



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



Volume 2 No. 4

October 2003

For private circulation only

From the Editor...

Almost time to say farewell to autumn and greet winters as it slowly sets in. This season is the beginning of wonderful weather in most Asian countries and brings with it a variety of flora and fauna. May we wish all the pleasant things for our women in cooperatives and community with good health and healthy lifestyle. Healthy lifestyle is essential for good health. As we know that the epidemic of HIV/AIDS is paralyzing our society and it hit hardest to women by way of death of earning member in the family, loss of job, stigmatization, double burden of earning and care giving and more over, getting infected by the partners.

Let's resolve to practice a healthy lifestyle and join hands in fighting against the epidemic. Together we can do it and we will!

In Oslo on August 2003, the office bearer of the women committee met to discuss about the progress of activities of our Gender Development Programmes. The Pilot Training of Trainer programmes have been completed successfully and we hope to organize national TOT programme for more and more members.

We look forward for your active participation in exchange of views through this newsletter. Thank you!

– Savitri Singh
Advisor, Gender Programme
ICA ROAP

Health and HIV/AIDS Care by Co-operatives in Asia and the Pacific



Ms. Vanda Giuliano, Chair, ICA Gender Equality Committee, Dr Jose Carlos Guisado, Chair, IHCO and Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Programmes, ICA-ROAP during the presentation

A Joint Seminar on "Health, Gender and HIV/AIDS" was organised by the ICA Gender Equality Committee and International Health Co-operative Organisation just prior to the ICA General Assembly on 31st August 2003 in Oslo, Norway.

This topic was chosen because now the HIV/AIDS is an issue of grave concern which affects cooperatives worldwide. Its global spread and destructive force make it the worst epidemic in human history. Cooperative members, staff and their families are suffering and impairing their ability to operate effectively.

Responding to the crisis, the ICA and the cooperative movement have launched preventive actions, focusing on health care and initiatives aimed at treatment and assistance. The seminar aims to share best practice on what is being done by cooperatives to promote the health of their members and the communities which they serve.

Health and HIV/AIDS care by Co-ops in Asia

In most of the Asian countries, cooperatives are providing health care services and regularly organizing health care programmes for the members. In some cooperatives, member health care is one of the important activities and considerable amount of funds are being spent for such activities.

- AIDS was first reported in Asia in 1984
- It is estimated that in the year 2000 alone, more than 550,000 people died of AIDS in Asia, about 1500 a day.
- This number will reach about 800,000 by 2005

REPORT FROM MEMBERS

- India

- National Co-operative Union of India

- As of year 2000-2001, there are 181 Hospital Co-operatives with membership of 111,000
- 50 cooperative education field projects for men and women
- Family welfare and health awareness programmes are the part of regular project activity
- During the year 2002, these projects have organized 372 health awareness programmes on HIV/AIDS for the members.
- More than 7000 rural and urban people including youth and women participated in these meetings and get the benefit.

These programmes are not limited to only members. All the people are welcome to take the benefit thus serving the whole community.

Women Projects

- NCUI has established 4 exclusive co-operative education field projects for development of women only in rural areas of the country.
- These projects have more than 10,000 women individual members.
- Health care of members and other women in the community is one of the most important activities of these projects.
- The lady education instructors and women mobilisers are responsible for conducting monthly awareness workshops for better health practices, hygiene and child care with special attention to pregnant women.
- During the year, 75 education classes on awareness about AIDS and HIV infection have been held only for women 150 classes held for awareness about general healthcare and family welfare.

IFFCO member health care

Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative is having regular health care programmes for farmers and their families in the adopted villages and at its special project areas. General physicians, ENT and Eye specialist and Pediatricians are engaged to provide free services to patients. They also provide free medicines to needy as well as insurance cover up to maximum of INR 100,000 to each member delegate under the 'Group Personal Accident Policy'.

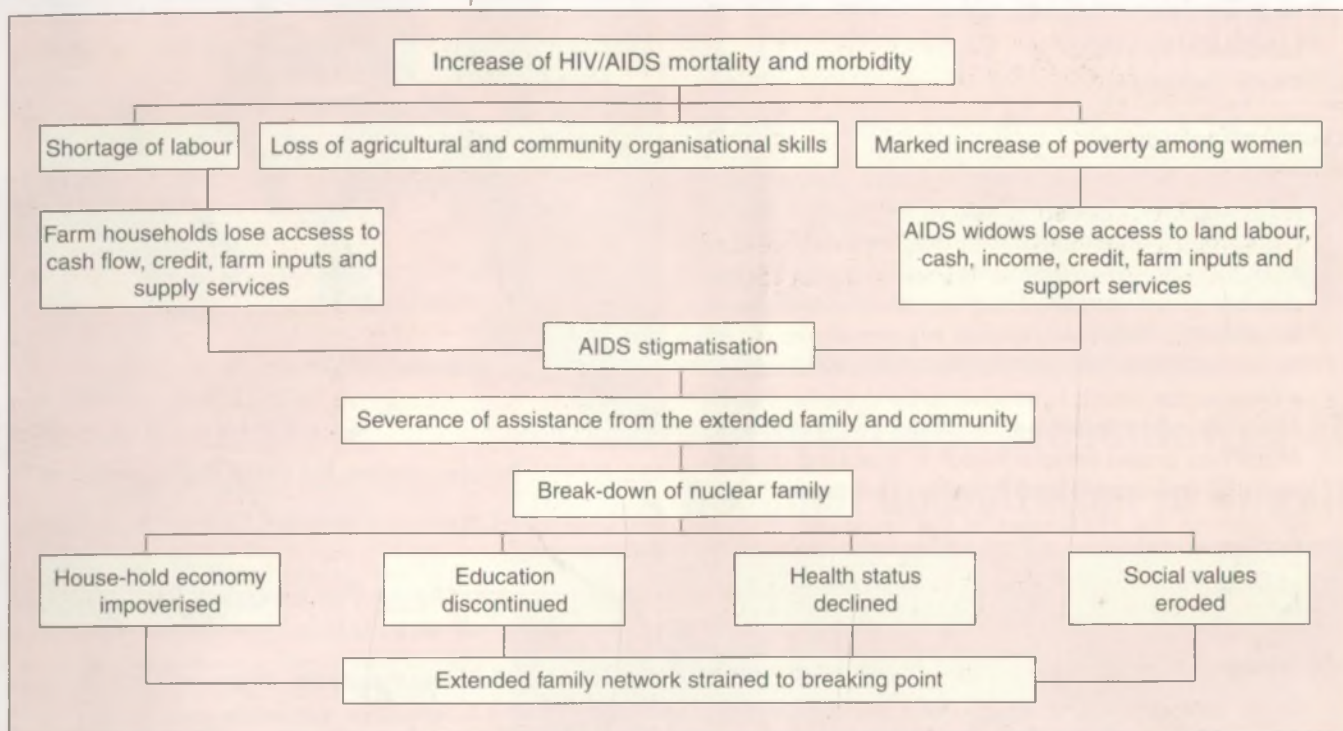
ITGI with patronage of IFFCO launched Sankat Haran Bima Yojana which is a Personal Accident Insurance Scheme offered with purchase of 50 kg. bag of fertilizer from any cooperative outlet.

UNAIDS/WHO Global Report, 2000

Country	Population Age 15-49	Number of HIV+	HIV Prev (%)
Bangladesh	68 021 000	13 000	0.02
Bhutan	938 000	100	0.01
Cambodia	6091 000	1 69 000	2.77
India	522 862 000	3 900 000	0.75
Indonesia	116 009 000	100 000	0.09
Japan	580 98 000	10 000	0.02
Myanmar	25 768 000	510 000	1.99
Nepal	11 259 000	34 000	0.30
SriLanka	10 572 000	8 500	0.08
Thailand	36 241 000	671 000	1.85

Extracts from a presentation by Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Programme, ICA ROAP, New Delhi

Impact of HIV/AIDS on Rural Economies - Farming community and women. [Source: FAO]



NEPAL : National Co-operative Federation of Nepal Ltd.

- The cooperative health care service known as Sajha Swasthya Sewa is serving the members and community in major cities in Nepal
- A number of consumer coops and health service coops supply medicines, medical instruments, medicated materials etc.
- Public health concern cooperative established in 1993 and has started Kathmandu Model Hospital as a referral for patients from the communities.
- Members and other people visit to health care cooperatives for medical care. HIV/AIDS cases are usually referred to Kathmandu model hospital.

VIETNAM : Vietnam Co-operative Alliance

- VCA in coordination with other concerned agencies, regularly organizes workshops on labour safety, prevention of occupational diseases and labour accidents.
- VCA is coordinating with all the concerned government organizations to conduct awareness and information workshops for cooperative members for prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS.
- This is especially focused to high HIV/AIDS prevalence areas.

MALAYSIA : ANGKASA

- There are 6 health co-operatives registered with the co-op development department and are involved in community health care.

Co-operatives are taking initiative to generate awareness about HIV/AIDS through campaigning, information dissemination by distribution of leaflets and also through health clinics to help prevention of spread of the disease.

JAPAN : Zenkyoren - National Mutual Insurance Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives

- Zenkyoren provides many health care services to promote better health and well being of the members as well as the community.
- Regular health check-up.
- Health care and nursing care Hotlines for members.
- Funds for medical check-up, recreational activities, daily care and nursing for elderly.

SINGAPORE : NTUC Income

- This insurance cooperative's products provides coverage for 30 major diseases such as cancer, heart attack, encephalitis and stroke etc.
- First insurer to cover AIDS for Medical Personnel such as doctors, nurses, laboratory technician, ambulance worker or dental surgeon if AIDS is contacted during the course of their work.

SRI LANKA : Co-op medical and health care

There are several cooperative hospitals functioning as separate cooperative societies and one cooperative hospital managed by a Multi-Purpose cooperative society. About 11000 families are the members of these cooperative hospitals. These health coops provide following services:

- Indoor and outdoor patient treatment
- Maternity services
- Pharmacies and dispensaries
- Laboratory services
- Minor operations.

ICA-ROAP Initiatives

- Promotion and development of health cooperatives in the region through its specialised body Asia Pacific Health Co-operative Organization (APHCO).
- APHCO organizes conferences seminars and workshops for development of healthy community in member countries through member organizations.
- As we have seen, health care is a priority to co-operative sector, much is needed to be done for health of women and combating the challenges of HIV/AIDS which has posed serious threat to mankind in general and co-operative community in particular.
- To address the challenges of the epidemic, the regional office has developed a project for "prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS among cooperative members through education and training in Asia".

Objectives

- To spread awareness among rural population, mainly women and youth in cooperatives for prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS.
- To increase informed demands for condoms and increase access to appropriate youth friendly STI prevention and treatment services for cooperative members.

Beneficiaries

- Young men aged 15-49 among the coop members.
- Young women aged 15-24 and children.

Gender aspect of the project

- Stimulating active participation and mobilization of women.
- Separate programmes for women by women health personnel.
- Training of more women health workers.
- Sensitise men about safe sex practices and majority of promotion work focused on harder to convince young men.

NEWS

ICA Regional Women's Committee Office Bearers Meeting was held on 31st August 2003 in Oslo, Norway. The meeting was chaired by Mrs. Rahaiah Baharen, the Chairperson of the Committee. The meeting discussed about various issues such as implementation of findings of ILO Study on "Legal Constrains to Women's Participation in Co-operatives", Women's Committees presenta-



Mrs. Rahaiah Baharen chairing the Office Bearer's Meeting

tion before the Cooperative Ministers Conference and other Policy matters.

The next meeting of the office bearers of the Committee will be held in February 2004 in New Delhi, India.

The United Nations Funds for Women (UNIFEM) and United Nations Conference on Trade and development (UNCTAD) had organized a symposium on Trade, Globalization and Gender on 3-4th November, 2003 in New Delhi, India. The symposium focused on impact of globalisation and WTO on female workers and to explore synergies between economic development, trade liberalization and women's livelihood.

THAILAND

The Co-operative League of Thailand organized a seminar for development of women's activity on "Master Plan for Development of Women in Cooperatives" during 15th-16th September 2003 at the CLT Training Center. The seminar aimed for comprehension and utilization of women in the master plan including development of women's knowledge, capacity and potential to participate in setting direction of development as the master plan can be accepted and applied for development of Thai cooperative movement in the near future.

Ms. Malirat Kaewgla, a senator of Sakong Nokhon Province opened the seminar delivered a lecture on "Women's Role Development View" on 15th September 2003 at the CLT training center.

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Volume 3 No. 1

January 2004

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From the Editor..

Wish you all our readers a very happy and prosperous New Year 2004!

This is our first issue of the year and we wish an equal, just and peaceful world for all women in this universe. The ICA Regional Women Committee will continue its endeavour for cause of the women and will advocate for equality for women and gender integration at all levels of the co-operatives, so that more and more women will join, organize and manage the co-operatives and will be able to use its services for self empowerment as well as for the empowerment of the community.

The meeting of the office bearers of the committee will be held in New Delhi in Feb., 2004 to review our performance and plan for future activities. The ICA ROAP is organizing the Co-operative Ministers Conference at the same time and Ms. Rahaiah Baharen, Chairperson of the Women Committee will be making presentation before the conference on "Empowering women through Co-operatives". She will impress upon the conference to take up effective measures for creating enabling environment for women for their equal participation at all levels of the co-operatives.

The ICA Regional Women's Forum is scheduled to be held in Bangkok in December this year in conjunction with ICA Regional Assembly.

We call upon all the women co-operators in Asia-Pacific to participate in the forum and make it a great success.

— Savitri Singh
Advisor, Gender Programme
ICA ROAP

Womens Committees presentation at the ICA Regional Consultation in Kuwait



Savitri Singh making presentation before the Regional Consultation

The ICA Regional Consultation of Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives of National Co-operative Organisations was held in Kuwait on December 2003. Representatives of governments and of the co-operative movements from 27 countries in the region and from various countries of Africa participated in the consultation. Based on the discussions and presentations in the consultation a draft joint declaration have been formulated and recommended for adoption by the 7th ICA Regional Co-operative Ministers Conference.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor-Gender Programme of the ICA-ROAP and Secretary to the ICA Regional Women's Committee made the presentation before the Consultation on "Legal constraints to women's participation in co-operatives" based on the findings of the study commissioned by ILO

Based on this presentation, the Regional Consultation included in its draft joint declaration the following declaration:

"Making enabling provisions in Co-operative Legislation to enhance participation of women in management and leadership of co-operatives."

This will be adopted by the 7th Co-operative Ministers Conference 2004 in New Delhi

Report on activities of International Cooperative Alliance, Regional Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific (2002-03)

The ICA Regional Women's Committee was organized in Seoul, Korea in October 1998 with objective to promote gender integration in cooperatives and increase participation of women at all levels of cooperatives in the region. The ROAP is implementing its Gender Programs in the region through this Committee. The Committee has done several commendable work in order to achieve its objectives in the Region. Some of the achievements are :-

- a. Establishment of the Women's Committee
- b. Successful organization of three Regional Women Forums
- c. Encouraging the networking among women leaders and cooperators
- d. Organizing National Women Forums in several member countries
- e. Representation of Gender issue in the agenda of Cooperative Ministers' Conference
- f. Preparation of Training Manual for Leadership Development of Women in Cooperatives, in collaboration with ILO-COOPNET.
- g. Completion of two sub regional TOT covering nine countries and 50 Trainers.

1. Regional Training of Trainers Program for Leadership Development of Women in Cooperatives

The ICA ROAP in collaboration with ILO Coop Net developed a training manual for training of trainers for leadership development of women in cooperatives.

Two sub regional TOT program have been held during the year 2002-2003.

The first TOT was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in collaboration with Financial and administrative support of ANGKASA. 25 Trainers from 5 Asian Countries participated.

Impact of the Program

It has been reported that Cooperative College of Malaysia has conducted several TOT based on the Trainers' Manual Programs for their teaching staff. ANGKASA is also organizing TOT for their cooperative members. In Thailand, CLT has got the manual translated into local language and TOT has been held for local trainers/leaders.

Second sub Regional TOT has been held in Pune, India in June 2003. Twenty five trainers from 4 countries have been trained during the programme. The National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) extended all the financial and administrative support.

The Women Committee is considering to organize such more programmes at national level in member countries through the member organizations who have not participated in the Regional Programs.

2. Women Committee Meeting

The Women Committee Meeting has been held in Cebu, Philippines in February, 2003.

The meeting reviewed the progress of activities and election of office bearers has been held. Mrs Rahaiah Baهران has been re-elected as Chairperson and Ms. Junko Ito and Ms Preema Shanti Suriyarachchi have been re-elected as Vice Chairpersons. There are 11 other members in the Committee nominated by the member organization in the Region.

3. Regional Women Forum,

Since 1998, the ICA Regional Women Committee is organizing the Regional Women Forum regularly in conjunction with ICA Regional Forum. Second ICA Regional Women Forum was held in June 2000 in Singapore. The Third Forum was held in Cebu, Philippines on 18th February, 2003. Around 100 women and men from several countries across the world including the ICA President Mr. Ivano Barbeni attended the Forum. It was a great success.

Objectives of the Forum are

- to determine whether Asian values enhance the participation of women in cooperatives
- to identify mechanisms to overcome factors that limit women's participation in cooperatives.
- Based on the findings of the presentation and discussions at the Forum, the Forum called on men and women cooperators and cooperative 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 cooperatives
- day care for children and elderly
- reproductive health and medical services
- business information and know how for women entrepreneurs
- educate members
- on leadership
- on gender concerns in coop and business and shared household responsibilities
- other issues in the society
- Provide support systems and activities that would improve family relationship and services that will address needs of children and spouses.

Cooperative Women's Forum, NICD, Sri Lanka

The National Institute of Co-operative Development, Polgolla, Sri Lanka has organized a National Co-operative women's forum on 11th and 12th December 2003 in their Institute in collaboration with ICA-ROAP and National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka.

When we look at the membership of Co-operatives in Sri Lanka, it is clear that majority are males. Women members are less in number. Similarly, membership is not obtained with full knowledge of its activities. Obtaining membership of co-operatives with other motives such as to be eligible for Janasawiya, Samurdhi and housing loans etc. have led to membership being inactive.

Although there is some satisfactory progress in co-operatives on regional or village levels, the number of women getting elected to managerial positions is negligible. Even if women get elected to such positions, they become inactive due to outside pressures and also due to the fact that qualified persons do not get elected.

Under the circumstances, Co-operative Womens Forum was held in order to create an awakening and awareness among women and get them to participate actively in cooperative activities. It was also considered a step taken at the appropriate time.



Interactive session in progress

Participation

70 women representing Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies, Thrift and Credit Co-operative Societies, Co-operative Women's Bank and National Co-operative Women's Union etc. participated in the forum.

Commencement

Mr. Udaya Seneviratne, Director General, NICD, Polgolla welcomed the distinguished guests and explained the objective of the forum. The following special invitees participated in the inaugural session and addressed the forum.



Inauguration of the Forum

1. Ms. Savitri Singh
Advisor, Gender Programme, ICA-ROAP
 2. Prof. J. M. Gunadasa
Chairman, Presidential Commission on Co-operatives and former Vice Chancellor, University of Peradeniya.
 3. Mr. Upali Herath
Former Advisor, ICA-ROAP
 4. Ms. Prima Sooriarachchi
President, National Co-operative Womens Council on behalf of the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka.
- During the two-day Forum, the International experts made presentations about significant issues concerning women cooperators. The detail of the session are given below:
- a. "My Experiences as a Woman Co-operative Leader"
Presentation by : Ms. Lecira V. Juarez
Chairperson, NATCCO Network, Philippines
 - b. "Women's Participation in Micro-finance Activities in Asia"
Presentation by : Mr. Ranjith Hettiarachchi
Chief Executive Officer, Asian Confederation of Co-operative Credit Unions, Thailand
 - c. "Development of Women's Co-operative Activities for a National Programme"
Presented by : Mr. Upali Herath
Former Advisor, Gender Equality, International Cooperative Alliance and Managing Director, Co-operative Insurance Company.
 - d. "New Trends and Training opportunities for Co-operative Women in Asia".
Presented by : Ms. Elenita San Roque
Manager, Member Services, Asian Confederation of Credit Unions, Thailand.
 - e. "Legal Constraints to Women in participation in Co-operatives."
Presented by : Mrs. Savitri Singh
Advisor, Gender Programme, ICA-ROAP.

Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum

The Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum organized 3 days conference on "Transformative Leadership for Co-operatives". The conference was held in Bangkok in the last week of November, 2003.

On behalf of ICA ROAP and ICA Regional Women Committee, Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme of CA-ROAP and Secretary to the Women's Committee attended the conference and delivered following message of solidarity:

Message from ICA-ROAP

Probably most of you may be aware, the International Co-operative Alliance is an independent nongovernmental association, which unites, represents and serves co-operatives worldwide.

Gender integration and leadership of women in co-operatives is one of the most focused ICA development programmes.

ICA has developed a strategy for promotion of gender equality with a specific aim to promote equality between men and women in all decisionmaking activities within the co-operative movement.

The rationale for gender equality are moral and ethical issues- i.e. basic human rights of women and men and promotion of economic growth based on the full utilization of potential of human resources, i.e. men and women. Both have some special abilities which are equally useful for the business of the cooperatives as well as economic and social activities of the community.

In order to achieve its goal of gender integration and empowerment of women in cooperatives, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has constituted Regional Women's Committee consisting of representatives from member organizations of various countries in the region.

I feel happy to inform that Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF) is an associate member in the Committee.

AWCF, as a resource and advocacy body on gender and co-operatives in Asia is doing commendable work regarding gender equality and transformation of co-operatives through transforming leadership.

This issue of transformative leadership is very relevant to co-operatives today, more so because the co-operative institutions in most of the Asian countries are reeling under pressure of government interference, imbalanced trade practices due to globalization and unequal competition from the developed world.

The co-operative leadership style need to be transformed to become more participatory and people oriented so that opinion of all the concerned could be heard and considered before arriving at any decision.

Most of the development programmes in co-operatives do not reach to its destination because people, generally do not feel involved in decisions taken by few at the top. Most of the time

such decisions are not need based because the leaders decide "what people want".

Human history is full of such incidences where a leader could make or mar the destiny of great civilizations. There is an old saying in India "Yatha Raja tatha Praja" means as the king is so are the subjects.

However, there is also need to address some contemporary issues which are vital for the very existence of women in general and women in co-operatives in particular.

Trade and globalization are burning issues which are affecting the livelihood of women workers. International and Regional trade agreements are not suited for reflecting gender considerations.

The negative effects induced by trade liberalization are strongest in small subsistence farming and on the factory workers. Co-operatives represent women of these sectors who are disproportionately affected.

The other issue is HIV/AIDS and women. It hit hardest at women. They lose the earning member, burdened with double responsibility of earning and care giving, stigmatization and in most cases, innocent victims of infection through partners.

Achieving transformation of co-operative leadership requires systematic change, which can only become reality through partnership at all levels. The entire co-operative community must come together to forge partnerships to create an environment conducive to women as well as common members participation at all levels of cooperative structure, positive gender integration, promoting economic and social security and ending gender biases-the key to sustainable growth for cooperative movement world-wide.

Empowering people to empower the society and transform leadership

The Asian Women in Co-operative development forum, for its part is a good and long standing partner of the ICA-ROAP in its endeavour to advocate and enable co-operative organizations to achieve equity and equality for women in co-ops and positive/productive gender integration.

We look forward to continuing our common quest for common good. In that spirit of solidarity, please accept our best wishes for all success in your noble missions in future.

Initiating public debates and sharing views through a conference like this is of immense value in building up better understanding about the issue and forming strategy for change. I wish the organizers and participants of this conference all success in their endeavours.

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Compiled by Mr. Jiro Ito, Director, Gender Program and edited by Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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From the Editor...

Dear readers, I am happy to announce that the ICA Regional Women's Committee Meeting and ICA Regional Women Forum will be held on 29th and 30th, November, 2004 respectively in Thailand. The members of the committee are expected to present country report comprising of latest gender related activities and data reflecting women's participation at various levels of decision making in co-operatives in their respective countries.

The theme of the women forum will be "Women in re-engineering of co-operative in the globalized economy".

We all know that the financial markets tend to discriminate against women with requirements for collateral and in some contexts, male signatories. Despite the introduction of special credit schemes by co-operative for women, disparities in credit allocation remain high.

In the agriculture labour force, women tend to be categorized as 'unpaid family workers' rather than 'valuable resource'.

In agriculture and in factories men tend to control mechanized means, have greater access to market information and despite women's labour's inputs, in most cases they control the cash.

Under this background, the forum will attempt to assess the latest trends, opportunities and effects of trade liberalization and globalization on women in co-operatives in Asia and the pacific Region.

You all are cordially invited to join the forum and make it a great success.

- Savitri Singh
Advisor, Gender Programme

7th ASIA- PACIFIC CO-OPERATIVE MINISTER'S CONFERENCE

Empowering woman through Cooperatives



Ms. Rahaiah Baهران, Chairperson, ICA Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific speaking at 7th Asia - Pacific Co-Operative Minister's Conference

Creation of an enabling legal and policy environment for growth and development of member centric and community oriented cooperatives, is the most significant key result area of the International Cooperatives Alliance (ICA) in Asia-Pacific Region. Cooperative Minister's Conference and Regional Consultations of Permanent Secretaries in charge of Cooperatives in the Governments and representatives of Cooperative movement have been very well recognised fora to Facilitate interaction between Government and Cooperatives to evolve parameters for conducive cooperative legislation and policies keeping in view various contextual issues that emerge from time to time.

The 7th Co-operative minister's conference is the latest in a series of high-level interaction between government and the Co-operative movements in Asia & the Pacific Region, Organised by the International Co-operative Alliance Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific (ICA ROAP). Since its inception in 1990 in Sydney, the Conference has taken incremental steps in addressing the common agenda of moving Co-operative Development forward in individual Countries and in the region. Mrs. Rahaiah Baهران, ICA Board Member and Chairperson of the ICA Regional women's committee for Asia and the Pacific made presentation before

the above said conference. While speaking at the programme, she gave an account of previous recommendation /resolutions made by the women's committee for Gender integration in cooperatives and equity and equality for women at all decision making levels.

4th Minister' Conference (1997) : Chiangmai

- Review, identify and eliminate all legislation and policies which hinder full participation of WOMEN;
- Training opportunities to ensure that gender issues are properly recognized;
- Proper gender analysis collaboration
- Funds for gender and women's activities
- Create a conducive environment in which women could gain access to, and control over, resources

5th Minister's Conference (1999) : Beijing

"RESOLUTIONS No. 4: On Fair Playing Ground

- Removal of all legal and other barriers which limit equal participation of men and Women in membership, leadership, management and decision-making in cooperatives.

6th Minister's Conference (2002) : Nepal

"Resolution # 1

Government should develop and formulate a co-operative policy contain the following elements:

... Describe methods by which government's would enable capacity building in cooperatives-leading to their empowerment."

ICA Co-operative Identity Statement

- 1st Principles : Voluntary and open Membership
..... without gender, social racial, political or religious discrimination.

ILO Recommendation 193 which highlights the need of women's involvement in cooperatives:

"(7.3) Special consideration should be given to increasing women's participation in the cooperative movement at all levels, particularly at management and leadership levels."

National cooperative policies (NCP), Malaysia

"Towards implementing the NCP, some concrete actions need to be taken according to the various sectors as follows:

Women

- Increase participations of women in cooperatives;
- Increase the number of women cooperatives;
- Encourage more women to play the role of decision making;
- Create women's bureau and committees in cooperatives; and Conduct specific training programs for women."

7th Minister's Conference (2004) New Delhi

At this platform she made following recommendations

Empowering Women through:

1. Gender Disaggregated database
(3rd Recommendation of the 4th Minister' Conference in Chiangmai, Thailand, 1997)
2. Training and Education
3. Funding
4. Networking & Exposure
5. School Co-operatives

Benefits to co-operatives, society, country:

- More well-informed members
- Becoming instruments of empowerment
- Increased human resource
- Nation Building

3rd ICA-ILO COOPNET Regional Training of Trainers Programme for Leadership Development of women in Co-Operatives held in Bandung, Indonesia from 8-13 March,2004

The ICA-ROAP is concerned about under representation of women in leadership and decision making at all levels in coops in the region. Therefore, the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific took initiative to identify need of training to women to enable them taking up leadership role. With the efforts of the committee, ICA ROAP and ILO COOPNET has developed a Trainers Training manual for leadership development of women cooperators in Asia Pacific Region. The ICA has decided to conduct training program in three Phases.

1. First in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia covering member organizations from ASEAN region countries.
2. Second in India Covering member organizations from SOWECA Region.
3. Third covering member organizations from far East Asia Pacific.

Project objectives

1. Training of trainers for the leadership development of women in cooperatives



Organisers and participants of TOT in Bandung

2. Capacity building of women leaders and cooperators to enable them take up leadership jobs.

The first trainers training programme was conducted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 21th October to 26th October 2002. The National Cooperative Organization of Malaysia (ANGKASA) hosted the programme and trainers from Indonesia, Phillipines, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia attended the programme.

The second TOT was held in Pune, India from 2nd to 7th June. 2003 for SOWECA region. 23 participants from Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India attended the programme.

With this background , 3rd TOT was held in Indonesia. The TOT was Inaugurated by Mr. Mohd. Eqbal, Vice President of DEKOPIN, Indonesia.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, the Regional Director ICA -ROAP extended warm welcome to the participants and made a power point

presentation about ICA and explained about the activities and programmes of ICA-ROAP.

25 Participants from 4 Asian countries i.e Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand attended the programme

It was hosted by LAPENKOP with support of DEKOPIN

Study visit to Women co-operative in Bandung was organized for the participants at the end of the training.

The participant found that training is useful and relevant to their work. They observed that they will try to incorporate the text of the manual in the training curriculum of their co-ops.

The DEOKPIN has been requested to get the manual translated in the local language so that it could be more useful to the co-operators.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor-Gender programme of ICA-ROAP will follow up for the progress.

International Womens Day, 8 March 2004 "Woman and HIV/AIDS"

Message from the ICA president Mr. Ivano Barberini

This year the United Nation has chosen to focus on the theme of "Woman and HIV/AIDS" for the celebration of International Women's Day 2004.

The ICA, and its Gender Equality Committee in Particular, welcomes this initiative as HIV/AIDS is a pandemic around the world that continues to spread causing misery and death. It also greatly helps in the Follow-up of the ICA joint seminar organised by the Gender Equality Committee and International Health Co-operative during the last ICA's General Assembly (Oslo, September 2003) which focused

on this very problem and underlines the important activities currently being undertaken by ICA's regional offices in Africa and Asia/Pacific to tackle the problem.

HIV/AIDS has profound impact on Societies from both an economic and cultural perspective. For Many countries, especially in Africa and Asia, it means a collapse of the economy and for Co-operatives it means lack of economic performance and the painful loss of members and employees.



Mr. Ivano Barberini

One of the most recent UN reports highlighted that Women are increasingly bearing the brunt of the illness both as victims of HIV/AIDS but also as care-givers to others that are infected. These reports also clearly link the high rate of infection of woman with that the imbalance between the roles of men and women in the family and society and lack of gender equality worldwide.

