Deputy Prime Minister inaugurated the Trade Exhibition held at the Westin Chiangmai hotel, with co-operative products displayed by co-operative organisations in Thailand and other countries in Asia and the Pacific.

17. The 2nd part of the 11th ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives was held at IDACA, Japan, from 23rd February to 20th April 1997. All 15 participants prepared their own developmental projects for submission to the Project Appraisal Sessions held in Tokyo from 24th February to 3rd March and revised their projects thereafter. The participants were exposed to the management practices of Japanese agricultural co-operatives and also studied them in depth during field study visits in Tokyo, Fukuoka and Shizuoka Prefectures.

A Conference of top leaders on "Collaborative Strategies for the Development of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia" was jointly organised by the ICA ROAP, JA-Zenchu and the IDACA at Tokyo from 14th to 19th April 1997. The Conference was attended by seven senior level representatives of ICA member-organisations from China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. Inaugural addresses to the Conference were delivered by senior representatives from the MAFF-Government of Japan, JA-Zenchu, JICA, ICA and the IDACA. The Conference was also

attended by the participants of the 11th ICA-Japan long-term Training Course.

18. The 3rd Meeting of the ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/College Co-operatives for Asia and the Pacific was held on 14-15 March 1997 at Sasa International House, Thailand. 32 participants from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam attended the meeting. The meeting deliberated on a number of issues for the development of University/College co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region. Vietnam was admitted as a new member of the Sub-committee. On 15th March a study visit was organized by the host organization to a couple of consumer co-operative stores.
19. The 29th Meeting of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific was held at Chiangmai on 23rd March 1997. 29 participants from 14 countries attended the meeting. The meeting deliberated on a number of issues for the development of consumer co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region. The meeting reviewed the progress of the current years work plan and discussed the indicative work plan for 1998.
20. An informal meeting of the Coop Banking and Finance Committee for Asia and the Pacific was held at Chiangmai on 17th March 1997. 14 participants from India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Thailand, Tonga and ICA attended the meeting. It was agreed that the name of the Committee should be Regional Co-operative Banking Association (RCBA) for Asia and the Pacific. The annual subscription for the RCBA was fixed as US\$ 100.
21. The ICA Committee for HRD for Asia and the Pacific met in Chiangmai on 17th March 1997 to review the ongoing activities and to discuss the future activities for 1998. 35 member delegates from 11 countries attended the meeting. The presentations of the delegates revealed changes in the region in relation to HRD situation of co-operatives during the previous year.
22. Women and Decision-Making in Co-operatives was the theme of a successful May 7-9 Conference co-sponsored by ICA ROAP and the Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum, held in Tagatay City, Philippines. Over 100 people from 15 countries participated. The situation of women in co-operatives internationally and in the Asia-Pacific was explored. Participants discussed ways



to increase women's participation in co-operative decision-making.

23. The ICA ROAP organized a Workshop to introduce co-operative Identity Statement in the functioning of co-operatives as a follow up to its adoption in 1995. The objectives were to: reach a common interpretation and understanding of the ICIS among ICA members in the Region; examine the relevance of the ICIS in the context of the changing socio-economic environment in the Region; formulate guidelines to make co-operatives more competitive without losing their identity and to offer an input to ICA ROAP for its long term strategic planning exercise.

50 Delegates from 12 countries in the Region and co-operative specialists attended the workshop. There were special presentations on the theme by Prof. Ian MacPherson, from Canada, Dr. Peter Davis from U.K. and Mr. Gary Cronon from Australia.

24. The Asia and Pacific Health Co-operative Organization was established at a general assembly held in Kathmandu, Nepal, on August 26, 1997. Co-operatives have been working on medical and health care exchange since the Tokyo International Health-Medical Coop Forum in Tokyo in 1992. Following the forum, two regional conferences were held in Sri Lanka and India - leading to the general assembly.

25. ICA ROAP sponsored a exchange of faculty members of the national level co-operative training institutions between Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management in Pune, India, and the School of Co-operation, Sri Lanka, in July-August 1997. This was the revival of such an exchange of experiences among co-operative training institutions for the first time after 1960s. HRD Committee of the ICA ROAP mooted the idea last year.

