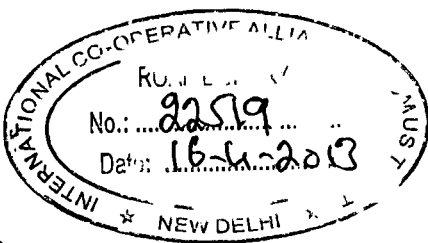


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IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



ANNUAL REPORT
2003

CONTENTS

Message from Mr. Mu Li, Vice President	1
Message from Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director	2
Second Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum and the 5th Regional Assembly	3
ICA/DiD Workshop on Governance of Co-op Credit and Banking	4
Sub-Regional Workshops on Strengthening Agricultural Co-ops in Asia	4
Second Asia-Pacific Research Conference held in Cebu	5
Third ICA Regional Women's Forum in Cebu	6
Second Trainers' Training Programme for Leadership Development of Women co-operators	6
Seventeenth ICA/Japan Management Training Course	7
Regional Workshop on ILO Recommendation No.193 on Co-ops	8
Workshop on Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction and PRSP	8
Asia-Pacific Co-operative Trade Forum in Bangkok	9
Consumer, Health and Youth Co-operative Activities	10
ICA-Japan Training Course for Strengthening Women's Agricultural Co-ops	11
7th Regional Consultation on Co-operative Policy Development and Legislation	11
ICA Member Organisations in the Region	12

Message from the ICA Vice President

The ICA in Asia-Pacific had an eventful year during 2003. It was able to undertake as many as 34 activities during the year. Apart from the usual meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops, the ICA has ventured into a major initiative in developing agricultural co-operatives in the region, in collaboration with AGRITERRA, Netherlands. Studies on the current agricultural co-operative situation in six countries, viz., Bangladesh, India, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia were undertaken and national level workshops were held in these countries, besides, two sub-regional workshops were held in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Hanoi, Vietnam during the year. We hope to carry on with our developmental activities on agricultural co-operatives in the Region during 2004.

Another important initiative was the organization of workshops on building and strengthening collaboration between co-operatives and the trade union movement in relation to ILO Recommendation No.193, in collaboration with the ICFTU. We have also organized a number of Trainers' Training Programmes using a Manual on Co-operative Leadership Training for Women, which was developed in collaboration with the ILO Co-opnet.

We have also been deeply into youth co-operative development and the project staff participated and conducted a number of meetings and seminars for university/campus/youth co-operators. We are planning to organize a Regional Youth Seminar in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, during September 2004. I would request ICA members to nominate a large number of youth co-operators to participate at this seminar.

Other major initiatives were the organization of an International Conference on Poverty Alleviation – during the Oslo General Assembly of the ICA, Poverty Alleviation was considered as a major priority area in ICA's operations – in Bangkok during November. We have also organized a

couple of seminars on Governance of Credit and Banking Co-operatives and on Micro-Finance.

Another area of importance was the organizing of a Co-operative Trade Forum in Thailand. The ICA ROAP is collaborating with the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC) to organize an International Trade Fair and Forum during April 2004. I am sure that co-operative organizations will send delegates and products to this event in large numbers.

The ICA Regional Office, during the year 2003, organized a number of meetings in Cebu, Philippines, during February, where the 5th ICA Regional Assembly, the 2nd ICA Regional Co-operative Forum, the 3rd ICA Regional Women's Forum, the 2nd ICA Regional Research Conference and a number of meetings of ICA's specialized organizations and committees in the region were held.

All these efforts point to an emerging Regional Office for your ICA and we have already identified our top priority areas for the year 2004. They are, Co-operative Identity and Image, Co-operative Legislation and Policy Development, Strengthening of Professional Management in Co-operatives, Promotion of International Co-op Trade, Gender and Youth Mainstreaming.

The ICA ROAP is also organizing a programme on awareness creation for HIV/AIDS prevention in the region and is associating with UN AIDS. We are also collaborating with the Co-operative Movement of Kuwait for the development of co-operatives in middle-east countries, in the coming year.

ICA members in the Region has all along been very supportive of activities of the ICA Regional Office, which we very sincerely appreciate. We hope your support and collaboration will continue in the years to come.

– Mu Li
Vice President, ICA for Asia-Pacific



Message from the ICA Regional Director



The year 2003 has been a hectic and successful year for the ICA in Asia and the Pacific. During the year, we have been able to hold a number of activities – 34 in total – of different sectoral importance, be it agriculture, gender, consumers, human resource development and research, youth mainstreaming, co-operative policy and legislation, etc.

The year began with a series of meetings, fora and conferences. The ICA Regional Office organized the 5th Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly, the 2nd ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum, the 3rd Regional Women's Forum, the 2nd Asia-Pacific Research Conference and meetings of a number of specialized bodies. All these meetings and conferences were phenomenal successes. Another important event during this period was the ICA/DiD workshop on governance of co-operative credit and banking.

During the year, like in the past, the ICA-Japan Management Training Project – the seventeenth in the series – was conducted, which trained fifteen participants from 10 countries. The training took place in India, Thailand and Japan.

With the support of AGRITERRA of the Netherlands, the ICA Regional Office conducted critical studies on agricultural co-operatives in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. These studies have made very important recommendations for the growth and development of agricultural co-operatives in these countries. Two sub-regional workshops were also held, one in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and the other in Hanoi, Vietnam. National level workshops were held in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nepal, Thailand, and India. We are planning to hold such national level workshops in Laos and Cambodia soon.

Another very important activity was the holding of two Regional Trainers' Training Programme for Co-operative Leadership Development for Women, based on a manual developed jointly by the ICA ROAP and the ILO Coopnet. The TOT workshops were held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Pune, India. We propose to hold a few sub-regional workshops in Indonesia, Iran, etc.

On the Co-operative Policy and Legislation issues, we had conducted the 3rd Critical Study on Co-operative Policy and

Legislative Reforms covering several countries in the Region and also held a successful Regional Consultation in Kuwait, which prepared the draft Recommendation to be adopted at the 7th Asia-Pacific Co-operative Ministers' Conference, scheduled to be held in New Delhi, India, during February, 2004. The Government of Kuwait has kindly sponsored the Regional Consultation and the Ministers' Conference.

Co-operators from Asia-Pacific participated at the last General Assembly in Oslo during August-September, 2003. The General Assembly adopted the UN Millennium Development Goals of Poverty Reduction as the target area for co-operatives globally. To this end, the ICA in collaboration with the ILO organized a workshop on the Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction with particular emphasis on PRSP and decent work in Asia.

Promotion of International Co-op Trade is another priority area identified by the ICA in this Region. We have organized an Asia-Pacific Trade Forum in Bangkok during November 2003. The Regional Office is also involved in the organizing of the International Co-operative Trade Fair and Forum in Beijing during April, 2004.

Youth mainstreaming has been one other area where the ICA ROAP is involved. Our program director and other staff have been participating in a number of regional and national level youth seminars in India, basically targeting the campus/school/university/school co-operatives and their member youth.

An international youth forum organized during the Oslo General Assembly was also well attended, especially in view of the decision of the board to nominate one youth co-operators to the ICA Board. We are organizing a Regional Youth Seminar in Malaysia early September next year.

We are very grateful to our member organizations in this region and our development partners in supporting us in organizing these very useful activities and are hopeful the support and collaboration will follow in the years to come.

– Shil Kwan Lee



ICA Regional Director, Shil Kwan Lee, speaking at the Oslo General Assembly.

Second Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum and the 5th Regional Assembly

The 2nd ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum and 5th Meeting of the Regional Assembly as well as several meetings of the ICA specialized organizations were held at the Waterfront Convention Center and Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City, 18-23 February 2003.

His Excellency Teofisto T. Guingona, Jr., Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines, delivered the keynote address during the Joint Opening Ceremony on 19th February. Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also sent a message to the delegates, which was read by Honorable Secretary Efrén Moncupa, Chairperson of the Co-operative Development Authority (CDA).

In her message, President Macapagal-Arroyo stressed that "Co-operatives are schools for democratic participation and pro-active citizenship... Co-operatives provide a locally-based answer to globalization. They demonstrate the true meaning of freedom, equity, security and human dignity." She added that "Co-operatives are more relevant today than they have ever been. Their ability to combine an entrepreneurship approach with the values and accountability of the private sector and civil society make them an essential part of the Philippine economy."

Mr. Mu Li, ICA Vice President, and Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President, delivered the opening remarks during the ceremony.

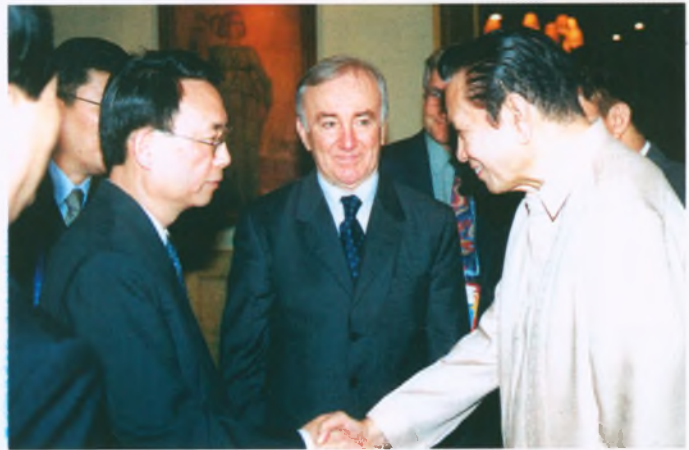
The actual deliberations of the Forum started on 20 February by a briefing by Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director on the theme of the Forum (Co-operatives: Past 10 years and 10 years ahead). Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General, spoke on "ICA's Thinking on the Prospects and Strategies for Facing the Future".

The sub-themes of the forum were "Asian Values as Reinforcing Element to Strengthen Co-operative Values", "Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific - An Introspective View", "Globalization - Its Impact on Co-operatives", and "Facing the Future", with very eminent speakers on the subjects.

Dr. Münkner capped the forum with an excellent and much-appreciated summing-up of the discussions.



ICA President Ivano Barberini with Philippine Vice President H.E. Teofisto T. Guingona.



ICA Vice President Mu Li welcomes Philippine Vice President H.E. Teofisto T. Guingona.



ICA President Ivano Barberini speaking at the Forum

ICA/DiD Workshop on Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking

A workshop was organized on 24-25 February 2003 in Cebu, Philippines, as a part of ICA ROAP/DiD efforts to strengthen co-operative credit and banking institutions in the Region. Executives and leaders of co-operative credit and banking institutions from India, Japan, Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and officials of central banking institutions participated. The workshop focused on different aspects of co-operative governance in credit and banking institutions.

The outcomes of this workshop and the seminar on Surveillance System held earlier in November 2002 in Korea will form the basis for preparation of a practical guidebook on "Surveillance and Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking Institutions" by ICA ROAP for the benefit of financial co-operatives of Asia-Pacific.



The workshop on Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking [above] and Meeting of the ICA Regional Banking Association [left].

Sub-Regional Workshops on Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP), New Delhi has initiated a project on Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific Region with the support of AGRITERRA of Netherlands.

The objective of the project is to evolve workable parameters for formulating suitable strategy for strengthening agricultural co-operatives in the region. As a part of the project the ICA has undertaken critical studies on

agricultural co-operatives in selected countries of the region, namely, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. These studies led to holding of national level seminars and also two sub-regional workshops.

The first sub-regional workshop was held at Hotel Holiday Inn, Colombo on 27th May 2003. The Chief Guest was Ms. C. Separate, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Co-operatives, Govt. of Sri Lanka. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP also spoke at the opening ceremony, in collaboration with the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka.

The second Sub-Regional Workshop for the ASEAN Region was held in Hanoi (Vietnam) from 23rd to 25th July 2003 in collaboration with the Vietnam Co-operative Alliance (VCA). Mr. Nguyen Tien Quan, Acting President of VCA and



Delegates at the sub-regional workshop in Hanoi

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP spoke at the opening ceremony.

The participants prepared country action plans for strengthening their agricultural co-operatives.

The participants of these workshop prepared country action plans for strengthening their agricultural co-ops, which will be reviewed and finalized at the national workshops to be held in these countries.



Delegates at the sub-regional workshop in Colombo

Second Asia-Pacific Research Conference held in Cebu, Philippines

Eighty Researchers and Co-operative Leaders from Brunei, Canada, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, apart from representatives from Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO), Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU) and the ILO participated at the Second Asia-Pacific Research Conference, Cebu, during February, 2003.

Akira Kurimoto, Chairman of the Global Research Committee presided over, while M.V. Madane, Chair of the Asia-Pacific Research Group coordinated the Conference. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, welcomed the delegates and hoped that the deliberations and discussions will be fruitful.

Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General presented a paper and Ivano Barberini, ICA President also participated. The National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) hosted the Conference .

M.V. Madane, in his speech briefed on the background of the Conference .. "...for the past decades or so, our search for viability norms and suitable paradigm has continued to this day. In Tokyo during 1992, we searched for viable models both in western countries and Asia and came forward with many successful role models scattered all over. We have been discussing in successive research conferences, the new awareness of co-operative action and expansion. We discussed civil society as a possible area for our goal under the widened scope of co-operative principles to include Concern for Community. And the search goes on."

The first Conference was held in Singapore, during June 2000, which received overwhelming response from the movements in the Region. The Asia-Pacific Research group hopes to organize the third Research Conference during the next Regional Assembly in Thailand.



Akira Kurimoto, Chair of the ICA Global Research Committee



Iain Macdonald speaking at the Conference



M.V. Madane, who co-ordinated the Conference



Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director presenting a memento to Msgr. Manual Alonzo, Chairperson of NATCCO

Third ICA Regional Women's Forum in Cebu

The 3rd ICA Regional Women's Forum held in Cebu, Philippines, 18 February, 2003, wherein delegates from the region and outside participated. The objectives of the Forum were to determine whether Asian values enhance the participation of women in co-operatives, and to identify mechanisms to overcome factors that limit women's participation in co-operatives.

Ms. Rahaiah Baharen, the Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, Msgr. Manual Alonzo Jr., the President of NATCCO and Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President spoke at the Forum.

Hon. Corazon Juliano Soliman, Secretary of the Department of Social Development, Republic of Philippines, delivered Keynote Speech. Ms. Remmy Rikken, Operations Director of

CAPWIP (Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics) presented a well researched paper on the theme. Ms. Rameshwary Ramachandra of DEW Credit Co-operative, Singapore made a presentation based on her experience in a UN Project in North Korea.

Based on the findings of the presentations and discussions at the Forum, the Forum called on men and women co-operators and co-operative organizations in Asia and Pacific at all levels to develop and design more programs towards leadership development and empowerment of women in co-operatives.

In the concluding session, Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, emphasized ICA's commitment for the cause of women.



Cebu Mayor Mr. Osemama interacting with Mr. Shil Kwan Lee. Mr. Barberini looks on.



Mr. Tan Kin Lian speaking at the Co-operative Forum



Cultural show at the joint opening ceremony.

Second Trainers' Training Programme for Leadership Development of Women Co-operators

The ICA-ROAP, concerned about the under representation of women in leadership and decision-making at all levels in co-ops in the region, took initiative to train women to enable them taking up leadership roles. With the efforts of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, ICA ROAP and ILO CO-OPNET developed a Trainers' Training Manual for leadership development of women co-

operators in Asia Pacific Region. The ICA conducted the first trainers' training programme in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia covering member organization from ASEAN region countries. The second training programme was held in India covering member organizations from SOWECA Region, during 2nd to 7th June, 2003 in Pune, India.

Participants from Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India attended the programme. The objectives of the programme was to train trainers on leadership development of women in co-operatives in the region, and to enable women to build capacity for taking up leadership jobs. The National Co-operative Union of India hosted the programme at the Vaithkuth Mehta National Institute of Co-op Management in Pune.



Mr. Bhagawati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCU, India speaking at the Trainers' Training Workshop. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Dr. S.S. Sisodia are also in the picture.



Participants at the Trainers' Training Programme in Pune, India [left].

Seventeenth ICA/Japan Management Training Course concludes

The Seventeenth [17th] ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia was held in India, Thailand and Japan, from November 26, 2002 to April 19, 2003. The programme was implemented by the International Co-operative Alliance [ICA] in collaboration with JA-Zenchu [Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia-Japan [IDACA].

The fifteen participants to this Training Course were nominated by ICA member organisations from ten countries i.e., Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. Six of the participants were women.

The Inaugural Session of the Course was attended by Mitsuaki Kinoshita, First Secretary in the Japanese Embassy in India.

Mr. Prem Kumar, Programme Adviser, ICA ROAP, was responsible for the conduct of the training course, while the Japanese segment of the programme was under the direction of Mr. Shigeri Fukamachi, Managing Director of the IDACA.

At the concluding session, Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, congratulated the participants for the successful completion of the course and thanked all the institutions involved in imparting this training course, and the Government of Japan, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) for continuously funding this training programme.