The terrible consequences of HIV/AIDS not only touch women and men, but increasingly children. More and more boys and girls are affected by the illness themselves, are orphaned or are victims of the loss of parent and the economic, cultural and social consequences this brings. Mobilisation of methods to reduce transmission of the virus to children in child birth must also be a priority area of our concern. Entire societies are being devastated by this pandemic.

The rates of HIV/AIDS infection are rising in many parts of the world. We must seriously tackle this to ensure healthy and productive societies.

We must remember too that AIDS is not only a health problem, but an economic, social and cultural challenge. Co-operatives can play an important role contributing to stopping this modern day plague through actions ranging from reducing poverty, promoting gender equality and providing education and information to their members and to the communities in which they operate.

The strength of Co-operatives is that day traditionally work in social and cultural spheres alongside their business interests. Let us today promote this strength to focus on the fight against HIV/AIDS. We know that it will not be easy, and care is needed as HIV/AIDS stirs up strong religious and deeply-rooted cultural beliefs, but we can no longer ignore this reality if we want to strengthen the co-operative role around the

world.

ICA supports the UN in its fight of HIV/AIDS and concurs with the UN Secretary- General's in his message for international Women's Day, when he says:

" What is needed is positive, concrete change that will give more power and confidence to women and girls, and transform relations between Women and men at all levels of society.

Change that will strengthen legal protection of women's property and inheritance rights, and ensure they have full access to prevention options.

Change that makes men assume their responsibility -whether ensuring their daughters get an education; abstaining from sexual behavior that puts others at risk; forgoing relations with girls and very young women; or understanding that when it comes to violence against women, there are no grounds for tolerance and no tolerable excuses."

Members of ICA and its regional offices are already working towards fighting HIV/AIDS. Partnership with International organisations and civil society organisations are in the process of being initiated to collect and share best practice.

ICA urges all its members to support efforts to fight the HIV/AIDS by working to eradicate poverty, make gender equality a reality, and raise awareness on HIV/AIDS through partnerships in their countries and at all levels.

Together we can make a difference!

Attention Readers !!!

We are pleased to announce that ICA Regional Women's Committee's meeting and ICA Regional women forum will be held on 29th & 30th Nov 2004, respectively at Chianghai, Thailand. We appeal to our member's and readers to please announce this news in your cooperative and ensure participation of men & women in large numbers.

You may please send your nominations to Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Programme of ICA-ROAP at the address printed in this News Letter.

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Compiled and edited by Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



Volume 3 No. 4

March 2005

For Private Circulation only

From the Editor...

Dear Readers,
Greetings from Regional Women Committee. I am happy to come back to you again through this newsletter. Second Issue of the year 2005 is significant as International women's day falls on 8th day of this month every year and also this year marks 10 years of international movement for equality and empowerment of women - the 10th year post Beijing Conference and platform for action. This is also the eight - year post ICA AWCF Women Conference, Tagaytay 1997. As I have informed you in the last issue, we are undertaking a huge exercise to review progress post tagaytay and sex-disaggregated database will be established to evaluate achievements.

ICA AP has set women's empowerment and gender equality as target to be achieved. The Tagaytay strategies have clearly underlined that we should enhance the status of women at primary, national and international levels of cooperatives.

Besides the need for gender equality at decision making as well as at all levels of cooperatives, it is fundamental to create opportunity for women's socio-economic and political empowerment through cooperatives and within the cooperatives. In traditional occupations such as farming, dairy, textile and handicrafts women perform majority of work and are major producers. Cooperatives have to play vital role in the field of empowerment of women by giving them due recognition for their labour and equal share in profits.

I would like to know your opinion and will expect your response. Till then Happy Women's Day.

– Savitri Singh

POST TAGAYTAY REVIEW PROJECT MEETING 25&26 FEB-2005, BANGKOK



Partners of the Project Team

In 1997, The ICA ROAP and AWCF had jointly organized a regional conference on 'Women in Decision-making in co-operatives: which was held on May 7-9, 1997 in Tagaytay City, Philippines. In order to enhance the number and participation of women in leadership and decision making conference proposed six important strategies and actions to be implemented within a period of 8 years, from 1997 up to year 2005.

Therefore, the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia & the PACIFIC (ICA RWC) and representative of AWCF and ACCU had held two days meeting to review the post "Tagaytay Declaration 1997 achievements or lack thereof". Meeting was chaired by Ms. Rahaiah baheran, the Chairperson of the ICA RWC. The group has reviewed all report from their organizations about the progress achieved or lack there of. Based on the reports from members, it was found that all the six strategies have been dealt with but performance could not be maximized due to various reasons.

Therefore, it has been decided that it is necessary to collect sex disaggregated data in order to review the achievements and lack thereof. The data will cover number of women and men at all levels of co-operatives such as general membership, managers and board of directors, breakdown by age group and also number and kind of educational/training activities have been implemented and policies put in place for capacity building of co-ops on women leadership development and building capability of women for leadership and decision making in co-ops. The data will be collected from all the ICA, AWCF and ACCU

member organizations in the region. Based on the data so collected the achievements will be evaluated and will be presented before the " Post Tagaytay Review Conference : to be held in May 2006.

The ICA Regional Women's Committee will collaborate with Unifem to get the benefit of the expertise of the agency in the field of sex-disaggregated data collection and the services of an expert consultant recommended by the UNIFEM to expedite and complete the task.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - 2005 CELEBRATIONS

NTUC/SNCF International Women's Day 2005

Held at the Intercontinental Singapore on Saturday, 5 March 2005. Together with the ATUC Women's Committee, the SNCF Women's Programme Committee organized a seminar to celebrate International Women's day which falls on 8 March. The Guest-of-Honour was Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth & Sports and Senior Minister of State for Trade & Industry. Mdm Halimah Yacob, Assistant Secretary-General of NTUC also attended the event in her capacity as the Secretary of the NTUC Women's Committee.

With the theme "The Power In You", the event aimed to showcase successful women figures in Singapore as well as to discuss issues relevant to women in this globalised economy. More than 500 participants, from both the union and the co-operative sectors, attended the half-day event which witnessed three prominent women speakers elaborating on sub-themes pertaining to the social, political and entrepreneurial aspects.

In his keynote address, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan mentioned that the Women's Charter was one of the earliest legislative changes that the People's Action Party Government pushed through and he further added that the journey is not over yet although women have indeed come a long way in terms of bridging the inequality gap between the genders. He emphasized that women should be given the power to choose the path that gives them most fulfillment and the power to contribute to society.

The first speaker, Dr Paulin Tay Straughan, Associate Professor & Deputy Head of Department of Sociology /

Vice-Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore (NUS) Highlighted the many social progress that Singapore women have made and also gave her views on work and family life balance. Her many personal anecdotes further shed light on the need for women to embrace their commitments especially where family matters are concerned. Her humorous and entertaining delivery brought smiles and laughter to the strong turnout.

Briefing the participants on "Women's Political Participation & Empowerment in Singapore" was Dr Suzaina Kadir, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, NUS. Dr Suzaina touched on the need for more women to come forth and take on leadership roles especially in the political arena. Though tremendous improvements have been made through the decades, more can be done because it is crucial that women's voices are heard particularly in areas and which will affect the lives of the common Singaporeans.

The last speaker was Ms Loh Wai Kiew, President & CEO of Semb Corp. Environmental Management, who gave a more personal account of her climb up the corporate ladder. As the head of a successful and rapidly-growing environmental business, Ms Loh who often calls herself a garbologist, emphasized the fact that women leaders do not have to change or try to fit themselves in their respective male-dominated working environment. The key point is that female bosses can bring in their own unique style of consultative leadership which is evidenced from her success story.

The panel discussion, comprising of Mdm Halimah Yacob, Ms Goh Ming Huay and the three speakers, saw a



Participants at the celebration

lively discussion between the panelist and the participants. In her closing address, Ms Goh emphasized and urged the many ladies present to unleash the power within them and to go all out to achieve aims and goals in life especially those who are able to excel in male-dominated field to take that crucial step forward and contribute in whatever ways possible.

Feedback received from the majority of the participants was very positive and they enjoyed the afternoon session.

On the whole, many participants commented that the event well-organised and the more of such events should be organised in the future. Majority of the participants were most impressed with Dr Paulin Tay Straughan and has requested that she be invited to speak again in future events.

MESSAGES

- **ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and Pacific**

With all my heart I congratulate you on the International Women's Day, 8 March. I wish you good health, peace and happiness to our family and the co-operative movement. Let me also wish further success to you and to all women co-operators. The increase of the role of women in the co-operation is important for both our country and the co-operative movement. With co-operative greetings,

From :

Rahaiah Baهران

Chairperson, ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and Pacific

- **Central Organisation for Rural Cooperatives of Iran**

During the last year we did our best to empower the rural women of our country and to increase their involvement in decision making at different levels of management and socio-economic activities. For the first time we establish Taxi service for rural women, rural nurseries (kindergarten) and places to collect cow/sheep milk produced by rural women. We supported agro-tourism and agriculture projects involving women in rural areas and held several workshops to elevate women's ability in managing their business and co-operatives.

Presently, rural women contribution is not only limited to strength of traditional activities as farming, handcraft, housework and guarding children. They go further to education, management economy and financial activities.

Now we congratulate you on the International Women's Day and we believe Together we can make a difference!

From :

A. Cheraghali

Deputy Minister, Director Manager and Chair of Board
Central Organisation for Rural Cooperatives of Iran

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2005

JOINT MESSAGE OF THE ICA PRESIDENT AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE ICA GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE

International Women's Day has become a day to reflect on the situation of our world from a gender perspective. This year we celebrate under the theme, "Gender Equality Beyond 2005: Building a More Secure Future". The theme recognises the close relationship between gender equality, security and development and stresses reducing poverty, protecting human rights and investing in sustainable development as keys to empowering women. It also emphasises that pursuing the goal of gender equality is integral to building a more secure and sustainable future.

A more secure future is the dream for millions of people around the world that ask what can they do to build a better future for themselves and for future generations. The uncertainties in our world destroy our sense of security and make us less trusting of what lies in the future. To ensure security for all we must not only eradicate war, conflict situation and poverty, but also tyranny and discrimination in all forms as these are often the roots of malaise in our world. Here, women and children are the main victims. We must work towards a culture of peace to fight insecurity and promote respect for diversity.

A first and main step to achieve the above is to fight discrimination at all levels, starting from discrimination against women in the family, in the workplace, in business and at a political level, in society as a whole. By doing this, we can lay the foundations to build a more secure future for all. It is for this reason that gender equality must become a responsibility of every international institution, every government, every business, every family and individual.

The ICA and its Gender Equality Committee acknowledge that advances have been made in women's rights, and in their increased participation in the economic, social and cultural life of societies in many parts of the world. Within the co-operative movement, the ICA Global Gender Strategy and the regional platforms have made considerable inroads in creating awareness and creating conditions for moving towards gender equality, increasing women's participation in co-operatives and their decision-making structures. However, we must also recognise that still much remains to be done.

Over and over the international community has demonstrated the importance of women's participation in successful initiatives to fight against poverty, to mitigate the spread of HIV / AIDS, to improve the destiny of children, and to make the world a better and more peaceful place. Within our movement, we have seen that women's empowerment is moving co-operatives into new areas of

activity and co-operatives that have been most proactive are seeing the return on their investments both economically and socially. Gender equality in co-operatives is contributing to making our enterprises more sustainable and successful, more able to address the changing needs of our members and creating economic security.

We are convinced that working towards creating a better world is possible only if an approach of increased Co-operation can take root and grow with women playing a major role.

Today, we call on ICA members and co-operators around the world to continue to work towards giving women the opportunities to enable them to make a difference in our co-operatives and communities. ICA appeals to all its members to fully act according to the spirit of promoting gender equality to build a more secure future for all.

IMPORTANT EVENTS 2005-2006

The Post Tagaytay Review Conference, May 2006

The ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and Pacific is pleased to announce that the post Tagaytay Conference will be held in May, 2006 in Tagaytay City of Philippines to mark the decade of Tagaytay Declaration-1997 and to evaluate our achievements or lack thereof. We are expecting a large number of women and men delegates from the region and from co-operative fraternity of other countries in the world. For further information please contact Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programmes at savitrisingh@icaroap.coop

Note

For more information on International Women's Day, please check the United Nations Official website : <http://www.un.org./events/women/iwd/2005> which includes the UN Secretary-General's Message.

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



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June 2005

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From the Editor...

Dear Readers,

Greetings for Monsoon Season!

As agriculture is the main source of livelihood in most of the Asian countries, good and timely rain brings hope for good crop. In South Asia paddy is the main staple food and this is the season for sowing of paddy plants. World over, women share about 55% of total labour for food production. They do most of the farming work, yet their status remains as landless farm workers and land mostly belongs to male member of the family. Though, cooperatives are lobbying for change in land ownership law and other economic and social laws of countries to make them more women friendly, speed of the change is very slow. We have to be consistent and persistent in our efforts. Coming back to this monsoon issue of the Newsletter, starting from this month we will publish report on women cooperatives from our member countries. In this issue, we are covering two reports one from Indonesia and one from Japan. These reports are useful for sharing information with other cooperators. I encourage our readers to read these reports and come back with their opinion about any issue or policy mentioned in the reports which they think is good or need to be changed etc. I also, request the readers to please send news reports and stories from their own coop which will be published in this newsletter and will reach out to other cooperators as well.

Looking forward to hear from you!

– Savitri Singh

WOMEN CO-OPERATIVES IN INDONESIA

Indonesia is the fourth world's most populous country, with a population of over 215 million in 2003, approx 50 % of whom are women and 55.60 % of them live in the rural areas. 65.60 % of the population are under the productive age category (15 -64 years old). The official data reveals that 18.40 % of the Indonesian people live below the poverty line and the average income per capita per annum is US\$ 621.

In education, the constitution mandates that every citizen has the right to receive education and the obligation to follow basic education for 7 to 15 years-olds and the government has obligation to provide the funding. The central and regional governments has the obligation to provide services and facilities and ensure the provision of quality education without discrimination. There is a significant gap in drop out rates between females and males and this gap widens as the level of education increases.

Table -1 School Participation Rate by age group and gender, for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Age Group / Gender		2000	2001	2002
1		2	3	4
7-12 years	Female	95,7	95,4	95,7
	Male	95,3	95,0	95,0
	Total	95,5	95,2	95,3
13 -15 years	Female	76,8	77,0	78,7
	Male	78,3	77,3	79,3
	Total	77,5	77,2	79,0
16 -18 years	Female	47,4	48,0	50,8
	Male	49,9	50,5	51,5
	Total	48,6	49,3	51,1
19 -24 years	Female	9,9	10,3	11,2
	Male	13,7	14,1	14,3
	Total	11,6	12,1	12,7

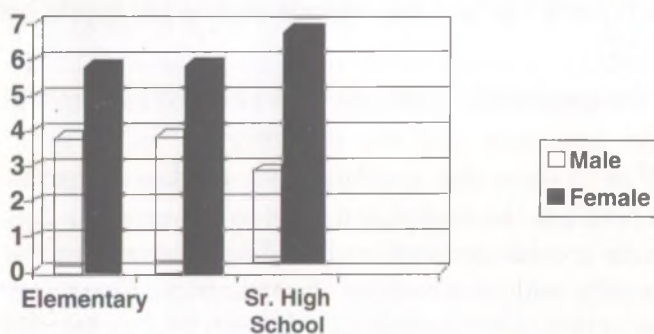
Source: Susenas-2002

Table-2 Percentage of Citizens 10-years and older by highest education completed and gender, 2002

Highest Education Completed	Urban			Rural		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not/never in School	7,3	2,7	5,0	15,6	7,5	11,5
Below elementary School	16,8	15,8	16,3	28,0	27,5	27,8
Elementary School (SD)	28,2	25,7	27,0	37,5	39,3	38,4
Jr High School (SMP)	18,7	19,4	19,1	11,9	14,8	13,4
Sr High School (SMU) & above	29,0	36,4	32,6	6,9	10,9	8,9
Jumlah	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Susenas-2002

Table 3 - Ratio according to gender for every 10 drop outs



Source: SUSENAS, 2002

As table 3 shows, at the senior high school level, there are 7 female students who drop out for "every 3 male students who drop out. An indication of the-low level of education in Indonesia is in the high, number of students who drop out reaching around 6 million. In addition, school-age children (7-12) from poor families that are unable to go to school number around 1.4 million.

In health, the current Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) in Indonesia still high : 396/100.000 life births. It was estimated that every year 20.000 women died during pregnancies and deliveries. Bleeding contributed 42% to the MMR, following eclampsia (13%), infection (10%), complication during abortion (11%), prolonged labor (9%) and others (15%).

In co-operative, the total number of co-operatives in 2003 was 123.181 units scattered over 341 districts and municipalities within 30 provinces in Indonesia. The total member of—cooperatives in 2003 was 27.282.658.

The total number of women co-operatives in 1999 was 1284 units, and the total members was 275.417 and the total number of women co- operatives in 2000 was 1.405 units, and the total members was 366.194 members.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We have commitment to improve women participation in co-operative by various strategic acts:

1. Ensure equal access to co-operative
2. Improve women's access to co-operative facilities
3. Develop non-discriminatory education and training in co-operative
4. Promote lifelong career for women in co-operative

ACTION TAKEN

1. Education is "key" to empowering women in co-operative An equitable access in co-operative will raise awareness among women of the meaning of their rights and obligations for themselves.
2. To socialization co-operative concept and co-operative principal and co-operative facilities.
3. To provide education, training and information to all members, especially to women in co-operative and get the opportunity for education and training in co-operative.
4. Training and Capacity Building is the key to empowering women that will make women self sufficient, responsible, knowledgeable, aware of the importance of future, aware of opportunity to participate in co-operative.

GAINS

1. The participation of women in co-operative has been raised. Total women co-operative in 1999, were 1264 units and total women co- operative members 275.417 and total women co-operative in 2000 are, 1405 units and total women co-operative members 366.194.
2. The participation of women in decision making in co-operative has been increased.

OBSTACLES

1. Constraints on database
 - ❖ Lack of data on participation of women in co-operative in Indonesia.
 - ❖ Lack of data on women co-operative members at mixed co- operative.

- ❖ Lack of data on women in decision making at mixed co-operative.
 - ❖ Lack of data on potential women members in mixed co-operative at the national, provincial and city level.
2. Constraints on Human Resources
 - ❖ The unequal capacity of women to be active in co-operative.
 - ❖ The unequal capacity of women to be decision maker in co-operative.
 3. Constraint of socio-cultural values

Values, stereotype, views in society that was constructed by patriarchal culture and the gender biased interpretation of religion that positioned men as a leaders, made women as second class citizens and marginalized.

FUTURE ACTIONS

1. Women Capacity building of women is needed in the co-operative.
2. Encourage women to participate more in the co-operative in central and regional positions.
3. Motivate women to conduct co-operative program.
4. To establish women co-operative network to continue to struggle for gender equality and awareness.

FEMALE-MALE JOINT PARTICIPATION IN CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES IN JAPAN

1. **General information about women's situation such as male-female ratio in Japan.**

- (1) Rank of GEM(2002) .32nd
- (2) Female Ratio of MP(2002) .7.3%
- (3) Female Manager Ratio of Businesses(2001) .8.9%
- (4) Female Workforce Ratio(2001) .41.0%

2. **Over all participation of women in co-ops in your country**

1. Members

Total membership of Japanese Consumer Co-ops is almost 22 million. According to survey conducted in 2003, we would estimate that more than 90% out of total membership are female.

2. Employees

Total full-time employee of retail co-ops is 33,265. Among those female are 5,670 (17%).

3. **Number and type of all women co-operatives**

None

4. Constraints to women in joining co-ops as organisers, members and service users.

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Law, as well as the rules, regulations and by laws contain no discriminatory provision against women. Therefore, there are no constraints against women.

On the other hand, even though there are also no constraints to men, the number of male members are much smaller than female. This is because the notion that women bear the primary role of consumers' affairs in the families is popular in Japan.

5. Data of no of women as leaders, directors, managers.

Level of Female Participation

Secondary and National Level	1996	1998	2000
JCCU Board	6%	23%	20%
Regional Committees	6%	18%	19%
Board Members and Auditor's	11%	11%	14%
Primary Co-ops	1991	1996	2000
Executive Board and General Board	58.1%	85.0%	96.6%
Chairpersons	10.2%	20.4%	23.5%
Vice-Chairpersons	33.3%	53.1%	48.4%

6. **Business of the co-op and actions which has enhanced women's participation.**

Business

1. Retail Businesses

- (1) Joint Purchasing & deliver to HAN or Individual Members

- (2) Store Operation

- (3) Mail Order Business

2. Insurance Business

Actions

(1) Policy Making

Several Co-ops as well as JCCU adopted the policies to ensure female-male equal participation. These included some positive actions such as (a) an increase in women employees, support for women to continue to work, and improvement in the ratio of women in management positions, (b) Transfer of more power to part-timers and promotion of more part-time employees to full-time positions, (c) prevention of sexual harassment.

(2) Employees/Human Resources

Several Co-ops have created a position, whose job is to focus-on and deal with gender issues. This staff is responsible for contacting local governments and other organizations for the purpose of collaboration on gender related issues. Furthermore, they organize gender sensitivity training and activities for Co-op employees. JCCU also has appointed staff who is in charge for gender issues.

(3) Awards

The Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society enacted in 1999. Since the establishment of the Law, central and local government of Japan have jointly presented Corporation Awards for the Promotion of Gender Equality. 12 Co-ops had the Awards during 1999-2003.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE CHAIRPERSON/WOMEN DIRECTORS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN INDIA

The National Centre for Cooperative Education the education wing of NCUI, New Delhi organises Leadership Development Programme for the leaders of cooperative societies all over the country. These programmes are organised either in New Delhi or in collaboration with Institutes of Cooperative Management located across the country. These Programmes are being organised sector-wise.

One such leadership Development programme for Chairpersons/Women Directors of Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh was organised in collaboration with Institute of Cooperative Management, Hyderabad from 10-12 May, 2005. 31 women cooperators from all over the state participated in this programme. The inauguration was attended by senior officers of the cooperative department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh who emphasised on the role of women in development of cooperatives and the nation. The role of NCCE was also appreciated in organising such programmes and giving women cooperators a platform to hone their skills in managing there Cooperative Societies.

The participants were exposed to such diverse topics such as cooperative ideology role and responsibilities of the board of directors, conducting meetings, understanding financial statements, legal aspects of cooperatives,



member participation etc. In addition they were also asked to share their own personnel experiences in respect of their Cooperatives so as to facilitate learning from each other. The deliberations were addressed by the faculty members of ICM Hyderabad and also experts from different fields.

The women participated very enthusiastically in all the deliberations and frequently asked questions about many issues which they are unable to clarify at their own level.

NEWS BRIEF

China Gender Facility

The China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy provides funding for innovative and catalytic projects that seek to promote advocacy and social dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment in China. Its goal is to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the reduction of gender inequalities in the country.

Established in September 2004 by the United Nations Theme Group on Gender (UNTGG) and administered by UNIFEM, the facility invites applications for funding from research institutions and other civil society organizations with legal status in China that have the basic capacity to initiate research and advocacy work. For more details, please visit [UNIFEM's Beijing Office](#).

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



Volume 3 No. 7

September 2005

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From the Editor...

Greetings for autumn season!

In some countries this is the season for harvest before the winter sets in. I am happy to present this news letter at the eve of ICA Global General Assembly which will be held in next week in Colombia. As most of you are aware that our Chair Person, Ms. Rahaiah Baheran is the Board Member of ICA and she is also the member of ICA Gender Equality Committee. She will represent our region at the assembly and will report about the activities of the Regional Women's Committee for ICA-AP. She has been very actively involved for the cause of gender integration in coops and introduced new concepts for the progress. This is the last quarter of the year and we have completed number of activities with the able guidance of the chair person. One of the major initiative of Ms. Rahaiah for the year is collection and establishment of sex disaggregated data in ICA member co-ops in the region. The questionnaire for the data collection has already been sent to all by post and by email and we expect to receive complete information by the end of this month. Several members have already confirmed progress of data collection. The members will be suitably awarded for their cooperation. The data processing will begin by the end of this month and we may be able to get the complete picture by the end of this year. We are hopeful to accomplish our target with help and co-operation of all of you.

Thank you!

Savitri Singh

NATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR TRAINING OF TRAINERS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN IN COOPERATIVES SRI LANKA 1-6 AUGUST, 2005



Participants at the TOT

The ILO-Coop Net and ICA ROAP has developed a training manual for leadership development of women in cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region. The manual is being used for training of trainers of cooperatives who in turn will train the women cooperative leaders. The ICA ROAP has decided to conduct the training for women and men trainers of primary, secondary and tertiary cooperatives whose role and task is to conduct training activities on gender sensitivity and accountability and on leadership capacity building of women in cooperatives.

During past 3 years, we have conducted 4 Regional TOT in 4 different countries in the region and trained 100 trainers. Six participants from Sri Lanka have also attended the programme.

As the objective of the TOT is to multiply trainers so that a team of trainers could be generated who in turn train the women co-operative leaders at grass-root/primary level.

Therefore, it is decided that National TOT should be conducted in the ICA member countries who have already participated in Regional TOT and in the



Participants at the TOT

National TOT, 25 local trainers, both men and women will be trained.

We are happy to report that NICD, Sri Lanka had accepted our proposal to host a national TOT. The ICA-AP had provide regional resource persons and technical help required for organizing the programme. The NICD invited 29 women and men trainers of primary, secondary, and tertiary cooperatives with basic knowledge of cooperatives and substantial grasp of gender issues and concern in the society, committed to the advocacy for gender equity and equality in society in general and in cooperatives in particular. The trainers had willingness and capability of training and mentoring current potential women leaders in the effective management of cooperatives, to attend TOT and extended all the support for successful completion of the training.

The program was arranged for 6 days (Mon to Sat) 5 days for classroom training and one day for study visit.

This training workshop aims to assist trainers of Asia Pacific to:

1. Raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on gender issues, on the manifestations of gender bias (against women) in cooperatives, and on the effects of gender discrimination on the personal and interpersonal growth of its leaders and members as well as on the organizational development of cooperatives.
2. Build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with knowledge and skills on the following:
 - Nature of Cooperatives
 - Effective and gender-responsive leadership
 - Cooperative Enterprise Management
 - Coping with challenges; and
 - Personal Development

ICA RWC EXPOSURE AND NETWORKING PROGRAMME FOR EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN CO-OPERATIVES



Participants of the Programme

The ICA AP has organized an exposure and networking programme for women co-operative leaders of our region in Seoul, Korea from 5th to 10th September, 2005. The challenges of globalization and free trade are affecting lives of people unevenly across the world. The cooperatives worldwide are feeling the heat of unequal opportunities and threats created by the free market. As usual, this has intensified the existing inequalities and insecurities for many poor women. The high tech means of trade and business are tend to benefit rich than the poor. Women are most likely to suffer more from the rapid changes societies are undergoing due to globalization and free trade.

In the context of these challenges, ICA Regional Women Committee has been making this attempt to share information with women cooperative leaders in the region and expecting to find ways and means to promote women's economic security and empowerment through the cooperatives. The information sharing during the exposure visits to successful co-operatives, focused upon co-operative endeavour to promote women's interests.

Last year the same programme was conducted in India.

This year the programme was held jointly with Agriculture Co-operative Study visit_ sponsored by ICA-AP and hosted by National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) of Korea. The main purpose to combine these two programmes is gender integration and giving more exposure to women in the field of agriculture and credit as about 55% of farming work is done by women in Asia. Two women cooperative leaders/directors on the board of cooperatives or person dealing with women development activities in co-operative organization in the region have been invitation to participate in the seminar. 18 persons, 10 men and 8 women from India, Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia attended the programme.



Mr. Jae Bok Kim, Executive Vice President of NACF Giving Inaugural Address

Mr. Jae Bok Kim, Executive Vice-President of NACF opened the joint programme with his inaugural speech. He spoke about the agriculture and agricultural cooperatives in Korea and informed that NACF is working to encourage every citizen to support rural communities and to raise awareness of the importance of having a thriving agricultural industry. Ms. Savitri Singh spoke on behalf of ICA-ROAP. She extended warm welcome to all the participants and talked about objective and benefits of such programmes. She expressed her gratitude to all the participants and their Coops for sponsoring them to attend the programme and special thanks to NACF for their collaboration and contribution. Mr. Ryu Kun-Won, General Manager of NACF, Mr. Hyung Jo, Asstt. General Manager of NACF and Mr. Lee Kwan Hee, Officer of the International Division were also present.

The participants have been requested to prepare a success story about how cooperatives are helping women's economic empowerments in their country/cooperative and good practices for advancement of women. During the interaction session the participants discussed with their Korean counterparts role of the farm credit business and spoke about activities of their own country and coop. They visited to Hanoramart Chain Store Division, Agriculture Coops including meeting with Women Association in the coop and Kyoyang Agricultural Marketing Complex and Agricultural Co-operative Collage.

ICA-AP-CLT WORKSHOP FOR SENSITISATION OF CO-OPERATIVE LEADERS TO GENERATE AWARENESS FOR PREVENTION OF SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS

The ICA-AP has taken initiative to address the HIV/AIDS crisis in the region and a strategic project focusing on prevention and intervention activities has been put in place to cover all the member co-operatives in the region. According to plan to cover the countries with high HIV prevalence first, a workshop for sensitisation of co-operative leaders to generate awareness for Prevention of Spread of HIV/AIDS has been held on 1-2 July

2005 in Bangkok, Thailand in collaborating with Co-operative League of Thailand. Last year the same workshop was held in India with the support of UNAIDS and NCUI.

The 30 participants who attended the workshop were co-operative leaders, directors and managers from various sectors of Thai co-op movement.

The workshop has been inaugurated by Dr. Suthiporn Chirapada, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Govt. of Thailand. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP, Mr. Wisoot Suthinoon, Chairman of the CLT, and Dr. Wiwut Daengsubha, Executive Director of CLT addressed the participants and expressed solidarity in fight against the pandemic. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief executive of NCUI, India was also present as special invitee and he shared his experience about ongoing HIV/AIDS awareness activities in co-operatives in India with the participants. Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme presented her report as co-coordinator of the workshop and introduced the programme.

This workshop was designed with an aim to sensitise co-operative ministers, leaders and managers of the co-operative about the sensitivity of the issue and pronounced commitment from them to bring out required facilities for spread of preventive education to reduce risk of HIV/AIDS among the co-operators.

At the end of the workshop, as intended following objectives have been achieved:

1. Orientation of the leaders and managers about the issue.
2. Strategy for conducting HIV/AIDS awareness programmes.
3. Framework for national action plan to implement the strategy in all the co-operative societies throughout the country.

During the Technical sessions, experts from UNAIDS, ILO and AOHCO deliberated upon the following issues:

- Basics of HIV/AIDS, its impact on the society and ongoing programmes for prevention and cure of the disease
- Prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Thailand as workplace issue and need for action on part of co-operative institutions
- APHCO and health issues in cooperatives, and
- "Need for creation of political Will" had been discussed by Savitri Singh

The sessions followed by Interaction and discussions by the participants.

At the last session, group discussion have been held and group leaders presented their Out-put/ action plan as how they think they will implement HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes in their co-operatives.



Participants at the 83rd International Cooperative Day and Workshop

We at ICA are making efforts to mobilize funds for implementation of total project in selected countries and organizing more such workshops. Also, hope to cover more countries in the region in coming years.