Two faculty members from India were attached to the School of Co-operation, Sri Lanka, for three weeks as the faculty. They have exchanged academic inputs with the on going courses and helped them to be updated. They were also able to receive ideas about Multipurpose co-operative concept popular in Sri Lanka and the rural banking system.

At the next phase, VAMNICOM would receive two faculty members from Sri Lanka for three weeks in October 1997.

26. The 30th Meeting of the ICA Committee on Agriculture for Asia and

the Pacific was held in Colombo on 14th August, 1997. The meeting not only highlighted the importance of food security and ways to increase productivity in the agricultural sector, but also agreed to hold a joint workshop with the consumers committee in October 1998 to seek optimum synergy in responding to the increasingly competitive marketplace. Hence specialized committees in the region gradually see the need for horizontal integration to maximize strategic alliances and/or collaboration.

27. A six-member delegation from the China Association for International Exchange for Personnel (CAIEP), All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC), the Ministries of Agriculture and Finance visited agricultural co-operatives in Canada from September 6 to 28, 1997. The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) sponsored the exchange program between Chinese and Canadian co-operatives, and ICA ROAP was entrusted to co-ordinate the program. Mr. Guo Yong Kang, Agricultural Co-operative and Trade Development Adviser, ICA ROAP, led the mission to Canada.

The mission was aimed at strengthening linkages between Canadian and Chinese co-operative organizations. ICA ROAP co-ordinates the program with the view that more commercial co-operation could develop among viable co-ops, supported by technical co-operation in the field of legislation and trade, as well as other significant value added components to the linkage program. It was agreed that the CCA would send a delegation to China in April 1998 in order to further strengthen co-operation between Chinese and Canadian co-operatives.

28. The 12th ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia, organized by ICA with funding support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan and with the active collaboration of JA-Zenchu/CUAC and IDACA, as well as participation from other ICA member organizations in the Asia-Pacific region, commenced in New Delhi on October 20, 1997. The Training Course was inaugurated by the Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Sakutaro Tanino following remarks by the Project Director, Dr. Daman Prakash, and a welcome address by ICA ROAP Regional Director.

Fifteen participants (including five women) from ten countries -

Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam - will travel with the course, to India, the Philippines and Japan.

A follow-up review workshop will be held with former participants in the Philippines. It will explore the present situation of the movement and implementation of project proposals.

29. The 7th Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia, conducted by the ICA ROAP, in close collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia (IDACA) was held in Tokyo, Japan, from November 4 to December 3, 1997. Six women leaders, two each from India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, attended the programme. The main focus during the training course was laid on the organization, activities and development of women's associations in the agricultural co-operative sector in Japan.
30. The ICA ROAP in collaboration with the JA-Zenchu/IDACA and the AARRO held the 2nd Asian Top Leaders Conference of Women Farm Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia in Tokyo from 4th to 10th November, 1997 with a view to emphasize the need for providing opportunities for the further development of rural farm leaders, especially among women. Approximately 43 women leaders from the agricultural rural sectors from ICA and AARRO member countries including the above mentioned six participants from India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan participating in the 7th Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia, attended the conference. In addition, observers from the Japanese Agricultural Co-operative Movement and international organizations were also in attendance.
31. The ICA ROAP held its second phase strategic planning exercise following the initial one conducted in August 1997. It was held at Bonow House in New Delhi from October 13 to 15, 1997, and facilitated by ICA Head Office staff.
32. The 30th meeting of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific was held in Tokyo on October 24, 1997. Delegates from five member countries (India, Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam) attended the meeting. This meeting was preceded by an International Youth Conference organized by the National Federation of University Campus

Co-operative Associations (NFUCA) a few days earlier. There was good participation from youth delegates from India, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam, and more than 40 participants from Japan itself.

33. An International Symposium on Co-operative Environmental initiatives was held by the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) at Waseda University, Tokyo. The Symposium invited four guest speakers, namely Mr. Peter Bear from the Federation of Migros Co-operatives (Switzerland), Mr. Toshifumi Yamashita from Co-op Tokyo, Mr. Ulisse Pedretti from Coop Italy, and Mr. Robby Tulus, Regional Director, ICA ROAP.