Prem Kumar, Programme Adviser, presented a summary of the End-of-the-Course Evaluation.

Certificates of Participation from the ICA as well as from the IDACA were awarded to the participants.



The closing session of the course in progress. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director [second from left]



Mr. Fukamachi, Managing Director, IDACA issuing the Certificate of Participation to a participant.



Course participants during their study visits



Regional Workshop on ILO Recommendation No. 193 on Co-ops held in Singapore

The ICA ROAP/ICFTU-APRO/SNTUC/SNCF had jointly held a Regional Workshop on "ILO Recommendation No. 193 on Co-operatives: Building & Strengthening Co-operation between Co-operative & Trade Union Movements" on 16-18 July 2003 at the Orchid Country Club, Singapore. The objectives of the workshop were:

(i) To share the partnership experience of co-operatives and trade unions; (ii) To get to know the follow up actions taken by ILO; (iii) To reflect on the ILO Recommendation No. 193 and point out areas of co-operation; and (iv) To point out as how to build and strengthen the co-operation between the two organisations as well as the areas of joint work.



Mr. Lim Boon Heng addressing the Workshop

The Workshop was well participated by forty leaders from both the labour and co-operative movements.

Mr Lim Boon Heng, Minister (Prime Minister's Office) and Secretary-General, Singapore National Trade Union Congress, was the Guest of Honour.



A section of the delegates at the Workshop

Workshop on Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction and PRSP

A noteworthy effort by the ICA ROAP was the holding of a regional workshop on 'Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction' with particular emphasis on PRSP and Decent Work in November, 2003 in Bangkok, in collaboration with the ILO.

Participants represented governments and co-operative movements of PRSP countries, viz. Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Timor East, Vietnam, Mongolia and Indonesia participated; besides resource persons from ICA and ILO. ICA ROAP was represented by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior Consultant.

The workshop, through extensive discussions and deliberations, formulated recommendations on the issues of (a) what should governments, co-operatives and development partners do to make the PRSP process more participator and inclusive?; (b) how should co-operatives



Delegates at the Workshop

play a greater role in the PRSP process?; (c) what should be the role of governments in facilitating the contribution of co-operatives in poverty reduction at local and national levels?, and (d) what should donors do to support the contribution of co-operatives to poverty reduction?

Asia-Pacific Co-operative Trade Forum in Bangkok

The Co-operative League of Thailand hosted the ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Trade Forum, 13-15 November 2003 at Bangkok. The Forum attracted 153 participants from Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Iran, Korea, India, Vietnam, Pakistan, Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, etc.

An exhibition was also organized by CLT at the venue of the Forum. Samples of commodities were exhibited by representatives of different countries. Eminent speakers, Mr. Ryu Iwadare from Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union, Mr. Alan Kovan from NTUC Fairprice, Singapore, Mr. Robby Tulus, Canada, spoke at the Forum.

Group discussions on the next day covered the recommendations of study of co-optrade initiated in Korea, Japan, China, India and Sri Lanka and the implementation of the same and the promotion of co-optrade. The discussions were presented at the closing session, chaired by Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director.

This was a start-up for the next International Trade Exhibition-cum-Forum to be held in Beijing, China, in April 2004.



The delegates at the Forum [top] and the Forum in progress [centre]



37th Meeting of ICA Consumer Committee, Mumbai (July 2003)



Meeting of the ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/Campus co-operatives, Singapore (November, 2003)

Consumer, Health and Youth Co-operative Activities

Consumer Co-op Activities

During the year, the Consumer Co-operative Development Project has undertaken a number of activities:

- 36th Meeting of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation, Cebu, February 2003
- Training Programme for Consumer Co-operative Managers in Miyagi Co-operative and Co-op Tokyo, October, 2003
- Training Programme for Elected Members of Consumer Co-operatives at the JCCU and Mikawa Citizens' Co-operative, November, 2003
- 3rd Regional Workshop for Senior Managers of Consumer Co-operatives in Singapore, October, 2003
- 37th Meeting of ICA Consumer Committee in Mumbai, India, November, 2003

Activities of University/Campus Co-operative Youth

The project staff (Jiro Ito and Nair) attended a national youth seminar at Natesan Institute of Co-operative Management during January, 2003, where youth co-operators from various universities and colleges participated. Another Regional level Seminar in Guwahati, North-eastern India was attended by P. Nair, during July, 2003, wherein youth co-operators from 10 north-eastern provinces converged.

There were meetings of the office-bearers of the Consumer Sub-committee on University/Campus Co-operatives during April, 2003, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, followed by the Sub-Committee meeting in Singapore during November, 2003.

The project staff also participated at the International Co-operative Youth Seminar held in Oslo, Norway, on conjunction with the ICA General Assembly, September, 2003. This was a very important meeting, after which the ICA Board has co-opted a Youth leader to the board.

Health Co-operatives

The 9th Board Meeting and the 4th General Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organization was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, during June, 2003, wherein the project staff (Jiro Ito and Taneja) participated. This meeting discussed above the relationship of APHCO with the global IHCO, exchange of used medical apparatus, virtual university plan, etc.



Photos:

1. Mr. Fujioka speaking at the Consumer Committee meeting, Cebu
2. 4th meeting of Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation, Colombo, Sri Lanka
3. Participants of the International Youth seminar in Oslo, Norway presenting their views
4. Regional Youth Seminar in Guwahati, P. Nair from ICA ROAP (sitting) participated.

ICA-Japan Training Course for Strengthening Women's Agricultural Co-operatives

The ICA ROAP, in association with its member organisation in Japan, the Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives of Japan (JA-Zenchu) and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia (IDACA) organised the 3rd ICA-Japan Training Course for "Strengthening Women's Agricultural Co-operatives in Rural Areas and Improvement of Farm Management and Rural Life" in Thailand and Japan, including participants from Cambodia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The main objective of the course was to train women leaders in rural areas in developing countries by means of strengthening women's agricultural co-operatives, farm management, and improvement of rural life, which also helped in capacity building of the participants. The concluding session of the Training Course was held on 2nd October 2003, with Mr. Kazunari Iwafuchi, Section Chief, International Co-operation Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) as Chief Guest. Mr. Shigeri Fukamachi, Managing Director of IDACA and Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Planning Officer of ICA ROAP also addressed the closing session.



The delegates at a group photo

7th Regional Consultation on Co-operative Policy Development and Legislation Reforms

The 7th Regional Consultation on "Co-operative Policy Development and Legislation Reforms" was convened by the ICA ROAP, 7-9 December 2003 in Kuwait with the support of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Government of Kuwait; and Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies of Kuwait (KUCCS). A very large gathering of delegates from the various governments and co-operative movements of Asia-Pacific and Middle East deliberated co-operative policy development and legislation reforms for three days to evolve workable recommendations in these areas with a view to enabling co-operatives to sustain themselves effectively in the present era of globalization.

His Excellency Faisal Al-Hajji, Minister for Social Affairs and Labour, Government of Kuwait inaugurated the Consultation on behalf of the Prime Minister. While ICA President Ivano Barberini delivered

the key note speech. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, also spoke at the opening ceremony.



Participants at the Regional Consultation in Kuwait [above and left] H.E. Al Kandari, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Kuwait, speaking at the Regional Consultation

ICA MEMBER ORGANISATIONS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

1. Bangladesh Jatiya Samabaya Union (BJSU), Dhaka, Bangladesh.
2. All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC), Beijing China.
3. National Co-operative Union of India, New Delhi, India.
4. National Co-operative Consumers' Federation (NCCF), New Delhi, India.
5. Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-op. Ltd, (IFFCO), New Delhi, India.
6. National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation (NAFED), New Delhi, India.
7. National Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' Federation, Mumbai, India.
8. National Federation of State Co-operative Banks Ltd., Mumbai, India.
9. Krishak Bharati Co-operative Ltd. (KRIBHCO), NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh, India.
10. National Federation of Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies, New Delhi, India.
11. Dewan Koperasi Indonesia (DEKOPIN), Jakarta, Indonesia
12. Central Organisation for Rural Co-operatives of Iran, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.
13. Central Union of Rural Agricultural Co-operatives of Iran Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.
14. Iran Chamber of Co-operatives (ICC), Tehran, Islamic Rep. of Iran.
15. Central Union of Co-operative Societies in Israel, Tel Aviv, Israel.
16. Co-op Jerusalem
19, Hagana Street, Jerusalem, Israel
17. Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA-ZENCHU), Tokyo, Japan.
18. Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU) Tokyo, Japan.
19. National Federation of Fisheries' Co-operatives Associations (Zengyoren), Tokyo, Japan.
20. National Federation of Forest Owners' Co-operative Associations (Zenmori-ren), Tokyo Japan.
21. The Norinchukin Bank (Central Co-op Bank for Agriculture & Forestry), Tokyo, Japan.
22. National Federation of Agricultural Co-op. Associations (Zen-Noh), Tokyo, Japan.
23. IE-NO-HIKARI ASSOCIATION (Association for Education & Publications on Agricultural Co-ops), Tokyo, Japan.
24. National Mutual Insurance Federation of Agricultural Co-ops. (ZENKYOREN), Tokyo, Japan.
25. National Press & Information Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives, Tokyo, Japan.
26. Japanese Workers' Co-operative Union (JIGYODAN) Tokyo, Japan.
27. The National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NAFUCA) of Japan.
28. National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Co-operatives (ZENROSAI), Tokyo, Japan.
29. Union of Consumer Societies, Almaty, Kazakhstan.
30. National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
31. National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
32. Korean Federation of Community Credit Co-operatives (KFCCC), Seoul, Rep. of Korea.
33. National Credit Union Federation of Korea (NACUFOK), Seoul, Rep. of Korea
34. National Forestry Co-operatives Federation (NFCF) Seoul, Rep. of Korea.
35. Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Safat, Kuwait.
36. National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia (ANGKASA), Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.
37. National Land Finance Co-operative Society Ltd., Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
38. Central Co-operative Society, Yangon, Myanmar.
39. National Co-operative Federation of Nepal Ltd. (NCF) Kathmandu, Nepal.
40. National Co-operative Union of Pakistan, Islamabad, Pakistan.
41. The Agricultural Co-operative Union, Palestine. (Via Israel).
42. National Confederation of Co-operatives Inc. (NATCCO) Quezon City , Philippines.
43. Singapore National Co-op Federation Ltd., Singapore
44. National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
45. Federation of Thrift & Credit Co-op Societies Ltd. (SANASA), Colombo, Sri Lanka.
46. Consumer Co-operative Societies' Federation (Sri Lanka), Colombo, Sri Lanka.
47. National Institute of Co-operative Development Polgolla, Kandy, Sri Lanka.
48. Co-operative League of Thailand, Bangkok, Thailand.
49. Union of Consumer Societies, Turkmenistan
50. Vietnam Co-operatives Alliance (VCA), Hanoi, Vietnam.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

1. Australian Centre for Co-operative Research and Development (ACCORD), Sydney, Australia.
2. Institute for Indonesian Co-operative Development Studies (LSP 21), Jakarta, Indonesia.
3. Co-operative College of Malaysia Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
4. International Co-op Housing Foundation for Asia and the Pacific, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

INTERNATIONAL MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

1. Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions, (ACCU), Bangkok, Thailand.

STATEMENT ON THE NEW CO-OPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice. They are:

First Principle: Voluntary and Open membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of the membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

Second Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.

Third Principle : Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Fourth Principle : Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

Fifth Principle : Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees, so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

Sixth Principle : Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

Seventh Principle : Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

ICA IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC : REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 2003(1200)

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Phenomenal success for Second ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum

The 2nd ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum and 5th Meeting of the Regional Assembly as well as many meetings of the ICA specialized organizations were held at the Waterfront Convention Center and Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City on 18-23 February 2003. More than 650 delegates from Brunei, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and ACCU, which is an international organization which is a member of the ICA in this region, including nearly 350 Filipino delegates. The international organizations who participated were Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO),



His Excellency Teofisto T. Guingona with Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President

CICOPA, ILO and CCA (Canadian Co-operative Association).

The Philippine Co-operative Forum



His Excellency Teofisto T. Guingona speaking to Mr. Mu Li, ICA Regional Assembly Chairperson. Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President (in the middle), looks on.

CONTENTS

Phenomenal success for Second ICA Co-op Forum	1
5th ICA Regional Assembly meets in Cebu	3
Summary of 2nd Regl. Co-op Forum	4
2nd Asia-Pacific Research Conference	7
Agriculture Committee meets in Cebu ..	8
Regional HRD and Research Committee meets in Cebu	8
Regional Assembly resolution on IDACA support	9
36th ICA Consumer Committee meeting	9
Regional Co-op Banking Assn	10
3rd ICA Regional Co-op Women's Forum	11
RCBA Workshop	12
State award to M. Sharda B. Remke ...	13
And now a Snake Co-operative!	13
Int'l Co-op Trade Fair, China	14
P. E. Weeraman passes away	16



His Excellency Teofisto T. Guingona inaugurating the Forum

was also held at the same venue 21-22 February, 2003.

His Excellency Teofisto T. Guingona, Jr., Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines, delivered the keynote address at the Joint Opening Ceremony on February 19. Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also sent a message to the delegates, which was read by Honorable Secretary Efrén Moncupa, Chairperson of the Co-operative Development Authority (CDA).

In his keynote address, Vice President Guingona said, "What is the role of co-operatives in this age of globalization and technology revolution? I state that co-operatives are more crucial today. The Asian crisis devastated our economies. The current recession in Japan and the U.S. have stunted our recovery. The present threat of war in Iraq adds more instability. These are the areas co-operatives must focus on: (1) economy, for fair trade and not free trade, (2) governance, especially strengthening civil society, and (3) promotion of peace".

The Vice President also made a pitch for a more enabling policy environment for Philippine co-operatives, specifically requesting Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon, who was among the distinguished guests at the Opening Ceremony, to craft a special law for savings and credit co-operatives. Senator Biazon is the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Co-operatives.

In her message, President Macapagal-Arroyo stressed that "Co-operatives are schools for democratic participation and pro-active citizenship... Co-operatives provide a locally-based answer to globalization. They demonstrate the true meaning of freedom, equity, security and human dignity." She added that "Co-operatives are more relevant today than they have ever been. Their ability to combine an entrepreneurship approach with the values and accountability of the private sector and civil society make them an essential part of the Philippine economy."

Mr. Mu Li, ICA Vice President, and Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President, delivered the opening remarks during the ceremony. Msgr. Manuel P. Alonzo, Chairperson of the National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) welcomed the delegates. After a colourful and rich cultural evening, the ceremony closed with remarks by NATCCO Chief Executive Officer Guillermo Cua.

The actual deliberations of the Forum started on 20 February by a briefing by Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director on the theme of the Forum (Co-operatives: Past 10 years and 10 years ahead). Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General, spoke on "ICA's Thinking on the Prospects and Strategies for Facing the Future".

The first sub-theme of the forum was "Asian Values as Reinforcing Element to Strengthen Co-operative Values".

Prof. Jung-joo Kim of Korea and Mr. K.S. Bhorla, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture and Co-operation of India, made the presentations. The second sub-theme was "Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific – An Introspective View". The resource persons were Mr. Akira Kurimoto of the Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU) and Mr. Robby Tulus, former ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific.

Mr. Huseyin Polat of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Co-operative Branch, in Geneva and Mr. Gong-Sik Chung, Executive Vice President of the National Agriculture Co-operative Federation (NACF) of Korea spoke on "Globalization – Its Impact on Co-operatives".

Mr. Tan Kin Lian, CEO of NTUC Income Insurance Co-operative of Singapore and Dr. Hans Münkner of Germany were the presentors on the final sub-theme, "Facing the Future". Dr. Münkner also capped the forum with an excellent and much-



Hon. Secy. Efrén Moncupa, Chairperson of Co-operative Development Authority (CDA), reading the message from H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, President of Philippines

appreciated summing-up of the discussions.

Honorable Senator Aquilino Pimentel also attended the Forum and launched the Philippine Co-operative – Local Government Unit (LGU) Partnership Awards immediately after the lunch break.

– P. Nair

The 5th ICA Regional Assembly meets in Cebu, Philippines

The 5th ICA Regional Assembly met in Cebu, Philippines, 21st February 2003. More than 160 delegates and representatives from the member organizations of the ICA in Asia-Pacific participated at the assembly and the discussions. This was the largest ever Regional Assembly for this region.



K.S. Bhoria, Joint Secretary, Government of India speaking at the Forum.

ICA President Ivano Barberini and Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General were present and addressed the Assembly. Msgr. Manuel P. Alonzo, Chairperson of NATCCO Confederation presided the assembly meeting. Mr. Mu Li, Chairperson of the ICA Regional Assembly, welcomed the delegates and actively participated at the assembly deliberations.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director presenting a memento to Honorable Secretary Efren Moncupa, Chairperson of CDA.