Our partners here, in this endeavour are Co-operative League of Thailand (CLT) which is the Apex organization of Thai Co-operative Movement and very active member of ICA-AP. We are thankful to CLT for their enthusiastic support as host and hope that this programme will be beneficial for the participants and to the co-operative community in Thailand as a whole. We also expect the co-operative department to take necessary action to make it a regular processes.

There are more than 3,016 co-operatives in Thailand with about 4 million individuals as co-operative members, both men and women in different age groups. As Co-operatives are community based organizations and follow the principal of "concern for community", they can reach out to 4 million individual members, their families and community in which they live and operate from. If co-operatives take up this issue in organized manner, it will be a major breakthrough in fight against this dreaded pandemic.

HIV/AIDS epidemic, as we know is not merely a health issue but a development challenge that disturb the social, economic and cultural parameters of the society.

Co-operatives as a large employers, producers and economic institutions are suffering the loss of their members, skilled workers and business due to HIV/AIDS.

Therefore, there is great need to organize facilitating services for the members within the co-operative set-up for strengthening the capacities and capabilities of members so that co-operative members as well as their communities can withstand and sustain

the burden of HIV/AIDS.

Addressing the need of co-operatives not only benefits its members but also their families and in turn the community. Thus one empowered co-operator multiplies into many empowered citizens.

The ICA-AP has taken initiative to target and sensitize co-operative leaders, directors and government officials of the department to utilize the potential of co-operative in fight against the pandemic as Role of leaders for creating political will is very important for initiating community based programmes.

Leaders, policy makers, educators and others can help in:

- Recognizing the epidemic publicly and openly and act to reduce the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS
- Display political courage in applying sound measures to reduce the spread of the virus as community follows the leader
- Support the commitment of national resources which in turn may encourage increased external funding.
- Endorse a multisectoral approach, including the involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS as a priority.
- Give leadership to the fight against this global epidemic.

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

Fax : 26888067 and printed at Grand Print & Process, Z-20, Okhla Indl. Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110020. India. Ph.: 26383946



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



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From the Editor..

At the outset, I would like to wish all our readers and sisterhood in cooperatives and communities a very peaceful, happy and prosperous New Year 2006!

Last year was an encouraging year as we have been able to complete all our programmes successfully and also initiated a new and significant project of "Collection and Establishment of Sex dis-integrated Data base in Co-operatives".

The data collection work is over and we are in process of analyzing the data for final result. There is one significant development that the time for the proposed conference which was planned to be held in May, 2006 has been shifted to November, 2006 in order to get better collaboration with partners.

This year also we will continue with our regular activities of capacity building of women cooperators as well as sensitization of male members for achieving equity and equality for women at all levels of cooperatives in the region.

The Conference to review progress and identifying gaps will be one major event. We will let you know the details soon. And beside these activities, the ICA Regional Women Committee will meet in Colombo in August, 2006 along with the ICA-AP Regional Assembly. Hope to hear from you, Thank you!

Savitri Singh

ICA REGIONAL WOMEN COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC PRESENTATION AT COOP DIALOGUE



Madam Rahaiah Baheran at Coop Dialogue Nov., 05

The ICA Co-op Government Dialogue on Co-operative Policy and Legislation in Asia-Pacific Region was held on 14-18 November, 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Ms. Rahaiah Baheran, Chairperson of ICAAP Regional Women's Committee made a presentation on "Gender Responsive and Gender Sensitive Policies to Attain Equality And Equity in Co-operatives."

She emphasized that ICA Regional Women's Committee aspires to achieve that the women's co-operators of Asia Pacific be seen and heard.

The presentation recommended to the dialogue for the next Minister's Conference in 2007 to:



Meeting of the office Bearers of ICA-APRWC in Progress

1. Nomination to ICA RWC from each ICA AP member. (Now it is 12 to 55) Today of the 57 delegates present excluding Malaysia, 9 are women (15%)
2. Creation of a special fund by the government and the co-operative movement to mainstream gender in co-operatives. (ICA DOMUS Trust ANGKASA, JCCU, IDACA, NCUI and ILO)
3. Ways to come out with gender-responsive and gender-sensitive policies in order to attain equality and equity in co-ops in accordance with our Co-operative Identity Statement.

In conclusion she appealed on behalf of all the women cooperators that;

We need the assistance of government and the co-operative movement in formulating policies to attain equality and equity in line with our Co-operative Identity Statement.

MEETING OF THE OFFICE BEARERS OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN COMMITTEE

The meeting of the Office bearers of the ICA Regional Women Committee was held on 14th November, 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Ms. Rahaiah Baheran, Chairperson of the Committee opened the meeting welcoming the participants. She informed that the year end meeting has been called to discuss about work plan of the committee for the next year 2006 and also to discuss the presentation of RWC at the Co-op Dialogue. She

also mentioned about the urgency of finalizing the arrangements for proposed conference in 2006.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICAAP was specially invited to attend the meeting. He expressed his satisfaction with the progress of committee's work and offered all the support from the office.

Minutes of the last meeting held in Bangkok on 26th February, 2005 have been adopted. The secretary presented the report on the action taken.

The committee adopted the work plan for 2006 as proposed in the agenda.

It was decided that in view of the Conference in 2006, there will be no Women Forum in 2006 and only election and meeting of the RWC will be held in Aug. 2006 in Srilanka.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS: MALAYSIA: ANGKASA COMMEMORATES WORLD RURAL WOMEN'S DAY

Co-operators from all regions of Malaysia convened at ANGKASA to celebrate the World Rural Women's Day this year. Over 140 women and men members from 51 co-operatives took part in the event.

The World Rural Women's Day was held for the fifth year at the Wisma Ungku A. Aziz, ANGKASA, Kelana Jaya from the 25th to 26th November, 2005 and the theme was, "The Right to Knowledge- Production and Marketing of Tapioca Chips."

Madam Hajah Rahaiah Baهران, Vice President of ANGKASA and ICA Board Member, officiated the ceremony. Madam Baهران explained that the focus this year was to introduce and to encourage ANGKASA's women co-operators to get involved in the tapioca chip production industry. She explained that ANGKASA was committed in helping its members to attain an in-depth knowledge of the industry. She also reaffirmed that ANGKASA would provide suitable training and education programs to its members and, would subsequently match them up with the appropriate government assistance.

After the opening ceremony, participants were introduced to the chip-making business by guest speaker, Mrs Hajah Che Rahani Zakaria, Manager of the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI). Mrs Zakaria explained the various production, packaging and technological options currently existing in the industry.

On the second day, Mrs. Wan Faizatul Aniza binti Ismayatim, Director of the Marketing Division at the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority of Malaysia (FAMA), provided the participants with an insight into the potential market of the product and the marketing strategies available. This talk was followed by a discussion session with Mrs Mokinah binti Haji Sirat of Sepang RJ Pty Ltd., and Mrs Hajah Mariam binti Boon of Azhar Food Product, who had become successful entrepreneurs in the chip production industry.

The World Rural Women's Day concluded with a speech by Madam Baهران, who reiterated the commitment that ANGKASA has towards empowering its women co-operative members.

INDIA: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR WOMEN IN COOPS

The National Centre For Cooperative Education, New Delhi organized a Leadership Development Programme for Chairpersons / Women Directors of Cooperative Societies of India from 10-12 January, 2006. About 35 women cooperators from states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal attended this training programme.

This programme aimed at providing participants with an overview of the cooperatives in India and specially women participation therein and also latest developments in the cooperative sector.

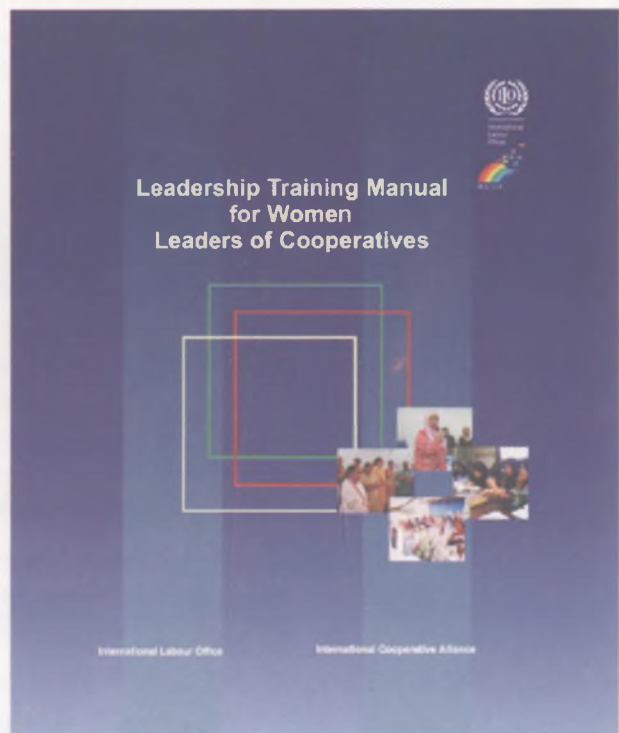
The programme was inaugurated by Mrs. Leeladevi Prasad, Ex-minister of Karnataka who also delivered lecture on leadership and entrepreneurship qualities required in women. The various topics covered in the programme were

1. Cooperative Ideology
2. Current Status of Women in Cooperatives in India and barriers in their development
3. Role of Board of Directors in Managing Cooperatives
4. Understanding Financial Statements of a Cooperative
5. Conducting Meetings Effectively
6. Various programmes, policies and schemes of govt. and other institutions for promotion of women cooperatives

The lectures were delivered by the faculty members of NCCE and experts were also invited from various organizations for various deliberations.

The group was also taken for a local study tour to some cooperative organisations in New Delhi. At the end, participants expressed their thanks to NCCE for organising a very informative training programme.

ICA-ILO PUBLICATION



The ICA-ILO Leadership Training Manual for Women Leaders of Co-operatives have been published in December 2005. This training manual aims to assist trainers of cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific to raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on

the manifestation of gender bias in cooperatives and build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with knowledge and skills on the following

- Nature of cooperatives
- Effective and gender-responsive leadership
- Co-operative enterprise management
- Coping with challenges, and
- Personal development

The manual will be sent to all the ICAAP members and partners for use with a request to get it translated in their own language for better and effective use by co-operatives.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMY: FACTS AND FIGURES

- Women account for about 40% of all workers worldwide, and their participation rate has risen steadily. The largest increase over the past 20 years was in South America (up from 26% to 45%), while the lowest rates were in North Africa and West Asia, where only a third of all women are economically active. But women still earn about two thirds of what men earn. The manufacturing wage gap ranges from 52% in Botswana and 75% in Egypt to 81% in Costa Rica and 86% in Sri Lanka.
- Women spend twice as much or more time as men on unpaid work and grow about 65% of the world's food. They represent the majority of the world's part-time and informal sector workers and have a higher unemployment rate than men, although this varies significantly by region.
- 60% of the world's 550 million working poor are women.
- Women account for just under half of all people with HIV/AIDS.
- The number of women dying in childbirth is on the rise, reaching 1,300 deaths per 100,000 live births in some poor countries.
- Source: UNCTAD, World Bank

CONGRATULATIONS !!!

We are pleased to announce that Madam Rahaiah Baهران, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Regional Women's Committee has been re-elected second time consecutively as Member of the Board of Directors of International Co-operative Alliance, Geneva.

We wish her all the success !

NORWAY SMASHES THE GLASS CEILING

This story was printed from TODAY online
500 listed firms told to install women on their boards within two years

Tuesday • January 10, 2006

LONDON • The 500 companies listed on Norway's stock exchange face being shut down unless they install women on their boards over the next two years in a radical initiative imposed by a government determined to help women break through the glass ceiling. After a week in which the Equal Opportunities Commission in Britain warned that it would take 40 years for women to break into the ranks of the FTSE 100 in the same way as men, Norwegian companies face a two-year deadline to ensure that women hold 40 per cent of the seats of each company listed on the Oslo bourse. The requirement came into effect at the start of this year after companies were given two years to embrace the demands voluntarily, following the passing of the law in 2003. State-owned companies are already obliged to comply and now have 45-per-cent female representation on their boards.

The failure of companies to act • about half of the listed companies are estimated to have no women on their boards • has prompted the Norwegian equality minister, Ms Karita Bekkemellem, to take the draconian step of threatening firms with closure.

"I want to put in place a system of sanctions that will allow the closure of firms," she said. "I do not want to wait another 20 or 30 years for men with enough intelligence to finally appoint women. "More than half of the people who have a business education today are women. It is wrong for companies not to use them. They should be represented."

Source : <http://www.todayonline.com/articles>.

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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From the Editor...

Happy Women's Day 8 March!!! and Greetings for spring! By the time this reaches you it will be summer. So friends enjoy the beauty of the season. Do something innovative on the occasion of Women's day starting from yourself. Take good care of yourself. Stay healthy and happy. Asian summer is mostly hot, humid and dusty, it also brings along variety of fruits, flowers and harvesting season though.

As you are aware, there is a big event coming in November and preparatory activities are in full swing. Please see the ICAAP web for latest information. The draft report of sex-disaggregated data collection from coops in the region will be ready soon. The formal invitation letters will be out in June.

Before this, we will be meeting in Colombo in August at Regional Women's Committee Meet during the ICAAP Regional Assembly.

This issue on the eve of International Women's Day includes the message of ICA President and Chair of the ICA Gender Equality Committee.

However, in our endeavor to make this news letter more interesting and informative, I have included some Articles of women development activities other than coops. Hope you like it! I would appreciate your more active involvement in progress of the new letter.

Savitri Singh

Conference on Gender Integration in Co-operatives: 10 Years Before and After, November, 2006 Philippines.



Preparatory meeting with partners in Manila

The Office Bearers of the ICA AP Regional Women's Committee met on 11th February 2006, in Manila, Philippines. Goh Ming Huey, Vice Chair Person, Jiro Ito, Manager of JCCU representing Ms. Junko Ito, Vice Chair Person, Sally Ganibe Regional Coordinator of AWCF, Tsubasa Nakamura, Director, ICA-AP and Savitri Singh, Secretary of the ICA-AP RWC were present

The meeting was held to finalise arrangements of the forthcoming Conference on Gender Integration in Co-operatives: 10 Years Before and After such as Programme, Budget, Speakers, Time, Duration and Venue etc.

The committee also met with Mr. Crise Paez, CEO of NATCCO for possible collaboration as NATCCO is an esteemed member of ICA-AP.

The conference will be held at Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City, Philippines from 6-8 November, 2006 for 2 days and 3rd day will be a study visit to a cooperative. The participants will arrive one day before the conference and will leave on 4th day after the study visits.

AWCF and NATCCO are the partners in organizing the conference.

Take A Stand: Make Gender Equality A Reality!

ICA Message on the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2006

The theme "women in decision-making" chosen at international level to celebrate the 2006 International Women's Day is a good occasion to assess the progress made, and set out the path ahead, in line with the commitments taken, to accomplish true and sound gender equality at all levels, including in decision-making.

According to global data, despite much recorded progress and numerous policy commitments, women's representation needs to be strengthened at all levels of decision-making. The empowerment of women is at the centre of the Millennium Development Goals which are so important to the ICA and the Global Campaign against Poverty; women and men sharing equally in decision making is vital for democracy, peace and development.

Women all over the world create and join co-operatives. Through them millions of women have been able to raise their living standards and "co-operate out of poverty". They contribute to the development and cohesion of their communities and local and national economies, both developed and developing.

The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) promotes gender equality: it is specifically noted as one of its fundamental organisational aims. An equal sharing of responsibilities

between women and men is not only a way to put in practice our values and principles and bring them alive, but is an essential element in promoting co-operative excellence in all fields social and economic. Most ICA member organisations and their co-operatives have adopted policies and programmes for women's participation and leadership.

In 2000, the ICA Board adopted the *ICA Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality*. It acknowledged some issues and challenges, and adopted concrete targets including those for women co-operators in decision-making positions. In 2005, for the first time, four women - one from each of the ICA Regions - were elected as ICA Board members. The future challenge is to have women elected to decision-making positions at all levels; locally, nationally, regionally and worldwide.

Our society is developing rapidly and to face this, the co-operative movement needs to continue to change. In doing so, we must have women, who are frequently agents of change, in decision-making positions. We must ensure that women assume leadership roles for the benefit of the movement.

On this International Women's Day, the ICA calls on all its members and all co-operators to take a stand and ensure that women are enabled to fully contribute to the future of our movement at all levels.

Stefania Marcone

Chairperson, ICA Gender Equality Committee

Ivano Barberini

ICA President

Training of Trainers on Women Leadership



Madam Rahaiah at the TOT

ANGKASA provides various program and courses to increase the participation of women members in the Malaysian co-operative movement. Besides the Women in Leadership Skills course and the TCM Childcare Training Institute, ANGKASA also offers Training of Trainers workshops throughout Malaysia.

A two day Training of Trainers workshop focusing on women leadership in the co-operative movement was recently held in

Selangor on the 22nd to 23rd March, 2006 and in Trengganu on the 6th to 7th of April, 2006.

Some 29 women co-operators from 18 co-operatives attended the Selangor workshop whilst the Trengganu program had 32 participants from 17 co-operatives.

The ToT workshop was organised by ANGKASA and facilitated by Dr. Paul Sinnappan, an international resource consultant on the development of women in co-operatives.

The program was activity based to encourage participants to express and assert themselves, to make effective decisions and to learn about their rights as co-operators. The course focused on the methods and tools available to the participants to improve their skills and knowledge as quality leaders within their co-operatives.

Dr. Sinnappan also addressed the issue of gender equality in co-operatives. He advised the participants to create a plan to address the issue which could be implemented at the grassroots level of their respective co-operatives.

The next ToT on Women Leadership is scheduled to be held in Kedah and Melaka in June 2006.

Contributed By : ANGKASA

National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia Open for discussion

Malaysia Star - Malaysia

<http://thestar.com.my/lifestyle/story.asp?file=/2006/5/15/1ifefocus/14193108&sec=lifefocus>

Women of Malaysia, the United Nations is listening to you. As two Malaysian delegations prepare to meet a panel of experts on women's issues at the UN headquarters, LEE TSE LING explains the significance of our government's choice to go with a rather special Convention 11 years ago.

EVERY woman has probably felt this niggling bit of paranoia: *somewhere, someone is talking about me*. And in this case, it's not only true, but downright comforting to know.

Later this month, on May 24 to be exact, representatives from the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development will head for the UN headquarters in New York to speak on behalf of women in Malaysia at the 35th session of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw).

The Cedaw (pronounced: "see-daw") is an international treaty that defines what constitutes discrimination against women and provides guidelines for national action to end it.

This will be the very first Malaysian presence at a Cedaw session, 11 years after our government ratified the Cedaw in 1995, and two years after they submitted their first report in 2004.

There, the government delegation will discuss the status of women in all aspects of Malaysian life (as documented in their 2004 report) with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as part of the country's review process.

This in itself is a considerable achievement for the country, and a clear demonstration of the government's continued support for the rights of women in Malaysia.

Even more laudable is the fact that they won't be in New York alone. Two days before their review session, six representatives from local women's rights groups are scheduled to present their Shadow Report which "shadows" the government report to the same UN Committee.

Forming the Shadow delegation are Dr Hamidah Karim from the National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO); Ivy Josiah, Vizla Kumaresan and Meera Samanther from the Women's Aid Organisation (WAO); Zaitun Kasim from Sisters in Islam (SIS); and Zarizana Abdul Aziz from the Women's Centre for Change (WCC).

The Shadow Report is a Cedaw reporting mechanism that allows non-governmental organisations in member countries to

comment on their government's reports, identifying discrepancies and/or filling in gaps where necessary.

Needless to say, our first Shadow Report could not have been produced in the absence of a healthy population of women's rights activists in the country, and assistance from groups like the International Women's Rights Action Watch, Asia Pacific, through whose *Global to Local* programme the Shadow delegation were trained in Cedaw procedures.

And yet it is vital that such reports are researched and published because it provides an alternative snapshot of the faces of women in Malaysia, highlighting issues that may be underexposed in the government report, having been deemed "sensitive" or "controversial" by the government.

The significance of this, according to Josiah, executive director of WAO, is that there is added pressure on the government to be accountable in manner of a checks and balances system where an entity is prevented from having too much power within a group.

"And we all know the importance of this mechanism in civil society," she said at the public briefing to highlight how Cedaw works, its significance, and the four critical issues that will be presented by the Shadow delegation to the UN Committee at the 35th Cedaw session.

Once both delegations return from New York, their work will be far from over. Following each country review, the UN Committee issues its concluding comments which can be used both by governments to take action domestically, and by women's rights groups to lobby governments to do so.

As Zaitun puts it, "It will be up to the groups to pick up on the concluding comments from the session and run with them."

Zaitun and her fellow activists are keenly aware that ratifying a treaty is one thing, but implementing and all that it entails from ensuring legislation is in concordance with its articles to ensuring your citizens are gender-sensitised is another.

"Treaties ratified by the government do not automatically become the law of the land. They still need to be enacted into domestic law," says Dr Hamidah.

And therein lies the significance of the Malaysian presence at the Cedaw session. It means there is another level of international authority women in Malaysia can refer to, another platform where injustices can be heard, and another forum in which such injustices can begin to be resolved.

Information and Documentation Centre
International Cooperative Alliance - Asia & Pacific

Global Girlfriend Introduces Its Latest Collection of Fair Trade Fashion and Accessories That Make Shopping a Socially Conscious Experience

Fair trade boutique offers inspiring accessories, gifts and organic apparel from over 20 women's cooperatives worldwide that support women's human rights education, child trafficking, homelessness and poverty. Littleton, Colo., (PRWEB) May 25, 2006 — Global Girlfriend, a unique web based and mail order fair trade boutique, is pleased to announce the launch of its latest collection. The line, which supports women's human rights worldwide, features fashion forward items such as an exclusive line of beaded and silver jewelry from well known designer Amy Kahn and KABW, a women's cooperative in Nepal that uses traditional Nepalese skills to create much needed employment and income for impoverished women and their families. Another key item in this season's Global Girlfriend collection is 100% organic cotton clothing line made by women at Assisi Garments, a fair trade organization started by the Assisi order of nuns in southern India. The entire Global Girlfriend collection can be viewed and purchased at www.globalgirlfriend.com. Additionally, Global Girlfriend items are now being carried at Whole Foods Market's Belmar location in Colorado. The partnership marks the first national retailer to join the Global Girlfriend family – a huge step for independently owned Global Girlfriend and an even bigger step for the women behind the products. Owned and operated by longtime women's advocate and former social worker Stacey Edgar, Global Girlfriend is a fun and simple yet powerful way for consumers to support women in need, both at home and across the globe. Global Girlfriend believes that economic opportunity for women holds the promise for real change because when women have an income, they reinvest in their children's health, education and nutrition, creating a multiplier effect that creates stronger families and communities over time. The one-of-a-kind boutique has designed and hand selected a line of stylish items that benefit women's human rights without compromising style. This philosophy is the underlying theme behind Edgar's attempt to help women help themselves. "The women we work with are incredibly enterprising and tenacious, they just need design input to appeal to the Western markets and economic opportunities to get their products to those markets" she commented. "By helping them create marketable products using their amazing skills and craftsmanship, we are able to create a sustainable business model that can help break the cycle of poverty," Edgar continued. "This is such a simple way to give a 'hand up' when

you shop and now, with the addition of Whole Foods, customers can experience the Global Girlfriend line online, by catalog or in person," she added. This season's collection is perhaps the most personal to Edgar to date, after a recent trip to visit her artisans in India and Nepal. Edgar was most moved by her visit to Conserve India, a non-profit based in the slums of New Delhi where women collect plastic bags from garbage dumps and recycle them into amazing high fashion handbags. "When visiting the women who work for Conserve at the dump site where they also live, it was incredible to see what they have been able to create from what most of us would consider nothing," Edgar reports. "When Conserve began working with the women in this slum they were illiterate to the point that they had never even held a pair of scissors let alone written with a pencil. Conserve is working to change this with adult literacy and skills training as well as much needed resources for housing, health care, water treatment and education for this vibrant, dynamic and truly resourceful community," she continued. Conserve's products include handbags, messenger bags, makeup bags, and day-timer style organizers all made from colorful plastic fabric recycled from plastic bags resurrected from the dumps of India. Global Girlfriend's new collection includes products from ten different countries and over 25 different women's non-profit organizations and cooperatives. The products benefit causes such as women's human rights education, child trafficking, homelessness, fair trade and poverty. Items may be purchased at www.globalgirlfriend.com through a mail order catalog and in person at Whole Foods Belmar in Colorado. About Global Girlfriend Global Girlfriend is a unique fair trade boutique offering stylish accessories and gifts that help women in need help themselves. All of Global Girlfriend's products are hand made by women's non-profit programs in the US and cooperatives worldwide. The line of apparel, accessories and gifts is a marriage of the talents of female artisans worldwide and the trends that grace the pages of today's fashion magazines. Global Girlfriend's catalog and web based boutique lets shoppers support disadvantaged women in over twenty organizations around the world. Global Girlfriend was founded by longtime women's advocate and social worker Stacey Edgar and inspired by her mother in law, former Illinois first lady Brenda Edgar. The company is headquartered in the Denver, Colorado area with ties in Chicago and Boston. For more information please visit www.globalgirlfriend.com. Media Contact: Anna Bahr Tel 303 680 7004 Cell 303 229 6558

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



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FIFTH ICA REGIONAL WOMEN COMMITTEE MEETING IN COLOMBO



Participants at the meeting

From the Editor..

Winter is setting in and also season of festivity in several countries in the region. We will have festival in ICARWC also in the form of Regional Conference on Gender Integration in Cooperatives 6-8 November, 2006 in the beautiful city of Tagaytay in Philippines. Many men and women will meet there to evaluate the achievements and chart out a road map for future.

The quarter from July to October has been eventful. ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia Pacific has had its meeting in Colombo in August. Where major decision of amendment of the Constitution of the Committee has been taken. Several members present their country report. The reports will be published in the news letter. This issue carries the report from Singapore.

In its endeavour to keep cooperative safe from HIV/AIDS, the ICA AP has conducted. TOT for 60 women cooperative trainers in two states of India. Two more such TOTs covering other 60 women trainers will be done this month.

Women are growing from strength to strength but still remain a long way to cover till they are counted and heard. Let's fight together and MAY WE WILL BE THE WINNER, Amen!

Savitri Singh

The Fifth meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee was held on 15 Aug, 2006 in Hotel Galadari, Colombo in conjunction with ICAAP Regional assembly. 25 persons from 10 countries including members attended the meeting. The committee discussed about the activities, performance and future plans. The committee amended the constitution of the committee to extend the term of the committee and term of members and office bearers from 2 to 4 years. Hence the election of the committee will be held in 2008.

The chairperson reported the amendment of the constitution to Regional Assembly for approval. There were no comments received from the RA. Hence the amendments are considered to be approved.

The next meeting of the committee will be held in 2008 in Vietnam in conjunction with ICAAP Regional Assembly. An exhibition cum sale of products from various cooperatives organised at the meeting venue.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON TO THE ICAAP REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Colombo, Sri Lanka

15 August 2006

With the participation of 25 persons from 10 countries
Regional Women's Committee was set up in 1998

- Represented by 13 Co-op organisations in 10 countries
- To encourage women, to participate actively in all aspects of co-operative development, esp. on decision making and leadership
- To Create an environment that will allow more women's participation through legislation and policies
- To Link women and men to tackle these issues

Programmes 2005-2006

- National Training of Trainers for leadership development of women in Co-ops Sri Lanka -- 35 persons
- Exposure and Networking Programme - Korea, 20 persons from 5 countries

Publication of Quarterly Newsletter

- HIV/AIDS Awareness Workshops in Thailand and Vietnam in collaboration with CLT and VCA
- Workshops and Forums at national level Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, India
- Collection of Sex-disaggregated Data
- Training Manual on Women's Leadership Development in Co-operatives printing, translation into 5 local languages, dissemination

Country Reports

AWCF, Iran, Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam

Work Plan -2006-08

- Training of Trainers for leadership development of women in Co-ops - at national level - Vietnam
- Regional Conference on gender integration in coops- 10 Years before and after, November, 2006 Philippines
- Exposure and Networking programme - among member organizations
- Follow-up on recommendation of Regional Conference on gender integration
- To continue meetings and forums at national and international levels
- Participation in ICA Gender Equality Committee Plenary Session to be held together with ICA GA in Singapore
- Presentation at Co-operative Ministers' Conference on gender issues - Co-operative legislations and policies

Amendments in RWC Constitution

- Article 5.3: Amendment in the terms of committee from 2 to 4 years

- Members unanimously decided to extend the term of the present committee, office bearers, members from 2 to 4 years
- Hence, election of committee to be held in 2008

SINGAPORE'S CO-OPERATIVE REPORT

1. SINGAPORE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation Lt. or the SNCF is the apex body representing the co-operative movement in Singapore.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Singapore movement has more than 1.4million individual members from 83 co-operative societies, of which 73 are affiliated to SNCF. Total population is 4 million.

3. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CO-OPERATIVE

Women make up more than half of the 1.4million co-operative members in Singapore. However at the leadership and decision-making level in the co-operative, only 25% hold position of managerial or professional and above.

In Singapore, regardless of gender, everyone share the responsibility and the work of building our nation and the benefits. It is in keeping with this formula that the co-operative movement has maintained its relevance in Singapore.

4. SINGAPORE'S REPORT ON WOMEN'S STATUS

The development of women in the co-operatives is very much in line with the general development of women in Singapore.

According to the Report on Labour Force in Singapore, women participation in labour force increased from 51 percent to 54 percent. Dual income households rose from 37 percent to 45 percent over the same period. Among full-time workers, the median monthly income of men was \$2,217 compared with \$1,625 for women. Hence women earned about 73 percent of what males earn.

Occupational upgrading of women has been significant after 2000, as compared to 1990, 53 percent of women in the 25 to 34 age group took up managerial, professional and technical posts. This is a significant increase from 27 percent in 1980. Similarly, for women in the 35 to 44 age group, there was also a percentage increase of female managers, professional and technicians over the 10-year period.

5. GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES RELATING TO WOMEN

- a. Singapore has adopted an equal opportunity policy based on the principles of meritocracy. This principle encourages both women and men to do their best in all sectors. Singapore women have equal access to basic social services, including educational and health.
- b. The government recognizes the challenges men and women face in fulfilling their responsibilities at home and at work. For this reason the Ministry of Community

Development, Youth and Sports, together with other Ministries and National Trade Union congress, provides a comprehensive range of family services such as child care centres, student care centres and family service centre etc.

In this respect, the co-operative have also been very forthcoming in the promotion of practices to promote work life harmony at workplaces.

6. RECENT DEVELOPMENT OVER LAST 2 YEARS

- a. No of women in parliament has increased markedly from 5 to 11 (100%)
- b. Singapore introduced "Married Women's cost Relief". The objective of this tax relief is to encourage women to continue working after marriage.
- c. The government has removed the quota on the number of women entering medical faculty.
- d. The government has changed its policy to grant citizenship to children born outside of Singapore to a Singaporean mother and non-citizen father.
- e. Introduced a cost of benefit for working and non-working mother to encourage families to have more children e.g. baby bonus, 3months maternity leave etc.
- f. Singapore women today have enjoyed better social status. However, more can be done to encourage women to participate actively and lead in their respective workplace, co-operative and community.
- g. 3 years ago only 9% of the women co-operators have participated in co-operative movement programmes. Since we started to organise yearly workshop/seminar with the total of 3 events per year for women, the number of women participation from co-operative have increased to 24%/

Some of the workshops or seminars organised by SNCF Women's Programme Committee:-

Year	Name of Events	Number of Participants
2003	Personal Mastery	150
2004	Living in Passion	65
2005	Women in Power	550
2006	Leadership Challenges	100

SNCF Women's Programme Committee will look for more innovative ways to reach our women members. They are planning to organise the following events.