The Symposium was organized by JCCU to anticipate the debate on climatic change and global warming during the COP (Convention of Parties)-3 due to be organized by the United Nations in Kyoto in December 1997.

34. The International Forum was organized by the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation of Korea (NACF) and introduced important case studies from successful co-operative organizations such as BayWa AG (Bavaria, Germany), CEBECO Handelsraad (the Netherlands), Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (Canada), ZEN-NOH (Japan), and NACF themselves. A theoretical framework on co-operative subsidiaries was also presented by the Chief Executive of Plunkett Foundation (UK), followed by a field trip and country presentations. The ICA Director General and ICA Regional Director participated at the Forum, and Mr. Won-Sik Noh, Agriculture Advisor at the ICA Head Office in Geneva co-organized the Forum with NACF. The Forum was an eye-opener for many co-ops in the developing countries in Asia, which learned first hand from how innovative undertakings could lead to competitive strength of co-ops.
35. The Third Co-operative SUMMIT of the Philippines was held in Cebu, the Philippines, from November 5 to 7, 1997, with the theme : "Co-operative Excellence towards Economic Growth". It was inaugurated by H.E. Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines, followed by a presentation of the Regional Director of ICA ROAP who was the only guest speaker invited by the organizers to speak during the first day plenary session of the Summit. Over 5000 co-operators were in attendance, and the Co-operative development Authority organized the event in close collaboration



with co-operative organizations from Region VI, VII, and VIII in the Visayas. Foreign guests included Zen-Noh, CCA, Myanmar Co-ops, and Indonesian Co-ops.

The SUMMIT touched on salient issues such as globalization, gender/youth and development, co-operative financing, legislative reform, support services, and co-operative collaborative agenda (Apex), and local governance.

36. The ICA ROAP in collaboration with the ILO Coopnet held a preparatory workshop on Co-operative Leadership Development for Women from 9-11 December 1997 at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, hosted by ANGKASA. 20 participants from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka, ASCF, CCA, ILO Coopnet and ICA participated in the workshop. The workshop discussed the necessity and feasibility of developing a women's leadership training programme for co-operatives.
37. The 8<sup>th</sup> National Follow-up and Review Workshop under the ICA-Japan Management Training Project was held in the Philippines on 11-12 February 1998. Eight former participants of the Course attended the workshop. The objective of the workshop was to have a comparative study of the Cooperative Movement in the Philippines.
38. A Cooperative Think Tank Consortium (CTTC) was organised in Manila from 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1998, to replace the hitherto Development Partners Meeting of ICA ROAP. The CTTC held in Manila was aimed at eliciting strategic input from ICA ROAP stakeholders - not just development partners - into the ROAP Planning cycle. It was structured to allow critique on current services rendered by ICA ROAP to come forth more spontaneously. The second purpose was for ICA ROAP to better appreciate the aspiration and expectations of its stakeholders. While the former was less vigorously pursued by stakeholders - in spite of careful presentation of the ICA Development Policy and ICA ROAP Strategy by both ICA Geneva and ICA ROAP respectively - the latter was addressed at more length. Members made it clear that the Financial Crisis in this region was their main concern. Singapore, Korea, Japan and the Philippines drew the attention of ICA ROAP as to the need for consolidating financial strength during bullish times, and that such strength would at the same time deter excessive government intervention.

A small booklet containing excerpts of case presentation of participating co-operative organizations at the Think Tank Consortium is being printed for distribution (sale) at the Regional Assembly in Seoul on October 28-29, 1998.

39. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Top Leaders' Conference on "Collaborative Strategies for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia", jointly organised by the ICA ROAP, JA-Zenchu and IDACA, was held in Tokyo from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April 1998. The Conference was attended by representatives of India, Malaysia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka and the participants of the 12<sup>th</sup> ICA-Japan Training Course. The collaborative arrangements between the ICA and the JA-Zenchu/IDACA to conduct the Course and other agricultural cooperative activities were also considered.
40. The Twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) ICA/Japan Regional Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia was held in India, the Philippines and Japan, from 20<sup>th</sup> October 1997 to 17<sup>th</sup> April 1998. The Programme was conducted with the financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan and was executed by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) as per agreement reached between the two Organisations. The first part of the 12<sup>th</sup> Training Course was held in India. After the study visits Programme in the Philippines, the participants followed the 2-month training Programme and project appraisal sessions in Japan at IDACA, 22<sup>nd</sup> February – 17<sup>th</sup> April 1998. The eight-week Programme at IDACA included study visits to agricultural co-operatives in and around Tokyo and in Yamaguchi and Iwate prefectures in Japan.
41. The President of ICA visited ICA member-organizations in both Singapore and the Philippines in April/May 1998. It gave Mr. Rodrigues first hand field exposure to the larger, and economically strong, co-operative enterprises in Singapore on the one hand, and more community-based yet sustainable co-operatives at the grassroots level in the Visayas region on the other. In Singapore, Mr. Rodrigues explored the possibility of setting up an ICA project office in order to promote new business opportunities among co-operatives in the region and beyond. In the Philippines, the President also visited with the Co-operative Development Authority and the Co-operative Union of the Philippines, facilitated by the National Confederation of Co-operatives. This exposure and visitation in the Philippines was

conducted in conjunction with the President's participation at ICAO and the World Conference of IFAP.

42. Subsequent to the visit of an ICA delegation, led by ICA Director General, with Mr. Mitsuo Sato, President of the Asian Development Bank, in February 1998, a strengthened relationship has ensued. The Regional Director of ICA ROAP has made several follow-up consultations with the focal liaison officials of the ADB in Manila. The International Co-operative Alliance is now officially recognized in ADB's most recent Strategic Interim Plan on Micro Finance, alongside CGAP of the World Bank and a prominent Foundation based in Brisbane, Australia, as the three distinct institutions which can help promote "best practices" on micro finance.
43. The ICA ROAP organized a joint workshop on Co-operative Support Services in collaboration with the ILO and the National Co-operative Union of India in New Delhi, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1998. It was attended by more than 30 delegates from Co-operative movements and governments in Asia, including international organizations such as ILO, FAO, and the Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organization (AARRO). The Deputy Regional Director of ICA ROAP presented ICA's views on the "Conditions for Restructuring Co-operative Support Services".
44. The Regional Director of ICA ROAP was one of the keynote speakers on a National Seminar on People's Credit Fund co-organized by the State Bank of Vietnam and the Developpement International Desjardins (DID) on the theme of Micro Finance, held in Hanoi, Vietnam during the third week of April 1998. He also made a joint presentation with Dr. Peter Davis to the SNCF Education & Training Committee, including SNCF staff, on "Leadership and Value-Based Management" in Singapore during May 1998.
45. A delegation of the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives, and representatives from ICA member organizations in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia attended the Triennial Congress of the Canadian Co-operative Association with the theme "Deep Roots – New Growth", in Winnipeg, Canada, in June 1998. They also visited co-operative organizations in various parts of Canada, and discussions took place with co-operative leaders to explore possible collaboration in the future.
46. Initiated and sponsored by JA-Zenchu, ICA conducted a rapid sur-

vey during April – July 1998 on agricultural co-operatives and farmers' organizations in select developing countries in Asia to identify the status and trends of agriculture development and food security in these countries. Under a similar important initiative of JA-Zenchu, ICA ROAP accorded the means and infrastructure for the Norinchukin Research Institute (NRI) to conduct a study on various agricultural sectors in India. Mr. Suda from the NRI spent six months in India to undertake the research assignment.