All chairs of specialized committees presented their reports to the Regional Assembly. The organizer of the 2nd Asia-Pacific Research Forum, Madhav V. Madane, presented a report on the successfully conducted Research Forum the previous day. Similarly, Mdm. Rahaiah Baharen, Chairperson of ICA Regional Women's Committee reported on the committee meeting and the 3rd Regional Women's Forum held on 18 February, 2003 at the same venue.

Dr. Hans Münkner also reported to the Regional Assembly on the

deliberations of the Regional Co-operative Forum and presented his summary of the Forum deliberations.

Prior to the Regional Assembly, the ICA Regional Standing Committee met and elected new office bearers for 2 years till the next Regional Assembly in Thailand. They are:

- Mr. Mu Li, ACFSMC, China Chairperson.
- Ms. Junko Ito, Board Member, JCCU, Japan, Vice Chairperson.
- Royal Prof. Ungku A. Aziz, President, ANGKASA, Malaysia, Vice Chairperson.
- Dr. S.S. Sisodia, President, NCUI, India, Member.
- Dr. Yehudah Paz, Central Union of Co-op Societies, Israel; Member.
- Mr. Chung Dae-Kun, President, NACF, Korea, Member.
- Msgr. Manuel Alonzo, President, NATCCO, Philippines, Member.
- Mr. Seah Kian Peng, Chairman, SNCF, Singapore, Member.
- Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe, President, NCC, Sri Lanka, Member.
- Mr. Deepak Prakash Baskota, Chairman, NCF, Nepal, Member.
- Mr. Sutrisno Iwantono, DEKOPIN, Indonesia, Member.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director presenting a memento to Msgr. Manuel Alonzo. Mr. Mu Li, Chair of Regional Assembly (seated behind).

– P Nair

Summary of presentations at the 2nd ICA Regional Co-operative Forum

Hans H. Muenkner

The ICA Regional Office for Asia-Pacific successfully conducted the Second Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum in Ceb, Philippines, 19-20 February, 2003. The theme of the Forum was "Co-operatives: Past ten years and 10 years ahead", with four sub-topics:

- Asian Values as reinforcing element to strengthen co-operative values
- Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific: an introspective view
- Impact of globalization on co-operatives in the region
- Facing the future

Asian values

Co-operation is an age-old tradition in the region, deeply embedded in Asian values while modern co-operation following co-operative principles was introduced around 1900 in many counties of the region by colonial governments. During that time and even in the first decades after independence parallel development of civic organizations based on Asian values or of independent co-operatives was not encouraged. After Independence, governments supported and controlled co-operatives and used them as development tools.

When talking about Asian values we actually refer to Southeast Asian values and the Confucian view of values, with emphasis on human relations and social objectives, the human factor being given priority before materialism and co-operation as a stabilizing factor strengthening community life.

The contents of Confucian values was described in some more detail as honesty, hard work, saving and thrift, service and sacrifice, unselfishness, emphasis on family loyalty, pooling of earning capacity, to be united, precedence of order, non-violence, trusteeship. In this context, a different concept of the role of law prevails as compared to the modern European concepts: Good laws serving the state to govern its subjects as opposed to laws empowering the citizen to defend his/her individual rights against others and even against the state. In Japan and Korea for a long time Asian values were seen as success factors for co-operative development but it was doubted whether this was still the case today. Today, economic and material success is essential for the survival of co-operatives. In these considerations size and the economies of scale play an important role. In Korea, the amalgamation

programs were hindered by a strong sense of community ties and it was feared that large co-operatives would jeopardize human relations and therefore agricultural co-operatives remained small.

Problems to reconcile business relations and human relations were discussed as another problem area: Co-operative leaders had problems to take hard measures against loan delinquency. It is also known from Indonesia that rather than reporting bad figures in the balance sheet, which would create conflicts, it was preferred to report better figures than actually existed. Also problems with recruiting external CEOs in order to provide professional management was raised and it was stated that human relations were often considered more important than a person's abilities and skills ("know whom" taking precedence over "know how"). Another problem area was that of innovations among conservative farmers, who shied away from confrontations of old and new methods of production, which could put harmony at stake.

During the discussion it was criticized that Asian values are used to keep leadership in power and are not working in favour of the "subjects". It was also said that although most communist regimes had collapsed, the basic communist ideas remain relevant.

Finally the general problem of cohesion and solidarity was discussed, where according to Asian values the individual is part of the whole and the whole is not just a sum of individuals and where the behaviour of the individual is regulated by the whole. Here the metaphor of the relationship of tree and leaf was evoked, where the tree is not bothered to lose one or several



Dr. Munkner with Dr. S.S. Sisodia (President, NCUI, India) at one of the sessions

leaves and can grow new leaves, but the leaf is doomed once it is separated from the tree.

Areas where Asian values clash with Western values are:

- ◆ Family and community orientation versus individualism,
- ◆ Authoritarian and bureaucratic rule versus decentralisation and democratic control,
- ◆ Solidarity and mutual aid versus self-help and self-reliance,
- ◆ Human relations versus contractual relations,
- ◆ Dominating role of men and disregard for women versus gender equality (e.g. membership of women in Korean agricultural co-operatives only being possible since 1994, up to today no woman as president of such co-operative),
- ◆ Subsistence agriculture versus commercial farming and the "Westernization of farms".

Can in such circumstances Asian values reinforce co-operative values?

It was felt that values are not static but develop further, that Asian values, co-operative values and universal human values have many things in common. It would certainly be positive, if co-operatives could educate people to be less selfish and more co-operative and to combine values and business. Whether in general increase of knowledge could be considered as a means against increased sorrow was debated. Two more issues were raised in relation to values. It was stated that co-



K. Tsukada speaking at the Forum

operative values remain vague. And it was answered that they had to remain vague in order to be accepted and applicable worldwide as a kind of a smallest common denominator, however, without losing its substance.

Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific: Introspective view

Starting from the case of Japan, it was pointed out that after decades of overwhelming European influence, Asia has become a co-operative growth region mainly benefiting from the globalized economy. Increased democratic systems and deregulation have created a more favourable environment for co-operative development.

Three typical Asian models-of co-operation were presented:

- ◆ Consumer co-operatives with joint buying systems (from Han Groups to individualized services),
- ◆ Hybrid consumer/wholesale co-operatives serving consumers and retailers and marketing farmers' products,
- ◆ Agricultural multipurpose models of co-operation following an integrated approach covering production (working) and living (reminding of Sir Horace Plunketts slogan of better business and better living).

All three models combine economic efficiency with active member participation.

The Asia Pacific Region has clearly benefited from the regionalisation of the ICA in 1992. But even before this time ICA ROAP has played a very positive role as an advocate of the co-operative movement. It managed to become accepted and trusted both by its member organizations and by the government in the region.

Co-operatives are conscious of their role as stabilizing, locally rooted



NATCCO staff at dinner

actors in times of globalization. Their strength lies in their dual concern for economic growth and equity, in the economic participation of their members and their inalienable, indivisible capital base. Unlike the large consumer co-operatives in some countries of Europe (France, Belgium, Germany), consumer co-operatives in Asia are performing well. Also some micro finance operations work with low delinquency rates

Gender is an integral part of co-operative development efforts (which according to Asian values would amount to "emancipation"), making women conscious of their prerogatives in equal rights organizations under the Identity Statement of the ICA. Another focus of activities has been to involve youths in leadership and decision-making throughout the co-operative system. This also includes preoccupation with the most pressing problems of youths, e.g. develop ideas for creating employment among the youths in the future.

There have been several attempts regarding co-operation among co-operatives, with successes and failures. Lessons learned from this are that co-operation among co-operatives requires careful planning based on realistic approaches. There are examples of joint purchasing of large consumer co-operatives in the region. These forms of horizontal and vertical integration are seen as the best strategy for the future of co-

operation.

Since 1988 there is a dialogue between governments and co-operatives; since 1990 there are Ministerial Conferences. These Ministerial Conferences have brought about concrete results, among others, the insight that "the potential of co-operatives is best served when their distinct character is recognized by law."

A key issue is capitalization. There is general agreement that new vehicles need to be developed that will interest holders of capital without losing co-operative identity (which is easier said than done). In his presentation Robby Tulus states that co-operatives have pushed the art of compromise a little too far and are already at the limit of what is acceptable in the co-operative milieu when it comes to control and ownership of the business and there is the danger to cross the line into the capitalist world.

Survival of co-operatives will largely depend on the ability of co-operatives to adjust to changes of the members' preferences and outlook and of the environment. It will be the task of ICA ROAP to identify and disseminate best practices and to advise member organizations how to use co-operative values and principles as a competitive advantage and as a valuable asset.

Impact of Globalisation on co-operatives

Globalisation has forced Japanese agricultural co-operatives to step backwards because of decreasing demand of rice due to more diversified diets of people and production adjustments as a result of WTO rulings. Liberalization of farm trade is benefiting only exporting countries. Fair and equitable agricultural trade rules are needed.

Other issues are changes from family farms and family ownership of farmland to commercial farming and agro-business and anti-monopoly laws.

A major problem area for Japanese agricultural co-operatives is the trend to separate agricultural production,

banking and insurance business. This would deprive the agricultural co-operatives of their main source of income and endanger their role as sources of stable food supply and providers of social infrastructure. New tasks for agricultural co-operatives like preservation of the environment, green tourism, food and farm education would also be called into question. The need to preserve agricultural co-operatives based on sound management as community based enterprises also in times of globalization does not only exist in Japan but all over.

In Korea new pro-farmer policies are adopted. Recently there has been is



Robby Tulus speaking at the Forum

a consolidation of co-operative apex organizations and new marketing systems have been developed, allowing direct marketing to the consumer. There are no intentions to introduce uniform systems in Korea but rather coexistence of different systems is perceived. Family farms will not be victimized agricultural reforms.

In the ILO, the focus is on the social dimension of globalization with its good and bad effects, like increased understanding of the outside world; loss of focus on the local level; raising of individualism; loss of trust in institutions; increased gap between the rich and the poor; reason for unemployment on the one hand and chances to fight unemployment on the other.

In 2002 ILO established a World Commission on the Social Dimension Of Globalization to look into the issues like: values and goals in the context of globalization, how to

spread the benefits of globalization, impact of globalization on local markets and politics, cross-border networks, international performance, international labour standards, role of people and communities in a global environment, role of trade unions as strategic partners, help to indigenous people, social co-operatives helping the excluded to help themselves, and contributions of co-operatives to poverty reduction. The new ILO Recommendation No. 193 of 2002 on the promotion of co-operatives includes the Statement of the ICA on Co-operative Identity. It strongly recommends a new spirit of promoting genuine and autonomous co-operatives.

Facing the Future

Where do co-operatives fit into this new environment? They provide reliable structures and services in uncertain times, including employment. They have to manage their business better, using modern technologies and methods to meet competition. They have to make use of their value base and their specific corporate culture to reach the loyalty of their members by offering tangible and exclusive benefits derived from membership (e.g. privileged access to information and services, patronage refund). Governments and co-operatives have started to work together as partners in elaborating parameters for conducive co-operative policies and legislation. It has been understood that co-operatives as member-based, member-centered and member-responsive, community based enterprises, which can mobilize their own resources for local development and which can stabilize social structures in a highly mobile environment are valuable assets. ICA ROAP has developed instruments to measure the degree to which co-operative policy and co-operative legislation are conducive to sound co-operative development, the "proximity to ICIS index" (ICIS = International co-operative Identity Statement) and a Grid Model.

The Second Asia-Pacific Research Conference was organized in Cebu, Philippines

Almost 80 researchers and co-operative leaders from Brunei, Canada, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, apart from representatives from Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO), Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU) and the ILO participated at the deliberations.

Akira Kurimoto, Chairman of the Global Research Committee presided over, while M.V. Madane, Chair of the Asia-Pacific Research Group coordinated the Conference. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, welcomed the delegates and hoped that the deliberations and discussions will be fruitful.



ICA President gets a dancing lesson

arrangements for Conference and other events speak volumes of the devotion and endeavour of our hosts to ensure our comforts and holding the deliberations in the most ideal environment.

M.V. Madane, in his speech briefed on the background of the Conference "...for the past decades or so, our search for viability norms and suitable paradigm has continued to this day. In Tokyo during 1992, we searched for viable models both in western countries and Asia and came forward with many successful role models scattered all over. We have been discussing in successive research conferences, the new awareness of co-operative action and expansion. We discussed civil society as a possible are for our goal under the widened scope of co-operative principles to include Concern for Community. And the search goes on."

The first Conference was held in Singapore, during June 2000, which received

overwhelming response from the movements in the Region.

In this Conference the endeavour was to debate on the current problem vexing the co-operatives the world over, viz. Globalization of the economy and how we can cope with the situation to the satisfaction of stakeholders. I hope during our deliberations today and tomorrow, we shall discover many ways to overcome the problems. Another equally important theme of the conference is Gender Integration. Many speakers, especially from Malaysia presented very elaborate papers on gender integration in co-operatives.



Gen. Lozada, former President of CUP and CDA administrator posing a question at the Regional Assembly



Mr. Kurimoto speaking at the Conference

Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General presented a paper and Ivano Barberini, ICA President also participated. The National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) made elaborate



Shil Kwan Lee talking to H. E. Teofisto T. Guingona.



MV Madane at the Conference

The Asia-Pacific Research group hopes to organize the third Research Conference during the next Regional Assembly in Thailand.

– P. Nair

ICA Agricultural Committee for Asia and the Pacific elects new office bearers

The ICA Committee on Agriculture for Asia and the Pacific had its 35th meeting at Waterfront International Hotel, Cebu, Philippines on 18 February, 2003. 11 members from India, Indonesia, Korea, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the meeting.

As the chairperson of the Committee, Deepak Prakash Baskota, was late, the meeting started with Mr. Coreto C. Rumino in the chair. Later Mr. Baskota took over the chair. Dr. Sutrisno Iwantono, Vice President of DEKOPIN, Indonesia was elected as the chair of the Committee, while Mr. Wirat Iam-Ua-Yut, chairman of Co-operative League of Thailand was elected as the vice chair of the Committee. Both the elections were unanimous.

Dr. Chan Ho Choi, Agricultural Advisor at the ICA Head Office in Geneva presented a paper on the 'Impact of WTO Negotiations on Agricultural Co-operatives'. Dr. Choi also presented some cases of successful co-operatives in the new



B.D. Sharma, Secretary addresses the Agriculture committee meeting

scenario. The meeting, after discussion, felt that there was a need for a comprehensive farmers' education programme to sensitise them about the implications of the WTO negotiations and requested agricultural co-operatives and their federations to chalk out suitable strategy in this regard.

Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior Consultant, ICA Domus Trust and Secretary to the Committee presented a report on the

critical studies on agricultural co-operatives conducted in Bangladesh, India, Laos, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam, as an AGRITERRA funded project. The Committee appreciated the support of AGRITERRA on the support they are providing to co-operatives in the region. The meeting has authorized the new Chairperson to decide on the venue and date of the next meeting.

– B.D. Sharma

HRD and Research Committee meets in Cebu, Philippines

The 16th meeting of the ICA Committee on HRD and Research was held in Waterfront Hotel, Cebu, Philippines, 19 Februar. 22 members from six countries, namely, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand and ACCU attended the meeting. In the absence of Chairperson (Royal Professor Ungku Aziz) and Vice Chairperson (Dr. Yehudah Paz), the meeting elected Mr. Leow Peng Kui as Chairperson to conduct the meeting.

The meeting unanimously elected Mr. Leow Peng Kui, Chief Executive of Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) as Chairperson

and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) as Vice Chairperson.

The meeting recorded its thanks and sincere appreciation for the significant contributions made by Royal Professor Ungku A. Aziz and Dr. Yehudah Paz to the Committee.

Country reports on HRD activities were presented by members from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Mr. Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Director of ICA Geneva made a presentation on the Global Virtual Co-op Learning

Centre. Mr. Ranjith Hettiarachchi, General Manager of ACCU made a presentation on Action Research on Institutional Development.

The Committee also considered the proposal to hold a seminar on Financial Co-operatives in Sri Lanka possibly in May, 2003.

The meeting also appreciated the support and hospitality provided by NATCCO.

The committee also approved the proposal to hold an HRD Seminar on Financial Co-operatives, in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 31 May, 2003.

– K. Sethumadhavan

Regional Assembly adopts a resolution appreciating the support of MAFF-Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Government of Japan

(The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries-MAFF, of the Govt. of Japan has been supporting the ICA ROAP in implementing a project on Agricultural Co-operative Management Training for the last 17 years and a Rural Women Leaders Training Course for the last 12 years, jointly with the Institute for Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia-IDACA.

As the IDACA completes its 40th Anniversary of its dedicated services, the ICA Regional Assembly adopted the following resolution).