Oct 2006	Legal and Financial Management for Women
2007	Joint Programme with National Trade Union Congress

Singapore National Co-operative Federation Women's Programme Committee

Workshop on Leadership Challenge

95 participants from 20 SNCF affiliates attended a workshop on Leadership Challenge organised by SNCF Women's Programme Committee on 17 June 2006 at York Hotel. The theme of this workshop was "Your Challenge for the Future".

Dr Low Guat Tin, Associate Professor in Policy and Leadership Studies, National Institute of Education was the guest speaker at this half-day workshop.

The workshop offered women co-operators an opportunity to network as well as to develop a unique leadership style that is adaptable to their co-operative and will enable them to



Participants at workshop

exercise influence over their members. The workshop also aimed to equip participants' with self-confidence to face leadership challenges.

In her welcome speech, Ms Goh Ming Huay quoted former US President Richard Nixon who said "People are persuaded by reason, but they're moved by emotion" She added that "the leader must both persuade them and move them. The manager thinks of today and tomorrow. The leader must think of the day after tomorrow". Ms Goh also stressed the importance of training and highlighted that leadership training can provide a wide array of valuable resources to current and future leaders in the co-operative movement.

Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive of Singapore National Co-operative Federation in his opening speech urged the Women's Programme Committee to assist in educating young co-operators about gender issues and promote awareness of the need and importance for women to be in leadership and decision-making roles as well as to establish a network of women leaders in the primary level. He stated that this would help to highlight the women's agenda (empowerment of women, support for carrying out multiple roles, equitable sharing of power in co-operatives) to the co-operative movement, build solidarity at all levels, build consensus on common issues and exercise influence on decision making processes in co-operatives at all levels.



ICA AP workshop on HIV/AIDS awareness for cooperative Leaders

CO-OPERATIVE FIGHTING AGAINST HIV/AIDS

The ICAAP initiative to protect the co-operative community against the major challenge of HIV/AIDS resulted into implementation of a comprehensive and sustainable project on prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections through education and training for cooperatives in India. The project is started in India first because of all the countries in the region, India is said to have the largest burden of about 5 million infections. It's being implemented in 4 states of India.

The objective of the project is:

1. Sensitization of cooperative leaders/managers and increasing the knowledge and awareness of cooperative trainers and project staff of the cooperative set up About prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STDs through education and training. Pronounced commitment from co-operative leadership and managers of all co-operatives to bring out required facilities for spread of preventive education to reduce risk of HIV/AIDS among the co-operators
2. Increasing the training capacity and capability of cooperative training staff in imparting knowledge and skills of training on prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STDs. The expected outcome is Capacity building and skill development of 60 co-operative trainers in each state and 240 in all who will act as master trainers and will facilitate Creating network of trainers and will disseminate information among co-operative members.

So far 4 sensitisation workshops for cooperative leaders have been organized. 50 cooperative leaders of primary coops in each state participated. Contents of the workshop are;

Ice breaking and Expectations from the work shop
 Basics of HIV/AIDS, it's impact on the society and ongoing programmes for prevention and cure of the disease
 Prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Thailand as workplace issue and need for action on part of co-operative institutions, HIV risk behaviour and assessment, Need for creation of political Will, Interface with Person Living with HIV/AIDS, Developing Strategy for prevention of HIV/AIDS. With Specific Objectives To enhance the knowledge level of the participants on HIV/AIDS

To discuss the prevention modes

To clarify attitudes towards HIV

To clarify myths and misconceptions, To discuss the extent of HIV/AIDS Problem in the country

To familiarize participants to the facts that make HIV/AIDS a work place issue

To discuss how co-operatives can be effective tools for prevention of HIV/AIDS in the co-op community as well as in the society, To discuss various risk behaviour that pose a risk of HIV Transmission.

To sensitise participants about role of counseling in risk assessment and reduction

The photo shows the participants of Workshop held at Institute of Cooperative Management in Hyderabad. Andhra Pradesh.

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext. 109.

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REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER INTEGRATION IN COOPERATIVES: 10 YEARS BEFORE AND AFTER



Participants at Regional Conference, Tagaytay

From the Editor..

Happy New Year 2007 and seasons Greetings to all!
It's winter and Delhi is very cold as well as several other parts of our region. Year which has just gone by was eventful and satisfactory for us the ICAAP Regional Women's Committee. We have been able to complete several important activities such as Sex disaggregated data collection and report, meeting of the Regional Women's Committee, 10 yearly review of post Tagaytay, 97 and first amendment of the constitution of the committee. We have also been able to continue with TOT and other regular meetings. The Tagaytay Conference, 06 was especially successful in terms of number of participation and good discussions. We hope that we will continue with our persistent efforts for the gender integration in cooperatives and be able to achieve success. Amen!

Savitri Singh

130 women and men cooperators and gender advocates representing cooperative organizations from Asia and the Pacific countries India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam and one from Italy gathered from 6-8 November 2006 for the "Regional Conference on Gender Integration in Cooperatives: 10 years Before and After (Empowerment and development of Women in Cooperatives)" in Tagaytay City, Philippines. The theme of the conference is Empowerment and development of women in co-operatives. Speakers from ILO, FAO, ICA GEC and Cooperative Development Board of Philippines deliberated upon the themes and sub themes. The speakers shared how the efforts of co-operatives in poverty reduction are strengthened and made even more possible by involving the women, by helping them in their empowerment and development. The conscious inclusion of women and their concerns in the various processes of the co-operatives, including decision-making and leadership, is tapping half the

potential, talent, strength, and experience pool of the co-operatives that are needed for their growth and progress, and effective and timely implementation of programs and services for the members and the community, as a whole.

In addition to 6 strategies of Tagaytay-97 the conference adopted the following additional four strategies:

1. Inventory and sharing of expertise and resources such as manuals and tools.
2. Targeting at least 30% participation of women in leadership and decision making at all levels within 10 years.
3. Enterprise development for women as a strategy for poverty reduction.
4. Development of monitoring and evaluation tools and indicators

And also to improve and expand our initiatives in the following areas:

1. Promotion of transformative leadership that is development oriented, issue focused and gender sensitive.

2. Personal, professional and leadership capacity building of women
3. Documentation of successful cases for replication
4. Collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data
5. Availability of funds for empowerment and development of women
6. Development of successor generation program
7. Gender responsive legislation
8. Use of ICT in reducing the gender divide.

We hereby adopt this Declaration and the ensuing Platform of Action that will further define the strategies identified herein

ICA AP Regional Women's Committee OBM, Tagaytay

Meeting of the office bearers of ICARWC was held in Tagaytay on 5th November, 2006 in Tagaytay City, Philippines in conjunction with the Regional Conference on Gender Integration in Co-operatives: 10 Years before and after. The meeting was held to discuss planning and arrangements of next day's conference. Besides, work plan for 2007 was also discussed.

Training of Trainers (TOT) for leadership Development of Women in Cooperatives 4-7 December, 2006 Hanoi, Vietnam



Participants of TOT

The ILO-Coop Net and ICA ROAP have developed a training manual for leadership development of women in cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region. The manual is being used for training of trainers of cooperatives who in turn will train the women cooperative leaders. The ICA AP is conducting trainings for women and men trainers of primary, secondary and tertiary cooperatives whose role and task is to conduct training activities on gender sensitivity and accountability and on leadership

capacity building of women in cooperatives.

During past 4 years, we have conducted 4 Regional TOT in 4 different countries in the region and trained over 100 trainers.

The objective of the TOT is to multiply trainers so that a team of trainers could be generated who in turn train the women cooperative leaders at grass-root/primary level.

Therefore, it is decided that after regional TOT, national TOT should be conducted in the ICAAP member countries who have

already participated in Regional TOT. Therefore, first National TOT in Sri Lanka has been held last year and 30 trainers were trained.

This year the national TOT was held in Vietnam from 4-7 December, 2006 hosted by VCA at the Vietnam Institute for Small Enterprise and Cooperatives (VISEC). 20 local trainers, both men and women from different part of Vietnam cooperatives attended the training. The ICAAP provided technical support and resource person to coordinate and conduct the training. Different training tools and methods were adopted to conduct the training such as role play, games, question answers and group discussions. A wide range of topics

i.e. gender analysis, gender socialization process, nature ,values and concept of cooperatives, ICA statement of identity, Coop law, By-laws and policies, gender issues in coops, removing barriers in empowering women, functional training for women leaders such as planning, budget, evaluation and monitoring, financial management, enterprise management, qualities of effective coop leaders, leadership styles, communication, decision making net working and lobbying etc. have been covered during the training. At the end of the training, the participants were asked to prepare a plan that how they plan to make their own coop gender responsive and how they will utilize these training skills in their own trainings.

NGO HA LAQUER & INCRUSTATION COOPERATIVE, VIETNAM



Ms. Nguyen Thi Vui Second from left

This is story of a successful women cooperative in Vietnam. I personally visited this cooperative at the end of the TOT for leadership development of women in cooperative in Vietnam. There are 38 members in the cooperative, 94% of them are women. Share of per member is 3million Vietnamese Dong.

There is an 8 member Board out of which 7 members are women and only one male member.

The Ha Lacquer and Incrustation Cooperative is located in Chuyen My Commune Phu Xuyen, District HA TAY. It was established in 1960. There are 105 employees working and 38 labourers. The cooperative is running 3 training classes for 139 children out of which 39 boys and 32 women. The training started in 1996.

The Chairperson of the cooperative is Ms. Nguyen Thi Vui. She informed that volume of the business of the cooperative is about 1.5 million DONG yearly and profit is 8%. Besides board members there is one chief accountant employed by the coop to take care of the business activities of the cooperative. The economic activity of the coop is handicraft making, marketing and export and training. Under their social programme, they have been arranging vocational training programme for women, boys and handicapped children. This training programme is supported by national and international donors. They provide residential facilities for handicapped children.

This cooperative is member of HATAY Province Cooperative which in turn is a member of Vietnam Co-operative Alliance (VCA).

WOMEN & HIV/AIDS



Participants of ICAAP -NCUI TOT on HIV/AIDS awareness at RICM, Patna

Geeta Rao Gupta(ICRW) said in Washington on June 2, 2005 that it is a cruel paradox that in many developing countries, women who have complied with their expected gender roles- they have married early, become mothers and remained faithful to their spouses- are becoming infected with HIV. It is this paradox of low risk yet high HIV vulnerability that underlies the large number of new infections among women in countries as diverse as Thailand, India, Kenya and Zambia. The experience of these women reveals that marriage does not provide protection from HIV risk, especially when the age of the husband in five years or more than that of the wife. Data from Kenya and Zambia show that HIV infection levels among married girls aged 15 to 19 were 10 percent higher than for unmarried sexually active girls of the same age. This because men are typically older than their brides, and are therefore more likely to have had other sexual partners before marriage, increasing the probability that they have been exposed to HIV. Also, in marriage, condoms do not serve as a viable protection option because they do not permit new married couples to meet the most desired goal of marriage to bear a child. And many married women lack the ability to negotiate condom use with their husbands out of fear of violence or other repercussions because the talk of condoms typically raises questions about trust and fidelity. These realities about the HIV risk within marriage are all the more important to understand given that 51 million adolescent girls worldwide are currently married, and in the next 10 years 100 million more young girls will marry before they are adults.

Therefore, women in cooperatives need to build their capacity to fight against HIV/AIDS.

Thus, ICA AP incollaboration with NCUI launched an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention programme for cooperatives in India. 120 Women cooperative trainers of state of Bihar, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh of India have been chosen to be trained through TOT on the subject so that they are able to disseminate information and spread awareness among women coop members and the community during their regular cooperative training and education classes.

The TOT for Women Cooperative Trainers conducted from September to December in these 4 states and a group of 30 women trainees in each state inclusive of women cooperative trainers, cooperative officers and lady mobilisers attended the programme and have been taught the skills for imparting correct and complete information about various aspects of HIV/AIDS. Training was designed for 5 days class room and one day study/exposure visit to a HIV/AIDS care and treatment centre. The 5 days curriculum covers issues: Why HIV/AIDS is an issue for cooperatives? Women and HIV/AIDS, Environment building, HIV and AIDS: General scenario, HIV/AIDS: basic knowledge, addressing concerns of HIV/AIDS and training skills. 3 women trainers who are specialized in training on the subject conducted the training

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

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Declaration & Platform of Action, Tagaytay, 2006

From the Editor...

This addition of the news letter covers activities done from January to March, 2007. It means that the beginning of the New Year. We have started well with completion of writing of the declaration and platform of action, 2006. Also participated in 8TH ICAAP Cooperative Ministers Conference where the RWC declared the platform of action for achieving total gender integration in co-operatives in the region. However, changes are taking place. Madam Rahaiah is no more in the committee officially but hope she continues with her interest in women empowerment. Talking about changes and new beginnings, I think of strengthening of our gender integration programmes with certain changes in approach based on feed back from the women in cooperatives with whom we have been working so far. We expect certain discussion on our approach in forth coming Regional Women's Committee Meeting in Singapore on 16th October, 2007. Appeal to all ICAAP members to please depute men/women members to the committee to represent your organization.

Savitri Singh



Drafting Committee

The drafting committee comprising of Ms. Junko Ito, Vice Chairperson of ICARWC, Savitri Singh, Secretary, Salome Ganibe, Paul Sinappan and Annamalai from AWCF, Tsubasa Nakamura, ICAAP and Jiro Ito, JCCU met in Kuala Lumpur and completed drafting of Declaration and Platform of Action of Regional Conference on Gender Integration in Cooperatives, 10 Years Before and After Tagaytay, 2006.

The Tagaytay + 10 DECLARATIONS, 2006

We:

Women and men co-operators and gender advocates representing co-operative organizations from Asia and the Pacific (India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Lao P.D.R., Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and the Chairperson - ICA Global Gender Equality Committee who gathered on 6-8 November 2006 for the "Regional Conference on Gender Integration in

Co-operatives: 10 Years Before and After (Empowerment and Development of Women in Co-operatives)" in Tagaytay City, Philippines

Note the diverse context in which our co-operatives operate as well as acknowledge the diversity of women and men served by our co-operatives

Recognize that significant gains have been achieved in the past decade, notwithstanding the uneven results in implementing the strategies identified in the 1997 Platform of Action, to increase women's quality participation in leadership and decision-making as well as mainstream gender in co-operatives

Are aware that barriers and challenges persist to women's full and active participation in co-operatives and that globalization has brought forth new and more serious forms of poverty and inequalities among women and men

Strongly challenge co-operatives to live up to their values and principles of democracy, equity and equality, and to their nature as instruments for poverty alleviation

We sustain our commitment:

Taking note of our achievement and gaps of previous actions from Tagaytay 1997, and in order to increase the women's participation at all level of co-operatives, we propose the following strategies and actions to be implemented within a period of ten years from year 2006 to year 2016.

Strategy I: Instituting gender responsive co-operative laws, by-laws and policies that promote increased women membership in co-operatives and participation in leadership and decision-making therein

Action to be taken:

By governments

- Review, amend and enforce gender responsive co-operatives law, by-laws and policies.

By all levels of co-operatives

- Review, amend and implement gender responsive co-operative by-laws and policies

By regional co-operative organizations

- Influence upon the co-operatives and governments to ensure implementation of gender responsive co-operative laws, by-laws and policies

Strategy II: Building capacity of co-operatives through successor generation programs, gender sensitization, documentation and sharing of best practices and resources for gender mainstreaming and women leadership

Action to be taken:

By all levels of co-operatives

- Undertake gender analysis, planning and budgeting
- Conduct gender responsive HRD programs, focusing on successor generation programs for institutional capacity building of co-operatives

By regional co-operative organizations

- Develop a sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis system among the co-operatives
- Documentation and sharing of best practices for success case replication

Strategy III: Building capacity of women for leadership and decision-making in co-operatives and enterprise development as a strategy for poverty alleviation

Action to be taken:

By governments

- Allocate fund and resources for training of women on leadership skills and co-operative enterprise development

By all levels of co-operatives

- Allocate fund and resources for training of women on leadership skills and co-operative enterprise development
- Identify needs for training and specify number of women to be trained in a particular time period

By regional co-operative organizations

- Develop training manuals, resource materials and extend technical support to co-operative organizations
- Develop networks of women leaders and entrepreneurs
- Create support systems such as marketing and Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Strategy IV: Developing monitoring and evaluation tools to map progress of gender mainstreaming in co-operatives through institutionalizing a sex-disaggregated data collection and utilization system

Action to be taken:

By governments

- Ensure implementation of monitoring and evaluation tools to map gender mainstreaming in co-operatives
- Promotion and advocacy for sex-disaggregated data collection to map the progress of co-operatives

By all levels of co-operatives

- Establish and implement sex-disaggregated data collection system
- Ensure regular collection, analysis and use of the data

- Allocate fund and provide resources such as technical support
- By regional co-operative organizations
- Establish and implement sex-disaggregated data collection system
 - Ensure regular collection, analysis and use of the data
 - Allocate fund and provide resources such as technical support
 - Documentation and sharing of data results
 - Develop tools for data collection and advocacy for adaptation of a unified system

Strategy V: Reserving minimum 30% seats for women as recommended by ICA/AWCF Tagaytay Regional Conference 2006 to facilitate women's participation at all levels of co-operatives especially leadership and decision making level

Action to be taken:

By governments

- Take required action to ensure implementation of minimum 30% reservation of seats for women in co-operatives

By all levels of co-operatives

- Adapt and implement minimum 30% reservation of seats for women

By regional co-operative organizations

- Advocacy for implementation of minimum 30% reservation of seats for women in co-operatives
- Adapt and implement minimum 30% reservation of seats for women at leadership and decision making bodies
- Monitoring and sharing best practices

Strategy VI: Establishing a fund for the empowerment of women in co-operatives generated from within the co-operative movement as well as from other institutions to be used in carrying out the actions contained in this document

Action to be taken:

By governments

- Advocate establishment of a separate fund for women empowerment
- Issue directive, wherever applicable, to co-operatives for establishment of a separate fund for women empowerment

By all levels of co-operatives

- Establish a separate fund for women to be utilized for capacity building for example training on leadership and enterprise development
- Generate additional resources through fund raising

By regional co-operative organizations

- Establish a separate fund for women to be utilized for capacity building for example training on leadership and enterprise development
- Generate additional resources through fund raising
- Develop and implement projects to support capacity building of women

We hereby adopt this Declaration and the ensuing Platform of Action.

RWC at 8th Co-operative Ministers Conference



Ms. Junko Ito, Vice Chair of ICA RWC at the conference

Ms. Junko Ito, Vice Chair of ICA RWC reported about the achievements of the Committee and presented recommendations of the Tagaytay Conference, 2006. She talked about:

- Gender Mainstreaming in Co-operatives
- Achievements of ICA Regional Women's Committee (ICA RWC)
- Strategies for promoting gender-integration in co-operative

After the introduction she made presentation of the Recommendations

by ICA RWC as placed below:

1. Revise/change existing co-operative laws, bylaws and policies to become gender responsive that promote increased participation of women at all levels in co-operatives, for example, joint membership of husband and wife

2. Reservation of minimum 30% seats for women as recommended by ICA/AWCF Tagaytay Regional Conference 2006 to facilitate women's participation at all levels of co-operatives especially leadership and decision making level
3. Intensive education and training of women for leadership and co-operative enterprise development as a tool for poverty alleviation
4. Including gender indicators in the co-operative monitoring and evaluation system to map the progress of gender mainstreaming as recommended above.

Special News

Madam Rahaiah Baهران has relinquished her position as Chair Person of the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia



Madam Rahaiah in action

and Pacific with effect from March 2007. Ms. Junko Ito being the senior vice chairperson of the committee will officiate till the time new chair person is elected in 2008.

Madam Rahaiah was elected as the first chairperson of the committee since its inception in 1998 and served for 9 years with success. The ICA RWC greatly acknowledges the contribution of Madam Baهران as chairperson of the committee. We wish her good health, happiness and all the success in her future endeavour.

News from Members: Sri Lanka

National Cooperative Women's Forum-Sri Lanka 17th 18th December 2006

A National Level Cooperative Women's Forum was held in Colombo in Sri Lanka from 17th to 18th December 2006 at the auditorium

of The National Cooperative Council, Women Leaders from all types of cooperative institutions attended the program. The two day workshop was conducted with the objectives of preparing a plan of action for the year 2007, discussing the future of the National Women's Committee and also providing practical skills training on sewing, ribbon embroidery, cake structures and dressing of a Kandyan bride. Special lectures were delivered on cooperative principles and values, Devolution of leadership for a successful tomorrow and Mental and physical wellbeing of women for their successful day to day living. The ladies had a lively discussion on the activities carried out during the past year in the different districts.

The program ended with the unanimous decision to hold an Exhibition and sale of cooperative women's product during the three day program scheduled to be held in March 7th to 9th 2007 to commemorate the International Women's Day.

Japan

After Tagaytay Meeting in Nov 14 2006,

JCCU Gender equality sub-committee was held.

And at the committee, Tagaytay participants-Ms. Makiko Sakurai, Mr. Jiro Ito and Ms. Masako Ishimine made a presentation about Tagaytay meeting.

Then, the article about 2006 Tagaytay declaration draft and recent situation of gender equality in Japanese consumer cooperative societies was published in a magazine, Consumer cooperative studies February issue.

After Women's committee, held in March 2007 at Malaysia,

JCCU Gender equality sub-committee was held again,

At the committee, complete version of Tagaytay declaration was introduced and importance of disaggregated data collection was emphasized.

ICA AP Gender Programme Upcoming events- 2007

1. ICA AP Trade Fair in Bali, Indonesia- 12-15 July, 2007
Women producers and entrepreneurs are specially invited to participate
2. RWC Meeting in Singapore on 16 October, 2007
3. TOT for Leadership Development of Women in Cooperatives in Bangkok, 12-17 November, 2007
4. Study visit to a success case for networking and empowerment of women in cooperatives, November, 2007, Pune, India

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



Volume 5 No. 13

October 2007

For Private Circulation only

Meeting of ICA AP Regional Women's Committee



Participants at the meeting

From the Editor..

Dear readers, it's great privilege to reach out to you all through this news letter. Winter is setting in and also a mood for holidays and festivities. We have been quite busy with our Agenda of gender integration and women empowerment through out the year. There have been several activities to achieve this mandate. We made new friends from Pakistan, Philippines and Nepal who joined the RWC and also there were moment of departures when we said good buy to some members while welcomed the others.

We also tried to expand our horizon and reach out to new countries and members. Cambodia and Bangladesh have been very interesting experiences. Women are strong as usual and men are open to idea of gender integration. We wish to do much more in future to reach out to many- many more....Hope this issue will give you a good reading of our endeavour and your participation for the cause. Enjoy and contribute with your news and views! !

Savitri Singh

6th Meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia-Pacific was held in Singapore on 16th October, 2007 in conjunction with ICA General Assembly-2007.

The issue of effective and innovative leadership development of women in co-operatives was discussed at women committee meeting. About 50 participants from 10 countries came together for the 6th meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia-Pacific. Dr. Lou Guat Tin, Assistant Professor at National Institute of Education, Singapore gave the keynote address. Savitri Singh, Gender Programme Advisor of ICA-AP convened the meeting. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director ICA-AP, Stefania Marcone, Chairperson, ICA Gender Equality Committee and Ms. Goh Ming Huay, Vice Chair of ICARWC addressed the meeting and encouraged members for exercising their rights and duties for gender integration in cooperatives. Members from 9 countries presented country reports and shared their experiences about progress of gender integration programmes in their respective countries/coops. A study tour to NTUC Income Insurance Co-operative was enjoyed by the participants.



Savitri Singh and Ms. Ayesha Lutfi

Trade Networking

The ICA AP- DEKOPIN Cooperative Trade Fair was held in Bali Indonesia. The Trade Fair has been successful especially in terms of Gender Integration. For the first time women cooperatives producers' participation in the Trade Fair had received good response. The following countries sent the women coops -

Country	Product
1. Iran	Carpet and Chocolate
2. Malaysia	Silk
3. CICOPA Project India supported by ICA DOMUS Trust	Handicrafts, Jewelry and Textile They received trade enquiries from two traders
4. Sri Lanka	Textile, Tea and Handicrafts
5. Indonesia	Handicrafts, dresses, Jewelery and Textile

Ms. Savitri Singh, Secretary of RWC coordinated and facilitated women's participation. She also represented RWC and made presentation at the symposium on "Trade Networking and Women in Cooperatives".

Ms Ayesha Lutfi, RWC member from Indonesia presented a success case story on women co-operative in Indonesia.

ICA Initiative for gender integration in Bangladesh

ICA-AP has organised a Workshop on "Enhancing Role of Women in Co- operative Development" which was jointly hosted by: ICA Asia Pacific & Department of Cooperatives of Bangladesh in Dhaka on 22 & 23 August, 2007.

Mr. Md. Anwarul Iqbal, Honourable Advisor in charge of the Ministries of Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives and Ministry of Labour & Employment was the Chief Guest and had inaugurated the workshop. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICAAP also joined as Special Guest. The function was chaired by Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Secretary-in-Charge, Rural Development & Co-operative Division.

The workshop was attended by about 30 national participants including resource persons from ICAAP, UNAIDS-Bangladesh, UNIFEM Office for South Asia and FAO, Dhaka. The proceedings of the workshop have been divided into 3 sessions: .

A. Understanding Co-operative Movement in Bangladesh & ICA



Savitri Singh, Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Mr. Md. Anwarul Iqbal, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mr. Mosarraf Hossain Bhuiyan with participants

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-Asia Pacific spoke about ICA presence in the region, activities and programmes and relation with Coop Movement of Bangladesh. Mr. Md. Mosarraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Registrar of cooperatives of Bangladesh made a presentation on History of cooperative movement in Bangladesh, present situation and future plan (focusing on role of government).

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Regional Women's Committee at Gender Equality Committee events



Savitri Singh at the GEC Conference

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Capacity building of women co-operators of Cambodia



SO Ritkun, Director of MOA of Cambodia, BD Sharma and Savitri Singh with the Participants.

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Exposure and networking programme
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Volume 5 No. 14

Jan 2008

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Exposure and Networking Programme for Empowerment of Women



Shri Bhagwati Prasad, CEO NCUI, Savitri Singh and group of Participants

From the Editor...

I am immensely pleased to present this first issue of year 2008. There will be some important events this year, such as women forum and election of the office bearers of the Regional Women Committee. We have to elect a Chairperson and Vice Chair Person. Participation in the meetings of the RWC is on self financing basis as we do not have a fund for the purpose and also we do not charge any registration fee for attending the Forum. Out of 57 ICA cooperative members from 23 countries in Asia, the women's committee is represented by only 13. We need to broaden our member base for more participation and support from co-operatives. I appeal to the Asian cooperative community to nominate more members. And also, please send nominations for post of chair and vice chair of the committee by October 2008. Please support the ICARWC for better performance by way of nominating and supporting members! Thank You.

Savitri Singh

The challenges of globalization and free trade are affecting lives of people unevenly across the world. The cooperatives worldwide are feeling the heat of unequal opportunities and threats created by the free market. As usual, this has intensified the existing inequalities and insecurities for many poor women. The high tech means of trade and business are tend to benefit rich than the poor. Women are most likely to suffer more from the rapid changes societies are undergoing due to globalization and free trade.

In the context of the above challenges and the resolution of the ICA Co-operative Minister's Conference for exposure of women cooperators to success stories and networking for business development, the ICA Regional Women's Committee has been making attempts to share information with women cooperative leaders in the region and expected to find ways and means to



Participants at Jija Bai Mahila Bank

promote women's economic security and empowerment through the cooperatives. This programme is being organised by ICAAP every year in one of the member countries.

Objective of the programme

The objective of this program is to provide a common meeting ground to Asian cooperative women leaders/persons responsible for gender and women development in co-operatives for sharing information and experience about success stories and best practices of their co-operatives and most importantly help women to establish a network for mutual cooperation and business interest across the Asia & Pacific Region.

Expected outcome

- Establish contacts among women leaders/co-operative members and create network
- Collection of information and dissemination of best practices
- Identify mechanism to overcome factors that limit women's participation as organizer and decision maker
- Business information about products and services as well as know-how for women entrepreneurs
- Identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration.
- Based on the success of the programme, more such programme will be organized in future.

The Programme

This year the programme held in Pune India, from 12-14 Dec. 2007 in collaboration with national cooperative Union of India (NCUI). There were 10 participants, 7 women and 3 men from 4 countries, namely Bangladesh, Malaysia, Nepal and Srilanka. The 3 days programme was divided into 2 parts- Inaugural session and class room

interaction combined with information sharing of best practices from the participants' countries and visit to cooperatives. The resource persons, Assistant General Manager of National Agriculture and Rural Development Bank of India talked about cooperative and SHG Bank Linkage. Programme for entrepreneurship development and Ms. Bonani Dhar of UNIFEM made a presentation on "Sustainable entrepreneurship development for women in cooperatives". The ten participants represented eight different cooperatives in their respective countries and shared information about their work through power point presentation and discussions.

Second day - The group visited to a very successful business organization Lizzat Papad factory which is operated by women. It is not registered under Co-



Bonani Dhar from UNIFEM at the interaction session



Lizzat Papad Factory

operative Act but functioning is on cooperative pattern i.e. collective effort and collective benefit.

In the afternoon the participants visited to Jija Mata Women Cooperative bank where majority of membership is of women and chairperson and several directors are also women. The bank has got 9 branches. There are total 19 board members out of which 11 are women. Women bank concept is popular and successful in India which is providing opportunity to women as service users, managers and leaders which they are being deprived of in mixed membership banks.

Third day, we visited 'AKLUJ' a cooperative village, promoted by cooperatives. The Co-operative village is housing a cooperative sugar factory, a spinning mill, co-operative milk dairy and cooperative consumer store. The whole village, more or less, is the member and service users of these cooperatives. The cooperatives are doing success full business and fulfilling the daily needs of the members along with providing employment and other social services such as schools for children, health care and farming inputs in way of training and education to farmers.

News from Members

NCF, Nepal

National Cooperative Federation of Nepal has successfully organized the Seminar on Gender Equality through Cooperatives on September 20, 2007 and 12th World Rural Women's Day on October 15, 2007 at Kathmandu, Nepal.

The seminar was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Parliament Member Mrs. Sujata Koirala . Total 45 participants, 27 women and 18 men were present. They represented cooperatives/unions from the primary levels to national levels, concerned stakeholders, Nari Chetana Kendra, Cooperatives Consulting Service and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Objective of the seminar is:

- To sensitize participants on gender equality in cooperatives,
- To educate participants about need of enhancing women participation in their cooperatives,
- To find out ways and means of increasing active participation of women at all levels of cooperatives.