47. JCCU and ICA ROAP conducted a workshop on “Joint Buying” in Bangkok from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August, with Mr. Fujioka as the keynote speaker. 40 participants from 8 countries attended the workshop. Joint Buying is a powerful concept for co-operatives to respond to the economic crisis because of its cost-efficiency approach and also to show in practice the principle of Co-operation among co-operatives. The successful experiences of JCCU were highlighted for potential emulation and adaptation in other countries.
48. A Pro-tem Regional Women’s Committee Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14<sup>th</sup> August, hosted and chaired by Senator Hjh. Rahaiah Baهران. This Committee discussed in detail the preparation for the Regional Women Forum to be held prior to the Regional Assembly of the Asia Pacific region in Seoul, Korea, and the Platform for Action adopted in Tagaytay during the Regional Women Leadership Conference in 1997.
49. The ICA Global HRD Committee and ICA ROAP took the initiative to hold a Seminar on “Value Based Professional Management”, hosted by the National Co-operative Union of India. The Global Seminar was held at the Vaikunth Mehta National Institute for Co-operative Management in Pune, India from 31<sup>st</sup> August to 11<sup>th</sup> September. 23 participants and 8 resource persons came from countries in Asia and the Pacific, Africa as well as Eastern Europe (Russia). The Seminar reviewed position papers presented by Dr. Peter Davis and Drs Robby Tulus, and additional papers from Dr. Dubbashi, Prof. Nakada and other participants.
50. The 8<sup>th</sup> Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia was organised by the ICA ROAP with the financial support of the Government of Japan at IDACA, Tokyo, from 24<sup>th</sup> August to 14<sup>th</sup> September 1998. Six participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka attended the Course. The main objective of the Course is to encourage rural women to organise them-

selves with a view to improving living conditions of the farm women in this region. The participants, besides their classroom work, also observed the JA-WO activities in Niigata prefecture and also took part in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Women Conference.

51. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Conference of Women Farm Leaders' of Agricultural Co-operatives was jointly organised by the ICA ROAP, JA-Zenchu and IDACA at Tokyo from 26<sup>th</sup> August to 6<sup>th</sup> September 1998. The Conference was attended by 35 senior level women leaders representing 13 countries and three international organizations. A familiarization field study visit to Niigata prefecture was organised for the delegates.
52. Another joint activity with ILO is being undertaken to design and produce a training Manual on "Women Leadership in Co-operatives". The draft Manual will be produced by a consultant, and to be validated by national level trainers later in the year. The draft is being jointly reviewed by ICA and ILO to focus more on practical coop case studies as well as add to its quality,
53. The work at ICA ROAP is being focused on making the Regional Assembly and its accompanying events a success. There will be, among others, the Regional Women's Forum, the Standing Committee Meeting, Specialized Committee Meetings, a special workshop on "Agriculture, Consumers and Fisheries Strategic Alliance", a Women's Co-operative Forum, a Global Forum, and study tour to Korean Co-operatives. Close collaboration is being undertaken with the National Agriculture Co-operatives Federation (NACF) who coordinate its work closely with other ICA member organizations in Korea. All these activities will take into account results and impact-orientation with members as the key stakeholder.
54. Taking advantage of the good momentum, a Round Table Meeting (RTM) is being initiated by ICA's international development partners from Canada. This RTM will be held in Seoul on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1998 to discuss a Strategic Policy Paper on "Canada-Asia co-operative collaboration", to be attended by senior officials from CIDA, CCA, DID, and ICA member organizations in Asia, and chaired by Prof. Dr. Ian MacPherson.
55. The sale of Bonow House has some teething problems mainly because of a court injunction. This, paradoxically, occurred as the sale is done in a most transparent manner. But the ICA Bonow Trust and

ROAP management have done what it should do best in the interest of the organisation, and time is now of the essence to see to it that the stay will be vacated soon.

56. CCA and DID recently approved a project on Policy Reform, with fresh value-addition to pilot-test the concept of “Value-Based Management”. This project will use the momentum of the economic crisis in this region to evolve increased dialogues with governments and for them to set new policies that will empower co-operatives to correct socio-economic distortions currently prevailing. Any positive results will in turn bring benefit to CCA and DID in their efforts to promote successful co-operative programming in this region.
57. ICA ROAP participated in the Mission to Central Asia (Kyrgystan and Kazakhstan) fielded by ICA Geneva, and supported by SCC, to study the possibilities of developing a regional Programme to support cooperatives in the region. According to Mission, ICA Geneva has already sent a project to European Union (EU) in Kazakhstan to support a Programme of sensitization (Managing Change – Supporting Coops in transition in Central Asia). The EU is yet to convey its approval.