We, the participants of the 5th Regional Assembly, are aware that the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia (IDACA) has been playing an important role in the sphere of human

resource development for agricultural co-operatives in Agricultural co-operatives. On this occasion, the following Resolution is placed for adoption by the Regional Assembly:

"Recognising the significant role of IDACA in the field of human resource development for agricultural cooperatives by training 4,500 managerial personnel and co-operative leaders for the last 4 decades with the substantial financial support of Japanese Government and JA-ZENCHU (Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives) of Japan;

Appreciating a very long collaboration between ICA ROAP and IDACA to catalyse the process of human resource development in agricultural co-operatives of Asia-Pacific region;

Further appreciating the large financial support of Japanese Government to enable IDACA and ICA ROAP to undertake the management training for agricultural co-operatives and rural women leaders training course to strengthen agricultural co-operatives to enhance farmers income, women empowerment, standard of living of people and poverty alleviation in the spirit of self-help and mutual help;

The Regional Assembly earnestly calls upon the Japanese Government to continue its support to IDACA and ICA-ROAP to enable them jointly moving forward effectively to build up strong agricultural co-operatives of Asia-Pacific region."

□

ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific meets at Cebu, Philippines

The 36th meeting of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific was held at the Waterfront International hotel in Cebu, Philippines, on 18 February, 2003.

Twenty two delegates from Japan, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and the ICA ROAP participated at the meeting.

Mr. T. Fujioka, Chairperson of the Committee, welcomed the participants to Cebu and thanked the host NATCCO for providing invaluable support to organize this meeting. He also thanked Mr. Edgar Comeros, CEO of VICTO for agreeing to present a special report on co-operatives in the Philippines and arranging a study visit for the participants.



T. Fujioka, Chairman of the Consumer Committee speaking at the meeting

Mr. Fujioka informed the meeting that Asian economy had been developing steadily. Hence consumer buying power will also increase and

competition with private market will intensify. He invited the participants to discuss in more detail as to how to cope with the competitive situation.



Consumer Committee members pose for a photograph

He urged the members to come forward and contribute towards training programmes like Japan and Singapore. He also requested Mr. Mohd. Iqbal, Vice Chairperson, to take over the Chair and conduct the meeting on his behalf.

Jiro Ito, Secretary of the Committee, read out the main activities conducted since last meeting, which was discussed by the meeting. He also mentioned that the Consumer Co-operative Development project of the ICA ROAP, with the support and collaboration of JCCU, the Miyagi co-operative and Co-op Tokyo are organizing two training programmes for Managers of Consumer Cooperatives in Japan on 6-25 September and 9-31 October. One manager from Indonesia, one from Vietnam, and two persons from Thailand would participate in these trainings. Another workshop will be organized in Singapore in collaboration and with the support of NTUC Fairprice Co-operative during 15-19 June 2003. All member organizations of ICA ROAP can nominate participants for this training. The programme is on self-financing basis.

Jiro Ito also reported that he attended a youth seminar in Chennai, India, from 29-30 January, along with Mr. K. Ranto and Mr. Tabata of NFUCA and P. Nair from the ICA ROAP, New Delhi. The youth seminar was well organized and attended by over 75 delegates from 4 provinces, on the

theme of inculcating co-operative ideology, principles and philosophy in the students so as to encourage them to promote Campus Co-operatives.

Mr. Dudz Samson, Co-CEO of NATCCO Network – Visayas (VICTO) presented the report on Consumer Co-operatives in the Philippines.

Jiro Ito also reported to the Committee that a Regional Youth seminar will be held in KL from 5-8 August, 2003. Prior to this, the ICA Consumer Subcommittee on University/College Co-operatives will be held on 4th August, 2003 in Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, MD, NCCF of India Ltd., offered to host the next meeting at Pune, Maharashtra, India, in Oct.-Nov., 2003, which was accepted.

The Union of Consumer Co-operative Society has been accepted as a member of the Consumer Committee.

– A.K. Taneja



Cebu Mayor Osemama, B. interacting with Shil Kwan Lee; Ivano Barberini and Iain Macdonald looks on.

Regional Co-operative Banking Association (RCBA) meets in Cebu

The 5th Meeting of Regional Co-operative Banking Association (RCBA) for Asia and the Pacific, met in Cebu, Philippines 1-18 February 2003. 16 delegates from India, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand and the ICA ROAP participated at the meeting.

In the absence of Mr. P.A. Kiriwandeniya, Chair, meeting was chaired by Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, former Chairperson of RCBA.



B.S. Vishwanathan speaks at the meeting

In his opening speech, he emphasized importance of Co-operative Financial System for dynamic growth of cooperative economy. He also briefly described growth of co-operative banks in his home country Poland. He said that there are following important issues that will decide the future growth of cooperative banks in the world, including Asia. These are: (a) what kind of values co-operative banking system should adopt?; (b) how the co-ops respond to needs of modern society, (c) prevalence of poverty despite globalization, (d) how do the co-ops market themselves?; (e) banking laws; (f) quality of product.

Presentations were made by some members. It was decided that RCBA and ICBA should collaborate to conduct joint activities in Asia-Pacific Region.

The meeting agreed that collaborative activities should be pursued by ICA in the Asia-Pacific Region.

–A.K. Taneja

“Asian Values and Women’s Participation in Co-operatives” – The 3rd ICA Regional Women’s Forum, Cebu, Philippines

The 3rd ICA Regional Women’s Forum held in Cebu, Philippines, 18 February, 2003, wherein about 85 delegates from the region and others participated. The objectives of the Forum were to determine whether Asian values enhance the participation of women in co-operatives, and to identify mechanisms to overcome factors that limit women’s participation in co-operatives.

Ms. Rahaiah Baharen, the Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women’s Committee extended warm welcome to chief guest, speakers, participants and observers and gave opening remarks. She also informed the Forum about the progress of activities after the last Forum. Msgr. Manual Alonzo Jr., the President of NATCCO delivered the welcome address.

Mr. Ivano Barberini, the President of ICA inaugurated the Forum. He expressed happiness on the progress



The participants at the Women’s Forum

impact of globalization on women, and concluded that co-operatives offer an important opportunity to confirm the rights and needs of women more than any other type of enterprise.

Hon. Corazon Juliano Soliman, Secretary of the Department of Social Development, Republic of Philippines, delivered Keynote speech. Dr. S.S. Sisodia, President, National Co-operative Union of India and ICA Board member, also attended the Forum as an observer.

Ms. Remmy Rikken, Operations Director of CAPWIP (Center for Asia Pacific

Women in Politics) presented a well researched paper on the theme. Ms. Rameshwary Ramachandra of DEW Credit Co-operative, Singapore made a presentation based on her experience in an UN Project in North Korea. Participants from India, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines,

Japan and Thailand also presented country papers. Group discussions were held for the participants to provide opportunity to interact with each other, on a sub-theme chosen, “Asian values as facilitator or obstacle for women’s participation in co-operatives”

Call for action

Based on the findings of the presentations and discussions at the Forum, the Forum called on men and women co-operators and co-operative organizations in Asia and Pacific at all levels for the following actions:

Develop and design more programs towards leadership development and empowerment of women in co-operatives, like daycare for children and elderly, reproductive health and medical services, business information and know-how for women entrepreneurs, and education for member on leadership, gender concerns in co-ops, etc. At the concluding session, Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, emphasized ICA’s commitment for the cause of women.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh



Ivano Barberini, ICA President discusses a point with Mdm Rahaiah Baharen. Savitri Singh looks on.

and achievements of ICA-ROAP gender activities. He said that the role of women in co-operatives is still quite limited specially at managerial and leadership levels. In ICA the presence of women has grown but still not enough. He talked about the need for a women friendly legal system, the

ICA/DiD Workshop on Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking

The workshop was organized on 24-25 February 2003 in Cebu, Philippines, as a part of ICA ROAP/DiD efforts to strengthen co-operative credit and banking institutions in the Region. 24 executives and leaders of co-operative credit and banking institutions from India, Japan, Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and officials of central banking institutions participated. The workshop focused on different aspects of co-operative governance in credit and banking institutions.



Delegates of the workshop posed for a photograph



Members of the ICA Regional Banking Association at its 5th meeting

Major subjects deliberated at the workshop, among others, included:

- i) roles, responsibilities and accountability of different bodies/mechanisms of co-operative governance, e.g., general assembly, board of directors and managers,
- ii) role of federations,
- iii) protection of interests of shareholders,
- iv) synergising co-operative values with market values,
- v) code of conduct of board and chairperson.

Mr. Michel Bergeron of DiD (Elements of Good Governance System for Co-op Credit and Banking Institutions),



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, speaking at the Workshop

Mr. Robby Tulus, Senior Expert (Integration of Co-operative Values in the Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking Institutions), Mr. P.A. Kiriwadeniya, Chairperson of SANASA Bank, Sri Lanka (Protection of Stakeholders' interest and their role in Co-op Governance), and Mr. K.V. Rajan, General Manager, Reserve Bank of India and B.S Shekhawat, General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development-NABARD), India (Adequacy of Legal Frame for Good Governance) presented very interesting papers at the workshop.

After an intensive two-day deliberations, the workshop led to the following important outcomes:

- Need for formulating and implementing an effective programme of education of members and board,
- Clear demarcation of roles, functions, powers and responsibilities of the board and the manager,
- Establishment of a suitable mechanism for screening of the prospective candidates for election to the board,
- Clear definition of delinquency norms for members and board members,

(Continued on page 16...)

State Award to Mrs. Sharada Balkrishna Renke

Her saga began with a lifetime decision at an early age of tying the nuptial knot with Balkrishna Renke. She traversed with her husband from the slums of Mumbai, which was once her home, into the hearts of rural areas in Solapur district after taking voluntary retirement from her job at Bombay Port Trust. Her major concentration was working with deserted women Denotified Tribal communities.

Sharadai realized life for women from downtrodden sections were filled with abject misery and required support from the abysmal situation. She initiated activities that would empower women after understanding patiently their woes. Convincingly she took interest in '10-gunthe land experiment' on small plots of land with women. This kindled a ray of hope among hapless and hopeless women. Apart from which she handomen's issues of livelihood, education, health and production. Sheer endurance and patience in her style of work paid rich dividends. She journeyed from an ordinary woman

(We had brought about a story about "One man's dream of sustainable livelihood for nomads" in the August, 2002 issue of Co-op Dialogue, about a new initiative for settling nomads on sustainable livelihood. This project was mooted and brought to fusion by Mr. Balakrishna Renke and his wife Mrs. Sharada B. Renke. We are happy to know that Mrs. Renke has been awarded by the Maharashtra State (provincial) government for her work on socially uplifting the poor women in Maharashtra.

-Editor)

to seeking herself and getting empowered along with those she was empowering.

Sky was the limit when she founded 'Astitva Sakhyanche' with other core members. A process initiated 8 years ago by like-minded activists [both women and men] with gender sensitivity and concern, from the social field getting together to share and exchange information, innovative

programs and perspective. From a mere stem the process is nurtured into a fully grown tree; gathering momentum with 60 member activists from Maharashtra and gradually percolating to grassroots with a process called 'Maitreen Gat'.

Time is ripe now to recognize her endeavors in the field of social development. She has done us all proud. Her contributions are exemplary for those who wish to tread on a similar path.

A niche curved in the life of Sharada Balkrishna Renke who would be the recipient of "Savitribai Phule Award" a State level award from Maharashtra Government for exploration of livelihood alternatives for deserted women from the Denotified Tribal communities.

The facilitation program was organized on March 10th 2003 at the K.C. College Auditorium, Churchgate, Mumbai.

In Solidarity

Vikas Sahyog Pratishthan, Mumbai.

Rajan Indulkar/ Mohan Surve

And now a snake co-operative!

NO, it is not a co-operative of snakes. Recently, while participating at a Regional Youth Seminar in Chennai, I have had occasion to visit a snake co-operative near Chennai, on the way to the famed Mamallapuram in India. There are 211 tribals formed themselves into a co-operative to extract venom from snakes and the venom is sold to research societies like Hafkine Institute where anti-snake venom drugs are prepared.

One snake gives about 1 gram of venom each time. They have an annual turnover of Rs. 60-80 lakhs (12500-16000 US dollars).

The speciality of operations is that this is very eco-friendly. Snakes are caught in the forests, brought to the co-operative to extract venom and then released back into the wild. They are

never kept in captivity for more than a few days, which keeps this as a most eco-friendly one. They cut off a scale at the belly of the snake to make sure that a particular snake was not caught recently to extract venom. It takes about 6 months for the scale to be replaced by which time, the venom in the snake gets 'matured'!

Over the last 3-4 years, the society lost 10 members' lives due to snake bites.

-P. Nair



The picture above shows pots containing snakes - cobras, krates, vipers, etc.)

Left: The snake park (name board above).



2003 International Co-operative Trade Fair:

Beijing, China - 15-17 October 2003

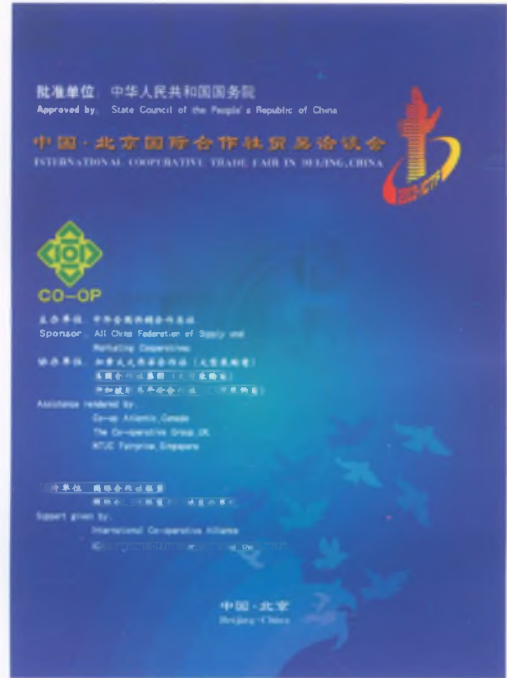
March 19, 2003

Dear Co-operator,

The 2003 International Co-operative Trade Fair in Beijing, China, sponsored by the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives with the co-operation of the Canada Co-op Atlantic, the UK Co-operative Group, and the Singapore NTUC Fairprice and supported by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the ICA ROAP, will be held in Beijing from October 15 to 17, 2003.

Aiming at promoting trade co-operation among co-operatives in the world, this Trade Fair will mainly invite co-operatives from all countries to participate in the exhibition and try its best to satisfy the demand of co-operatives from various countries for purchasing goods in China.

The Chinese commodities on display during the Trade Fair will include, among other things, small electric appliances, hardware, textiles and garments, office supplies, sports and tourist goods and goods for other leisure pursuits, cases and bags, lamps and lanterns, lamp pendants, household utensils, tableware and kitchen utensils, articles of everyday use, shoes and hats, porcelain ware, gifts, toys, foodstuff, local products and livestock products, fruits and vegetables.



- 國際合作協會組委會聯系方式
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- 國際合作會網址: www.chinacop.com 或 www.icop.org
- How to Contact the Organizing Committee for Business Talks
International Co-operative Organization, 10- China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives
Person in Charge: Mr. Zhuohe 1391059821 Wang Lu 1391013343
Tel: 010-68555492 1931 4838
Fax: 010-68513221
E-mail: icof@china.org.cn 或 icofchina@163.com
- How to Contact the Executive Body for Buyers
Marketing and Technology Co-operative Center - All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives
Add: 100000, Beijing, 32, Guocunliang, Chongqing Branch, Beijing, 100000, China
Support Bank: Lightlight Bank, Wuyuan Branch
Tel: 010-671-84888786
Tel: 010-671-84888786 68188718 6818872 68188711-1230
Tel: 010-671-84888786 68188718
- Person in Charge: Mr. Zhenyi 13903306360 Sun Zhongli 13904181930
Tel: Beijing 13903306361 Tel: Beijing 13903171030
E-mail: icof@china.org.cn 或 icofchina@163.com
- Business talks website: www.chinacop.com 或 www.icop.org

To ensure the success of the Trade Fair, the organizing committee will collect catalogues of products from the suppliers (Chinese enterprises run by the supply and marketing co-operative and other enterprises) and demand catalogues from the buyers (co-operatives of various countries). Then the suppliers and buyers will be paired off on this basis. During the Trade Fair, co-operatives of different countries will have on-the-spot negotiations with suppliers and select suitable commodities from among thousands of products and their suppliers. In the meantime, the Trade Fair will afford business opportunities for foreign co-operatives' commodities to find their way into the Chinese market. Co-operatives from various countries are welcome to give briefings on their enterprises and products. Arrangements will be made for Chinese enterprises run by the supply and marketing co-operative to negotiate with relevant co-operatives of other countries the possible import of their commodities.

Trade Fair

This Trade Fair will have an area of 8000 square meters for exhibition. Commodities will be classified into different categories on display in the exhibition areas. There will be a separate section for business fairs in the exhibition area for buyers.

International Co-operative Forum

Leaders of co-operatives from countries such as Canada, Britain and Singapore will be invited to give lectures on co-operatives'

tactics of competition with multinational corporations, co-operatives' transnational procurement procedures and criterion, the successful practice of modern modes of business operation in transforming co-operatives and other special topics on the occasion of the opening of the ACFSMC-sponsored 2003 Trade Fair in Beijing, China, combined with the Forum.