Presentation on Gender Situation in Vietnam by VCA at RWC-2007

- About 18,000 cooperatives and 300,000 cooperative groups (pre-cooperatives) in Viet Nam.
- 30,000 female workers accounting for 50, 9% of the total workers in the cooperatives.
- The high rate of female workers in small industry and handicraft cooperatives (68, 5%), 47% in consumer and trading services and low rate in transportation, fishery, construction etc.
- Around 10% women involved in management or indirectly working in the cooperatives and the Unions and over 90% female labourers participate in certain parts of the whole business and production process.

- Only 4, 9% are chairman, vice chairman and chief inspectors.
- Education and technical levels of women are lower than that of men
- Number of female workers graduated at the high schools above accounting for 15, 4%; around 4, 5% of female labourers have the college and university graduation in the cooperative sector.
- Propaganda and raise awareness on the laws and policies on gender equality, roles and rights of women in the cooperative sector.
- Eliminate the feudalism thoughts and low evaluation on the potentials of female workers, not facilitate them to join in the activities and decision making process.
- Emulate the good examples as chairwomen, directors and managers in directing the production and business activities.
- Implement the training, vocational training for female labourers in the cooperatives in short and long term courses.
- Encourage women to take the high positions in the cooperatives and in the unions so that they are self believable and independent.

5. News letter
6. Activity Report 2005-2007

RWC News

Ms. Goh Ming Huay, vice chair person of ICARWC has tendered her resignation with NTUC Income, Singapore and will be leaving Income's service on 2 March 2008. As such, she would also be relinquishing her positions in the ICA AP Regional Women's Committee, SNCF Exco, and SNCF Women's Programme Committee.



Ms. Goh addressing ICARWC Meeting in Colombo, 2006

In a message sent to ICAAP, she said that "I wish to thank the entire ICA AP RWC for the ardent support, guidance and cooperation during my term of service. It has been a most wonderful experience for me working with all the ICA AP co-operators. I have enjoyed every moment and will certainly treasure the good memories. Wishing you and ICA AP and the Regional Women's Committee all the best in the future.

Friends, it's a great loss to gender integration efforts of ICAAP. On behalf of ICAAP RWC, we wish all the success to Ms. Goh in her future Endeavour.

Kind attention

ICAAP Regional Women's Committee Meeting and Women Forum-2008

The next ICAAP RWC Meeting will be held on 1 December, 2008 and Regional Women Forum will be held on 2- December, 2008 in Hanoi.

Participation in the conference will be on self financing basis.

Information about theme, programme, speakers and invitations will be sent by Sep-October 2008 to all ICA-AP Members and associates. We are expecting more than 100 men and women delegates/speakers and observers from ICAAP member cooperatives in Asia, ICA Global Equality Committee and local participants from Vietnam.

For further information please contact Ms. Savitri Singh at savitrisingh@icaroap.coop

RWC Programmes Calendar-2008

1. Study visit/exposure to a success case in China
2. Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Cooperative Development in Nepal
3. Office Bearers Meeting in Singapore
4. RWC meeting and Regional Women Forum, Vietnam

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March 2008

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Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development



Participants of the training

From the Editor...

As you are familiar, comes March and suddenly there are concerns for women and seminars, meetings and celebration galore addressing the issue. So, this issue is largely covering the "D" Day celebrations in the co-operative circle. All the stakeholders across the world are advocating for end of violence against women, gender budgeting and creation of enabling environment. However, our primary concern is over all development of co-operatives as competitive business enterprises for the benefit of the members. As co-operatives are mostly involved in traditional sectors such as agriculture, dairy, handloom and handicrafts etc., we know that 70-80% labour is put in by women. Therefore, equal and active participation of women at all levels of the co-operatives are crucial for the successful business generation. Thus, the ICA appeal for "Investing in Women for Co-operative Success" is very appropriate and timely. Lets come together to realize our vision of gender mainstreaming in cooperatives.

Savitri Singh

The ICA AP-CLT National Trainers Training Programme for "Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development" was held from 7-11 January 2008 at CLT Training Centre in Bangkok. 28 women co-operative leaders and managers from all over the country attended 4 days programme. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Adviser Gender Programme of ICAAP was the main resource person and conducted training on gender mainstreaming issue in cooperatives and entrepreneurship and leadership development of women.

This training workshop aims to assist cooperative leaders/trainers of Asia Pacific to:

1. Raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on gender issues, on the manifestations of gender bias (against women) in cooperatives, and on the effects of gender discrimination on the personal and interpersonal growth of its leaders and members as well as on the organizational development of cooperatives.
2. Build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with knowledge

and skills on the following:

- Nature of Cooperatives
- Effective and gender-responsive leadership
- Cooperative Enterprise Management
- Coping with challenges; and
- Personal Development

ICA Message on International Women's Day, 8 March 2008

“Investing in Women for Co-operative Success”

Increasing evidence shows that gender inequality is simply bad economics. Investment in gender equality and women's empowerment is therefore vital for improving economic, social and political conditions. Further, it has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth according to the United Nations.

It is for this reason that the 2008 theme of International Women's Day focuses on the need to invest in women and girls and calls on actions to increase resources for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Investing in women and girls means not only making financial commitments to build capacity and implement gender sensitive programme and policies, but also to take a leadership role in ensuring gender equality progress. It means taking practical actions to remove barriers and create opportunities for women's empowerment and professional growth. It also means addressing the issue of young women and ensuring that they find co-operative services relevant; that they find value in joining or forming their own co-operatives and that they consider participation in co-operative democracy rewarding and worthwhile. We are reminded too that the larger youth issue is of significant importance to the success of the co-operative movement. One person in eight is a girl or young woman age 10–24 and so co-operative education for girls and young women, and gender awareness for all are essential for the continued success of the movement.

- ◆ Educated girls contribute to increased economic productivity and improved family nutrition: for every year a girl goes to school beyond the fourth grade, her wages rise 20% and her family size drops by 20%
- ◆ A job given to a woman means support for the entire family
- ◆ Empowered women are agents for the common good and uplift the well-being of the human family overall
- ◆ Women who are empowered to make decisions strengthen family healthcare, reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and promote long-lasting peace.

So in celebrating International Women's Day, co-operatives are called to assess their budgets to see what proportion of financial resources are allocated to activities to promote gender equality, to seek additional resources for new and existing gender programmes, to keep gender balance in mind when recruiting staff and electing leadership, and to address the issue of young women and girls and their participation in the co-operative movement.

The ICA and its Gender Equality Committee are convinced that

the co-operative movement has a significant role in making investments of all types to promote gender equality and that we can make a difference.

Let us not forget that progress for women is progress for all.

Ivano Barberini
ICA President
Committee

Stefania Marccone
Chair, ICA Gender Equality

News from Members

Singapore

Women's Day celebration by SNCF

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation has celebrated the Women's Day by organizing "A Health Fiesta at Park'.

India

The Gujarat State Co-operative Union in India has organized a conference to observe the International Women's Day on 8 March, 2008 in the state capital Gandhi Nagar.

More than 900 women cooperative members and leaders from all over Gujarat participated in the conference. Shri Dilipbhai Sanghani, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperation of Gujarat State was the Chief Guest and he inaugurated the conference. Mr. G.H. Amin, Chairman of NCUI and Gujarat State Cooperative Union presided over the Conference. The participants thanked Mr. Amin for his initiatives in organizing the conference. The speakers, in general, emphasized upon importance of women participation in cooperatives and appealed to women to actively participate in the business of their cooperatives.



Women co-operators at the celebration

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program of ICA has been invited as Guest of Honour to deliver keynote speech on the topic "Empowerment of Women through Cooperatives". She read out the ICA President's message on the occasion. The theme of the message is "Investing in Women for Cooperative Success". Further, she spoke about need of positive discrimination by the government and stake holders. If there are enabling policies and legal provisions in place, it will automatically create enabling environment for empowering



Advisor Gender Programme ICAAP and Mr. G.H. Amin Presiden NCUI at the Function

women. The provision of 33% reservation for women in local government in India is one of the best examples to quote. In the context of ICA efforts and resolutions of Tagaytay-2006, she emphasized in her speech that there should be 33% reservation for women at all levels of co-operatives especially at leadership level. Several states in India have already introduced certain percentage of reservation for women at leadership level but Gujarat State has not introduced any such provision as yet. The participants impressed upon the Agriculture and Co-operation Minister for reservations. He promised to look into the matter and help.

The conference provided opportunity to many village and small town women to travel to the capital city and meet up with many co-operative women from other parts of the state. It was a great platform for sharing and networking.

Initiating participation and sharing views through a platform like this is of immense value in building up better understanding about the issues and forming strategy for improvement and change.

Hope that participant have found ideas/information useful and will make use of experiences gained during this conference for networking and exploring possibility of partnership and collaborations in future.

Indonesia

Ms. Tri Endang Sulistyowati, Management Board Chairperson of PPSW send following news:

Since 2005 The Centre for Women's Resources Development (PPSW) began the developing process of decentralisation in the areas of Jakarta, West Java – Banten, Sumatra and Borneo,

which during this time became specific focus areas of PPSW assistance. For three consecutive years, PPSW has worked and functioned towards decentralization as mentioned earlier. As such, on the 7 – 11 of April 2008 PPSW organized and carried out their General Assembly (MUBES) which decided to recognise PPSW as an association which possesses autonomous institutional members as follows:

- 1 PPSW Jakarta with Director *Tri Endang Sulistyowati*, Email: jakarta@ppsw.or.id
- 2 PPSW Pasoendan (West Java - Banten) with Director *Yayah Sobariyah*, Email: pasoendan@ppsw.or.id
- 3 PPSW Borneo with Director *Rosmaniar*, Email: borneo@ppsw.or.id
- 4 PPSW Sumatera with Director *Endang Sulfiana*, Email: sumatra@ppsw.or.id
- 5 Management Board "Association" structure as follows:
Chairperson : *Tri Endang Sulistyowati*
Vice-Chairperson : *Musepriyena*
Members : *Endang Sri Rahayu, Rosmaniar dan Villa Sahara*
Email: sekretariat@ppsw.or.id
- 6 Advisory Board "Association" structure as follows:
Chairperson : *Nani Zulminarni*
Members : *Mien Rianingsih*

For this opportunity we would like to express our sincere thanks and esteemed appreciation to all our friends who offered their assistance and supports to PPSW up until now.

PPSW hope that we can continue to maintain and develop our friendship and cooperation with you into the future.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT KEY TO ACHIEVING MILLENNIUM SUMMIT ANTI-POVERTY GOALS,

If the Millennium Goals of socio, economic and political empowerment of all the human beings are to be achieved in the envisaged time frame, then it is imperative to enable the full participation of women in this endeavour. Women constitute more than half of humankind. They are, without exception, in all cultures, the predominant communicators and caregivers. Hence the importance of their role in fostering a culture of peace and harmony amongst peoples, a culture of gender equality, a culture of sustaining the environment, a culture of mutual support across families, communities, and nations. Women and children represent 70 per cent of the world's poor and two thirds of the world's illiterate population not to mention that 80 per cent of the world's refugees and displaced persons are also women and children.

If the number of victims of extreme poverty and hunger is to be halved by the year 2015, then women have to be empowered to achieve this goal for themselves and their families. It is recognized that when we educate a woman we educate a multitude, when we educate a man we educate one individual. Because of the traditional gender division of labour in all societies, where the male head of the family is expected to provide the economic means for the family, and the women are left at home to give birth to children and care for the daily needs of the family, women then become the main channel of communication with the baby from the moment of its birth. Therefore, their impact and influence can be decisive in fostering new attitudes in their sons and daughters, attitudes of living in peace and harmony with diverse racial and religious cultures, fostering mutual respect in gender equality, for the environment, for prevention of diseases through safe water and sanitation habits, and so on. Women's role as communicators is also enhanced by virtue of the fact that most of the teachers around the world are women. If women are educated and empowered, together with their male partners, they will constitute a mighty force to combat hunger, poverty, disease and environmental degradation. The inclusion of women in development is, therefore, indispensable.

For prosperity to flourish, we need peace and security. Women of all cultures know the deep pain of losing their beloved fathers, husbands and sons in armed conflict and wars. They would be harbingers of peace if allowed and empowered to participate in peace negotiating, peace building, peace-keeping and conflict prevention activities, in other words building and promoting a culture of peace.

The economic empowerment of women is a fundamental step towards the eradication of poverty. Micro-credit schemes that benefit women are yielding dividends around the world. The concept of micro-credit was an initiative of Professor Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh. Through lending women small amounts of cash without collateral, and the ensuing success of the loan repayments, he revolutionized the concept of rural economic and social development, coupling capitalism

with social responsibility. The concept of micro-credit is being copied in 52 countries and the multilateral agencies are supporting micro-credit projects around the world at the grassroots level.

Political empowerment of women has also yielded positive results wherever they have the opportunity to participate in decision making. To cite one example, the Panchayat system in India, (local bodies at the village level that are meant to ensure people's participation), which has always existed though dominated by male members, now has a minimum of 30 per cent women constituents due to an amendment to the Constitution of India, providing for one third of the seats to be reserved for women. This has allowed women to use their empowerment in, for instance, improving local water and sanitation systems and educational facilities for the children in their villages, thus fostering sustainable development at the grassroots level.

The potential of information and communications technologies for advancement and empowerment of women is unlimited and should be tapped through training and capacity building.

There are many players and stakeholders in the aim to reach the Millennium Goals. Apart from the efforts of the United Nations family of organizations, multilateral organizations and civil society, the positive role of women also depends on the supportive attitudes of the local family unit, the local community in each village, in each town. In financing for development, the governments should promote participation of women in the allocation of aid. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of the organizations and individuals for their tireless and sustained efforts to promote gender equality and thus enhance the chances of attaining the Millennium Goals for a better world for all.

Note: This article is sourced from the web.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **TOT for capacity building of women in co-operatives in Nepal**
April-May 2008
2. **ICA Regional Women Seminar and Networking Programme for Empowerment of Women and Cooperative Development, September-China**
3. **ICARWC Meeting and Regional Women Forum, Vietnam**

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

Fax : 26888067 and printed at Grand Print & Process, Z-20, Okhla Indl. Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110020. India. Ph. : 26383946



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



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Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development



Deepak Baskota, Bui Thi Lan, Savitri Singh and RB Shah at the opening

From the Editor..

The gender imbalance at all levels of co-operatives and especially total absence of women in leadership is something must taken care of NOW! In many countries the membership of women in co-operatives is low because of "one family one member norm" and the man being the head of the family gets the place. This can be understood to some extent and as always, we may blame the cultures and customs. But in many countries, including Japan where up to 80-85% co-operative membership is of women, none of the directors or Chair is a woman. How can it be possible? Is it a fair election? Are all women electing men as their leaders? Do women not want to become leaders? Do they lack capacity which leads to lack of willingness to take up leadership?

These are the questions we are asking for a long time and we know the answers as well. But, how to implement the answers into action? We resorted to demanding positive discrimination through reservation at Tagaytay in 2006.

I think, we must discuss this in our forth coming forum in Hanoi and arrive at a definite solution. So, come prepared with concrete, readily achievable Strategies! See you all at Hanoi!

Savitri Singh

The ICA Training Programme on Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development was held in Kathmandu from 28 April - 3 May 2008 in collaboration with Nepal Cooperative Federation.

Dr. Suvedi, a member of Parliament from Nepal, Mr. Deepak Baskota, Chairman of National Co-operative Federation of Nepal (NCF),

Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Country Representative of FAO, Nepal and Savitri Singh from ICAAP were the speakers at the opening.

Mr. Juku Ozawa, former ICA staff and JICA volunteer was also present.

Ms. Archana Singh, ILO Programme Officer, Ms. Aruna Thapa, Programme Officer of UNIFEM, Nepal, Dr. Smita Premchander from Sampark, India and Savitri Singh from ICAAP were the main resource persons.

30 women and men cooperative trainers, leaders and staff attended the programme.



Training Participants

Following topics were covered by the resource persons during 5 days class room programme:

1. Concept, rationale, constraints and opportunities
2. Basic principles of capacity building
3. Understanding Gender
4. Gender mainstreaming in co-operatives
5. Situation of women and UNIFEM Programmes for gender mainstreaming in Nepal
6. Various aspects of management of co-operatives with special reference to the various kinds of co-operatives
7. Enterprise development- Role of Manager and Managing Committee
8. Decision-making capacity

As mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in co-operative education and training is one of the focused area of the ICA-AP, a separate session on the topic was conducted by the expert from ILO. As a moderator, Savitri Singh explained why HIV/AIDS is an issue for co-operatives. Following issues have been covered during the session:

1. Basics of HIV/AIDS, its impact on the society and ongoing programmes for prevention and cure of the disease
2. Prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Nepal as workplace issue and need for action on part of co-operative institutions
3. HIV/AIDS risk behaviour and assessment

The study visit was organized at the last day of the training. The participants visited 2 co-operatives in the outskirts of Kathmandu namely Shri Sidhi Ganesh Savings and Credit Co-operative in Bhaktapur and Artisan's Co-operative in Patan area of Lalitpur.



Training in progress

WTO, Trade and Gender

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) India Programme, New Delhi has organised an International Seminar on "Moving Towards Gender Sensitisation of Trade Policy" in New Delhi on 25-27 February 2008. Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD inaugurated the seminar. UNCTAD India Programme on "Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalization in India" is a joint trade related capacity building project of DFID (Government of UK), Department of Commerce (Government of India) and UNCTAD.

The seminar provided a forum to international trade and gender experts, policy makers, academia and civil society to discuss gender concerns in the context of trade liberalization. Recent research undertaken by UNCTAD India Programme and evidences from other countries reveal that women are important stakeholders in the process of trade liberalisation. This must be recognized and harnessed by the Government as part of the broad trade-policy formulation for integrating women into the international trading system. The results of globalization need to be made more gender equitable. Gender sensitization of trade policy needs to be taken seriously at the international level so that appropriate support measures can be provided to increase opportunities for integrating the gender dimensions into trade more effectively.

The primary objective of the seminar is to sensitize stakeholders, policy makers and trade experts about trade and gender linkages. It is hoped that insights emerging from the seminar will have an impact on trade policy formulation and it becomes sensitive to gender concerns.

Savitri Singh from ICA was invited to participate. The issues of women in traditional sectors such as agriculture, weaving, dairy and fisheries were discussed at length. Savitri Singh raised the concern for women in co-operative business in India and in other Asian countries. The huge population involved in co-operatives, in general, and women in particular are ignored by such forums. The seminar took note of the concerns of rural and urban women in co-operatives business and included in the preliminary report/ observation of the seminar.

News From Members

Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF)

The SNCF is organizing a Professional Development Seminar on Inspirational Leadership for women on 30 August 2008 from 2.30pm to 5.30pm at Room 801, Level 8 NTUC Centre, 1 Marina Boulevard, Singapore 018989.

The theme of the seminar is : Inspirational Leadership. The seminar will be attended by about 120 women cooperators of Singapore.

Participants will learn:

- a. To understand the difference between leadership and management
- b. To understand why each one of us is a leader
- c. To Understand what inspires us in leadership and how we can inspire in our leadership
- d. To Understand how our leadership contribution might change in the different seasons of our lives
- e. The crucial importance of inspiration and affirmation from the leader

The speakers are Dr Low Guat Tin who will speak on - Inspiration Leadership in the Different seasons of our Lives and Mrs Ding- Khoo Seok Lin who will speak on-"Leading Me, Leading You, Leading Us".

Gender statistics from India

I just came across The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2007 and a UNIFEM India supported SAARC database which prompted me to share this with you.

The Indian economy is booming, women's education, employment and income opportunities are increasing yet as per The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2007, among Asia and Oceania countries, it continues holding one of the lowest ranking -114. It performed very poorly on the economic, education and health sub indexes but relatively good performance on political empowerment ranking-21st. The report further says that over all labour participation of women in the country is 36% in comparison to men which is 84%. Only 3% women are senior officials and managers but 97% are men.

Women literacy rate is only 48% and over all sex ratio (male/female) is 1.06.

Women in India provide up to 90% of labour for rice cultivation, dairy and other farm related work but less than 10% women farmer own land, - by Savitri Singh

Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF):

We would like to announce to you that the Board of Trustees (BOT) of Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF) has appointed Ms Kruewan Boonrin Chonlanai of the Credit Union League of Thailand, Ltd. (CULT), Thailand as its new Chairperson. Ms Kruewan has been working for CULT for almost 18 years now starting as Training Staff of the Education Department (1990-1994), then became Education Manager (1995-2004), then Executive Secretary to the General Manager (2005-2006), and currently as Head of the General Manager's Office (2006-present). She also held the position of Program Manager of the it@coops project for Thailand for three years (2004-2007). The it@coops is a joint project of AWCF with InWEnt (Capacity Building International of Germany).

Absence of women from leadership positions undermines democracy, Commission on status of women told

Commission on the Status of Women Fiftieth Session 4th & 5th Meetings (AM & PM) Panel Discussions Focus on Ways To Enhance Women's Participation in Development, Decision-Making

The absence of women from political life and leadership positions undermined democracy and women's empowerment, the Commission on the Status of Women heard during discussions on the enhanced participation of women in development and on the equal participation of women in decision-making processes - the two substantive themes of the 45-member body's fiftieth session.

Chaired by Commission Vice-Chairperson Dicky Komar (Indonesia), a morning panel discussion focused on the need to create a more conducive environment that fully enabled women to participate in development. He noted that the 2005 World Summit reaffirmed that gender equality was essential to advancing development and peace. Measures for enhanced education, health and work for women were among the strategic priorities identified.

Stressing that education of women still lagged behind that of men, Bernadette Lahai, Member of Sierra Leone's Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Food Security, noted that women were more likely to be illiterate than men, and girls were less likely to access schooling than boys. No country could develop if it failed to tap women's talent for full participation in society. It had been generally found that the returns to educating women were higher than those of men; hence the adage, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate the nation."

Evy Messell, Director, Bureau for Gender Equality, International Labour Organization (ILO), noted that combating gender inequalities in the world of work called for equal access to social protection. An enabling environment would be created by extending national social security systems more widely. The ILO firmly believed that action to strengthen the capacities of its tripartite constituents - Governments and employers' and workers' organizations -- to promote positive change for gender equality hinged on men's and women's equal participation in meaningful social dialogue. Social dialogue also meant creating partnerships and networks with local and national women's associations. Organization was an essential tool for women to gain confidence, increase their representation and acquire a voice in local, national and international employment policymaking.

Opening the afternoon panel on the equal participation of women and men in decision-making, Commission Vice-Chairperson Szilvia Szabo (Hungary) said equal access to decision-making and leadership at all levels was a necessary precondition for the proper functioning of democracy. Equal participation in political affairs made Governments more representative, accountable and transparent. It also ensured that the interests of women were taken into account in

policymaking. Women, however, had traditionally been excluded from decision-making processes.

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, women's visibility in public life had grown, she continued. In 1995, women represented 11.3 per cent of all legislators. In 2006, they represented 16.3 per cent -- the highest percentage in history. More women judges had been appointed and more women had reached the highest executive positions in public and private companies. At the same time, persistent barriers to women's entry into positions of decision-making persisted, and equitable participation remained a challenge.

Nesreen Barwari, Minister of Municipalities and Public Works of Iraq, noted that the real reason women should be engaged in politics at all levels was not to emulate men, but to bring a unique feminine perspective to bear on the decision-making process. The human right to full and equal participation in power and decision-making included, among other things, the right to participate on equal terms with men in shaping and implementing decisions and policies affecting them, their families, communities and societies. Also, the presence of women in the halls of power was not sufficient. That was mere tokenism. What mattered was the effect of that presence.

The Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Anders B. Johnsson, said the achievement of democracy required a balanced participation of men and women in politics. One could not talk about democracy when half of a country's population did not participate in its work. The IPU had been tracking the numbers of women in national parliaments since 1970. Ten years ago, Sweden had led the pack, but today, Rwanda, a developing country, had the highest proportion of women in its national assembly, some 48.8 per cent. He added that the critical mass the Beijing Platform had asked for -- 30 per cent - would not be reached until 2025, and parity would not be reached until 2040.

Upcoming events:

1. Co-operative Development Conference in Fiji with special focus on Gender Mainstreaming in Co-operatives, July
2. ICAAP RWC Office Bearers Meeting, Singapore in August
3. ICA AP Regional Women Seminar on Enhancing Women's Role in Co-operative Business, in China - September
4. ICARWC Meeting and Regional Women Forum, Vietnam, December

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

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ICA AP Regional Women's Committee Meeting



Participants of the ICA Regional Women's Committee

From the Editor...

We bid farewell to 2008 and welcomed 2009 by organising of our very important events, the Regional Women's Committee Meeting and Regional Women Forum. The women forum made some important recommendations in order to achieve gender mainstreaming in co-operatives and appealed to all stake holders for urgent implementations of those recommendations. We also got to listen to speakers from ICA GEC, FAO and ILO. The papers presented by the speakers will be published in the news letter to reach out to the readers. We are starting with publication of paper of Ms Stefania Marcone in this issue. Hope you find the contents informative and useful. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Savitri Singh

The meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee was held on 1st December, 2008, in Hanoi, Vietnam. 5 members attended the meeting. Several members could not attend the meeting due to strike at the Bangkok airport.

In absence of the chair, Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, vice chair of the committee chaired the meeting. She extended warm welcome to the members and observers. The Vice Chairman of VCA made a special gesture by attending the meeting as a special invitee. He addressed the participants and extended warm welcome as the host.

The election of the committee held. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka from JCCU, Japan has been elected as Chairperson and Ms. Norma Preyaras from NATCCO, Philippines has been elected as vice chair.

As on this meeting, there are 11 members from:

Japan, Iran, Philippines, Srilanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam, Indonesia and AWCF

Malaysia, Singapore, India and Thailand were the members but have not responded this year. Fiji is interested and may nominate one in near future.

This year, India and Malaysia may nominate one each. The secretary presented report of the activities. All the activities as planned have been completed.

Paper on progress reports regarding gender integration and women development activities in co-operatives have been presented by:

Philippines, Vietnam and AWCF

Regional Women Forum

The 5th International Co-operative Alliance Regional Women Forum was held on 2nd December 2008 in Melia Hotel of Hanoi, Vietnam

The theme of the Forum was "Advantage of gender integration in the economy of co-operatives in Asia Pacific". Total 50 women and men cooperators from 8 Asian countries participated in the forum.

The forum was divided into 3 sessions 1. Registration and opening 2. Business session comprising of presentation by speakers from International Agencies as well as from the ICA member coops in from various countries and 3. Closing which includes Presentation of the Forum's Resolution.

The Theme was further divided in to 2 sub themes in order to put more emphasis on major components of the main theme.

At the out set, the chair person of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, Ms.Hitomi Tanaka welcomed the guests and participants of the forum and thanked them for their presence.

Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, the president of Vietnam Co-operative Alliance delivered his opening address and declared the forum open. Mr.Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICAAP and Mr.Ivano Barberini, the President of ICA also addressed the forum and reaffirm their commitment for achieving total gender integration in cooperatives.

Ms Stefania Marcone, Chairperson of ICA Gender Equality Committee could not attend the forum as she was unwell. However, she sent her message and best wishes for success of the forum which was read by Savitri Singh, Gender Programme Advisor of ICAAP

Business session opened with Key note speech on the "Theme of the Forum".

Keynote speech on the theme" Advantage of gender integration in the economy of co-operatives in Asia Pacific" was delivered by Speaker Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Representative from Nepal. Ms. Lan has rich experience of working for women farmers in several Asian countries as FAO Representative. She talked about significant contribution of women as food provider for the family as well as the community and focused on various FAO programmes for socio-economic development of women to achieve food security.

Ms. Stafania was originally scheduled to make presentation on the Sub-theme I: Women's entrepreneurship development for economic growth. However, Ms.Maria Elena Chavez Herting, DDG of ICA & secretary of the Gender Equality Committee read



Participants of 5th ICA Regional Women's Forum

out the paper of Ms. Marcone as she was not well.

We invited the ILO country Director from Vietnam to speak on Sub-theme II: Equity and equality in co-operatives for economic development. She said that co-operatives are the very important strategic institutions for economic growth of women. She also informed about ILO programmes for empowerment of women through co-operatives.

Speakers from ICA member organisations, Ms.Fukushiro, from JA ZENCHU, Japan and Ms. Armi Zannudin from ANGKASA, Malaysia presented country perspective and shared best practices.

The regional perspective was shared by Ms. Sally Ganibe, Executive Director of AWCF, Philippines which is a member organisation of ICAAP Regional Women's Committee.

After the presentations are over, the participants got time to interact with the speakers and asked questions.

After the speeches on themes and sub themes, a Panel Discussion was held. 2 international panelists could not join due to strike at Bangkok airport. The names of the panelists are Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Ms. Armi Zannudin and Mr.Shil Kwan Lee. The topics of discussion are:

a. Joint membership of couple/spouse of the member in agriculture cooperatives for increasing number of women in cooperatives

b.33% reservation for women at all levels, especially at leadership for active participation in cooperative business.

Based on the conclusion of the panel discussion, the forum resolved a number of actions by ICA as well as all the members, partners and stake holders.

The Chair Person of the ICARWC presented these resolutions of the women forum at the ICA Regional Forum to be adopted by the ICA.

- The resolution of the ICA Regional Co-operative Minister's Conferences (4th to 8th) must be acted upon urgently
- All the ICA member co-operatives, associate members, and partners must amend their respective co-operative law to accept dual membership of spouse in all type of co-operatives and especially in agriculture co-operatives. The spouse should be considered as full member for all the practical purposes and benefits of the membership, including right to vote and stand for election
- Minimum of 30% in membership, management and leadership position of the co-operatives
- ICAAP to organize national and regional conferences/workshop to discuss legal issues/co-op laws towards gender mainstreaming and increasing women's participation at leadership and decision making positions
- All co-operatives should collect and provide information on best practices in respect of enabling law and other legal provisions
- Capacity-building of women through various media forms
- Strengthen partnership with men towards gender equality and women empowerment
- For all co-operatives, every training should include gender awareness and family enrichment sessions
- The ICA should ensure compliance of recommendations by the members in the region within a mutually agreed time frame

Women's entrepreneurship development for economic growth

By Stefania Marcone for ICAAP Regional Women Forum-2008

Women represent more than one-third of all people involved in entrepreneurial activity, and are likely to play an even greater role when informal sectors are considered. Whether starting a micro-business up to leading a multimillion-dollar company, women entrepreneurs are becoming an increasingly important component of the world economy, its productivity growth, and its struggle against poverty. Great opportunities exist for governments at all levels to tap into the underutilized potential of women. Across the world, women from a variety of backgrounds are showing increasing interest in expressing their entrepreneurial spirit. When women encounter impediments to developing their full economic potential, the whole economy suffers. A better understanding of the potential contribution of women to the entrepreneurial landscape will allow the design of more satisfactory programs aimed at increasing their involvement in the marketplace. In addition to providing valuable knowledge about the entrepreneurial process, understanding and supporting the entrepreneurial behavior of women will have positive repercussions on a country's well-being and social equity.

According to OECD, women often become entrepreneurs because they look for a way out from exploitative working processes or because they don't have access to labor market as such. Once set up their small enterprise, women entrepreneurs face more obstacles than men in running their activities because of administrative burdens which are more severe for start ups and small business, lack of training mainly in financial matters, bottlenecks in credit access. Surprisingly even if women demonstrate high loan repayment rates, and default rates significantly lower than those of men, they still face consistent obstacles in obtaining credit by financial institutions.

