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From: ICA eDigest [edigest@ica.coop]  
Sent: 03 November 2013 18:21  
To: Ms. Sabitha Venkatesan  
Subject: November 2013 eDigest from the ICA

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Hello Co-operator

This week the global co-operative movement is focusing on the future of our enterprise model. We have over a thousand co-operators registered for the Global Conference in Cape Town.

A conference which will drive forward the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, delegates will focus on the participation, sustainability, capital and legal frameworks of co-operatives.

The event will also see the unveiling of the new Global Co-operative Marque to help strengthen our identity and ensure the distinctive business model stands out across the world.

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Director-General

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General's blog





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**Updates from around the world**  
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WAR ON RECESSION AND  
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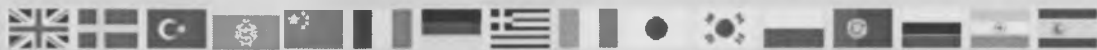
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Hello Co-operator

There is just one month until co-operators from around the world will come together in Cape Town for our Global Conference and General Assembly.

Inside this eDigest you will read about some of our most essential initiatives the International Co-operative Alliance has been implementing this year, which will be presented in South Africa.

The Blueprint, the movement's worldwide campaign to take the co-operative way of doing business to a new level, will aim to ensure the sector experiences a Co-operative Decade of confident growth.

I look forward to discussing the Blueprint in Cape Town.

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# What next

2012  
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Year of

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## Global Co-operative Marque to be unveiled in Cape Town

A global marque for the co-operative movement is set to be unveiled in Cape Town next month.

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### Survey: Help ensure co-operatives are in the UN's post-2015 development agenda

Co-operatives have an opportunity to influence the United Nations post-2015 development agenda.

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### Youth Network to discuss the Blueprint in Cape Town

Youth will be discussing how they can contribute to the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade in Cape Town next month.

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### Co-operatives invited to share sustainability stories

Co-operatives are being invited to share their best practices on sustainability, as part of a project for the International Co-operative Alliance's Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade.

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### Co-operators set to take action on Blueprint in Americas

Co-operators in the Americas region will be focusing on the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade at this month's regional conference.

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## Movement faces challenges to reach equality

Inés Mendoza, ICA Americas Gender Equity Committee, outlines the challenges facing co-operatives on the path to reach equality

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## International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation calls for action from governments

The International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation (ICFO) is urging governments to establish fisheries co-operatives and safeguard the rights of fishers.

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## Cooperatives Europe calls for more renewable energy co-operatives in Europe

Cooperatives Europe is helping to promote a co-operative option for the renewable energy sector in Europe.

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## President of Guatemala backs agricultural co-operatives for rural development

The President of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina, has praised agricultural co-operatives for the sector's contribution to the economic development of the country, especially in rural areas.

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## New Director of Policy for the International Co-operative Alliance

The International Co-operative Alliance has appointed Rodrigo Gouveia as its Director of Policy.

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**Memories and future plans**

My recent trip to Malta invoked fond childhood memories and family connections. The visit, hosted by Koperattivi Malta, gave me the opportunity to view some of the latest infrastructure improvements...

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**As co-operators we know that co-operatives build a better world,...**

As co-operators we know that co-operatives build a better world, but now you have an incredible incentive to share this good news with your colleagues, friends and family. The International Co-...

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**IN THE SPOTLIGHT: AGRICULTURE**

The National Agricultural Cooperative Federation of South Korea (NACF) launched a new initiative that will give one student from a developing country the chance to study co-operative management at the Agricultural Co-operative College (UCA) in Goyang City.

The selected candidate will receive a scholarship that includes tuition fees for the three-year course, as well as travel and living expenses. The scholarship programme is the result of a collaboration between the Federation and the College, both aiming to further co-operation among co-operatives.

NACF has invited UCA to submit their recommendations for candidate students. The two have worked on common projects before, having shared agricultural technology for rural development. Earlier this year, NACF gave to UCA two sets of tractors, to be managed by one of UCA's members.



**CHF CANADA'S 2013 ANNUAL MEETING IN CALGARY**



**BRAINTREE COOPERATIVE BANK: INTERVIEW WITH ED METRO**

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**XVIII ICA Americas  
Regional Conference**

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**The International  
Conference of the General  
Authority for Construction  
and Housing Cooperatives -  
ICCH'13**

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**ICA Global Conference &  
General Assembly 2013**

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## Review from the regions

### Review from the regions: Africa

The International Year of Co-operatives has provided a great impetus for co-operatives across the Africa region.