Other activities

Theatrical performances, sightseeing tours and banquets, etc.

Free services to be offered

Co-operatives will be given beforehand information about the suppliers according to their procurement catalogues, and they will be assisted in arranging appointments with the suppliers for discussions during the Trade Fair.

Each exhibitor may have a list of enterprises and a brief account of exhibits (not exceeding 200 Chinese characters) published in the Federation's journal.



All China Federation of Supply & Marketing Co-operatives
45, Fuxing Meng Nei Street
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icdsmc@public2.bta.net.cn

Contact persons:

Mr. Fu Chunhua, Ms. Wang Lei

Website: www.coopexpo.com.cn

www.expo.coop

Participants to the event will be invited to attend the opening ceremony and relevant activities.

A special Website which is www.co-opexpo.com.cn & www.expo.co-op has been opened for offering on-line registration service and other services.

For further information, please contact:

Organizing Committee of the International Co-operative Trade Fair



- Manager should be accountable to the board and be responsible to handle all operational, managerial and administrative issues, to implement policies formulated by the board and to ensure compliance of regulatory and legal expectations,
- Role of federations in ensuring reflection of co-operative values and principles in operations and management, development of new products, undertake supervision of constituents, share authority with regulators, undertake social audit, need for formulating clear set of guidelines indicating dos and don'ts for board and chairman.

The outcomes of this workshop and the seminar on Surveillance System held earlier in Nov. 2002 in Korea will form the basis for preparation of



Mr. P.A. Kiriwandeniya Pierre Bergeron, DiD Project Consultant in the Philippines, and Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director

a practical guidebook on "Surveillance and Governance of Co-operative Credit and Banking Institutions" by ICA ROAP for the benefit of financial co-operatives of Asia-Pacific.

Mr. Weeraman, former ICA Regional Director passes away



Palita E. Weeraman, former Regional Director of ICA in Asia-Pacific, expired on 14th January 2003, at his home in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

He worked as Regional Director of ICA in Asia-Pacific Region, for almost 10 years from July 1968. Prior to joining ICA, Mr. Weeraman had held the post of Commissioner of Co-operative Development and later as the Director of Cultural Affairs and Government Agent of Colombo District in the Ceylon Administrative Service, from where he prematurely retired in 1968.

He was a warm hearted and friendly person, with a constant smile on his face. All those who had associated with him will miss his warmth, sincerity and commitment to the welfare of all concerned.

Last year, the Government of Sri Lanka had bestowed on him the "Bhudhasasana Vibushana Deshabandu" award.

ASPACON sincerely condole the death of our former Regional Director and convey our heartfelt sympathies to Mrs. Durga, his wife, and the family to bear with this loss. We pray to Almighty God to give his soul contentment, happiness and peace.



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Seventeenth ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-ops in Asia

The Seventeenth [17th] ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia was held in India, Thailand and Japan, from November 26, 2002 to April 19, 2003.

The programme was implemented by the International Co-operative Alliance [ICA] in collaboration with JA-Zenchu [Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia-Japan [IDACA].

A generous financial assistance was provided to the ICA by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan to conduct the programme. It was executed by the ICA in accordance with the agreement reached between the two organisations. The course was held in the following two phases:

Phase-I: Home Country Assignments [November 26, 2002-January 14, 2003]

Programme held in India [January 15-March 3, 2003]

Programme held in Thailand [Mar 4-8, 2003]

Phase-II: Programme held in Japan at IDACA [March 9-April 19, 2003]



Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, addressing the closing session of the training course at IDACA, Japan

The fifteen [15] participants to this Training Course were nominated by ICA member organisations from ten countries i.e., Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. Six of the participants were women.

The main objective of the Training Course was to help improve the capabilities of managers in agricultural co-operatives. It was expected that the trained managers, by using project-oriented approaches, help the basic members at the grassroots level to enhance and sustain their farm income. It was also expected that agricultural co-operatives introduce and accelerate

the agro-processing activities to add value to the primary products of their members.

CONTENTS

17th ICA-Japan Training Course	1
Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Co-ops	3
Second ICA-ILO Coopnet Training Programme on Leadership Development for women co-operators	4
Sustainable environment through co-operative action	5
ICA ROAP Library revived	6
81st International Co-op Day Message	7
M.V. Madane honoured at Conference	7
Farewell from JCCU President	8
Two new members for ICA ROAP	8
Yoshitada Nakaoka passes away	8



Participants busy at work

The Inaugural Session of the Course was attended by Mitsuaki Kinoshita, First Secretary in the Japanese Embassy in India, B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant, ICA Domus Trust, S. S. Anand, GM (Marketing), IFFCO, Dr. C.S. Rao, Jt. General Manager (HRD), IFFCO, and Prem Kumar, Adviser, ICA-Japan Training Course.

Mr. Mitsuaki Kinoshita expressed his happiness that the present series of ICA-Japan Training Course is proving an important tool in helping the co-ops in Asia-Pacific Region.

Mr. Prem Kumar, Programme Adviser, ICA ROAP, was responsible for the conduct of the training course. The programme held in Japan was under the direction of Mr. Shigeri Fukamachi, MD, IDACA. Mr. Y. Abe, Manager [Trg], was designated by IDACA as Programme Co-ordinator for Part-II of the course.

The concluding session of the Seventeenth Training Course was held at IDACA on April 18, 2003. The session was attended by Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, Katsuyoshi Masukawa, Deputy Director, Technical Co-operation Division, International Affairs Department of the MAFF, Shigeri Fukamachi, Managing Director of the IDACA, including all his senior staff, and Prem Kumar, Programme Adviser of the ICA ROAP.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, congratulated the participants for the successful completion of the course.

He also thanked all the institutions involved in imparting this training course, and the Government of Japan, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) for continuously funding this training programme.

He also mentioned about the forthcoming activities of the ICA ROAP. He specially made a mention of the resolution passed at the ICA ROAP Cebu Regional Assembly which appreciated the MAFF for continuously funding the programme to enable young managers of the primary agricultural co-operatives of the Asia-Pacific countries to promote the co-operative movement in their respective countries.

Mr. Shigeri Fukamachi, Managing Director of the IDACA, extended congratulations to participants on the successful completion of training and said that the IDACA will study in detail the comments and suggestions made by the participants. He also assured the participants that some of their suggestions would be introduced in the future.

Prem Kumar, Programme Adviser, ICA ROAP, presented a summary of the End-of-the-Course Evaluation.

Mr. Hoang Van Long, a participant from Vietnam, spoke on behalf of the male participants, recounting the experiences and feelings of the participants right from the beginning. He felt that the training in Japan made the participants all to recognise afresh the vital tasks of food security and enhancement of self-sufficiency as well as the importance of establishing solid agricultural co-operatives.

Ms. Ni Jing, a participant from China, spoke on behalf of the female participants, there being six of them for the first time. She felt that this training course has contributed immensely to the promotion and development of agricultural co-operative movement of Asia.

Certificates of Participation from the ICA as well as from the IDACA were awarded to the participants at the concluding session.



A participant is being congratulated by Mr. Fukamachi.

Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, New Delhi has initiated a project on Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific Region with the support of AGRITERRA of Netherlands.

The important objective of the project is to evolve workable parameters for formulating suitable strategy for strengthening agricultural co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region that may be replicable in different countries.

As a part of the project the ICA has undertaken critical studies on agricultural co-operatives in selected countries of the region, namely, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. These studies have made very important recommendations for the growth and development of agricultural co-operatives in the changed context.

Based on the findings of these studies, the ICA-ROAP propose to formulate a workable strategies for strengthening agricultural co-operatives through a consultative process at sub-regional level. In view of this, a Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives for South Asian Region



Inaugural session

was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 27 – 29 May 2003 in collaboration with the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka. 18 participants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and two consultants who conducted the critical study attended the workshop.

The opening ceremony of the sub-regional workshop was held at Hotel Holiday Inn, Colombo on 27 May 2003. The Chief Guest was Ms. C. Separate, Sr. Asst. Secretary, Ministry of Co-operatives, Govt. of Sri Lanka. Shill Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP also spoke at the opening

ceremony. The workshop was co-ordinated by B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant, in co-ordination with Lionel Samarasinghe, President of NCC and his staff.

The participants prepared country action plans for strengthening their agricultural co-ops, which will be reviewed and finalized at the national workshops to be held in these countries in July-August. The participants also visited the Dunagaha Coconut Producers' Co-op Societies Limited and observed their facilities.

- K. Sethumadhavan



Ms. Separate, Senior Asstt. Secretary, Ministry of Co-ops Sri Lanka, lighting the inaugural lamp.



Participants visited Dunagaha Coconut Producers' Co-op, where coconut shells are converted into useful products.

Second ICA-ILO CO-OPNET Trainers Training Programme on Leadership Development of Women Co-operators

The ICA-ROAP, concerned about under representation of women in leadership and decision making at all level in co-ops in the region, took initiatives to train women to enable them taking up leadership roles. With the efforts of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, ICA ROAP and ILO CO-OPNET developed a Trainers Training Manual for leadership development of women co-operators in Asia Pacific Region.

The ICA conducted the first trainers' training programme in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia covering member organization from ASEAN region countries. The second training



Dr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI, speaking at the workshop. Dr. S.S. Sosidia, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mr. Paul Sinnappan are also seen in the picture.



Some of the participants discussing a point

programme was held in India covering member organizations from SOWECA Region, during 2nd to 7th June, 2003 in Pune, India.

23 participants from Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India attended the programme. The objectives of the programme was to train trainers on leadership development of women in co-operatives in the region, and to enable women to build capacity for taking up leadership jobs.

The National Co-operative Union of India hosted the programme at the Vaithkuth Mehta National Institute of Co-op Management in Pune.



Paul Sinnappan and Mrs. Savitri Singh, the resource persons

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI, took keen interest and extended all support to make the programme a great success.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programs, ICA, coordinated the programme, with the support of Mr. Jiro Ito, Director-Special Programs, ICA.

Dr. S. S. Sisodia, President, NCUI inaugurated the opening session and expressed his desire to see a gender-balanced co-operative movement where women are equally sharing positions as leaders and directors. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP, also participated and addressed the participants.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme, ICA, and Mr. Paul Sinappan conducted the seminar.

A one and a half day field study visit was also organized for the participants, when they visited exclusive women co-operatives in and around Pune.

A valedictory function was held on the concluding day.

– Savitri Singh

Bhagini Nivedita Co-operative Bank Ltd.

(Women's Bank – Pune, Maharashtra – India)

The society may be biased against women but it is certainly not biased against her competence. This is proved here in this story.

Recently, during the course of Training of Trainers programme for leadership development of women in co-operatives, held in Pune, I had the opportunity of visiting this Women Bank along with the participants of the programme.

This is an all-women co-operative bank and a living example of women empowerment through co-operatives. Success of this bank proves that how women are important for co-operatives and co-operatives for women. Given the opportunity and conducive environment, women are able to manage business enterprises.

Establishment

In India, there are many Women co-operative banks and all women multi purpose co-operatives are functioning well. Bhagini Nivedita Co-operative Bank is one of the most successful all women bank not only in the state of Maharashtra but also in India.

The Bank was established on 24th March, 1974 at Pune. Late Shri Vivek Ganesh Dadhe, who was a Chartered Accountant was the chief promoter of this bank. Women and men both are the shareholders and customers of the Bank. Women shareholders are more than 65% of the total shareholders. The board consists of women directors only. Except armed security guards and some male recovery assistants, total staff including, Chief Executive consists of only women. A total of 300 women working here.

Objectives and Evolution

The major objective of starting the bank was to (a) inculcate saving habit

* Mrs. Savitri Singh works as Gender programme Advisor at the ICA ROAP.

Mrs. Savitri Singh*

in the masses in general and women in particular, (b) to develop entrepreneurship among women to become self-reliant economically, (c) to free the families from the clutches of money lenders, and (d) to safeguard the monetary interests of the poor and deprived.

In the beginning, the board and staff members had to put lot of efforts to mobilize share money, deposits and get loan proposals. The bank used to meet at various places such as schools, colleges, hospitals, offices, temples, play grounds and housing societies and virtually at every nook

Board and indirect help of the well-wishers helped the bank to reach its current position. The chairperson, Ms. Sumitra Gowarikar was happy to mention that the bank never faced gender bias in its operations. Competence is the key to success.

Services

The bank gives loans for business purpose, all types of consumer durables, vehicles, housing and house repairs, repayment of old debts, marriages and ceremonies, educational and medical purposes etc. Workshops for women customers are held regularly to promote entrepreneurship among them and to give proper guidance to run their business. Women who are interested



Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director and Jiro Ito, Director Special programmes seen with Ms. Sumitra Gowarikar (extreme left) and others during a visit to the cooperative.

and corner of the city where a large group of people could be found. The board and staff of the bank would campaign about the benefits of the banking, explain them the necessity of savings, various deposit and loan schemes etc. To encourage them, the bank would open their account then and there and they could get the passbooks the next day. Gradually, the hard work started paying off and success achieved in gaining the confidence of the people in the bank. Tireless efforts of the staff and the

in starting some enterprise, can meet the board members on a particular day and can get the guidance. Special consideration is given to the proposals of women entrepreneurs. The bank holds exhibitions for women entrepreneurs, where their goods and products are sold on large scale and they get reasonable profit.

Work environment and staff welfare

Success of any organization depends largely on its trained and motivated workforce. The staff as well the board

of directors are regularly sent for training programmes, so that they can learn new skills and update themselves with the trends in the market. Wages and salaries of the staff are competitive. All the branches of the bank are fully computerized. The bank is maintaining various specialized departments such as audit and inspection cell, recovery cell, computer cell, etc.

Achievements and recognition

Every year, the bank allocates special funds for welfare of the members, staff and to help the needy in the society. Out of its eleven premises, seven are owned and managed by the bank. Various informative write-ups on the excellent performance of the bank have been published in India and abroad. The bank has set an example of excellent all-women co-operative enterprise and became a subject for learning. Delegates from various states of India as well as abroad visit the bank to study its functioning. The bank has been conferred with various state and national level awards for best performance. It strictly follows the directives of the Reserve bank of India and rules and regulations of the state government. Due to transparent functioning, the bank never came across any legal or administrative problems.

Approach

The approach of the bank is purely professional. There is no room for politics and incompetence. The chairperson proudly informed that to keep politicians at bay, they never invite political leaders for their official functions. Due to this approach, the bank never faces political interference in its working. Free and fair election of the board are held regularly and no vested interest of the directors or executives are entertained.

All the decisions of the bank are taken unanimously after discussions. Co-ordination among management and staff, transparency and discipline, efficient service to the customers, selfless service of directors, visualizing the problems beforehand, advance planning, market research, no politics in the board itself, are some of the attributes, which contribute to the rapid and sustained growth of the bank.

Moral of the story

Women have innumerable inherent capacities in them, but these capacities need to be channelized properly and effectively to attain the desired goal. It is a myth that women can't be leaders and women face problem because they are women. Society is not biased against competence.

ICA ROAP Library and Co-operative Information Resource Center revived

You are aware that due to the shifting of the ICA ROAP/ ICA Domus Trust Office from 43 Friends Colony (East), New Delhi a couple of years ago, the Library and Resource Center was not functioning properly.

We are happy to announce the reorganization and revival of the Library and Resource Centre.

Since reorganising process is in full swing, I would request you to kindly send us the following at your earliest:

1. Please send annotated list of Co-operative Journals received by your Library.
2. A list of cumulative catalogue published by you, if any.
3. List of new addition to the Library.
4. A brief note on the reference activities conducted by your Library and a potential collaboration with ICA ROAP proposed Resource Center.
5. Please send a list of co-operative books published by your co-operative movement during last five years.
6. Please advise us some select reference books/ documents on co-operative and allied subjects from your country, which you would advise us to keep in our Asia-Pacific Resource Center.

We, on the part of the ICA ROAP, have been regularly sending our newsletters, journals and other information to our member organisations. We are sure you are getting them regularly. As you agree, there is potential and possibility of mutual collaboration and co-operation on modernisation (computerisation) of resource centre which will be immense benefit not only to us but to our member organizations also.

Shil Kwan Lee
Regional Director

Youth Seminar postponed

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the ANGKASA, Malaysia, had scheduled a Youth seminar in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during 4-8 August, 2003.

Due to the SARS scare and related travel restrictions, the number of nominations received by us is very low and hence we have decided to re-schedule the seminar. The new dates are yet to be finalised. However, this could be held sometime early 2004. Detailed information will follow. We regret the inconvenience caused to some organisations who have already sent in their nominations.

-ICA ROAP

81st International Co-operative Day

Message from the International Co-operative Alliance

81st ICA International Co-operative Day – 9th UN International Co-operative Day – 5 July 2003

Co-operatives Make Development Happen!