Given the rapid changes in technology, the dynamics of globalization and fast changing business environment, businesses promoted by women in particular, face challenges of survival and growth. It is necessary to formulate appropriate strategies to stimulate, support and sustain efforts of women entrepreneurs in order to harness their potential and enable their continued growth.

Women are creating and running businesses around the world, contributing to economies that represent more than 70% of the world's population and 93% of global GDP (2007). A gender gap persists — both significant and systematic — in new venture creation and business ownership.

Some Key Issues

Women who are employed and have built a social network of entrepreneurs are more likely to become entrepreneurs. The social and economic benefits of working are driving women's entrepreneurship more than increased education or household income. Women's level of self-confidence necessary in starting a business is highly influenced by the culture and social norms of their native countries.

Regardless of gender or country group, employment matters to entrepreneurial activity. The likelihood of being involved in entrepreneurial activity is three to four times higher for women who are employed in a waged job compared to women who are not working, are retired, or are students. This suggests that working provides access to resources, social capital, and ideas that may aid in establishing an entrepreneurial venture.

Female entrepreneurs use less start-up capital than do male

entrepreneurs. This may be explained because women have limited access to venture funding compared to men. But it may also be that women do not seek venture capital to the same extent as men, because they fear encountering bias against women in the allocation of start-up financing, or because female entrepreneurial activity might be less capital-intensive than male activity given the kinds of business sectors that attract female entrepreneurs (e.g., consumer retail, health and beauty services). An additional explanation for the financing gap is that women are more financially risk-averse than men and try to "do more with less" to avoid increasing their financial obligations.

Some experts underline that policies and programs targeted to address entrepreneurs' difficulty in accessing capital are generally gender-blind so, since women are more financially risk averse, such programs could have a limited impact on women entrepreneurship. Good examples could be found in the non-profit sector micro-finance projects that, extending small loans for very short terms, help women entrepreneurs in gaining self-confidence as well as in establishing their own business, and in particular cooperative societies. Micro-finance is one of the most effective ways to empower women and increase their access to sustainable livelihoods and economic assets.

Credit provisions should be accompanied by supportive advisory and networking services to provide women with basic marketing information and advice. These include advisory bureaus, Internet access points to get updated information, included market ones. Business incubators, often established at universities or business schools, are of particular value to women entrepreneurs in providing an infrastructure, links to investors and market opportunities as well as personalized assistance and training. All these services could be channeled through cooperative organizations.

Another important element to highlight is the positive role that networks play in the new enterprises start-up activities. Women entrepreneurs' networks are smaller and more geographically concentrated than are men's, this is why being part of a regional and global network just like ICA, could represent an opportunity to strengthen cooperative women's entrepreneurship.

Women's associations and Women's cooperative Committees are important actors in the dissemination of business information and support services for new female-owned start-ups. Initiatives to foster women entrepreneurs should also be part of local development strategies and enterprise creation policies.

Moreover, women seem less likely than men to engage in entrepreneurial activity when such activity goes against the dominant view; cultural bias is a strong "invisible" obstacle to women empowerment. If so, policies should aim at promoting cultural awareness of the value of women's economic empowerment through self-entrepreneurship. Programs like education support, business and finance training, advertising campaigns, awards programs, and success story publications should be fostered.

There is a need for customized or targeted policies to overcome the gender gap in entrepreneurship; policy must be focused on how to

effectively change the business environment and social institutions to support women through employment, access to social and financial capital, and by raising self-confidence.

All this said, in order to reach an adequate enabling environment for women entrepreneurship to overcome the gap and become a substantial tool for women empowerment all over the world, strong public policies should go on the way of:

- ◆ high impact cultural operation putting equal opportunities in economics at the first place,
- ◆ provision of and support to networking experiences in order to reduce women vulnerability and isolation,
- ◆ Foresee "reconciliation" policies, in order to allow women reconciling paid employment with the job of looking after a family.
- ◆ Focus on business and financial training for women
- ◆ Free resources to support female entrepreneurship with dedicated financial programs
- ◆ Contribute with a gender sensitive legislation to break the cultural bias and make equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men real.
- ◆ Promote the access of women to innovative business sectors
- ◆ Promote pro-women financial tools

A multi-stakeholder approach is required to produce a local fabric supportive of women's entrepreneurship (the civil society, the economic actors, cooperative organizations and international institutions).

Cooperative women's entrepreneurship

Cooperative for its main features and characteristics, principles and values is a form of business in which economic and social goals are strictly linked. This two aspects make cooperatives particularly suitable for women's economic empowerment: they provides employment, they have flexible structures capable of adapting to the changing environment and circumstances, they are leading subjects in local and national contexts, they create networks capable of stimulating transnational and international collaboration, they contribute to create trust, promoting peace and social cohesion. Also for these reasons women join or set up cooperatives, in cooperatives they found answers to their need: a path out of poverty, to self-empowerment, to active participation, to count and have a voice.

In today's fast changing socio-economic scenario the need for innovative thinking and creative ideas is becoming a key success factor, also for the cooperative movement. Women are leading actors in innovating at social and economic level. Promoting gender equality within the cooperative movement becomes as such smart economics, because it injects new ideas, new business, new social awareness. A mutually beneficial relationship seems to link the cooperative movement and the process of gender empowerment; this is an element that should be strongly stressed! The self help and community support nature of cooperatives represent important factors for women's entrepreneurship, the cooperative movement at national level has also developed important policies and programmes to support the path of women's cooperative entrepreneurship and significant examples could be found in any world regions.

Another aspect that to me it is as much as relevant is the possibility to promote stronger collaboration among the different sectors of cooperative activity in order to create a whole system to strengthen women's business and making them in relation with other enterprises

with which to promote synergies, partnership, mentoring and expand market opportunities in the same country and abroad.

Cooperatives enable small scale entrepreneurs with limited resources to make the first small investments for their start-up businesses, can create economies of scale and broaden the access to markets.

The specific economic model represented by cooperatives is based on collaboration rather than on competition, this is particularly suitable in order to overcome isolation through networking women sharing the same experience and needs; the collaborative nature of the cooperative model also fosters trust and helps to develop social capital within local communities. The governance model is also a tool that goes beyond the economic aspect and makes women acquainted with decisional processes, democratic decision making, equal opportunities and weight among members. The proposal you will examine later on concerning the 33% of women all levels could be a momentum success.

Also, cooperatives tend to operate through mutually supporting networks in local, national, international structures, integrating cooperatives that operate in different functional areas. Also the virtuous dynamic between producers and consumers cooperatives can help building commercial networks for small scale start up businesses.

These are some of the strong points in fostering cooperative female entrepreneurship. Our experience as women cooperators shows us that worldwide, through cooperatives, millions of women have been able to change their life improving their living conditions, their families' and communities' finding their own way for self-empowerment and development.

Now it's time for the co-operative movement, as a whole, to be leader to further contribute in removing the visible and invisible barriers which still persist everywhere for women. This must be a common goal for civil society, governments, international community and economic actors as a whole, because equal opportunities for women and men will in turn create more opportunities for all and enable all to share the substantive benefits.

Programme-2009

1. Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development to be held in Malaysia in May-2009
2. Meeting of office bearers of RWC
3. Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Business (Exposure visit and networking for business development)
4. Publication of news letter

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Edited by

Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109.

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"Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development"



Participants and guests of the training program in Malaysia

From the Editor...

The world is reeling under Worst Financial Crisis ever. But all are not affected equally. As usual, poor and women are more vulnerable than others. However, the "Good News" is cooperatives have not reported any major loss due the financial crisis. There is no retrenchment, loss of business or collapse of cooperative financial institutions. This fact confirms the belief that cooperatives are best business and livelihood institutions for poor and women. We, at ICAAP, continued our endeavour to strengthen capacity of women as well as the coop institution for gender mainstreaming.

The ICA Americas organized a Women Conference in September this year to discuss impact of "Global Crises" on women in cooperative. They invited Asia Pacific region to share our experiences. We should take this time of crises as advantage for preparation of safeguard mechanism to avoid future crises. We, the women of Asia Pacific, in solidarity with women in Americas and Africa and Europe appeal to the cooperative institutions to take lessons from this crises and strengthen their capacity to help more and more people in need.

Savitri Singh

Women development and gender mainstreaming in cooperatives is one of the priority areas of ICA. We are very much concerned about low and negligible participation of women at all levels of cooperatives in the region i.e. 30% at membership and 8% at leadership and decision making. This is not a comfortable situation given the fact that 60-70 % of farming and food production work is done by women. Therefore, ICA AP is implementing a number of capacity building programme for the member cooperatives for gender mainstreaming and enhancing number and quality of women participation. Towards this endeavour, a skill development programme -"Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development" is being conducted regularly.

This year the programme was organized for the cooperative movement of Malaysia and held in Kuala

Lumpur from 28 June to 3 July, 2009.

This programme aimed at assisting the cooperative movement of Malaysia to review the status of gender integration and women's participation, constraints and possible solution to enhance the quantitative and qualitative participation of women.

The methodology involved presentation of status paper by ANGKASA and discussion on various aspects facilitated by resource persons. The discussion led to creating a road map followed by education and training on various skills crucial for quality participation in cooperative business and

management. Besides training on business issues, a session was also held on social and developmental issue of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

The following topics were addressed during the programme:

- Effective and gender-responsive leadership
- Entrepreneurship development
- Various aspects of management of a co-operative i.e. product development, member services, accounts, balance sheet, book keeping etc.
- Coping with challenges and Personal Development
- HIV/AIDS Awareness

ICARWC-Office Bearer's Meeting



Participants of the OBM with Ms. Tanaka, Chairperson

Meeting of ICAAP RWC Office Bearer's was held on 7 September, 2009 in Manila Philippines. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chair Person, Ms. Emma Neiva, Vice Chair Person and Ms. Savitri Singh, Secretary attended the meeting.

Ms. Sally Ganibe, AWCF, Mr. Yoshi Nakamura, Advisor-ICAAP, Ms. Makiko Sakurai, JCCU, Japan, and Ms. Emy Santos, NATCCO, Philippines were also present as observers.

Work plan 2010 was discussed in the meeting. The following

work programme has been approved for 2010:

- a. OBM for preparation of Women Forum and review of Capacity building (TOT) programmes
- b. RWC Meeting and Regional Women Forum in China-2010
- c. Enhancing role of women in cooperative business
- d. New Letter

The next OBM will be held in the second quarter of year 2010.

ICA Regional Workshop on Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative



Participants of the Workshop in Manila

The ICA AP Gender Programme has organised a Workshop on “Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative Business” for women and men cooperative leaders of our region from 8-10 September 2009 in Manila, Philippines.

The consultations during the workshop focused upon cooperative endeavour to promote women’s interests for gender mainstreaming in cooperatives. The 3 days programme consists of one day workshop followed by 2 days study visits to few successful cooperative businesses in the country.

A group of about 15 women and men cooperators from India, China, Nepal, Japan and Malaysia participated in the programme to have an exposure of gender focused best practices in Pilipino cooperatives.



Participants during study visit to a manufacturing cooperative run by women in Manila

Co-operative Summit and women conference of the Americas-2009

The ICA America's has organized its first Cooperative Summit in September, 2009 in Guadalajara, Mexico. The ICA America VI Continental Meeting of Women Co-operators was also held in conjunction of the Summit.

The ICA America Regional Office for Americas invited Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme to participate in the Summit and Continental Meeting of the Women Cooperators. The topic of the discussion is : "Global crises panorama and its impact on Women's lives"

Savitri Singh presented a Report from the ICA Asia Pacific Region. The presentation is posted on the website at www.icaroop.coop

The Chief guest of the opening was Ms. Maria Elena Herting, Deputy Director General of ICA.



Maria Elena, Dy DG of ICA at the Women's Conference



Savitri Singh making the presentation

SPECIAL HIGH LIGHTS

This is a big news worth mentioning that the gender data in respect of women's participation at decision making level has improved a bit. This year there are 2 women holding the position of CEO in ICA member organizations.

Ms. Ibing Paraguya has been appointed as CEO of NAATCCO in Philippines and Ms. Anita Manchanda has been assigned the charge of CEO of NCUI, India till the time a regular CEO is appointed.

Upcoming events:

ICA RWC Meeting and Regional Women Forum -2010 will be held in China in September 2010. Details of the programme will be posted in due course.

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Email: savitrisingh@icaroop.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109. Fax : 26888067

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HURRAY!!!! Women in Command



Savitri Singh, a women co-operator, Ms. Dame Pauline Green and Maria Elena

From the Editor..

Welcome to the concluding year of the first decade of the 21st Century I wish you Happiness in all forms and vibrant energy in your lives to be able to Fulfil your dreams. We build on the year just gone by and move forward. The year ended with a positive indication. The economy in the world has started picking up so do the job markets and financial health of people. The cooperatives enterprises also will be more active taking the advantage of revival of the economy.

Last year 2009 was more significant in terms of gender mainstreaming in ICA organisation. The women have got their well deserved place at leadership and decision making. The first woman President is elected and 3 women in Asia became CEO of national cooperative movements. A women president of ICA may add on new dimension to management and leadership of ICA and especially to gender mainstreaming in cooperatives.

We hope to achieve more in this year and always. This year we will be meeting at ICA Regional Women Committee and Women Forum in China in September. Hope to see you there in full strength.

We appreciate your news and views and support to make this news letter more useful for the readers. With warm regards.

Savitri Singh

The year 2010 witnessed a Land Mark progress in Gender statistics and women leadership in cooperatives.

ICA President: Ms. Dame Pauline Green has created history by taking the position of ICA President when she was elected by the global board in November 2009. She is the first women president in the more than 110 year old history of Inter National Cooperative Alliance.

Mrs. Anita Manchanda has been officiating as CEO of National Cooperative Union (NCUI) of India.

Ms. Sylvia O Paraguya has been appointed as CEO of NATCCO Network, Philippines

Ms. Dolly Goh has been appointed as CEO of SNCF, Singapore.

This is the highest ever score of women Chief Executive Officers at national level in the ICA Asia Pacific Region.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Camp for cooperative members in Orissa and Chattisgarh, India



Participants at Raipur camp , Chattisgarh

The HIV/AIDS Awareness Camp for cooperative members were held in Orissa and Chattisgarh states of India in the month of October, 2009.

The one day camp was held in Raipur on 8 October and on 10 October in Berhampur , Orissa. The events were held in collaboration with UNDP, India, National AIDS Control Organisation of Govt. of India, NCUI and ICAAP.

The resource persons were invited from the State AIDS Control Societies of the respective states.

More than 200 cooperative members, leaders and officers from various cooperative sectors in the state have attended the programme. The majority of the participants were women. The event was widely covered by the print and electronic media in both the states.



Women cooperaters at Awareness Camp in Berhampur, Orissa

Women Empowerment Programme for LAO PDR



Women Participants at a cooperative shop

ICA has organised a training on "Capacity Building of Women Co-operative Leaders for Entrepreneurship development" for the women cooperative leaders and extension staff of Ministry of Agriculture of Laos. The training was held from 21-25 December, 2009 in Vientiane City.

Mr. Latsanivong Amarathithada, Director General, Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Vientiane Capital and National Assembly Member of Laos delivered opening address and Savitri Singh, Adviser-Gender Programme of ICAAP addressed the participants and gave brief introduction of the programme. Mrs. Pith Phomphet made a presentation on Gender relation policy on agriculture and forestry. Dr. Lasay Nouanthasing, Director, Section of Agriculture made a presentation on Lao national decree on cooperatives.

The target Group consisted of 30 Women Co-operative Leaders and extension staff. Savitri Singh was the Master Trainer and she covered following topics during the training.

- Gender and socialisation

- Cooperative values and principles
- Cooperative business and Gender issues in cooperatives
- How to start a small business
- Entrepreneurship development
- Leadership skills, communication, financial management, how to manage personal changes and stress etc.

The trainer discussed in detail "How to enhance women participation in cooperatives." There is need for building capacity of women as well as the institutions for gender mainstreaming in cooperatives. Following measures should be taken by cooperatives/ concerned institutions:

1. Removing barriers to empower women such as legal, social etc.
2. Capacity building such as:
 - a. allocating special budget for women development in the cooperative,
 - b. sharing work at home,

- c. day care centers at the co-operative & maternity leave,
- d. opportunity for education and training,
- e. Consideration for special need-providing services at convenient time and place.
- f. Functionary Training to women to manage cooperative business;

Measures for capacity building of institutions such as :

- ◆ Gender responsive planning in development process
- ◆ Express the mandate on women participation and development
- ◆ Improve information on situation of rural women and men
- ◆ Training and sensitization of govt. officials
- ◆ Develop methodologies for integrating gender and the need of women



Participants with Mr. Latsanivong Amarathithada and Savitri Singh

- ◆ Promoting good practices
- ◆ Reservation of seats for women

Office Bearers and Members of ICA Regional Women's Committee

1. Chair Person : Ms. Hitomi Tanaka from JCCU, Japan
2. Vice Chair Person: Ms. Emma Neiva from NATCCO, Philippines
3. Secretary: Ms. Savitri Singh
Advisor Gender Programme, ICA-AP New Delhi
4. Ms. Naning Mardiniah
AWCF/ FORMASI-Indonesia
5. Ms Aisyah Lutfi
DEKOPIN, Indonesia
6. Ms Toshiko Fukushima
JA-Zenchu, Japan
7. Ms. Tran Thu Hang
VCA, Vietnam
8. Ms. Chitra Subba
NCF, Nepal

NEWS HIGH LIGHTS

Regional Women Committee Office Bearers Meeting-April 2010

Regional Women's Committee Office Bearers Meeting will be held in April to discuss implementation plan of activities and projects for the year 2010. Two big events, Regional Women's Committee Meeting and Regional Women Forum

will be held in China in September, 2010. The Office Bearers discussion will be focused on organisation of these crucial events which are being held in conjunction with ICA Regional Assembly.

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International Women's Day- 8 March 2010 Message from ICA



Famous Women Market in north east India

From the Editor..

The Women's Day 2010 was celebrated with enthusiasm all over. The message of ICA President and GEC President is included in this issue though it has been circulated already to all our members in ICAAP . This year is very busy for us as you know that the ICA RWC Meeting and Regional Women's Forum will take place in September in Beijing. News items from the FAO and UNIFEM website are reproduced for your reading as it contains useful findings about relationship between gender inequality and land ownership. On the occasion of Women's Day-2010, a photo of busy "Women Market" of north -east India is included. This market gives opportunity to women entrepreneurs. Hope you enjoy reading this news letter.

Savitri Singh

"Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all"

This year the United Nations focuses attention on the fact that the respect of women's rights and the guarantee of opportunities leads to significant advances in social and economic development. Under the theme, "Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all", International Women's Day underlines the need for governments, civil society, women's organisations, the private sector, the media, the entire UN system, and individual women and men to join forces in making important changes to policies, programmes, attitudes and behaviours to ensure that women fully participate in economic and social life.

Nearly every study that addresses the impact of women's participation in the economy concludes that gender equality is not only the right thing to do, it also makes good business sense. There are business studies showing that the higher percentage of women in decisionmaking positions, the more successful and efficient enterprises are. In times of economic stress, there is no business argument that can counter the value-added of investing in women.

Similarly development studies over and over show that investing in women

has a high return improving livelihoods, improving access to education for children and health for all, and reducing poverty in general terms, thus making an impact on overall national economic and social development.

In the co-operative movement, there are similar indications that women's participation leads to successful enterprises that fully serve the needs of all members and their families. Women are participating in co-operatives sometimes making up a very significant proportion of the membership and workforce as a recent ICA Gender Equality Committee survey is showing.

The evidence abounds for why it is in the interest of all to make women's rights and opportunities a priority and yet progress at all levels continues to be slow. Despite this, ICA and its Gender Equality Committee wish to underline the important contribution made by the worldwide co-operative movement in creating a culture of mutual respect and its commitment to democracy and participation. All over the world, co-operatives contribute to the challenge of gender equality by implementing at various levels gender equality policies and programmes, providing co-operators with awareness-raising, training and education, and decent work. Furthermore, co-operatives are promoting this model of business to women entrepreneurs who often find that this form of enterprise allows them the flexibility and alternative management structures that they seek – an efficient business model that takes into account their specific needs and that promote their socio-economic empowerment.

More action is nonetheless required. Co-operatives must intensify their efforts in improving gender equality in

Dame Pauline Green
President
International Co-operative Alliance (ICA)

particular at this time of economic instability. Co-operative resilience can only be reinforced when programmes to ensure equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men are implemented, particularly at senior levels in our movement. On the one side, there is continued need to review national and co-operative policies and cooperative statutes and bye-laws to ensure that these do not constrain women's access to equal opportunities including the right to own land and other property. Innovative strategies are needed to promote changes in organisational culture, rules of procedure and working methods as well as address constraints related to lack of time (work-family balance), and lack of personal security.

There is also the need for attitude changes. Too often obstacles in the form of negative stereotypes about women's leadership potential continue to limit change and progress. Specific measures to encourage and support women's participation and enable them to seek and gain senior leadership positions should be enhanced, including management and leadership training, formalised mentorship programmes and sustainable financial support. On the 8th March 2010, International Women's Day, we call on ICA member organizations and co-operators, to review and reinforce their commitments, policies and programmes to make gender equality a reality.

Let us be leaders in assuring progress for all by taking important steps to booster women's rights and access to participation and leadership in co-operative enterprise. Let us begin by asking all our members to ensure that from this year onwards that their representative delegations are truly gender-balanced.

Stefania Marcone
Chair
ICA Gender Equality Committee

Meeting of the Office Bearers

The RWC Office Bearer's Meeting was held on 14 April, 2010 in the office of JCCU in Tokyo. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chair Person and Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme of ICA-AP and Secretary of the RWC were present. Dr. Chan Ho Choi, Regional Director of ICA-AP and Mr. Amano, Manager –JCCU has attended the meeting as special invitee and Mr. Yoshimitsu Nakamura, ICA-AP and Ms. Makiko Sakurai from JCCU have been present as observers.

The meeting was held to discuss important issues such as arrangements for forth coming Regional Women Committee

Meeting and Women Forum to be held in China in September this year. One of the important issues was review of Training programme. The usual business of the committee such as election of one vice chair, work plan 2011 etc. have also been discussed in the meeting.

Dr. Choi observed that RWC is one of the oldest active and educational committee of ICA-AP. He mentioned about UN Co-operative Year 2012 and relevance of women empowerment to celebrations of coop year. He further suggested that in the regional assembly we have thematic forums where women committee can play a central role so



Ms.Tanaka and Dr.CHOI with participants of Office Bearers Meeting

that co-operatives can be inspired. ICA-AP is increasing sectoral and thematic committees. The women committee can intervene not only in consumer but also in other sectors,

especially in agriculture, credit union and housing etc. We should develop new grass root strategy for women movement into co-operatives.

News from FAO on gender issues

Supporting Asia-Pacific agriculture with better data
Access to agricultural land emerged as the number-one source of gender inequality in national gender profiles compiled for the first time ever in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Vietnam.

In Cambodia, female-headed households have access to about 21 percent less land than male-headed households, while in Lao PDR and Vietnam; they have 16 and 27 percent less land, respectively.

These details were among those included in profiles published after nearly one year of re-tabulation and analysis of existing government census data and other statistics. Technical and financial support for the initiative came from a strategic partnership between FAO and Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

The initiative, Strengthening National Capacities for Socially- and Sex-Disaggregated Data in Agriculture and Rural Development (SDD project), addressed the need for high quality, reliable statistical data gathered according to sex and age for the food and agriculture sector – data that could help the Asia-Pacific region to more effectively target agricultural and rural development policies and programmes.

The profiles showed that in Vietnam, less than a tenth of all commercial farms were owned by female-headed households. And in the mountain-plateau zone of

Cambodia, the average land size of female-headed households was up to 54 percent smaller than in male-headed households, leading female-headed households to produce up to 8 times less rice.

While the profiles looked closely at access to land, crops produced, access to equipment and other resources for use in farming, fisheries and forestry, some of the data also looked at a broader range of economic and social details that could provide information on gender in agricultural households. These areas included access to financial services; literacy and educational level; available technology and training; communication sources, and access to food, drinking water and sanitation.

The tables revealed gender inequalities in access to productive resources, as well as basic amenities and social services. In Laos, women had fewer alternative income and loan opportunities, spent a greater portion of their total expenditures on food purchases, and had less access to safe drinking water than men.

In Vietnam, statistics also showed a disparity in access to financial services. Proportionally fewer female-headed households accessed loans – 24 percent compared to 33 percent in male-headed households.

In Laos, 9 percent fewer women than men had completed primary school, while in Cambodia, the proportion of

educated males in agricultural households was 10 percent higher than that of female members.

The country profiles were created during the process of developing, testing and finalizing a Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF), which is designed to guide both producers and users of statistics through a series of standard stages for producing sex-disaggregated data.

The stages include identification of gender and agriculture issues to investigate, the listing of relevant statistics or indicators, the identification of appropriate data sources, and the re-tabulation and analysis of existing data according to sex.

GASF was designed to be used by countries worldwide and is compatible with the World Programme for the Census of

Agriculture (WCA) and FAO statistical frameworks like FAOSTAT and Country STAT. It draws on several existing frameworks and toolkits designed for gender and poverty analysis and the collection of agricultural statistics.

The GASF was developed in recognition of the multi-faceted approach needed in order to document women's roles in agriculture and gender disparities in access to productive resources.

Government ministries in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam have indicated that they plan to incorporate the GASF in planning and analyzing the next round of agricultural censuses.

Source: FAO Website

Global Open Day

Starting on 7 June 2010, the Global Open Day for Women and Peace will break new ground. Throughout June, in more than 20 post-conflict countries, senior UN officials are opening their doors to women peace activists and leaders. Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General and other high-level officials will engage with women advocates to hear their concerns, and discuss how to increase women's participation in sustainable conflict resolution, peacemaking and peace building.

In a statement, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has

called the Global Open Day for Women and Peace an opportunity to "reinvigorate our efforts to realize the vision set out in resolution 1325." Recommendations from the meetings will be forwarded to the UN Security Council for it to consider in accelerating the resolution's implementation.

The Open Day is organized by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

ECOSOC 2010

Gender equality and the empowerment of women will be the main focus of attention when government ministers from across the world gather in New York on 28 June – 2 July for the annual high-level meeting of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Announcement

7th Meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee: 1st September, 2010

6th ICA Regional Women's Forum: 2nd September, Beijing, 2010

Dear Members,

This is to inform you that the ICA AP will be organizing the 7th meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee on 1st September in the R. No. 302 and 6th ICA Regional Women's Forum on 2nd September, 2010 in the R. No. 305 B at Beijing International Convention Centre in conjunction with the ICA Regional Assembly and ICA Regional Cooperative Forum on 1-5 September, 2010.

While the meeting of Regional Women's Committee will be attended by the members only and will deliberate on the

prescribed agenda being sent to you in due course of time, the Forum is open for representatives and observers from the member organizations.

This year Women Forum will be jointly organized with Youth Conference. The joint theme of the event is:

“Co-operatives: The Sector for Empowerment of Women and Youth”.

We have already sent invitation to all ICAAP members by e-mail along with the Registration Form.

You are kindly requested to send the Registration Form to savitrisingh@icaroap.coop

And savitrisingh2003@yahoo.co.in by e-mail/fax or post latest by 30 July 2010.

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Edited by : Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Email: savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Ext.109. Fax : 26888067

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC



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Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Business



A consumer co-operative shop run by women

From the Editor...

Welcome to the summer issue of the news letter! The September is coming close and preparations for Regional Women's Committee Meeting and Forum is speeding up. This quarter was also eventful as we had a workshop in Iran where cooperators from 7 countries got a platform to share and network. We celebrate Co-operative Day every year but this year is special as the theme of the year is focusing on women. As the member deliberate on the theme during celebrations, expect to have some useful outcome for creation of equal opportunity environment leading to gender mainstreaming. Please do send your news and views. Hope to hear from you.

Savitri Singh

A workshop on the topic " Enhancing Role of Women In Co-operative Business) was held in Tehran, Iran on 25th May, 2010 followed by 2 days exposure/study visit to agricultural and rural co-operatives in Shiraj Province of Iran. The programme has been organized by ICA-AP Gender Programme Division and was hosted by Central Organisation of Rural Co-operative (CORC) of Iran and Central Union of Rural and Agricultural Co-operatives of Iran (CURACI).

Men and Women Co-operative Leaders from 6 countries, namely- China, Malaysia, Nepal, Srilanka and India attended the programme. The cooperative members from Iran were also present. The objective of this program is to provide a common meeting ground to Asian cooperative women leaders/persons responsible for gender and women development in co-operatives for sharing information and experience about success stories and best practices of their co-operatives and most importantly help women to establish a network for mutual cooperation and business interest across the Asia & Pacific Region. The out come expected from such programme is to



The participants with DDG of ICA, Maria Elena and Managing Director of CURACI

- ❖ Establish contacts among women leaders/co-operative members and create network
- ❖ Collection of information and dissemination of best practices
- ❖ Identify mechanism to overcome factors that limit women's participation as organizer and decision maker
- ❖ Business information about products and services as well as know-how for women entrepreneurs
- ❖ Identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration
- ❖ Based on the success of the programme, more such programme will be organized in future.

The workshop opened with the welcome address by Mr. M.R. Raeisi Nejad, Managing Director of the CURACI. He welcomed Ms. Maria Elena Chavez, Deputy Director General of ICA, ICA-AP and the participant to Iran. He thanked ICAAP for choosing CURACI for organizing the workshop in Iran. He further spoke in detail about the organizational structure of CURACI, its activities and business. Ms. Maria-Elena Chavez Hertig, Deputy Director-General of the ICA was invited as special guest to attend the workshop. She extended warm welcome to participants and wished them a successful visit to Iran. She talked about ICA activities and how gender mainstreaming is one of the priority areas for it. She mentioned that CURACI and CORC are the special members of ICA and thanked Mr. Raeisi Nejad for his co-operation in hosting the workshop. She also thanked ICAAP for the opportunity to meet with cooperators in Iran. Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor- Gender Program of the ICA-AP also welcomed the participants and gave introduction of the programme such as background, significance and benefits of organizing such workshops. She said that the platform like this provide opportunity for women

cooperators to build relations and form network for mutual business development.

Business session commenced after the formal opening. First part of the business session was the introductory session for environment building in which experience /information sharing was done by the organizers and host country. Ms. Lida Sadhighiyan, Head of Women Affairs of Rural Co-operative Division of CORC made a presentation and shared detailed information on how CORC has developed projects for helping rural women through co-operative business model.



The Tissue Paper packaging Co-operative

Mr. Masoud Samayee, Managing Director of Sabahang Co-operative of Iran made a presentation and focused on how this multipurpose co-operative is helping in gender mainstreaming.

Ms. Saahla Moini, Director manager of Sepidan women



The customers at the bread co-operative window

rural cooperative made a presentation on "Rural women co-operatives in Fars Province of Iran".

She informed that Fars province with 1.7 hectare of agricultural lands and 10 million tons of various kinds of agricultural products has got the best rank among provinces in Iran. Due to high agricultural production in this province during last 50 years, 500 rural and agricultural women cooperative companies have been established which caused enhancement of development in agricultural sector.