## **POLICY, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT FRONTS**

### **(A) The Policy Front**

Consistent with the new structure established in the Tokyo Congress, we have been able to strengthen the policy framework where members' needs take precedence. The KL Regional Assembly provided the impetus to seek renewal within ICA ROAP as it endorsed the report of the Advisory Committee on Policy Direction of ICA ROAP, and in turn endorsed the formation of a Standing Committee. The model constitution for the Specialized Committees was also adopted, and the formation of a Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific was endorsed. Resolutions of the Regional Assembly were reviewed in Chiangmai by the newly-organized Standing Committee, and recommendations from the latter was adopted by the Executive Council of ICA ROAP.

The increase of the number of ICA Board members from 16 to 20 was strongly advocated by the Standing Committee as well as by the Executive Council, and subsequently approved by the ICA Board Meeting in Uganda in April 1997. Mr. Yang Deshou has been nominated Vice President from Asia & the Pacific, and Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan elected Chairperson of the Executive Council. Prospective Board members from Asia & the Pacific (AP) were recommended by the existing Board members from AP and nominations have been forwarded accordingly. ICA ROAP and NACF has confirmed the place and dates of the Regional Assembly, i.e. in Seoul from October

Most of the Specialized Committees in the region have been proactive in drafting their new Constitution based on the ICA ROAP standard model, for endorsement by the Executive Council in Chiangmai, and for due adoption at the Regional Assembly in 1998. The "synergy effect" of different Specialized Committees, starting with the Consumer & Agriculture Committees will be endeavoured next year.

Consultations with member organizations within the framework of the above policy issues have been done by RD in close coordination with

the Director General of ICA. The Regional Director attended the ICA Board Meeting in Uganda and attended a number of governance meetings of members such as the ones in India, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia. In addition, membership consultations were held in Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Malaysia, China, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, and Nepal. Due to budget limitations, consultation with members in the Pacific, West and Central Asia has to be deferred.

### **(B) The Development Front**

As clearly verified by ICA's global membership survey conducted by HO, members gave the highest rating to ICA for bringing members together, hence creating the opportunities for members to meet other cooperators (88 points), and for being the custodian/guardian of the Co-operative Principles (now the ICA Co-op Identity Statement - 87 points).

Admittedly, ICA ROAP has been successful in performing the above role over the past decade or so. If any shortfall could be mentioned, it was the qualitative - not the quantitative - performance that could still be enhanced. The Regional Consultation in Myanmar, followed by the Ministerial Conference in Chiangmai, underwent improvements in both the format and business sessions. It went far beyond the facade of a show with lots of niceties. The resolution is succinct and creates the needed frame of reference for follow up in member countries. The Ministerial Conference - as also the Regional Consultation - gained substance as it was held in conjunction with a number of major policy meetings of the Standing Committee, Executive Council, Specialized Committees, and the Bonow Trust.

Co-operative networking over the past two years have been intensified by the active participation of both RD and the Advisory Staff of ICA ROAP. Networks with a number of key development agencies such as the UN Specialized Agencies (ILO, FAO, UNIFEM, WHO, and ESCAP, Habitat), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, JICA, CIDA, MAFF, and the New South Wales Government of Australia, have been created.

Co-operative International Development partners consultation has been actively kept up with CCA, JCCU, IDACA/JA-Zenchu, SCC, DID, CCD, and NACF.

A number of member-led forums attended/facilitated by RD and/or staff



included the International Seminar on Co-operative Law in Beijing, the Women in Co-op Leadership Workshop in Tagaytay, Philippines, and the more regular interaction with IDACA, Vaikhunt Mehta, IRMA, ILO Co-opnet, etc.

The range of co-operative development networking included participation in - and in some cases presentations at - global meetings such as the WOCCU Forum, the International Network Conference on Co-operatives and Small & Medium Enterprises, NEDAC Conference, and the IFAP Board Meeting in Japan. Most recently we have also started our links with the WHO by actively participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Health Promotion in Jakarta, Indonesia.

With more regular meeting among ICA Regional Directors, coordinated by Head Office in Geneva, we have been able to share our development agenda with other ICA regional offices in Africa, the Americas, and Europe towards a coordinated and strategic development understanding for future growth.