The contribution of co-operatives to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals

All over the world, millions of people have chosen the co-operative model of business enterprise to enable them to reach their personal and community development goals. Co-operatives create and maintain employment providing income; they are responsible for producing and supplying safe and quality food and services to their members, but also to the communities in which they operate. By putting the Co-operative Principles and ethics in practice they promote solidarity and tolerance, while as 'schools of democracy' they promote the rights of each individual – women and men. Co-operatives are socially conscious responding to the needs of their members whether it is to provide literacy or technical training, or to take action against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Through their varied activities, co-operatives are in many countries significant social and economic actors in national economies, thus making not only personal development a reality, but contributing to the well-being of entire populations at the national level.

Yet, many people still underestimate the scope and size of the co-operative movement and thus how it affects national economies and society in general. 760 million people around the world are members of co-operatives. In Kenya 20% of the population is a member of a co-operative, while in Argentina it is over 29%, 33% in Norway, 40% in Canada and the United States. Co-operatives also provide over 100 million jobs around the world and in some countries and areas are among the largest employers as in Colombia where a national health co-operative is the 2nd largest employer at national level. They are also leaders in their sectors, for example, in Benin, a savings and credit co-operative federation has provided USD 16 million in rural loans in 2002 and in Kuwait co-operatives handle 80% of the retail trade business. And even in countries where resources are scarce, co-operatives have been building communities as demonstrated by the sustained investment made by co-operatives in Côte d'Ivoire which invested USD 26 million in 2002 for setting up schools, building rural roads and establishing maternal clinics.

Co-operatives make development a reality for millions and in today's world where poverty and hunger are still touching billions of people, there continues to be room for significant co-operative development to enable people to rise out of poverty. The Co-operative Movement adds its support to the United Nations which has pledged to make the world a better place for all by setting to time-bound targets for combating poverty, hunger, disease including HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. These goals – United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - commit governments and the international community to halve the population of people living in extreme poverty; ensure that all children - girls and boys alike - receive a full primary education; halt the spread of HIV/AIDS and offer all young people the chance of decent work.

The ICA as the representative body of co-operatives will be highlighting best practices of how **co-operatives make development happen** at its General Assembly as it too focuses on democratic, social and economic development. It will also be launching a *Campaign against Poverty and Hunger* to promote the co-operative model of business enterprise as a means of helping people to help themselves. Co-operatives around the world can add their experiences and activities to the already long list of ways that they are contributing to the MDGs by celebrating this international day and sharing knowledge and best practice, by seeking out partners to further their activities, and to ensure that people have the opportunity to work through their co-operatives to improve their lives.

Co-operatives are truly making development happen on a daily basis allowing people to make dreams of a better life a reality.

Madhav Madane honoured at International Research Conference

Mr. Madhav Madane, former Project Director at the ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and Chairman of the Indian Society for Studies in Co-operation and Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Research group has been honoured at the recently held International Research Congress at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

A cedar wood made casket, depicting the SwanDance was presented to Madane with the inscription "*Madhav Madane - in recognition of your contribution to Co-operative Studies*".

The citation on the life and works of Madane was read out by Dr. Rita Rhodes, Professor at the Openion University, U.K. and author and researcher on Co-ops.

Farewell from the Former President of the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union

16 June, 2003

Dear Co-operative Friends,

At the 53rd Annual General Assembly of JCCU, which was held from 12 to 13, June 2003, I retired from the presidency of JCCU and subsequently became Honorary Consultant of JCCU. My successor is Mr. Shugo Ogura, who is currently President and CEO of Co-op Kobe.

I had been in the position over ten years since I became President of JCCU in 1993.

Thank you very much for the support and co-operation you had extended to me over the years. I hope that you would extend to Mr. Ogura the same support and collaboration.

Consumer co-ops in Japan have faced difficulties in business operations due to the recession of Japanese economy since the late 1990's. Thanks to the continuous efforts of co-ops to implement the structural reform of management in order to fulfill member's need, we had the increase both in total turnover and profit in 2002 after consecutive decrease since 1997.

Even though the current situation of tough competition still keeps going, we should continue to improve effective management of our business and we must continue to make progress based on co-operative values and principles.

I had been the Member of Audit and Control Committee of ICA since the General Assembly in Geneva, 1997. As I retired President of JCCU, I also decided to retire the Member of Audit and Control Committee. Mr. Ogura, my successor, new President of JCCU, will run for the coming election of the Member of Audit and Control

Committee, which will be held at the ICA General Assembly in Oslo, September 2003. JCCU continues to strengthen the relationship with ICA and to contribute to the development of international co-operative movement. Here I would like to request all of you to provide your full support for Mr. Ogura.

Let me express my sincere appreciation to you all once again for your warm friendship and kind support.

I wish you continued success in your co-operative endeavors.

With co-operative greetings,

– Shigenori Takemoto

OUR NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined the ICA in Asia-Pacific region:

1. **International Co-operative Housing Foundation for Asia and the Pacific**, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
2. **Co-op Jerusalem**, Israel.

Mr. Yoshitada Nakaoka passes away

Mr. Yoshitada Nakaoka, former Managing Director of IDACA passed away on May, 2003. Mr. Nakaoka had worked as Managing Director of IDACA for almost seven years from 1995-2002. Before joining the IDACA, he was the Manager of the Co-operative College (now National Education Centre). He had earlier worked in various capacities in the International Department of JA-Zenchu, which a member of the ICA.

Mr. Nakaoka was a very warm, friendly and amiable personality and was liked by one and all in the regional office. Mr. Nakaoka was a good friend to us all and we will always cherish the memory of his genial and cheerful personality. His sudden demise has left a deep and irreparable void in our midst. This loss will be felt very much by his family and the Asian co-operative movement in general.

The ICA Regional Director and the staff sent a condolence message to IDACA and the bereaved family.





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A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC

ICA holds its General Assembly in the land of the Midnight Sun

More than 800 delegates converged in Oslo, Norway, the land of the 'midnight sun' to participate at the ICA General Assembly, 30 August – 05 September, 2003, at the Radisson SAS Plaza Hotel, downtown Oslo. The theme of this General Assembly was 'Co-operatives – business the democratic way' with specialised themes, 'Global Environment for Development: External Challenges', and 'Democratic, Social and Economic Development: The Co-operative Response – Best Practices and Impact'.

The General Assembly was inaugurated by Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the Prime Minister of Norway. A message from the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, was presented.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II sent cordial greetings to all gathered in Oslo for the General Assembly of the



Delegates at the General Assembly

International Co-operative Alliance and offered prayers good wishes for their deliberations on the need of combating world poverty. His Holiness trusts that the Assembly will draw much-needed attention to the ethical principles of solidarity, subsidiarity and participation which are fundamental to the development of a human society and the growth of productive enterprises.

Steinar Dvergsdal, Chairperson of the organising Committee and an ICA board member, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Norwegian co-operative movement, and pointed out the achievements of the movement in Norway, but also mentioned some of the challenges that the movement is confronting.

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the Prime Minister in his welcome speech mentioned that he was very



ICA President speaking at the Oslo General Assembly

CONTENTS

ICA General Assembly in Oslo	1
Seminar on HRD Best Practices	3
Sub-Regional Workshop on Agricultural Co-ops in Colombo	3
Second Sub-Regional Workshop on Agricultural Co-ops in Hanoi	4
ICA/ICFTU/SNCF Regional workshop on ILO Recommendation No.193	5
Regional Consultation in Kuwait	5
APHCO General Body Meeting	6
Eastern Zone Youth Workshop held	6
Through Co-operation another world is possible	7



Prime Minister of Norway, H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, delivering his inaugural address.

happy that the ICA is organising its first ever General Assembly in Norway. He was much impressed by the ICA's global reach, wherein more than 750 million individual co-operators are members. He was sure that the ICA definitely makes a difference in peoples' life in a broad spectrum of sectors. He also said that the Norwegian co-operative movement has contributed greatly for the welfare of the society.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, ICA President, Ivano Barberini underlined the importance of giving priority to gender issues, the challenging situation in Africa and to involving young co-operators in building the ICA for the 21 century. Mr. Barberini stated that co-operatives are becoming a major player in economic and social development all around the world,



Delegates voting on the amendments to ICA Rules

and that co-operatives are contributing to development, despite the prevailing global economic climate.

Further, the president pointed out that economic growth without ethical perspectives is not compatible with needs for economic development, and that co-operatives

represent an alternative to the lack of social responsibility we experience in the private sector. He called for a stronger ICA in order to meet the challenges of poverty, inequality and unjust resource distribution, and said that the ICA should be a part of a global alliance to fight poverty, as co-operatives obviously are a part of



Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific making his presentation at the General Assembly.

the solution. He emphasised that the severe situation in many parts of Africa requires special attention from the co-operative movement. He concluded by stressing that premises for a new direction for co-operatives

must involve women and people from the young networks, as women prove to be the driving force in many co-operative sectors, and young co-operators possess the necessary perspectives for the future in a co-operative world.

ILO Director General Juan Somavia, in his speech focussed on the co-operation between the ILO and the ICA and stressed the need for strengthening the fight against poverty.

He said that the co-operative movement is the solution to for the problem of unemployment, "meeting social needs – organising with a community spirit – putting need ahead of greed – also drive on innovation. You prove it every day by transforming values into profits – by doing business the democratic way"

Beautiful folk dances were presented by young Norwegian Children, which was much appreciated by the delegates.

All Regional Directors presented reports on the priorities, projects and activities conducted in their respective regions with details on the membership.

Several other events and meetings of specialized bodies, like the Global Youth Conference, IHCO-ICA General Equality Committee seminar, the Consumer Co-operative International Seminar, the ICA Housing Plenary, the ICBA Seminar, the ICA Legislative Forum, the CICOPA World Conference, etc. were held during the week-long General Assembly meetings.

Many of the delegates took advantage of joining study tours organized by the host organizations (Coop NKL BA, Norwegian Federation of Co-op Housing Associations, the Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Co-operatives, and the Royal Norwegian Society for Development).

– P. Nair

A Seminar on HRD Best Practices-III (Financial Co-operatives)

A Seminar on HRD Best Practices-III (Financial Co-ops), jointly organised by ICA ROAP in collaboration with the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka (NCC) and the National Institute of Co-operative Development (NICD), was held at Galadari Hotel, Colombo on 1st and 2nd August 2003. Twenty five participants from India, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the seminar.

The seminar was inaugurated on 1st August by the Chief Guest Mr. K. Kanagasabapathy, Director General, Ministry of Finance. Mr. Bharatha Abeynayake, Chairman, NICD; Mr. Leow Peng Kui, Chairman of HRD Committee; and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP also spoke at the opening ceremony.

This was the third seminar the HRD Committee conducted in collaboration with member-organisations in the Asia-Pacific region. The first seminar on School Co-operatives was held in Malaysia on 2-3 September 2002. The 2nd seminar on Co-operative Management was held in New Delhi on 19-20 October 2002.

The objective of this activity was to (a) deepen co-operative knowledge and experience in HRD among co-operative institutions in the region; and (b) foster closer collaboration among them.

A series of seminars will be conducted in different countries for this purpose, focusing on human resource development in its various forms, as practised by member co-op institutions in the region. Showcasing HRD best practices in member-organisations is important. This concrete experience would be the basis for learning and exchange among member-organisations.

The seminar in Colombo focussed



Delegates at the HRD Best Practices seminar

on Financial Co-operatives and highlighted the practical experience of successful co-operative enterprises in Sri Lanka.

It covered HRD best practices in thrift and credit co-operatives, SANASA development bank, co-operative insurance and micro insurance, and financial co-operatives.

Field visits were arranged to SANASA District Co-operative

Union; Co-operative Insurance Company; District Co-operative Rural Bank in Gampaha; SANASA youth camp - Thalghadeniya Sanasa Society; and the National Institute of Co-operative Development in Polgolla.

The NICD arranged a Kandyan Dance Show at their Institute for the participants.

– Sethumadhavan

Sub-Regional Workshops on Strengthening Agricultural Co-ops (South Asia Region) held in Colombo

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP), New Delhi has initiated a project on "Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific Region with the support of AGRITERRA of Netherlands.

The important objective of the project is to evolve workable parameters for formulating suitable strategy for strengthening agricultural co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region that may be replicable in different countries.



The sub-regional workshop in progress.



The workshop was inaugurated by lighting of lamp by a senior officer of the Ministry of Agriculture. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director and Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe, President, NCC, are also seen.

As a part of the project, critical studies of agricultural co-operatives in a few selected countries of the region, viz., Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam were undertaken.

The studies made very important recommendations for the growth and development of agricultural co-ops in the changed context.

Based on the findings of these studies, it is proposed to formulate a workable strategy for strengthening agricultural co-operatives through a consultative process at sub-regional level.

– Sethumadhavan

Rochdale Pioneer's Award

The coveted Rochdale Pioneer's award this year went to two distinguished co-operators: **Mr. Francisco Luis Jimenez Arcila of Colombia**, and **Mr. Lloyd Wilkinson of the United Kingdom**. Both of them are well known in co-operative circles. Mr. Jimenez is 100 years old, having put in 80 years of service to the co-operative movement, while Mr. Wilkinson dedicated 46 years of service to the Co-operative Movement.

Second Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Co-ops (Asean Region), Hanoi, Vietnam



Participants of the sub-regional workshop in Hanoi

The 2nd Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Cooperatives for ASEAN Region was held in Hanoi (Vietnam) from 23rd to 25th July 2003 in collaboration with the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA).

Twenty-six participants from Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and three

consultants who conducted the critical study attended the workshop.

The opening ceremony of the sub-regional workshop was held at Baoson Hotel on 23rd July 2003.

Mr. Nguyen Tien Quan, Acting President of VCA and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP spoke at the opening ceremony.

The participants prepared country action plans for strengthening their agricultural cooperatives.

A national workshop was also organised in Hanoi on 26-27 July, where the action plan for Vietnam was reviewed and finalized.

The participants also visited the Vong Xuyen Agricultural Cooperative in Ha Tay Province and observed their facilities.

– Sethumadhavan



The delegates also visited the Vong Xuyen co-operative

The ICFTU-APRO/ ICA ROAP/ SNTUC/ SNCF Regional Workshop on ILO Recommendation No. 193 on Co-operatives: "Building and Strengthening Co-operation between Co-operative & Trade Union Movements"

The ICFTU-APRO/ ICA ROAP/ SNTUC/ SNCF had jointly held a Regional Workshop on "ILO Recommendation No. 193 on Co-operatives: Building & Strengthening Co-operation between Co-operative & Trade Union Movements" on 16 - 18 July 2003 at the Orchid Country Club, Singapore with the following objectives:

- To share the partnership experience of co-operatives and trade unions;
- To get to know the follow up actions taken by ILO;



The workshop in progress

- To reflect on the ILO Recommendation No. 193 and point out areas of co-operation;
- To point out as how to build and strengthen the co-operation between the two organisations as well as the areas of joint work.

The Workshop was well participated by forty leaders from both the labour and co-operative movements. Representing the co-operative sector were 15 delegates from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Israel, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Singapore.

Speaking at the Opening Session, Guest of Honour Mr Lim Boon Heng,

Minister (Prime Minister's Office) and Secretary-General, Singapore National Trades Union Congress stressed that trade unions and co-operatives had a crucial role to play.

He added: "In Singapore, the SNTUC set up co-operatives to promote the social well-being of the workers and the society at large. The current environment of persisting economic volatility has only accentuated this responsibility. In these times, the SNTUC co-operatives play a critical role to a holistic response to workers needs."

– Lee Lup Poon



Mr. Lim Boon Seng, Minister and Secretary General of NTUC speaking at the workshop

Regional Consultation in Kuwait

The next Regional Consultation on Co-operative Legislation and Policy will be held in Kuwait during 6-10 December, 2003.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Government of Kuwait and our Member Organization "Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies" will host the event. Detailed invitation letter will be sent in due course of time.

Government delegates, in-charge of Co-operatives,

and Chief Executives of National Co-operative Organizations are expected to attend the above meeting.

Recommendations of the Regional Consultation will form the agenda for the 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference that is scheduled to be held in India in early February 2004.

Co-operators in the region and member organisations are requested to block these dates.

APHCO Board meeting/General Meeting and Seminar held in Colombo, Sri Lanka

The 9th meeting of Board of Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organization (APHCO) and 4th General Meeting of APHCO was held on 20th July 2003 at Hotel Holiday Inn, Colombo, Sri Lanka. National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka hosted these meetings.

Thirty-three participants from Japan, Malaysia, Nepal and Sri Lanka attended these meetings. Among other things, the meetings discussed the Mid-Term Plan and Work Plan for the year 2003-2004.