The most important activities of Women Rural Co-operatives in Fars:

1. Enhancement of rural women contributions in families income.
2. Strengthening women's position in social, political interrelate.
3. Strengthening women presence by taking part in social and economic activities and fair
4. Rural women societies' vigilance and emphasis on their roles in families focuses from cultural, religious, moral point of view.
5. Using women leisure time by creating native jobs .
6. Varying the activities of cooperatives by using native knowledge.
7. Preventing the migration of men from villages due to women's economic activities .
8. Women's presence in national ceremonies.

Existent situation of Women cooperative companies

No. of cooperatives:	26 co.
No of the villages:	93
No of shops and offices:	26
No. of members	5518
Capital:	1524000000
Credit units:	26

Ms. Maria Elena Chavez spoke on the topic "Gender Equality in Cooperatives-ICA Global Perspective".

Ms. Savitri Singh made a presentation on "Gender integration and situation of women in co-operatives in Asia Pacific".

The participants from various countries shared information about their cooperatives as

1. ALL China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives, China
2. ANGKASA, Malaysia
3. The Raj Laxmi Women Co-operative Bank, Jaipur, India
4. The District Co-operative Bank, Muzaffar nagar, India
5. The Consumer Co-operative Federation of Sri Lanka
6. The Valley Multipurpose Co-operative Ltd., Kathmandu, Nepal
7. Second and third day were devoted to visits to agriculture and rural co-operatives, especially women cooperatives.

The participants visited to the following co-operatives:

1. Fatemieeh Rural Women Co-operative, Tafihan



Students of Nursery School run by co-operative

2. Fatemieeh Rural Women Co-operative, Shaporgan
3. Passargad Rural Co-operative Union and its member cooperatives

The women cooperatives are running successful business of tissue paper manufacturing which is supplied to the consumer outlet run by the co-op itself. Hence, there is no much problem of marketing.

Similarly, we visited to a fresh bread making unit run by the women co-operative.

There is popular demand for the bread in the local area itself and we saw a long queue of buyers at the bakery.

Both these units manage to generate some profit and are self sustaining. The CORC supports these units (co-operatives) with funds and loans.

The women cooperative also runs a nursery school for children of the members and local residents.

We had a briefing session at the office of Passargad Rural Co-operative Union. The Managing Director of the Union informed that 5 primary cooperatives are the members of the union. The co-operative members are basically farmers and the main crops are vegetables and wheat.

We visited to cucumber and tomato farms of the members.

A brief closing ceremony was held on 27 May evening in Shiraj. Mr. Khairad, Head of the Minister of Agriculture of Fars Province and other officials of the co-operative department were present. Mr. Khairad thanked the participants and the ICA for coming to Fars province. He said that it was an important event for the cooperatives of Fars Province to meet with foreign delegates and exchange information with cooperators of several countries. He spoke about women cooperatives in Iran and important role of co-operatives in socio-economic empowerment of women.

International Cooperative Day Celebration

Co-operative Day is being celebrated every year on the first Saturday of July month.

This year's day is 3rd July, 2010.

The theme of this year is "Co-operative Enterprises Empower Women". This year's theme highlights how the cooperative model of enterprise can successfully empower women. It links to the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action ([Beijing+15](#)) which sets out the internationally agreed agenda for women's empowerment. Co-operatives have a key role to play as they are able to respond to both women's practical and strategic needs. Whether it be through women only co-operatives or co-operatives made up of women and men, they offer an effective organisational means for women members and employees to raise their living standards by accessing decent

work opportunities, savings and credit facilities, health, housing and social services, and education and training. Co-operatives also offer women opportunities for participation in and influence over economic activities. Women gain self-reliance and self-esteem through this participation. Co-operatives also contribute to the improvement of the economic, social and cultural situation of women in other ways including promoting equality and changing institutional biases.

For the ICA Message on the "DAY" and for more information, please visit following website:

(source: <http://www.ica.coop/activities/idc/2010.html>)

Please do send report of your celebration to us for wider publicity.

Best Wishes & Happy Co-operative Day- 3rd July 2010



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC



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ICA Regional Women's Forum-2010



Participants-ICA Regional Women Forum-2010

From The Editor....

The two big events of the year, the 6th Regional Women Forum and Women's Committee meeting concluded with hope for future. As you are aware, the problems faced by women seems to be never ending despite considerable achievements by women in the society and efforts put in by governments and civil societies. The co-operatives are no exception as far as problems of gender integration is concerned. Due to persistent efforts of RWC and support of ICA -AP members, visibility of women has improved over the years and gender statistics shows some development. But the pace is slow and a lot has remains to be done to achieve the minimum. As always, the ICARWC and Women Forum resolved to continue efforts to reach to the aim. Hope you enjoy reading what happened in Beijing in September-2010.

Please do send your news and views.-

Savitri Singh

The 6th International Co-operative Alliance Regional Women Forum was held on 2nd September, 2010 in Beijing, China in conjunction with ICA Regional Assembly and related events.

This was a Joint event. 5th Youth Conference was also jointly held with the 6th Women Forum.

The Theme of the Forum was decided keeping in view participation of youth as well. The theme was "Co-operatives: The Sector for Empowerment of Women and Youth". The Theme was further divided in to 2 sub themes in order to put more emphasis on and address to the concerns of women and youth exclusively as mentioned below:

Sub theme no. 1: Women's Livelihood and Leadership through Co-operatives.

Sub theme no. 2: "Socio-Economic Empowerment of Youth through Co-operatives".

40 participants from following 10 countries attended the event:

India, China, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Japan, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Korea

The programme of the forum was divided into 4 sessions:

Registration and opening, Business session comprising of presentation by speakers, Group discussions, Closing which includes Presentation of the reports of the group discussions and Forum's Resolution.



Dr. C P Singh Yadav delivering the opening address at Opening Session

The opening ceremony was facilitated by Ms Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Programs of ICAAP and Secretary of the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia-Pacific (RWC). She initiated the program by welcoming the participants. She gave a brief background of the ICAAP initiatives on Gender main streaming in co-operatives and Role of Regional Women's Committee. She also introduced the outline of the day's program to the participants. Thereafter, she invited Ms. Hitomin Tanaka, Chairperson of the ICA RWC to address the participants.

Ms Tanaka is the Vice Chairperson of Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union and Vice Chairperson of ICA Regional Board. She has vast experience of promoting women in consumer co-operatives in Japan. She extended a warm welcome to the participants and thanked them for attending the Forum. She spoke about the endeavor of the Regional Women's Committee for empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming in co-ops in the region.

Dr. Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, Chairman of National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) was invited to deliver the opening address. Dr Yadav said that platforms like the women forum are very important for organizing stake holders and providing opportunity to discuss issue of equal participation of women and youth in social and economic activities.

Dr. Yadav delivered his opening address and declared the forum open.

He said that I appreciate the Women's committee for choosing the very appropriate theme: "CO-OPERATIVES : THE SECTOR FOR EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN and YOUTH". Women and youth are very important components of the society- women are the backbone , and youth is the future. This is very true for co-operative sector as well. Almost 55% of food production is done by women in Asia as well as many other countries in the world. Majority of the co-operative members are related to agriculture.

Secondly, the co-operatives business needs young generation to gradually take over from the old so that new vision and methodology of young people can take co-operatives to new heights.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, former Regional Director of ICAAP presided over and chaired the session. He introduced the speakers and facilitated Question and Answer session.

Keynote speech on the theme "Co-operatives: The Sector for Empowerment of Women and Youth" was delivered by Ms. Miyea OH, Chairperson of iCOOP Goyang /President of Mutual Aid Society For Enhancing Korean Agriculture .

It is a mutual aid society established by the members of iCOOP KOREA to support local co-ops and agricultural producers. Ms. OH started her address by reminding the participants, the message of this year's International Co-operative Day. It was "Co-

operative Enterprise Empowers Women." At iCOOP KOREA, most of the leaders in 76 local co-ops are women. And, of course, women are playing a crucial role also in representative and executive posts. She said that she believes this year's message bears a great significance for iCOOP KOREA, because its progress for the past decade is attributable to devotions and hard efforts made by the women leaders across the nation.

She proposed following tasks to participants:

- To study and create a variety of co-operative business models where both women and the youth can participate.
- However, we cannot draw interest and support from the public only by promoting values and social significance we pursue. Co-operative enterprises should at least secure the productivity level as high as the average business productivity level in the market.
- In addition, we should strive to promote the values and alternatives of co-operatives toward women and the youth.
- Lastly, I would like to highlight two things. First, it is imperative for us to take a closer look at the realities that each country's women and the youth are facing, and it is also important to come up with alternatives to promote co-operation and solidarity with marginalized women and the youth.

Her speech is placed on the www.icaroop.coop. May also refer to <http://www.icoop.or.kr> for more information about iCOOP, KOREA.

Ms, Hiroka Yanagishi, Vice Chairperson of Japanese Consumer Co-operative presented paper on the sub theme I: "Women's Livelihood and Leadership through co-operatives".

She presented her paper based on the activities of her co-operative in Cobe, Japan.

Mr. Ilham Nasai, Vice Chairperson of the ICA Regional Youth Committee delivered speech on the sub theme II: "Socio-Economic empowerment of youth through co-operatives".

Mr. Lee, Chair of the session initiated discussion on the equal participation of women in co-ops, especially in agricultural co-operatives as the requirement of membership is ownership of land and most of the women do not own land. He cited the example of Korea where law is

enacted to allow two members per family in order to provide opportunity to women. He invited Savitri Singh of ICAAP to give more information on the issue. Ms. Dolly Goh, CEO of Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), Ms. Emma Neiva of NATCCO NETWORK and other participants also shared their views.

Ms. Pauline Green, President of ICA joined the forum for a short while and interacted with the participants. She emphasized the need of women empowerment and gender mainstreaming in co-ops. She shared ICA vision on co-operatives as equal opportunity organizations. She informed the participants about UN proclamation of co-operative year 2012 and its significance for co-operatives to emerge as a strong socio-economic sector.

Business session concluded with summing up of discussion by Mr. Lee.

In the post lunch session, participants were divided into 2 groups, one for women and one for youth. The topic for the discussion was: "Co-operative for Professional Development of Women and Youth".

The members discussed the topic in detail and a report was presented by each group.

Report of the Women Group:

The women co-operators recommended the following:

The co-operative system can help professional development of women:-

- By conducting sex disaggregated data for appropriate design of products and services for both women and men
- By conducting a need-based capacity building programs, i.e., Gender Sensitivity Training and creating awareness to change the stereo-type mindset, Leadership Training, Responsible Parenthood, Livelihood and the like.
- Working in tandem with the government, to reach out for information on various gender issues.
- By conducting regular forums participated by women delegates from ICA member countries for exchange of best practices.
- For ICA to recognize successful women, youth and other co-operative leaders by giving AWARDS during ICA Assembly.

Report of the Youth Group:

The members of youth group agreed that there is a need of to promote youth co-operatives professionally by co-operative organizations.

The group focused their discussion around certain KEY ISSUES:

- Unemployment
- Education (social illness)
- Environmental (climate change)
- As co-operatives cater to the people with limited needs and aspirations, students and youth in general, automatically qualify under this group.
- The idea of a coop press in the colleges and universities could help the young citizens of the

world to be self sufficient and live independently.

- The Idea: As soon as the young students qualify into university, he or she is sou-moto inducted into the co-operatives wherein he or she becomes a member and contributes to the project.

The co-operatives own newsletters and periodicals. One way of employment for youth could be writing/ contributing articles, reports etc. for the periodical.

For example, sports, debates, academics and research on relevant issues.

ECONOMIC ASPECT

- The Newspaper could carry advertisement material of various co-operative enterprises in the world. This will give the co-ops much needed publicity especially with the International Year of Co-operatives only a year away. The Newspaper too would be able to earn its costs with such advertisements and promotional material.

Recommendations of the Youth group:

- The co-operatives are suitable organization for young students who have limited resources as co-op can provide part-time employment along with education.



Ms. Tanaka Presenting the report

- A system of employment to entice the youth to get involved in the agriculture activities.
- More information / publicity about co-ops for awareness in general public.
- Home-based work for women (with child and home care) and entrepreneurship / self employment for youth.
- All the student in university should join co-operative and contribute to co-op activities.
- The students should be encouraged to write on various topics in co-op newsletters and periodical. This may be a part-time employment for them.

The Chair Person of the ICARWC presented these resolutions of the women forum at the ICA Regional Assembly to be adopted by the ICA.

Recommendation to RA:

The co-operatives can provide professional development for women by:

- Conducting survey to assess needs of women and design need-based products and services.
- Conducting need-based capacity building programs such as training of cooperative members on gender

sensitivity to change the stereo-type mindset, leadership skills, responsible parenthood and livelihood etc.

- The co-operatives should be aware of various government's programs on gender issues and work in tandem with the government to derive the benefit of such programs for their own members.
- ICA / co-operatives should organize regular forums / interactive sessions for exchange of best practices.
- ICA-AP should recognize successful women, youth and other cooperators by giving AWARDS during ICA Assembly.

Current situation of Women in Co-ops and Our Burning CONCERNS

- Socio-cultural barriers supported by generations of patriarchic system are too strong to be changed through awareness and persuasion.

Meeting of the Regional Women's Committee for Asia Pacific-2010



Participant of ICARWC Meeting

The meeting of the Regional Women's Committee for Asia Pacific was held at 2-5 pm on 1st September, 2010 at R.N.-303, Beijing International Convention Centre (BICC), Beijing, China.

Following members attended the meeting:

- Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chairperson
- Ms. Emma Neiva, Vice Chairperson
- Ms. Kruewan Chonlanai, Vice Chair Person
- Ms Tahmineh Toliatkashani
- Ms. Akiko SATO , represented by Ms. Chieko FUJIKI
- Ms. MI-YEA, OH
- Ms. Datuk Hajah Noraini Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Salleh
- Ms. Errum Sharif Bhaiji, Pakistan
- Ms. SUZUE UTO
- Ms. Savitri Singh, Secretary
- Dr.Chanho CHOI- Regional Director-ICA-AP, Special Invitee
- Mr.Yoshi Nakamura, ICA-AP,Singapore-observer

Besides members, 20 observers from 8 countries were also present.

The meeting started with welcome remarks by the Chair Person Ms. Hitomi Tanaka. Dr.Chanho Choi, Regional Director of ICA-AP also attended the meeting briefly at the opening session and extended warm welcome to the participants. Dr.Choi emphasized upon importance of

- Women face difficulty to get elected in decision making positions because of socio-cultural and religious barriers.
- Absence of supportive legal provisions in many countries.

Therefore, there is urgent need of adopting fast actions/measures.

Our all time recommendations to be acted upon by co-operative fraternity in the region:

Minimum 30% reservation of seats for women in membership, management and leadership position of the co-operatives in the region.

ICAAP to organize national and regional conferences and workshop to discuss legal issues/co-op laws towards gender mainstreaming, and revise the law to make women's membership easy and thereby increasing participation of women at leadership and decision making positions.

equal participation of women and men in co-operatives and the need of capacity building of women to take up leadership. He said that in order to achieve gender equality, partnership with men is important .He further suggested that since the ICA gender programme is working for gender mainstreaming, the name "women committee" does not reflect the vision and mission. The members may consider changing the name a gender committee. He cited the example of ICA Gender Equality Committee at ICA Headquarters in Geneva. Dr.CHOI talked to the participants about UN proclamation of Co-operative Year-2012 and suggested that the participants may collect co-operative success stories and send to ICA for presentation before UN.

Ms. Savitri Singh, secretary of the committee presented the report from January 2009-August 2010. The minutes of the last meeting held in Hanoi in December,2008 has been circulated. No comments or observations received. Hence,



Meeting in progress

the minutes has been approved by the Committee as it is. The position of second chair was vacant for a long time due to non availability of a suitable candidate. Election of office bearers was held to elect the vice chair.

Ms. Kruewan Chonlanai from AWCF was elected as second vice chair.

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Edited by : Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Contact : savitrisingh@icaroap.coop Tel: 6888250 Extn. 109 Fax: 26888067



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC



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Training of Trainers for Gender Mainstreaming



Participants with the Managing Director of CCS

From The Editor....

Season's Greetings! This is the last quarter issue of 2010. The concluding year of the decade saw activities for the cause of gender mainstreaming around the world as well as in co-operatives in the region. The United Nations and civil societies are making noises for ending all forms of violence against women. ICA along with coop members in the region is emphasizing on capacity building of women to help achieve economic empowerment which leads to liberation from many forms of discrimination against women.

This quarter we focused on Myanmar and worked with women and men co-op leaders and managers to train them for better co-operative business management. Local culture is positive towards women in respect of inheritance. However, in practice, overall situation remains the same as in other parts of the world. I have tried to including certain interesting information about Myanmar in this issue. Hope you enjoy reading it.

Savitri Singh

ICA-AP organized a Training of Trainers Programme on "Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development" from 19-23 October 2010, Yangon, Myanmar, for the co-operative leaders and trainers of Myanmar. The program was hosted by the Central Co-operative Society of Myanmar, an ICA member and technical inputs such as curriculum, training materials and resource persons were provided by ICA. 25 women and men participants attended the programme.

Mr. U Khin Maung Aye, President of CCS Delivered opening address and welcomed the participants and ICA delegates. Dr. Chan Ho Choi, Regional Director of ICA-AP delivered special address and emphasized upon the need of women empowerment and gender mainstreaming in co-operatives for over all development of co-operatives, Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor- Gender Programme of ICA-AP



Group discussion in Progress

and co-ordinator of the programme extended warm welcome to the participants and thanked CCS for their efforts in organizing the programme. She further deliberated upon the back ground and aim and objectives of the programme and briefly introduced the proceedings for 4 days to come.

Vice-Chaiman of CCS, Mr. U Kyaw Lynn, Mr.Kyaw Thein, Chief Executive Officer of CCS, Mr.Min Lwin , General Manager and other senior officers and Board of Directors were also present at the opening.

Mr. Zaw Win Deputy General Manager, CCS presented the Status paper of CCS giving basic information about the co-operative system in Myanmar, situation of women in co-ops and activities of CCS. There are about 12000 co-operative societies in Myanmar but visibility of women as members, leaders or managers are very low. There is no data available to know how many women are there in the co-operatives in the country.

Customs & Practices in Myanmar



Legal age of marriage - 20 years for women, puberty for men, [i.e. boys reaching physiological maturity to reproduce];

- Matrim onial rights of a Myanmar woman include.

- right to property,

the country.

Ms. Savitri Singh was the main resource person for the training. Ms.Aye Aye Khaine from UNDP, Ms. Tha Nwai Law from FAO, Myanmar and Mr. Wann More Micro and Small Enterprise Development Specialist , UNDP , Myanmar were the other resource persons who contributed significantly in providing knowledge and information to participants on various aspects of women empowerment and gender main streaming issues.

Gender sensitization, managing a co-operative business and gender issues in co-operative business were the main issues addressed in the training programme. This was the kind of first time that the participants had exposure to issues such as sex and gender and gender socialization process

which impacts over all gender balance in the society including co-operatives.



Women at work in a Yangon market

- right to restitution of a conjugal relationship,
- right to claim maintenance,
- right to divorce.
- Polygamy- allowed by Myanmar Buddhist traditions as well as the legal system.
- Equal legal rights to bank loans and other types of contracts
- But this is not true for all of the ethnic groups or national races of the country.Males have phon (superior power;) they can attain monkhood, and can enter certain holy places which are not accessible to women.

Work Plan-2011

- Meeting of Office Bearers and review of Training Manual
- Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Business
- (exposure visit and networking for business development)
- Management Capacity Building Of Women For Gender Integration and Co-operative Development (TOT)
- Publication of News Letter and activity report

Vice-Chairman of CCS, Mr. U Kyaw Lynn, Mr. Kyaw Thein, Chief Executive Officer of CCS, Mr. Min Lwin, General Manager and other senior officers and Board of Directors were also present at the opening.

The ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia-Pacific

Chair Person Ms. Hitomi Tanaka
Vice Chair Person of
Japanese Consumers' Co-operative
Union (JCCU)
3-29-8, Shibuya, Coop Plaza,
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo-150-8913 Japan.
Phone- 81-3-5778-8103

Vice Chair Person Ms. Emma Neiva
Women's Representative to
NATCCO Board
National Confederation of
Co-ops Inc. (NATCCO)
227 J.P. Rizal Street, Project-4
Quezon City-1109, Philippines
E.mail: ceo@natcco.coop

Chair Person Ms. KRUEWAN CHONLANAI
Manager, Central Finance Facility
Department Credit Union League of
Thailand (CULT) &
Chair Person
Asian Women in Co-operative
Development Forum (AWCF)
227, J P Rizal Street, Project 4
Quezon City 1109, Philippines
E-Mail : Kruewan9@hotmail.com

Secretary Ms. Savitri Singh
Advisor- Gender Programme
ICA-AP, 9Aradhana Enclave
Sect. 13, RK Puram, New Delhi
Tel.92-11-26888250
E-mail: savitrisingh@icaroad.coop

Members

1. Ms. Lida Sadaghian Bavil
Manager of Women Rural
Co-operative affairs
Central Organisation for Rural Co-operatives of Iran
753, Valli-e-Asr-Avenue, Tehran-15948, Iran.
lisa@yahoo.com
2. Ms Tahmineh Toliatkashani
Expert of Foreign Trade
Central Union of Rural Agricultural
Co-ops of Iran
78, North Felestin Avenue
P.O. Box 14155-6413, Tehran-15948, Iran
hmonshizadeh@trocairan.com
3. Ms Aisyah Lutfi
National Federation of Women's
Co-operatives (INKOPWAN)
Jalan Dharmawangsa Raya, no. 18
Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta Selatan 12160
phone: 62 21 7394961, fax.: 62 21 7222669
4. Ms. Akiko Sato
Chair Person
National Council of Agricultural Co-operatives
Women's Association
Central Union of Agricultural Coops(JA-Zenchu)
3-1, Otemachi 1-Chome, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo
Postal code: 100-6837
Phone: + 81 (3) 6665-6242
Fax: + 81 (3) 3217-5073
5. Ms. Tran Thu Hang
Vice Director
International Relations
Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA)
Tel/Fax: + 84-4-3843 1768
Mobile phone: +84-904574727
Email: thuhangvca@yahoo.com
6. Om Devi Joshi
Board of Directors
National Co-operative
Federation of Nepal Ltd. (NCF)
Bijuli Bazar, Kathmandu-10, Nepal.
Tel : 977-1-4781510/4781787 ;
Fax : 97-1-4781326
E-mail : nfc@wlink.com.np
7. Ms. MI-YEA, OH
Chair person
Mutual Aid Society for Enhancing
Korean Agriculture, iCOOP, Korea
Tel)82-2181-7914 Fax) 82-2-2181-7960
E.mail: omy3240@hanmail.net

8. Ms. Datuk Hajah Noraini Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Salleh
 Chairperson, ANGKASA'S State of Sabah Liaison Committee
 National Co-operative Organisation Of Malaysia (ANGKASA)
 WISMA UNGKU A.AZIZ, JALAN SS6/1 KELANA JAYA, 47301 PETALING JAYA, SELANGOR, MALAYSIA
 Phone No. +603 7800 7892
 Fax No. +603 7806 1519 / +603 7804 2315
 E-mail address: international@angkasa.coop

9. Ms. Errum Sharif Bhajji
 Executive, Women Wing
 Karachi Co-operative Housing Society
 Address: 66, Kokan Society, Alamgir Road, Bahadurabad, Karachi, Pakistan

Contact#: 9221--34532603, 34946972
 Mobile#: 00923002106353
 Fax#: 92213-4941795
 Email: errum99@hotmail.com
 Website: www.kchsunion.com

10. Ms. Suchintha Marses Deepanthi Fernando Chakrawarthige
 Director, COOPFED, Sri Lanka

11. Ms. SUZUE UTO,
 President
 National Association of FCA Women's Group Associations
 Tokyo
 National Federation of Fisheries
 Co-operative Associations (JF ZENGYOREN)

Economic Participation of Burmese Women

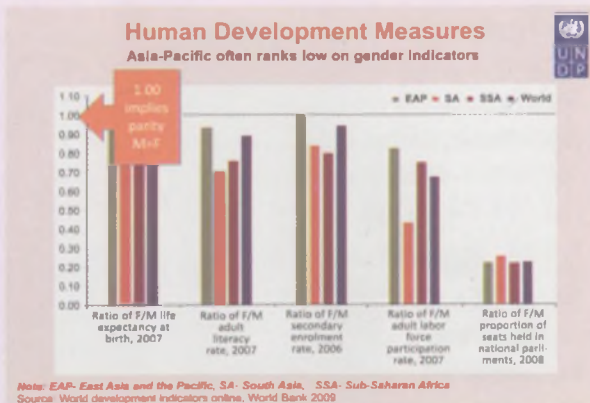
- 48.84% of women are in the labour force as compared to 80.57% of men
- 40.6% women wage employment in non-agricultural sector as percentage of total non-agricultural employees (ILO);
- Around 30% of women are in Wholesale and Retail Trades and in Restaurants and Hotel;
- 62.5% of workers in Communication (State Broadcasters) are women, but only 33% are in top or middle management;
- Daily wage for women were consistently below that of men, usually by a factor of 25-33%;
- While female teachers constitute up to 80% of the total staff, there is no female in Rectors position, except in the Institute of Nursing (Yangon and Mandalay).

News from members: iCOOP, Korea

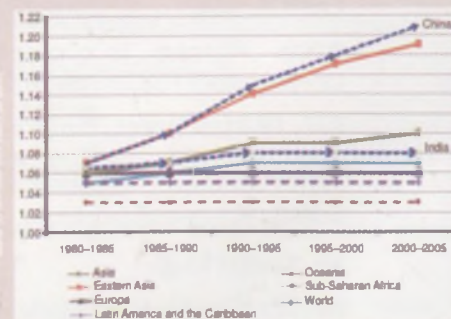
Korean Womenlink Co-op

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Some data about gender mainstreaming in Asia



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In 2007, the estimated number of females who were "missing" – who died as a result of health and nutrition neglect, or were never born in the first place – was close to 100 million in just seven Asian countries.

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 Edited by : Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.
 Contact : savitrisingh@icaroop.coop Tel: 6888250 Extn. 109 Fax: 26888067



ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC



Volume 5 No.25

Oct-Dec, 2010

For Private Circulation only

Training of Trainers for Gender Mainstreaming



Participants with the Managing Director of CCS

From The Editor....

Season's Greetings! This is the last quarter issue of 2010. The concluding year of the decade saw activities for the cause of gender mainstreaming around the world as well as in co-operatives in the region. The United Nations and civil societies are making noises for ending all forms of violence against women. ICA along with coop members in the region is emphasizing on capacity building of women to help achieve economic empowerment which leads to liberation from many forms of discrimination against women.

This quarter we focused on Myanmar and worked with women and men co-op leaders and managers to train them for better co-operative business management. Local culture is positive towards women in respect of inheritance. However, in practice, overall situation remains the same as in other parts of the world. I have tried to including certain interesting information about Myanmar in this issue. Hope you enjoy reading it.

Savitri Singh

ICA-AP organized a Training of Trainers Programme on "Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development" from 19-23 October 2010, Yangon, Myanmar, for the co-operative leaders and trainers of Myanmar. The program was hosted by the Central Co-operative Society of Myanmar, an ICA member and technical inputs such as curriculum, training materials and resource persons were provided by ICA. 25 women and men participants attended the programme.

Mr. U Khin Maung Aye, President of CCS Delivered opening address and welcomed the participants and ICA delegates. Dr. Chan Ho Choi, Regional Director of ICA-AP delivered special address and emphasized upon the need of women empowerment and gender mainstreaming in co-operatives for over all development of co-operatives, Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor- Gender Programme of ICA-AP



Group discussion in Progress

and co-ordinator of the programme extended warm welcome to the participants and thanked CCS for their efforts in organizing the programme. She further deliberated upon the back ground and aim and objectives of the programme and briefly introduced the proceedings for 4 days to come.

Vice-Chairman of CCS, Mr. U Kyaw Lynn, Mr. Kyaw Thein, Chief Executive Officer of CCS, Mr. Min Lwin, General Manager and other senior officers and Board of Directors were also present at the opening.

Mr. Zaw Win Deputy General Manager, CCS presented the Status paper of CCS giving basic information about the co-operative system in Myanmar, situation of women in co-ops and activities of CCS. There are about 12000 co-operative societies in Myanmar but visibility of women as members, leaders or managers are very low. There is no data available to know how many women are there in the co-operatives in the country.

the country.

Ms. Savitri Singh was the main resource person for the training. Ms. Aye Aye Khaine from UNDP, Ms. Tha Nwai Law from FAO, Myanmar and Mr. Wann More Micro and Small Enterprise Development Specialist, UNDP, Myanmar were the other resource persons who contributed significantly in providing knowledge and information to participants on various aspects of women empowerment and gender main streaming issues.

Gender sensitization, managing a co-operative business and gender issues in co-operative business were the main issues addressed in the training programme. This was the kind of first time that the participants had exposure to issues such as sex and gender and gender socialization process

which impacts over all gender balance in the society including co-operatives.



Women at work in a Yangon market

Customs & Practices in Myanmar



Legal age of marriage - 20 years for women, puberty for men, [i.e. boys reaching physiological maturity to reproduce];

• Matrimonial rights of a Myanmar woman include.

■ right to property,

- right to restitution of a conjugal relationship,
- right to claim maintenance,
- right to divorce.
- Polygamy- allowed by Myanmar Buddhist traditions as well as the legal system.
- Equal legal rights to bank loans and other types of contracts
- But this is not true for all of the ethnic groups or national races of the country. Males have phon (superior power;) they can attain monkhood, and can enter certain holy places which are not accessible to women.