Insofar as the ICA role as custodian/guardian of the ICIS is concerned, we have continuously weigh all member actions and development thrusts against our Co-operative Identity Statement. Recent developments in member countries where governments have been overly interventionistic should present an urgent cause for concern since we just enunciated the fourth principle of Autonomy and Independence. The difficult balancing act between social and economic concerns sometimes tips the equation to the profit-making side and leave co-operatives vulnerable to the lure of privatization. The ultimate test of the ICIS will depend on how best our members undertake business and development activities in their respective environments without diluting the co-operative identity as we understand it. Towards this end, ICA ROAP has taken a proactive stance by conducting the Special Workshop in Jaipur to develop the necessary safeguards for our members with their active participation (more update from the Special Workshop as we enter into our deliberations).

### **(C)The Management Front**

As from October 1996, we endeavored a change-management process. In November 1996 we took stock of where things stood when we conducted the review meeting. Together with Head Office we endeavored to create a more conducive environment and better team-working and results-based programming.

We created task-forces to encourage collective problem solving and decision making. We adopted rotational OICs (Officer in Charge) to take charge of the day-to-day management in the absence of RD.

Mid-term performance appraisals of directors/advisors were actively undertaken, followed by other staff members upon completion of the restructuring process by early December of 1997. Indicators to measure the results of the above were also evolved.

The meeting with ICA ROAP Staff Association led to the idea of setting up of an internal mechanism within ICA ROAP, instead of hiring an outside consultant to do a job evaluation process. A credible ROAP-HO task force was established as a result. The task force managed to define the "rights and obligations" of the employee in order to ascertain that *remunerative adjustments* are made in a just and fair manner based on job productivity and work performance, rather than on tenure and experience alone.

The Board of the Bonow Trust met several times and agreed to authorize the Regional Director, in consultation with Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, to ensure that the best price be obtained for the sale of the Bonow House. Since the first option and priority to sell to the Co-operative Movement in India failed to materialize, the building was sold in the open market. An agreement was eventually reached with a credible buyer. "Transparency" is the key word with regard to the sale. Unfortunately, the Bonow Trust is now being brought to court by the previous buyer who offered a lesser price. Although we are confident that the case will be won, it basically means a further delay in the completion of the sale.

But all that glitters is not only gold. ICA ROAP has its fair share of drawbacks in its efforts to shift the paradigm. Changing traditional patterns to a more results-based management is not always easy. Personal commitment, dedication, hard work, collective orientation (as opposed to ego-centered orientation), and departmental integration are challenges to be achieved. Not to mention patience and tolerance. At the same time ICA ROAP must continue to be more member-driven (post Tokyo Congress 1992) and make ICA ROAP a more quality-conscious service provider based on the principles and values of co-operative.

These challenges, however, have been overcome due to good team-work building and increasing member-service consciousness.