Election of Office Bearers for the next term also took place. The meeting elected the following persons as office bearers of APHCO unanimously:

1. Dr. Yasuvuki Takahashi, Japan Chairperson
2. Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe, Sri Lanka Vice-Chairperson
3. Dr. Masanori Suzuki, Japan Member
4. Dr. Vijay Deshmukh, India Member



Delegates at the APHCO Board and General Meeting

5. Dr. T. Krishnamurthy, Malaysia Member
6. Dr. Bharat Pradhan, Nepal Member

It was decided in the Meeting that the next Board Meeting may be held in Thailand in 2004 and next General Meeting may be held in Nepal in early 2005.

In conjunction with these meetings, a Seminar was also held at Galle Co-operative Hospital on 21st of July

2003. All the participants attended the Seminar. The theme of the seminar was "Developing Healthy Community and Human Resource Development initiated by Health Co-operatives". Key Note Address, on the above theme was delivered by Dr. Yasuyuki Takahashi and another presentation was made by Mr. W.U. Herath on the subject "Current Situation of the Health Co-operative Movement in Sri Lanka".

- A.K. Taneja

Eastern Zone Youth Workshop held in Guwahati, Assam, India

An Eastern Zone Youth Workshop was organised by the Institute of Co-operative Management, Guwahati, on the 24-25th July, 2003 at Rabindra Bhawan, Guwahati with the support of National Council for Cooperative Management, New Delhi. More than 100 youth from 11 north-eastern States of India participated at the 2-day workshop. They discussed their problems, possible solutions and came out with recommendations. Mr. Misbahul Islam Laskar, Hon'ble Minsiter for Co-operation, Government of Assam, inaugurated the workshop. Dr. Debdas Bharali, former Dean, faculty of Commerce, Guwahati University and the visiting professor of North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, delivered the



key-note address. P.C. Chakraborty, Commissioner of Co-operation, Govt. of Meghalaya; P. Nair, Communication Officer, ICA-ROAP; K.S. Lyngdoh, President, Meghalaya State Co-operative Union; T. Tara, President, Anunachal Pradesh State Co-operative Union; A.B. Das, Managing Director, Meghalaya Co-operative Bank; P. Goswami, Chairman of the Institute; E. Riba,

Hon'ble Minister of Co-operation, Govt. of Meghalaya; C. Pyangrope, Hon'ble for Minsiter for Co-operation, Govt. of Meghalaya were the distinguished speakers at the workshop. Dr. S. Borthakur, Principal and S.C. Borah, Vice-Principal of the Institute of Co-operative Managment, coordinated the workshop.



The Workshop in progress

Through Co-operation, Another World is Possible

The Youth Statement to the ICA General Assembly, Oslo 2003

Friends, we are the sons and daughters of our co-operative family. A family should support each other and share its strengths. We all have different strengths, but they should be regarded equally. We share common goals, but we may walk different paths to reach them.

Young as we may seem, we are not the future. We are the present. We are here and we are able. We want to take an active role and share responsibility with you, to ensure a healthy co-operative movement for our children and our grand children.

We ask you to listen but we need you to act!

This statement is from co-operative youth. It reflects the ideas and discussions generated over three days here in Oslo. At an informal and interactive event, eighty young co-operators from fifteen countries around the world met, debated, generated ideas and were inspired.

Of course, any successful event has a lot of people to thank. In particular the youth conference would like to thank the ICA, the Norwegian support organizations, the Young Co-op Network of Scotland for facilitating, May Woldsnes for her assistance, and all the participants for their enthusiasm and contributions to this dynamic event.

People of all ages have come together here in Oslo, united by the co-operative values and principles that we all share. Young people across the world are

A Youth Conference was organised during the ICA General Assembly in Oslo, and more than 80 youth from Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and United Kingdom participated and deliberated for 3 days. We are reproducing the Final Statement they presented to the General Assembly.

-Editor

passionate about co-operation. Why? Because it puts people first and cares about the environment in which we live. Co-operative values and principles make peoples' right to enjoy life in a decent way a reality.

Unfortunately, many young people are not represented here, simply because they cannot afford to attend. It is all of our responsibility to strive to represent those who cannot speak, and ensure they are here in future.

The co-operative model can contribute to the eradication of poverty. It is the responsibility of large well-established co-operatives to support the creation and growth of co-operatives in developing countries - ensuring that they are treated fairly in a growing global economy through fair and ethical trade.

A growing number of young people are becoming disillusioned with Globalisation and see it as the concentration of power in the hands of the rich minority while the poor

majority become increasingly excluded.

However, Globalisation need not be a negative phenomenon - Co-operation can provide a viable alternative to purely capitalist values and be a positive force for change. It could mean a worldwide effort to tackle environmental decay and protect the earth. The co-operative movement must have the confidence in its model to ensure that globalisation means global co-operation.

Co-operative values and principles put people first: we must never forget that. We, the co-operative movement employ 20% more people than all the large multi-national corporations in the world.

Co-operatives are solutions to providing employment and we should be educating our employees and members about our values and principles, encouraging them to live them in the wider world.

If we harnessed our potential and worked together, we have the power through co-operation to combat exploitation, inequality and poverty.

Co-operative values and principles can and should be applied to more than just business - they should form the base of how we live our lives. It's about fostering the co-operative spirit in all that we do. We must not forget our founding principles and roots - ours is a social as well as business mandate.

Perceptions of what co-operatives are, how they work, and what they do vary greatly throughout the world. There are brilliant examples of vibrant, young co-operatives, such as the University Co-operatives in Japan. At the same time, we are concerned by the overall image of the movement. We must challenge the myths that exist, and promote our values and principles in everything we do.

We must ask ourselves: How do we all work together? How do we engage, empower and enable young co-operators?

Young people must be empowered and supported within the co-operative



Youth seriously considering what they want!



Youth leaders presenting their Statement at Oslo GA.

movement's democratic systems. Young and old must work together within a transparent and accessible democracy. Democratic representation must facilitate the expression of ideals and not be overly bureaucratic.

All of these problems have been discussed before. What are we going to do about them? To ensure young co-operators can actively address these issues:

- ♦ *We need a voice.*
- ♦ *We need a place to share information.*
- ♦ *We need ways of connecting with each other.*
- ♦ *We need to promote change.*
- ♦ *We want to make a difference.*
- ♦ *We want to support each other.*
- ♦ *We want to be proactive.*
- ♦ *We want to have fun!*
- ♦ *We must ensure succession.*
- ♦ *But we cannot do this without your support.*

Everybody has a part to play in the creation and expansion of a vibrant youth movement. As a result of this conference we, the Youth, have begun to address these needs and have established a steering group to lay the foundations for an International Youth Co-operation Network.

This Network will link young Co-operators together from across the world to share a common vision, a vision first perceived by the Rochdale Pioneers when they founded this movement.

We will strive to carry their vision forwards into the future and work with every generation to make it a reality.

Young people can do a lot with our energy, creativity and commitment to the co-operative movement, but for our Network to succeed we need your

support.

We are really encouraged by the ICA's offer of a place on the main board for a youth representative. This is a positive development and we are excited by the possibilities that this will create for international young co-operators.

We had a lengthy and animated discussion and we feel really strongly that we had to be democratic in the way we approached this and do justice to the opportunity we have been given.

We believe that this will facilitate young people to bring new energy and ideas to the revitalization and growth of the co-op movement.

We want to work together with the ICA to define the role of the youth representative and we seek to put forward a researcher to attend the ICA board meetings to assist this process. We need to be a strong, democratic Youth Network when we elect our first representative to the board.

The Youth Conference should take a prominent role in the heart of ICA, so young and old can share and discuss their ideas together.

It is important that the Youth Conference is given the same level of support and resources as the General Assembly so it attracts more attention, significance and sponsorship. It is vital that the steering groups' first priority is to ensure our Network is truly international. We need to involve and represent youth from every part of the world to ensure that when we say we speak with the voice of the world's Young Co-operators, we really are.

Democracy doesn't come cheap. The steering group will have to source funding, to enable full international participation.

We are creative thinkers and we can make a little money go along way. But we will need financial resources to support our development. There are funds available for international Youth projects such as this and we can access it with your assistance.

Discussion is essential but lets start to think about how you can help us.

We need your full co-operation.

Be proactive in your country!

We want you to go back to your organisations and ask yourselves: Are you relevant to young people? How can you attract young people to the co-operative movement in your country?

Don't just agree with our words. Act upon them!

We ask you to agree today that when you go home every organization here will find at least one young person who believes in co-operative values to join our Network.

The young people we need who share our vision of the future may not be part of your co-operative yet. However they will be in your community, campaigning passionately for equality and democracy yet unaware of that their beliefs are those of the co-operative movement.

Your job is to find them for us.

If every body here answers this request our International Co-operative Youth Network will flourish.

But to continue flourishing, we must not be complacent. We will not be youth for much longer and we have to create a sustainable International Youth Network, which will nurture the leaders of our co-operative movement not just in the future but now!

Could everyone, in this room, whose organization came with a youth representative to this conference please raise their hands now?

Thank you. Please don't put your hands down just yet. Anyone else in this room who would like to commit now to try to bring a young representative to the next conference, please raise your hand as well.

Look around this room. Let's remember this statement we have made today. Through co-operation, another world is possible.

Thank you.

– P. Nair

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A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC

Seventh Regional Consultation on Co-operative Policy Development and Legislative Reforms held in Kuwait

The 7th Regional Consultation on "Co-operative Policy Development and Legislation Reforms" was convened by the International Co-operative Alliance, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP) 7 - 9 December 2003 in Kuwait with the support of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Government of Kuwait; and Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies of Kuwait (KUCCS). Nearly 150 delegates from the Governments and Co-operative Movements of Asia-Pacific and Middle East deliberated co-operative policy development and legislation reforms for three days to evolve workable recommendations in these areas with a view to enabling co-operatives to sustain themselves effectively in the present era of globalization.

The opening ceremony of the Consultation was held at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Kuwait on 9 December 2003. His Excellency Faisal Al-Hajji, Minister for Social Affairs and Labour, Government of Kuwait inaugurated the Consultation on behalf of the Prime



Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP, ICA President, Barberini and H.E. Faisal Al-Hajji at the Regional Consultation

Minister. Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA delivered the key note speech at the opening ceremony. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP also spoke at the opening ceremony and reiterated the commitment of ICA to play an increasing role for co-operative

development in the Middle East with the support of Kuwait.



ICA President, Mr. Barberini speaking at the Consultation



H.E. Faisal Al-Hajji inaugurating the Consultation

CONTENTS

Regl. Consultation in Kuwait	1
Draft Recommendations of the 7th Co-op Ministers' Conference	3
Regional Workshop on PRSP	3
Asia-Pacific Trade Forum, Bangkok	3
University Committee meeting	4
Workshop for Consumer Co-op Managers in Singapore	5
Consumer Committee meets in Mumbai	5
Housing Fed sets up Doc. Centre	5
Five Good reasons for Co-ops	6
Co-operative Bank of India meets	6
JCCU Appeal to Govt.	7
18th ICA-Japan Course	7
New Year Greetings from the ICA Regional Director	8

THE ASPACON WISHES ITS READERS A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR 2004



The objectives of the Regional Consultation were as follows:

- ♦ To review the progress made in implementing the "Resolutions" adopted by 6th Co-operative Ministers' Conference held in Katmandu, Nepal, in April 2002;
- ♦ To provide an opportunity for high ranking Government Officials and Co-operative Executives in the Asia and Pacific region to state their perspectives on the thrusts and recommendations made in second Critical Study in regard to co-operative policy development and legislative reforms; and
- ♦ To identify and formulate issues of agenda for deliberations at the 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference.

The Consultation was a preparatory meeting of and a dialogue between Governments and Co-operatives to formulate a draft Joint Declaration for adoption by 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference scheduled to be held 2-5 February 2004 in New Delhi, India.

At the end of the deliberations, the Regional Consultation recommended the Joint Declaration and Agenda for 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference scheduled to be held in February 2004 (see alongside).

While the 3rd Critical Study on Co-operative Legislation and Policy Reforms conducted by ICA ROAP through Mr. P.V. Prabhu, a veteran co-operative expert from India, formed the basis of deliberations, presentations by Dr. Hans H. Muenkner (Germany), Dr. Wahid Latiff (UK) and Dr. Aboubakr Abdeen Badawi of ILO enriched the inputs for Consultation.

The delegates also had an excellent opportunity to understand the socio-cultural aspect of Kuwait and significant role of consumer co-operatives in the social and economic life of the people of Kuwait under the leadership of Mr. Talaq Sager Al-Haim, Chairman of the Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies; and Mr. Mohammed Ali Al-Kandary, Co-op Deputy Minister, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Kuwait. The deliberations and discussions were facilitated by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior Consultant, ICA ROAP, New Delhi.

The theme of the 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference has been decided as "Establishing and Supporting co-operative Legislation and Policy for Sustainable Growth of Co-ops".

B.D. Sharma

Draft of Declaration recommended by the Regional Consultation for adoption at the 7th Co-op Ministers' Conference

1. **Recognising** that co-operatives, despite challenges and problems posed by reforms in the economy and liberalisation of policies, have served the economic interests of people and contributed significantly to the socio-economic growth of the countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.
2. **Recognising** the significance of supportive co-operative legislation and public policies to harness full potential of co-operative enterprises for socio-economic well being of the people in general and for employment generation, poverty alleviation and human resource development in particular.
3. **Taking note** that enabling legislation and favourable public policies of the government alone will not result in development of co-operatives, unless facilitated by follow-up measures for policy implementation and matched by supportive measures of the government.
4. **Appreciating** the ILO Recommendation 193 on Promotion of Co-operatives for its clear enunciation of views of global co-operative movement on co-operative legislation, policy and role of government for facilitating growth of member centric, community-oriented autonomous and competitive co-operative enterprises that may ensure equitable distribution of new opportunities and benefits emerging from globalization for the good of the community.
5. **Realising** that despite more favourable environment for co-operative autonomy, independence and democratic management, co-operatives are found to be over-dependent on government support and patronage and are found to be weak and dormant in several sectors in developing countries of the Region with no concrete action plan for revival and revitalization of potentially viable co-operatives in a time-bound manner.
6. The participants of the 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference held at New Delhi, India from 2nd to 5th February 2004, **call upon** the Governments, Co-operatives of the Asia-Pacific Region, and the ICA-ROAP to: Hasten the process of legislative and policy reforms for the autonomy and independence of co-operatives and for creating favourable environment for balanced and sustained growth of the co-operatives in all sectors of the economy in order to ensure the socio-economic development of the people and the country, particularly in regard to:
 - a. Formulation of specific public policy in consultation with co-operative movement that will facilitate the growth of member centric, community-oriented, autonomous and competitive enterprises;
 - b. Ensuring the co-operative policy and legislation are in harmony;
 - c. Defining appropriate role of co-operatives in public policies relating to other sectors of economy, e.g. agriculture, credit, banking and insurance, trade and commerce, labour, etc.;
 - d. Repositioning and strengthening the co-operatives by augmenting capital and resources, by professionalising the management, by adoption of appropriate manpower development strategies, by diversification and broad-basing the business operations by upgrading technologies for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of services and by learning from experiences, good practices and successful growth models of co-operatives in different sectors in the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region; and
 - e. Encouraging and supporting co-operatives in playing increasing role in social sector development.
 - f. Making enabling provisions in Co-operative Legislation to enhance participation of women in management and leadership of co-operatives.

ICA/ILO Workshop on Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction with particular emphasis on PRSP and decent work in Asia

A Regional Workshop on Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Reduction with particular emphasis on PRSP and Decent Work in Asia was jointly organized by the ICA ROAP and ILO (Co-op Branch), Geneva from 10-12 November, 2003 in Bangkok.

16 participants representing governments and co-operative movements of PRSP countries, viz. Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Timor Este, Vietnam, Mongolia and Indonesia participated, besides resource persons from ICA and ILO. ICA ROAP was represented by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior Consultant.

Poverty Reduction Strategy papers formed the basis of deliberations of the workshop.

The workshop, through extensive discussions and deliberations, formulated recommendations on the following issues:

- ♦ What should governments, co-operatives and development



Delegates at the PRSP workshop

partners do to make the PRSP process more participator and inclusive?

- ♦ How should co-operatives play a greater role in the PRSP process?
- ♦ What should be the role of governments in facilitating the

contribution of co-operatives in poverty reduction at local and national levels?

- ♦ What should donors do to support the contribution of co-operatives to poverty reduction?

-B.D. Sharma

Bangkok hosts ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Trade Forum

ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Trade Forum was held on 13-15 November 2003 at Bangkok, Thailand. The Co-operative League of Thailand hosted the Forum. 153 participants from Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Iran, Korea, India, Vietnam,

Pakistan, Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, and ICA ROAP attended the forum.

An exhibition was also organized by CLT at the venue of the Forum. Samples of commodities were exhibited by representatives of different countries.

ICA ROAP invited Mr. Ryu Iwadare from Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union, Mr. Alan Kovan from NTUC Fairprice, Singapore, Mr. Robby Tulus, Canada, to speak at the Forum. The ICA ROAP had initiated trade studies in China, Japan,

Korea, India and Sri Lanka.