Work Plan-2011

- Meeting of Office Bearers and review of Training Manual
- Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Business
- (exposure visit and networking for business development)
- Management Capacity Building Of Women For Gender Integration and Co-operative Development (TOT)
- Publication of News Letter and activity report

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The ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia-Pacific

Chair Person

Ms. Hitomi Tanaka

Vice Chair Person of

Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU)

3-29-8, Shibuya, Coop Plaza, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo-150-8913 Japan. Phone- 81-3-5778-8103

Vice Chair Person

Ms. Emma Neiva

Women's Representative to NATCCO Board

National Confederation of Co-ops Inc. (NATCCO)

227 J.P. Rizal Street, Project-4 Quezon City-1109, Philippines

E-mail: ceo@natcco.coop

Chair Person

Ms. KRUEWAN CHONLANAI

Manager, Central Finance Facility Department Credit Union League of Thailand (CULT) &

Chair Person

Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF)

227, J P Rizal Street, Project 4 Quezon City 1109, Philippines

E-Mail : Kruewan9@hotmail.com

Secretary

Ms. Savitri Singh

Advisor- Gender Programme

ICA-AP, 9Aradhana Enclave

Sect. 13, RK Puram, New Delhi

Tel. 92-11-26888250

E-mail: savitrisingh@icaroad.coop

Members

1. **Ms. Lida Sadaghian Bavil**
Manager of Women Rural
Co-operative affairs
Central Organisation for Rural Co-operatives of Iran
753, Valli-e-Asr-Avenue, Tehran-15948, Iran.
lisa@yahoo.com
2. **Ms Tahmineh Toliatkashani**
Expert of Foreign Trade
Central Union of Rural Agricultural
Co-ops of Iran
78, North Felestin Avenue
P.O. Box 14155-6413, Tehran-15948, Iran
hmonshizadeh@trocairan.com
3. **Ms Aisyah Lutfi**
National Federation of Women's
Co-operatives (INKOPWAN)
Jalan Dharmawangsa Raya, no.18
Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta Selatan 12160
phone: 62 21 7394961, fax.: 62 21 7222669
4. **Ms. Akiko Sato**
Chair Person
National Council of Agricultural Co-operatives
Women's Association
Central Union of Agricultural Coops(JA-Zenchu)
3-1, Otemachi 1-Chome, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo
Postal code: 100-6837
Phone: + 81 (3) 6665-6242
Fax: + 81 (3) 3217-5073
5. **Ms. Tran Thu Hang**
Vice Director
International Relations
Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA)
Tel/Fax: + 84-4-3843 1768
Mobile phone: +84-904574727
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Board of Directors
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WISMA UNGKU A.AZIZ, JALAN SS6/1 KELANA JAYA, 47301 PETALING JAYA, SELANGOR, MALAYSIA
Phone No. +603 7800 7892
Fax No. +603 7806 1519 / +603 7804 2315
E-mail address: international@angkasa.coop
9. Ms. Errum Sharif Bhajji
Executive, Women Wing
Karachi Co-operative Housing Society
Address: 66, Kokan Society, Alamgir Road, Bahadurabad, Karachi, Pakistan

Contact#: 9221--34532603, 34946972
Mobile#: 00923002106353
Fax#: 92213-4941795
Email: errum99@hotmail.com
Website: www.kchsunion.com

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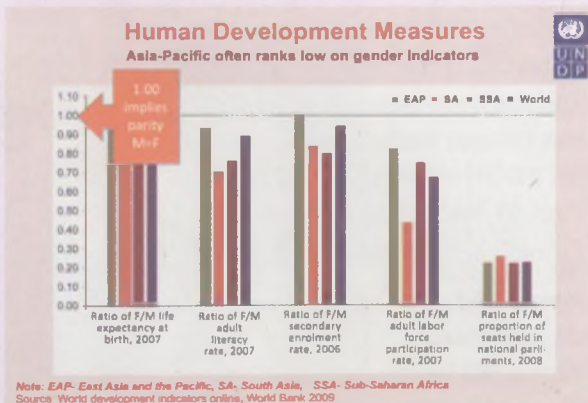
News from members: iCOOP, Korea

Korean Womenlink Co-op

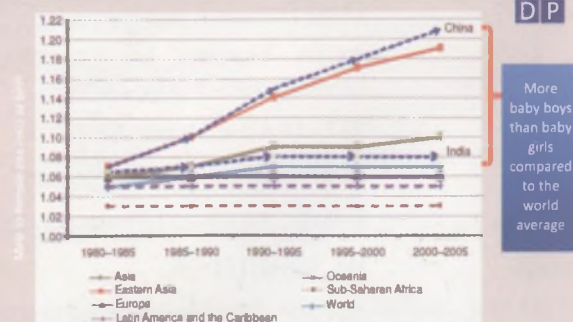
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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC



Volume 5 No.26

March - June, 2011

For Private Circulation only

Meeting of the Office Bearers



Armi, Paul, Hitomi Tanaka, Savitri and others in the meeting

From The Editor....

Dear readers, happy to present this issue with some interesting coop stories and articles. The UN proclamation of International Year of Co-operatives -2012 has presented us with opportunity to showcase co-operatives as most appropriate model for socio economic development of the society and especially of women. The ICA is encouraging members to spread awareness and reach out to youth and women to bring them into the fold of co-operatives for the growth and development of the movement. The coop stories are best method to generate interest. We try to present some stories of co-operatives creating jobs and opportunities. The speech of Ela Bhatt is to provide "food for thought " and also message of IWD-2011 from ICA for refreshing our action plan. Please share your feed back, news and stories to make the news letter more interactive. Thank You, Savitri Singh

Meeting of the Office Bearer's of ICA Regional Women's Committee was held on 21 June, 2011, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chairperson of the Committee chaired the meeting. The meeting was attended by the Chairperson, 2 Vice Chairs, Ms. Emma Neiva from NATTCO and Ms. Kruewan from AWCF and Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor-Gender Programme and Secretary to the committee. She convened the meeting and presented the progress report.

The members reviewed the progress of activities and discussed usual business of the committee, work plan for 2011 and preparation for major activities coming up next year-2012 such as Regional Women Committee Meeting and Women Forum to be organized in conjunction with the ICA Regional Assembly-2012. Datuk Nraini, RWC member from ANGKASA, Paul Sinnappan from Credit Co-operative Network of Malaysia, Ms. Armi

Zainudin, ICA Global Board member and other senior staff of ANGKSA participated as observers. In the light of International Year of Co-operatives-2012, the members

discussed to plan special events and Madam Armi suggested that ICA-AP should consider organizing a women conference in 2012 as part of IYC-2012 celebrations.

Review of “Leadership Training Manual for Women Leaders of Co-operatives”



The Manual Review Committee with Madam Armi

Low and negligible participation of women in co-operatives, especially at leadership level is a matter of serious concern for ICA. In order to build the capacity of women and men to facilitate and help women taking leadership role, a leadership training programme for co-operative trainers and leaders has been designed in 1998. Since then, the ICA-AP is organizing a Training of Trainers Programme (TOT) once in a year using the “Leadership Training Manual for Women Leaders of Co-operatives”. The manual was produced in collaboration with ILO-COOPNET.

Initially the response was good and the curriculum was appreciated by the participants. Gradually, a demand for more technical and need based curriculum was raised by the participants in some countries. The first Regional TOT was held in 2003 and some participants especial from Singapore, found the training very basic and content not so relevant to the co-operative environment in their country. Based on the feedback and suggestions received from the participants during trainings, the curriculum was modified a bit to meet up the requirement. More time devoted to cooperative enterprise management and financial management which included fund raising, loans, book keeping and accounts and reading and understanding

balance sheet of the co-operative.

However, in order to evaluate the usefulness of the programme and relevance of the curriculum, it was decided to approach the participants from countries where the programme was held in recent years. We designed a feedback form and sent to the participants of 4 countries in Feb 2010. However, Thailand (2008) did not respond and only following 3 countries sent the feedback:

1. Vietnam (2006)
2. Nepal (2008)
3. Malaysia (2009)

The participants (about 20-30 each country) appreciated the training and found it very useful for their work as a co-operative, trainer, manager and leader. Most of them conducted several training in their country using the reference from the manual. Gender socialization process is very informative for women and men. They recommended that the ICA should continue with such capacity building programmes for co-operative members in the region.

The current manual has got seven modules and several units in each module.

Hence, in the last meeting of the RWC, it was decided to

review the manual and a committee was formed comprising of following members:

1. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chairperson of ICARWC
2. Mr. Paul Sinnappan, Master Trainer
3. Ms. Sally Ganibe, Executive Director of AWCF
4. Ms. Armi Zanudin, ICA Board Director and Ex Director of

Co-op Stories from Malaysia

The meeting of the Office Bearers of the RWC was coincided with visit to a couple of women co-operatives and Day Care Centre operated by ANGKASA. As the host from ANGKASA, Ms. Armi extended warm welcome to the Manual Review Committee and gave a brief account of gender mainstreaming programmes in ANGKASA.



The manager briefing the visitors about the co-operative

Commencing from current year, the women committee of ANGKASA will be discontinued. A small technical committee on women comprising 3 members only will be functioning under the main training department of the organisation. This is a huge drawback/constrain towards achieving of gender mainstreaming in co-operatives.



Managers with skin and health care products

The participants visited to Koperasi Usahawan BIGDee Selangor Berhad which is run by a group of technical professionals. This co-operative manufactures and markets high end health care, beauty care products and electronic devices. They are the distributors of Wireless Security and Automation System via SMS.

Co-operative College of Malaysia

5. Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme, ICA-AP

The review meeting was held in Malaysia in June, 2011 and further action will be taken on the report of the committee in due course.

The participants also visited to a women co-operative "Koperasi Wanita Bersuadara Berhad (KWBB). The women members produce many variety of noodles, breads and biscuits etc which has very good market. During the interaction, the members expressed satisfaction about their association with the co-operative which helps them getting employment and income to support house expenses. Most of the workers at the cooperative were the members and they get paid for the work. The co-operative provides all the raw material for preparation of the eatables.



The members at work in KWBB factory



Some of the products

The ANGKASA is operating a Child Care Centre for the staff. There are 108 child care centers in the country out of which 27 are run by co-operatives and 71 are run by private people. ANGKASA has also organised course on "Women and Health". A book on the subject is under preparation and will be published soon.

UNDP Speech by Ela Bhatt

The founder of Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) India, Ms.Ela Bhatt gave a speech on June 27, 2011 Tarrytown, NY which has raised some serious concerns regarding approach to development. The excerpts of speech is produced below:

Respected Helen Clark, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, distinguished colleagues and friends. Thank you for inviting me to speak at the UNDP Global Meet to share some of my ideas on inclusive, equitable growth, and, on people, poverty and development. Coming from a labour organization, my world view begins with people. In this context, I am to stress today on fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals.

MDG is a pathetic story. The deadline for meeting the Millennium Development Goals is fast approaching, and still we find ourselves wondering why despite our best intentions and efforts, we have not made significant headway. Surely, it is time to reconsider our approach. After all, one cannot solve problems with the same thinking that brought us these problems in the first place. We need a fresh vision. We need to think seriously of a new approach.

At the Tallberg Forum, two women from Ghana said, We are farmers, but what we produce, we do not eat, and what we eat, we do not produce. The women grew cash crops for export, but at mealtimes, they ate frozen and canned food imported from another continent. Such ironies confront us at every corner today: farmers who till the land and feed the world go hungry themselves. World food consumption is increasing, but farming is no longer a viable occupation. Countries that have the most abundant natural resources are among the poorest. Their indigenous populations, neglected and pushed away to remote forest areas are now once again being driven from their lands because it is rich in timber and minerals. They join the growing numbers of economic refugees. Women work from dawn to dusk fetching water, collecting fuel, tending cattle, growing crops, processing grain, sewing, making baskets, but their labor is not considered work. They form the backbone of any developing country's economy but they remain invisible, their work considered marginal, and their contribution considered negligible to the national economy.

My appeal is that before we rush ahead to modernize and urbanize our world, armed with technology and capital, we must pause and look more closely at the economic and social structures that are collapsing, or are being dismantled in the name of development. Urbanization is not development. Technology, if it creates imbalances is not a solution. If profit is our only measure of success, we will turn a blind eye to the exploitation of people and nature. So long as the goal is maximizing production and consumption, and progress and wealth are measured by a

country's capital-intensive industries, exports, and GDP, we are embracing both imbalance and inequality. But if our goal is to build a society where everyone's basic needs for food, clothing and housing are fully met, and where the full potential of every human being is realized, we will need a radically different approach. We will need to get in partnership with our conscience; we will need to get in partnership with our fellow human beings and we will need a long-term partnership with Mother Nature.

It is time we paused and took a fresh look at older subsistence farming methods and horticultural practices, to learn some lessons in sustainability, in risk reduction, and in maintaining biodiversity. Their finely tuned production and consumption cycles which are holistic, and designed to meet human needs in the face of adversity, are systematically being broken. Even today, such self-sustaining communities and sustainable forms of agriculture and production still survive in our countries, but they are considered backward, inefficient, and unrealistic! Their plots of land are considered too small, their methods of farming too inefficient, their output too small, and their knowledge of local crops and local soils too specific and worthless! Indeed, where development is seen as membership in a cash-based market economy, where crops are a commodity, and market forces are large and increasingly distant and invisible, what hope does a simple farmer have of survival? This is our mistake. People who are still intimately tied to their land have many lessons to teach us. If we do not learn them, we are allowing our hope for the future to die; they are our lifeline.

International Women's Day-2011

The theme of the International Women's Day - 8 March 2011 is "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women"

Every year the ICA issues a message for the members relating to the theme. The message jointly issued by Dame Pauline Green, President, International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and Ms. Stefania Marcone, Chairperson, ICA Gender Equality Committee is placed at www.ica.coop.

Upcoming Events:

1. ICA-AP Workshop on Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative Business, 17-21 October, 2011, Indonesia
2. Meeting of the Gender Equality Committee of ICA, November, 2011 Cancun, Mexico

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ICA Regional Women's Committee

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE ICA REGIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC



Volume 5 No. 27

July - October, 2011

For Private Circulation only

ICA-AP Workshop on "Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative Business"



The group of participants at the Opening of the Workshop

From The Editor....

The autumn issue is here for you ! the co-operative world have been abuzz with series of significant events; the International Day of Co-operatives-2011 in July and the launch of - once in a life time opportunity for co-operatives - the International Year of Co-operatives-2012 by United Nations in October. We hope that co-operatives will use this opportunity to achieve it's agenda of gender equality. The gender mainstreaming activities are gaining momentum in the region as women are visible in significant numbers. A notable increase of number of women in capacity building and other programmes is witnessed. The workshop for providing networking opportunity for women and men co-operators was held and involvement of Indonesian women in co-operative business is incredible. Knowledge is empowerment- therefore, certain important information on relevant issues have been included in this issue which may be useful for the readers. We continue with our endeavour for a gender balance co-operative movement. Please share with us your stories. Savitri Singh

The ICA- AP Workshop on "Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative Business" was held in Jakarta, Indonesia in collaboration with DEKOPIN, Indonesia from 18 -20 October, 2011.

The 3 days programme included one day workshop followed by 2 days study visits to a few successful co-operative businesses in the country. The consultations during the workshop focused upon co-operative endeavour to promote women's interests for gender mainstreaming in co-operatives.

The total number of 13 participants (10 women and 3 men) from 6 ICA member countries in Asia and 20 local participants from Indonesia including- Ministry of Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Department and various co-operatives attended the workshop to have an exposure of gender focused best practices in Indonesian co-operatives.



The participants with Mr. Abdullah at the IKOPIN

Mr. Ilhamnasai, Board Member of DEKOPIN and Chairperson of the Youth Committee of ICA opened the workshop with Inaugural speech. Mrs. Savitri Singh of ICA-AP extended warm welcome to participants on behalf of ICA and gave a brief introduction of the programme. All the participants made presentations and shared experiences about their Co-operatives during the business session.

Ms. Dina Latifah Chairperson of the DEKOPIN committee of women empowerment made presentation on the theme "Enhancing Women's Role in Co-operative Business". Mrs. Savitri Singh shared information about the "Gender Integration and Situation of Women in Co-operatives in Asia

and Pacific". Ms. Lilis Solehati, Chairperson of BKWK (Badan Komunikasi Wanita Koperasi) also made a presentation and shared some interesting data.

Following participants from other countries shared and exchanged information:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. ACFSMC | China |
| 2. NATCOO and VICTO | Philippines |
| 3. NCUI | India |
| 4. NCC | Sri Lanka |
| 5. NCF | Nepal |
| 6. ANGKASA | Malaysia |



Participants at the IKOPIN coop store



The participants at the Kopwantera Bekasi

The Workshop concluded with a panel discussion and open forum.

During the second and third day of the program, the participants visited to following co-operatives and exchanged information

1. Indonesian Institute of Co-operative Management (IKOPIN)
2. KOPWANTERA, Jakarta
3. KOPPAS KRANGGAN, Jakarta

At the Indonesian Institute of Co-operative Management,

the participants have had meeting with the Rector, Mr. Burhanuddin Abdullah and other faculty members who explained about co-operative development initiatives of the institute. The participants also visited a consumer co-operative store run by the Institute in it's premises.

IKOPIN has produced several of co-operative leaders and professional who are serving the co-operative movement in the country and the students of the institute get placement with other commercial industries too.

The participants also visited KOPWANTERA which is a co-operative run by women. This is a successful business co-operative which provides marketing outlets to women members for selling their products. The shop sells handicrafts, dresses and food items. Ms. Dra. Yatti Surtiyatti Arief, Chairperson of the co-operative is a very active person and she runs the co-operative in profit with the help of a committed team of members. The participants also got the opportunity to visit KOPPAS KRANGGAN which is a credit co-operatives for traders. This co-operative is quite successful in the area of business. The main featur of the co-operative are , credit and capacity building of the members along with other welfare activities. At the end of the workshop, Certificate of participation was awarded to all the participants.

International Day of Rural Women 15 October -2011

The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on 15 October 2008. This new international day, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/136 of 18 December 2007, recognizes "the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty." Rural women play a critical role in the rural economies of both developed and developing countries. In most parts of

the developing world they participate in crop production and livestock care, provide food, water and fuel for their families, and engage in off-farm activities to diversify their families' livelihoods. In addition, they carry out vital functions in caring for children, older persons and the sick.

The theme for the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (27 February - 9 March, 2012) is: "The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges."

UN Secretary-General's

Message on the International Day of Rural Women 2011

This year's International Day of Rural Women falls at a time of heightened awareness of the important contribution women are making to social progress. Women have been rightly recognized for their role in supporting movements for democracy, human rights and peace. Their contribution to sustainable development is equally significant.

Study after study has demonstrated that rural women are pivotal to addressing hunger, malnutrition and poverty. They are the farmers and nurturers, the entrepreneurs and educators, the healers and helpers who can contribute to food security and economic growth in the world's most remote and vulnerable settings.

Despite the heavy responsibility rural women shoulder, they lack equal access to opportunities and resources. This hampers their advancement and holds all people back. More than 100 million people could be lifted out of poverty if rural women had the same access to productive resources as men, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Productivity on women's farms would increase up to 30 per cent. The number of hungry people would drop by as much as 17 per cent - an impact that translates into improvements for as many as 150 million individuals. The benefits would reverberate

Key Facts

(<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/english/fsheets/women.pdf>)

- In developing countries, women tend to work far longer hours than men. In Asia and Africa, studies have shown that women work as much as 13 hours more per week.
- On average, rural women and girls spend almost an hour each day gathering fuel and carrying water needed to prepare meals. In some communities, these activities may take up to four hours a day.
- A study in Africa found that, over the course of a year, women carried more than 80 tonnes of fuel, water and farm produce for a distance of 1 km. Men carried only one-eighth as much, an average of 10 tonnes for 1 km each year.
- Studies have shown that women use almost all they earn from marketing agricultural products and handicrafts to meet household needs. Men use at least 25 percent of their earnings for other purposes.

even further as these women's children gain better access to health services, education and nutrition. We know how to achieve these gains: Invest in rural women. Eliminate discrimination against them in law and in practice. Ensure that policies respond to their needs. Give them equal access to resources. Provide rural women with a role in decision-making.

These measures will help drive sustainable development - one of the

great imperatives of the 21st century. As we prepare for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held next year in Rio, let us remember that rural women have enormous untapped potential to generate results.

On this International Day, I call on all partners to recognize the contribution of rural women to our world, and to help them do even more for our shared future.

Ban Ki-moon

Gender Equality and ILO

"We take another step towards globalizing social progress when we champion gender equality as a matter of rights and social justice, as well as efficiency and good business sense"

By Juan Somavía, ILO Director-General

While all staff in the ILO are responsible for promoting gender equality in their work, the Bureau for Gender Equality supports and advises constituents and Office staff at headquarters and in the field on matters concerned with promoting and advocating for gender equality in the world of work. It also manages an extensive knowledge base on gender issues, conducts ILO Participatory

Gender Audits, and has a Gender Helpdesk which responds to queries to help to strengthen the capacity of staff and constituents to address questions of equality in their work. The Bureau for Gender Equality coordinates the global ILO Gender Network, which brings together gender specialists and gender focal points at headquarters and in the field offices.

The Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal Health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

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Edited by : Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.
Contact : savitrisingh@icaroop.coop Tel: 6888250 Extn. 109 Fax: 26888067



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Capacity Building for Gender Mainstreaming



Dr. Choi and Bandu Ranawaka with participants

From The Editor....

Greetings for a peaceful and progressive new year-2012!

The International Year of Co-operative-2012 is launched by UN on 31 October, 2011 and by ICA on 16 November-2011. Termed as 'once in a generation opportunity' the year will be very significant for co-operatives in various ways. Women may take advantage and bring forward agenda for social inclusion and level playing field.

The Regional Women' Committee meeting and Forum will be held at Kobe, Japan and this platform can be used for bringing the gender mainstreaming agenda at the forefront.

The training manual is under revision and we will carry on with the regular activities for capacity and resource building.

Information from Africa and China on women in co-operatives is interesting and more such information from other countries will be included in future.

Look forward to your cooperation and action. Savitri Singh

The Training of Trainers Programme on Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development for women and men co-operative leaders and managers was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 19-23 December, 2011 in collaboration with National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL).

The programme was inaugurated on 19th December by Mr. Priyantha Mayadunna, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Co-operatives for the Internal Trade of Sri Lanka followed by speeches by Mr. Bandu Ranawaka, Chairman, NCCSL and Dr. Chan Ho CHOI Regional Director of ICA-AP. The officials of NCCSL, ICA-AP and Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives such as Mr. Sunil Silva, General Manager, NCCSL, Mr. PH Annanda, Commissioner-Department of Co-operative Development of Sri Lanka, Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor,

Gender Programme and Communication and Mr. Rangan Dutta, Sr. Consultant of ICA-AP were also present.

25 co-operators (women and men) from all over the country attended the programme. Some participants from the Trincomalee districts were also present. It was informed that due to the long years of armed conflict going on in these areas, the co-operatives of this part of the country could not participate in the co-operative activities of NCCSL for a long time. This was the first participation from these areas after a long time.

The main objective of the programme is to Enhancing management skills of co-operative leaders and managers, specially women to handle the day to day management of their co-operatives and understanding the importance of women's participation in coops.

Main topics covered were;

- Understanding gender issues
- Effective and gender-responsive leadership
- Entrepreneurship development
- Various aspects of management of a co-operative business i.e. product development, member services, accounts, balance sheet, book keeping etc.
- Coping with challenges and Personal Development
- Current issues-climate change, economic slowdown etc



The participants of the training

The programme started with presentation of status paper on "Situation of co-operative movement and women's participation in Sri Lanka" by National Co-operative council of Sri Lanka and discussion on various aspects facilitated by resource persons.

Dr. Chan Ho CHOI took keen interest in the training and conducted a session on

contribution of women for the development of the society wherein he shared his experience from Korea where women are very active in co-operatives.

Experts from UN, ILO, FAO and local institutions delivered lecture on various topics. However, Savitri Singh was the main resource person and conducted training on gender sensitisation, entrepreneurship, Co-operative business management, leadership and stress management etc.

The discussion led to creating a road map for education and training on various skills crucial for quality participation of women and men in Co-operative business and management. Besides, social and developmental issues like awareness on climate change and economic recession impacting Co-operatives and members were also addressed during the course. However, main focus remained on developing skills on Co-operative business development.

How Co-operatives work for working women in Africa

In Africa, Co-operatives can and do work for working women.

Regardless of the sector they belong to or the types of Co-operative they represent - whether marketing, financial, workers', or housing, for instance - Co-operatives are powerful vehicles of social inclusion and political and economic empowerment of their members.

Due to the values, including equality and equity, solidarity, social responsibility, and caring for others, upon which they are based and principles that they embody - voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, member education, and concern for the community - their very mandate places Co-operatives in a unique position to ensure and promote gender equality.

Furthermore, as group-based enterprises, they bring to their members the benefits of joining forces with others. Apart from being able to access economies of scale as providers of services or products or as consumers, participating in a Co-operative as a member, elected

leader or manager also brings with it enhanced status and voice.

A leaflet is printed to explain how Co-operatives can work for working women in Africa by focusing on examples of areas where the Co-operative advantage is being harnessed for the benefit of women and by highlighting promising practices from ILO-supported initiatives. It also looks at the role of Co-operatives in mitigating the impact of the current financial crisis on women workers, as well as at what is being done to further enhance women's participation in the Co-operative movement.

A Co-operative, as defined by ILO Recommendation No. 193 (2002) 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". In Africa, it is estimated that some 7% of the population is affiliated with the movement, and that this is on the increase (P. Develtere, I. Pollet and F. Wanyama, Cooperating out of Poverty, ILO COOP Africa, 2008).

Status of Women in China & Co-operative

China is the largest landmass and country in East Asia. Land area is 9.6 million square kilometers. All of its twenty-two provinces, four municipalities and five autonomous regions are included within two Special Administrative Regions. It is also the most populous, with a human count of over 1.3 billion.

China's Labor Law provides that except in special types of production work, the working age is 16-54 for females and 16-59 for males, and discrimination should not exist between women and men in employment, salaries and promotion. Currently, the employment situation of women and men is characterized as follows:

- China's labor force resources are very rich and labor participation is relatively high.
- In terms of classification of industries, women's employment is concentrated in farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery; manufacturing; wholesale and retail sale trade and catering; education, culture, arts and broadcasting, films and TV.
- Women are generally less educated than men.

In terms of salary level, the salary income of women is generally lower than men in all industries. The largest gap shows in the mining and public service

industries, and the salary of women is generally 74% of that of men.

In order to change these, the Chinese government works actively towards women's development, always taking equality between women and men as a basic state policy to promote social development and to eliminate various discriminations against women. Over the past 20 years, the Chinese government has successively set and issued more than ten laws, regulations and rules including the "Law of Guarantee of Women's Rights and Interests", "Law of Maternal and Infant Health Care", "Regulation of Labor Protection for Women" and "Rule of Health Care Work for Women" in order to protect women's rights.

In accordance with the global trend and women's development within China, the Chinese government set one "National Programme for Development of Chinese Women" in 1995 and another two in 2001 and 2010, putting forward a series of goals for women's development.

As the rapid progress of economics and society in China, the status of women has been greatly improved. Compared with many countries, the women status in China is higher in many aspects such as economy, society, politics and culture. It is an important reflection of Chinese civilization.

Brief Description of Co-operatives in China

Chinese co-operatives have an 80-year history of development. Generally, SMC, credit co-operatives and handicraft co-operatives have wide distributions and foundations in CHINA. But SMC is biggest one of them. SMC represent national co-operatives movement involved in the activities of the International co-operative Alliance. Chinese government at all levels have set up SMC federations. At the end of 2010, the China SMC has included 31 provincial branches, 343 city branches, 2,369 county branches, 21,21,602 communities and 43,954 enterprises, employing a total of 3.67 million staffs.

The China SMC mainly engages in the distribution of agricultural-related products and commodities, including sales of agricultural equipment and supplies, purchase and sales of non-staple agricultural products and supply of ordinary consumer products to rural residents. The China SMC has also been active in setting up community services. SMC in all regions has set up village-level comprehensive service agencies and centers in village-level through local supply and sales outlets and rural supermarkets. These services includes supply and sales, processing, information, training, recreation, dining, public bath and child care. These service outlets serve as terminals for the modern rural distribution network and constitute a platform for local services in the countryside. As the end of 2010, the SMC had set up a total of 220 thousands local rural comprehensive service agencies and village-level centers.

Many local SMC are facing fierce competition in market economic environment. In order to suit for the modern market economic environment, China SMC had researched and explored new way of operations and structures. In response they have been adopting new modes of operating

and exploring. SMC hold a dominant position in recycling resources, fireworks, researching of cotton processing, wholesaling of agricultural products, production of highly processed agricultural products and rural hotels. In addition, they have entered all kinds of fields, such as estate development, foreign trade, vocational education and rural banking services.

Chinese agriculture has become more market-oriented, more professional and more industrialized, resulting in the emergence of large numbers of specialized co-operatives in the countryside. In order to promote the development of specialized co-operatives, Chinese government issued the Law on Rural Specialized co-operatives in 2006. The national supply and marketing co-operative organized activities carefully to help people understand it and work hard to provide guidance, support and services for the development of rural specialized co-operatives in order to promote their sound and rapid development. Over 54,817 specialized co-operatives have now been set up. Also 16,500 of them have completed registration procedures, accounting for about 40% in total. A total of 6.27 million rural households take part in these co-operatives. SMC also guide and encourage similar specialized rural co-operatives organize into co-operative associations and agricultural product industry associations so they can expand their scale of production, share a single trademark and brand, enjoy centralized production technology services and centralized marketing and sales, reduce market risk. Throughout the system, the national co-operative has directed the organization of 18,115 industry and specialized associations, with a total membership of 2 million 629 thousand 6 hundred people.

Status of Women in China and ACFSMC

Chinese women have the tradition virtue of loyalty, Purity, cooperation and patience. In the China countryside, women laborers made up half the rural labor force, The number of urban working women increased from 600,000 to 56 million since 1949, while their share of the total working population of China went up from 7.5 percent to 38 percent.

Statistics may be more convincing than individual, which indicates that in China, employed female was accounted for some 44 percent of the total number of employees, higher than the world rate of 34.5 percent. In the countryside, women laborers made up half the rural labor force. The number of urban working women increased from 600,000 in 1949 to 56 million, while their share of the

country's total working population went up from 7.5 percent to 38 percent. The status of women in All China Federation of Marketing and Supply Co-operatives (ACFSMC) can be an example. In ACFSMC, the female staff accounted for about 40%. As to Mid-level leadership inside, female leader number accounted for almost 40%. Moreover, compared with men, the level of education of women in ACFSMC was almost no difference. For me personally, I do not feel any discrimination or injustice. I can stand here and present you, that is the most direct example. Men and women do the same work, getting the same payment and having the same opportunities of promotion in ACFSMC. This is just a microcosm of our country.

Measures in Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operative Business

1. Organizing Training and Activities

ACFSMC and Women's Federations have jointly organized trainings and activities to encourage rural women to acquire knowledge and to learn science and technology. For example, in Fujian province, the training course for a hundred rural women was organized. Knowledge about business and law was transmitted to women.

2. Building Websites for Business Information Exchange

The network of ACFSMC has developed for several years. It combines the advantage of our whole system and reinforces the link between the rural and urban areas. A lot of useful information is equally provided to women and men who need it.

3. Establishing Specialist Co-operatives and Associations

As an old saying goes "Many hands make High Flame". A single person, especially woman will face many difficulties on business development and have relatively low ability to deal with it. ACFSMC dedicated a lot to develop specialist

co-operatives and associations. The specialist co-operatives and associations can supply more information about marketing, more technology service and more protection of rights and interests of women.

4. Provide financial support

Funds are the most important for co-operatives, including co-operatives run by women. Therefore, ACFSMC will provide financial support to special cases and important co-operatives run by women, sometimes. For example Shaxian Rural Credit Co-operatives, Fujian Province created special small-sum loans for women poverty alleviation, to better help women business development. At present, they provided loans amounted to more than 150 million to support women-based joint-stock companies.

5. Provide Guarantee of Loans

Some county federations provide service of credit guarantee of small-sum loans for co-operatives run by women in rural areas. For example, YU Ai-Qing, in the guarantee of co-operatives, got a loan of 3 million RMB yuan to expand the scale of her company.

Highlights



Errum Sharif Bhaiji, Executive - Women Wing of Karachi Co-operative Housing Societies Union Limited-Pakistan has been elected as the New board member of Housing Board during the ICA Housing Plenary Meeting held on 16 November 2011 in Cancun, Mexico during General Assembly of ICA. She is member of the ICA Regional Women's Committee of ICA - Asia & Pacific.

Published by : ICA-AP, 9 Aradhana Enclave, R.K. Puram, Sector 13, New Delhi - 110066.

Edited by : Ms. Savitri Singh, Advisor, Gender Program.

Contact : savitrisingh@icaroop.coop Tel: 6888250 Extn. 109 Fax: 26888067