## **PERSPECTIVE PLAN SUMMARY**

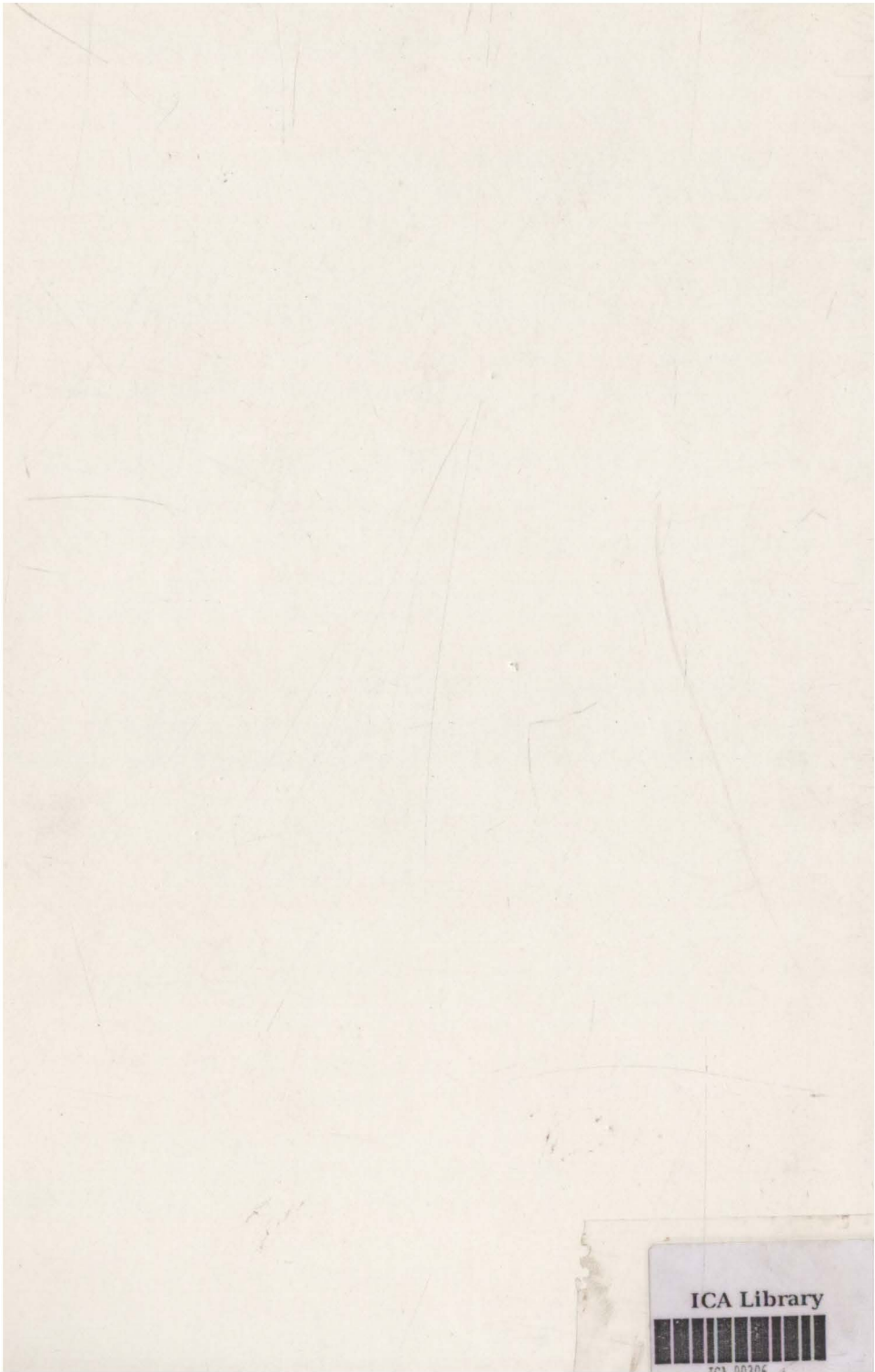
The ICA ROAP held its second phase strategic planning exercise following the initial one conducted in August 1997. It was held at Bonow House in New Delhi from October 13 to 15, 1997, and facilitated by ICA Head Office staff, namely Messrs. Bjorn Genberg and Claes Thorselius. The ICA ROAP staff identified the region's focal points until 2002. Lengthy discussions revealed key result areas as follows :

- Policy and legislation (conducive socio-economic environments)
- Leadership and professional management
- Trade
- Women in Co-operative Development
- Agriculture(focus : food security/the environment)
- Development partners' priorities (focus: Consumer Co-operatives).

ICA's key projects were reviewed and identified based on members' needs, including the new one being submitted to the Government of New South Wales, and continuation of previous ones sponsored by CICOPA, JCCU, MAFF, CCA/DID and SCC. These projects include:

- policy reform and management project
- new sub-regional programme for Central Asia
- agricultural coop management training
- value-based management training
- international coop trade network
- CICOPA
- consumer development project
- case studies in fair trade
- women leaders training
- rural women leaders training
- agricultural coop development
- new project ideas.

A four-year development plan, based on the above was prepared and submitted to ICA members in this region and also international development partners all of whom are important stakeholders. This presentation was made at the Cooperative Think Tank Consortium (CTTC) held in Manila in February 1998.



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