The studies were done and presented at the Trade Forum by Doo-Hee Oh from NACF Korea for China, Japan and Korea and S.C. Singhal of NAFED, India for Sri Lanka and India.

Representatives from countries, gave the details of their import/export activities.



Delegates attending the Trade Forum



Delegates at a photo session



Delegates at the Forum

In the evening, time was allotted for business negotiations/networking among the participants.

Group discussions on the next day covered the recommendations of study of co-optrade initiated in Korea, Japan, China, India and Sri Lanka and the implementation of the same and the

promotion of co-optrade. The discussions were presented at the closing session, chaired by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA ROAP.

As this was a start-up for the next International Trade Exhibition-cum-Forum to be held in Beijing, China, in

April 2004, the ICA ROAP requested its member-organisations to participate in the above Forum. Mr. Zhuang Yan of All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC) presented a paper, in this regard, inviting all member-organizations of ICA to participate.

-K. Sethumadhavan

ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/College co-operatives meets in Singapore

The ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/College Co-operatives for Asia and the Pacific held its 9th meeting in Singapore 12-13 November, 2003.

The meeting was hosted by Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), which was chaired by Mr. Kiyotaka Ohno, the Chairperson. A total of 18 members and observers participated. Mr. Ohno and Associate Prof. Poo Gee Swee welcomed the members and delegates.

Mr. Jiro Ito, Secretary to the Committee reported on the activities which took place after the last meeting. The

members presented country reports. Mr. T. Kuriki, Co-Secretary, and General Manager of NFUCA, Japan, made a presentation giving information on the global youth seminar which was held in Oslo, during the ICA General Assembly. He also reported on the developments in the Japanese University Co-op movement. There was a special presentation on the activities of the Campus co-operatives and youth in Singapore by Prof. Poo Gee Swee. The meeting discussed on the proposed Youth Seminar in Malaysia and the date has been confirmed as 5-7 September, 2004. The members

felt that the Sub-Committee be made a full-fledged Committee of the ICA ROAP, at least during the next meeting, which is the tenth, of the Sub-Committee. The

members also agreed that the next meeting be held in Thailand, together with the ICA Regional Assembly, in December 2004. It was



Delegates at the Singapore National University Co-op with student Board members

also proposed and agreed that a Leadership Workshop or a Forum on Campus co-operatives should be held during the next meeting.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks. Mr. Leow Peng Kui, Chief Executive Officer, SNCF, thanked the Committee for selecting Singapore as the venue for the meeting.

The members of the Committee enjoyed a field visit to Singapore National University, where the University Co-operative is operating a student store very successfully.

-P. Nair



Committee members and delegates pose for a photo

Mumbai hosts ICA Committee meeting on Consumer Co-operation

The 37th meeting of ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia & the Pacific was held on 9-10 November 2003 at Tulip Star Hotel, Mumbai, India. NCCF of India hosted the meeting. Dr. S.S. Sisodia, President of National Co-operative Union of India inaugurated the meeting and Mr. Ram Iqbal Singh, Chairman, NCCF of India, presided. In addition to participants from Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Vietnam and India, Board of Directors of NCCF, including Mr. Ajit Singh, Chairman, NAFED, attended the meeting.



Mr. Fujioka, Chairperson of Committee, speaking at the meeting. Also seen are Dr. S.S. Sisodia, President, NCUI, Mr. Ram Iqbal Singh, Chair of NCCF, India (above)

NCCF of India presented a paper on the status of Consumer Co-operative Movement in India, emphasizing on current issues and challenges faced. Each participating country presented a paper entitled "How to develop our strength and overcome our weaknesses to compete against the competitors". The Consumer Co-operative Forum of Maharashtra State also presented a special paper on "Consumer Co-operative Movement in Maharashtra". In addition, Activity Plan 2004 was presented by the Secretariat.

It was decided that next meeting of the Committee may be held in conjunction with next Regional Assembly in Thailand 2004. The meeting was followed by study visits to leading consumer co-operative stores in and around Mumbai. A cultural programme was also organized on 9th November by the host for the participants.

-A.K. Taneja

Workshop for senior managers of consumer co-ops in Singapore

The ICA ROAP in collaboration with SNCF and NTUC FairPrice Co-operative of Singapore organised a workshop in Singapore for the senior managers of consumer co-operatives in Asia Pacific region from 21-23 October 2003. 19 managers from 7 countries (India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Vietnam) attended the workshop. Workshop focused on observation/comparison of stores under competitive circumstances.

- Jiro Ito

Co-operative Housing Federation of India sets up a Documentation Centre

The National Co-operative Housing Federation of India has set up a Documentation Centre on Co-operative Housing at the NCHF Secretariat in New Delhi. The Centre was inaugurated by Mr. L.M. Mehta, IAS, Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation, on 19 December, 2003.

The Centre will function as a store house of data, information and documents, using easy to access computer software system. Mr. Mehta, who lauded the performance of the Federation, suggested that the Documentation Centre should evolve as a 'Think Tank' on co-operative housing.

Dr. M.L. Khurana, Managing Director of the Federation, Mr. T.N. Gupta, Technology Advisor to the Government of India and Mr. P.K. Mohanty, Managing Director, Orissa Co-operative Housing Corporation, spoke at the inaugural function.

An Announcement regarding CO-OP DIALOGUE

We are now adopting a different strategy by which we will be publishing one research article every month on our web-site www.icaroap.coop/publications/periodicals.

At the end of 12 months, we will collate all these articles and publish it as a magazine.

We have already uplinked 3 articles for October, November and December 2003. Please visit our web-site and read these articles.

-Editor

NFUCA has a New Managing Director

Mr. Toshiaki WADA has taken over as the Managing Director of National Federation of University Co-operative Associations - NFUCA, from Mr. Masami Kobayashi.

The change took place at the 47th Annual General Meeting of NFUCA on 21 December, 2003 at Tokyo.

Edited by P. Nair, Communication Officer, ICA Regional Office for Asia-Pacific <nair@icaroap.coop> Printed at Document Press, HS 14, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048
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Five Good Reasons for Co-operatives

1. Co-operatives are Community Enterprises

Co-operatives keep economic benefits within a community. Profit is not siphoned off by outside interests, because the co-op's members are its owners, and the co-op exists to fill a need in a community that is not being met by other businesses.

- * Agricultural co-ops satisfy the need for supply, processing and marketing of goods.
- * Consumer co-ops provide the members with the goods and services required of the preferred quality at competitive prices.
- * Workers' productive co-ops are formed to create or maintain employment in a community.
- * Housing co-ops give low-income people the opportunity to own their own homes.
- * Co-operative insurance protects individuals and small businesses from risk.
- * Credits unions serve people of limited incomes not reached by commercial banks, and extend credit to micro-entrepreneurs who otherwise might not be able to secure financing.
- * Tourism co-ops facilitate the opportunity of holiday stay and travel and offer fair prices and good quality service to their members.
- * Electric and telephone co-ops meet rural peoples' needs for power and telecommunications not satisfied by private business.
- * Community development co-ops are formed for the overall development of local communities and are specially concerned with social, economic and cultural development.

2. Co-operatives Promote Democracy

- * Co-operative members own their business. They provide share capital, elect a board of directors, and receive the benefits of ownership through better service and patronage refunds based on use.
- * Co-ops teach people outside the mainstream into a nation's economic and political life.
- * Co-ops teach people how to resolve problems democratically. Many individuals who received their education in democracy from co-operatives have gone on to become political leaders in their nations.

* In emerging democracies, co-ops help throw off the shackles of a non-market economy. Their members develop the skills of entrepreneurship and learn market values.

3. Co-operatives Build Open Markets

As more and more governments divest state-owned enterprises, there is a danger that these monopolies may be moved intact into private hands.

Co-operatives help avoid this pitfall by ensuring wide participation by the users of the former state service. Co-operatives spread economic power and encourage competition. They provide market leverage to small producers victimized by powerful cartels or sole-source companies. They undercut middlemen and money lenders, whose charges are often exorbitant. By ploughing profits back into the business, co-ops can operate on narrower margins. Thus they help drive down unfair prices, and set a competitive range for goods and services.

4. Co-operatives Raise Human Dignity

Co-operative help people escape poverty and achieve dreams, such as owning a home or giving their children an education. Since educated decision-making is essential to a co-op's success, co-ops also teach new skills, from adult literacy to business operations.

Co-operatives empower individuals by giving the chance to participate in decisions which have an impact on them. Armed with the ability to effect change, members find solutions to social and economic needs. Co-ops provide an organized way for low-income people to relate to sometimes distant governments and economic power structures.

5. Co-operatives are Systems for Development

Co-operatives draw community businesses into regional and national networks. Local Co-ops benefit from larger business volume, operating efficiencies and professional management. The economic pyramid enables farmers to purchase supplies at volume discounts, and receive profits from value-added processing and consumer sales. Credit unions pool their resources, and are able to transfer surplus savings to credit unions in lower income areas.

Electric co-operatives join together to buy power at a lower cost. They become an engine for development, spurring the growth of enterprises not possible without reliable energy. Co-operative insurance companies are tied into a worldwide reinsurance network to protect against catastrophic losses. They pool groups of individuals not served by commercial companies to guard against personal and business risks.

Co-operative Bank of India holds seminar in Goa

The Co-operative Bank of India (COBI), which is the national Apex of Co-operative Credit and Banking sector in India, organised the 4th National Seminar on 'Institutional Protection System, Deposit Guarantee Mechanism & Reforms in Co-operative Banking and Credit sector', 20-21 Dec., 2003 at the Bogmalloo Beach Resort in Goa.

The seminar was attended by more than 30 top level co-operative bankers. Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, Chairman of COBI emphasized the need to reposition the co-op banks to face challenges and competition in the market.



B.S. Vishwanathan, Chairman, COBI, addressing the seminar. Also seen are some of the distinguished delegates.

Messrs. Ashok Bando-padhayay, K. Sivadasan Nair, Ajit Kumar Singh, Bhagawati Prasad, D. Krishna, B. Subrahmanyam, K.K. Ravindran and P.V. Prabhu were some of other important leaders present at the seminar. The seminar discussed major areas of concern to the co-operative banking and credit sector in India.

The COBI has recently made a representation to the Central Government on the proposed amendments to the Banking Regulation Act.

-P.V. Prabhu

CONDOLENCES

The devastating Earthquake last Friday in the ancient city of Bam in Iran killed more than 30,000 and left more than 60,000 people homeless.

We, at the International Co-operative Alliance – Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, condole the cruel fate of the hapless thousands who were the victims of this terrible earthquake.

Several thousands of co-operators have lost their kith and kin, homes and livelihood and almost all co-operative facilities were destroyed.

We appeal to all co-operators in the Region and globally to provide possible support to the unlucky co-operative brethren and other victims of the earthquake.

Those of you who wish to support in cash or kind, please contact:

Mr. M. Karim Beiki
Managing Director,
Central Union of Rural & Agricultural Co-ops of Iran
No. 78, North Felestin Street, P O Box 14155/6413
Tehran (Iran)
Tel: 98-21-8966532/8968147
Fax: 98-21-8964166
E-mail: curaci@neda.net.ir
cyraci-1380@yahoo.com

Thousands freed dead in Iran's devastating quake



Taxi driver, Tahmasb Yousefababi, lost 17 members of his family in the quake and now he has nowhere to go.

18th ICA-Japan Agricultural Training Course commences

Eighteenth ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia started from 15 December 2003. The course will continue until 17 April, 2004 in three countries, India, Vietnam and Japan.

There are 12 participants taking part in the 18th course from Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Like the previous course, Mr. Prem Kumar, Program Advisor at the ICA ROAP, will coordinate the training course.

The first part of the training course in India will be conducted January 15 to March 1, 2004 at FMDI-IFCO Training centre, and a four-week Management Leadership Module at Institute of Rural Management – IRMA, at Anand in Gujarat. Comparative field study visits will also be conducted in the State of Gujarat during this period. A wrap-up session will be held at the ICA Regional Office in New Delhi, Delhi from February 28 to March 1, 2004. The participants will then proceed for field study visits in Vietnam – March 2-6, 2004.

Part II of the Training course on 'Management Practices adopted by Agricultural Co-operatives in Japan' will be held March 7 – April 17, 2004. There will be extensive study visits to agricultural co-operatives in Japan in the Tochigi, Oita prefectures and Tokyo area.

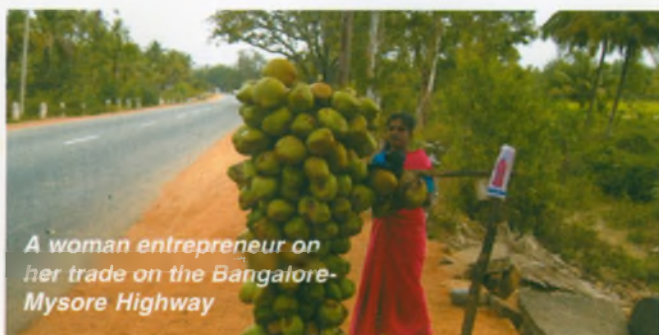
Back at IDACA, the participants will have lecture sessions on 'Ways to have better Communication with Members' and 'Food Security and WTO issues tackled by JA Group'. The course will wind-up with group discussions and evaluation and closing ceremonies from 12 to 17 April, 2004.

-Prem Kumar

Regional Director attends CICOPA Exhibition and Fair

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, was the guest of honour at the CICOPA Project Exhibition-cum-sale and the beneficiaries conference at Bangalore 26-28 December, 2003. The 'Mela' was inaugurated by Smt. Motamma, Hon'ble Minister for Women and Child Welfare, Government of Karnataka.

Mr. J.N.L. Srivastava, Managing Trustee, IFFCO Foundation, Mr. Dinesh Rai, Managing Director, National Co-operative Development Corporation, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, National Co-operative Union of India and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior consultant, ICA Domus Trust, were also present on the occasion. The CICOPA Bangalore Project is supporting a number of small-scale co-operative artisans and entrepreneurs in the State of Karnataka. Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, Chair of the Governing Council for the CICOPA Project coordinated the Mela.



A woman entrepreneur on her trade on the Bangalore-Mysore Highway

29 New Year Greetings to all our Members and Co-operators in Asia and the Pacific

Thanks to your kind support and co-operation, we are closing our activities in 2003 successfully and as attached, we are now preparing for activities in the New Year 2004. We hope your active participation and continuous support in 2004 also.

Wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New year,

With all good wishes,

Shil Kwan Lee

Regional Director - ICA ROAP, New Delhi.



ICA ROAP PRIORITIES – 2004

The priorities for the year 2004 are defined according to the "Strategic Plan of ICA ROAP for 2000-04" approved by the ICA Regional Assembly in Singapore in 1999. The Key Result Areas of the Plan are as follows:

- ♦ Co-operative Identity and Image;
- ♦ Co-op Legislation & Policy Development;
- ♦ Strengthening of Professional Management;
- ♦ Promotion of International Co-operative Trade; and
- ♦ Gender and Youth Mainstreaming.

According to the above priorities of ICA ROAP, the following activities are planned in the Work Plan for 2004.

1. *Co-operative Identity and Image*

- ♦ 6th meeting of ICA Regional Assembly for Asia and Pacific (December, Thailand).
- ♦ 3rd ICA Regional Co-operative Development Forum (December, Thailand).
- ♦ 3rd Asian Cooperative Research Conference (December, Thailand).
- ♦ Fact Finding Missions on Co-operative Development to Afghanistan, Laos and Cambodia.

2. *Co-operative Legislation and Policy Development*

- ♦ 3rd Critical Study on Co-operative legislation and Policy Reforms.
- ♦ 7th Co-operative Ministers' Conference (February, India).

3. *Strengthening of Professional Management*

- ♦ 18th Training Course on Strengthening

Management of Agricultural Co-operatives (January-April, India/Vietnam/Japan).

- ♦ 4th Women's Training Course for Strengthening Agricultural Co-operatives and Improvement of Farm Management and Rural Life (Sept-October, Malaysia/Japan).
- ♦ 4th Regional Workshop on Management of Consumer Co-operatives (October, Singapore).

4. *Promotion of International Co-op Trade*

- ♦ Opening of Co-operative Trade Directory Website.
- ♦ International Co-operative Trade Forum and Trade Fair (April, Beijing).

5. *Gender and Youth Mainstreaming*

- ♦ Sub-regional Trainers' Training Programs for Leadership Development of Women Co-operators (February, April/ Indonesia, Iran).
- ♦ 4th Regional Women's Forum (December, Thailand).
- ♦ Regional Co-operative Youth Seminar (August, Malaysia).

Besides the above, ICA ROAP is now discussing with development partners about the following projects:

- ♦ Agricultural Co-operative Development in Developing Countries (AGRITERRA, Netherlands).
- ♦ Prevention of HIV/AIDS through Education and Training (UNAIDS).
- ♦ Co-operative Development in Middle East Countries (Kuwait).