Throughout 2012 African governments continued to support ICA Africa Endowment Fund, while co-operators from the region took part in various events focused on growing the movement in Africa. In September 2012, the Swedish Co-operative Centre and the International Fund for Agricultural Development co-hosted the 6th Joint Rural Finance Thematic Workshop in Mozambique.

The event enabled African co-operators to assess effective rural finance delivery methodologies for increased productivity.

The following month delegates from 32 countries attended the 10th Africa Regional Assembly and Ministerial Conference met in Rwanda. ICA's regional office for Africa has also been involved in guiding the Government of South Africa in reviewing the country's Co-operative Policy.

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## Co-operatives invited to share sustainability stories



Co-operatives are being invited to share their best practices on sustainability, as part of a project for the International Co-operative Alliance's Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade.

The ICA has teamed up with [Sustainability Solutions](#) to undertake a scan of current sustainability practices in co-operatives around the world. The scan is designed to act as the foundation for the implementation of the strategic area of sustainability in the

Sustainability Solutions, a worker co-op at the forefront of sustainability in Canada, is seeking to determine how co-operatives are sustainable by analysing a sample of the movement.

The Blueprint aims to position the co-operative model as the acknowledged leader in economic, social and environmental sustainability. To help achieve this vision, Sustainability Solutions will analyse samples of co-operatives from around the world in terms of what they communicate about their activities and whether that represents the principles of sustainability or not.

It will also assess the information available online through various co-operative websites. The second part of this process involves asking co-operatives to describe the sustainability projects they are working on, by contributing to

The scan will help to identify co-operatives, sectors and supportive bodies that have established sustainability targets or certification programmes. It is intended to reflect the diversity across various regions and sectors, creating a living database illustrating the global contribution of co-operatives to sustainability.

This dual approach was designed to enable all co-operatives, no matter their size, to contribute to the sustainability scan. The results of the scan will be presented at International Co-operative Alliance's General Assembly and will be used to educate and inform on the practical

jects of co-operative business in the real economy.

o-operatives taking part in the scan can also get the chance to travel to Cape Town for the presentation. The winning entry will be chosen in a random draw. Entries can now be submitted

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## Co-operators set to take action on blueprint in Americas



Co-operators in the Americas region will be focusing on the Blueprint for a Co-operative decade at this month's regional conference.

Delegates will attend the event in Brazil from 6-11 October, which is hosted by the International Co-operative Alliance's Americas Region. It is hosted with the National Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Brazil (UNIMED), the Organization of Brazilian Cooperatives (OCB) and the National Cooperative Learning Service (Sescoop).

As part of the 'legal framework' section of the Blueprint, Parliamentarians from across the region will also be encouraged to engage further with the movement. The Blueprint seeks to encourage governments and lawmakers to understand the economic and social benefits of the co-operative enterprise model.

The meeting last year adopted a proposal from the Americas region and the Latin American Parliament for the creation of a Network of Parliamentarians to support co-operatives in the region.

Several countries have already constituted their national networks, which include Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. Also, several dozens of legislators in the continent have directly joined the network.

Green, will

He will give a presentation on the importance of the Blueprint, while underlining the themes of participation, Sustainability, Identity, Legal Framework and Capital.

During the conference, delegates will have the opportunity to debate individual elements of the themes. Workshops will also look at communication, advocacy and integration.

Following on from the other sessions a debate on co-operative growth and identity will also provide input into the conclusions and recommendations that come out of the event through

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## Youth Network to discuss the Blueprint in Cape Town



Youth will be discussing how they can contribute to the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade in Cape Town next month.

The International Co-operative Alliance will host its Youth Network Meeting at the Global Conference on 2 November. This will give youth Network members the chance to discuss on the role of the Youth Network in implementing the

"The Alliance firmly believes that the international youth movement is set to play a significant part in the delivery of the objectives in the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, and youth are mentioned throughout the document", said José Antonio Chávez Villanueva (pictured), the Youth representative on the Alliance's Board.

The event will feature a presentation by Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa, Regional Director of the Alliance's Africa Region, who will talk about the Co-operative Decade and youth in action. Another session will give Youth Network Members the chance to learn from four case studies of youth programmes implemented by African co-operatives. Regional Youth Committees will propose work plans for the Co-operative Decade, showcasing successful experiences from Europe, Americas and Asia and Pacific.

A discount is available for youth delegates (those under the age of 30), who can get a special reduced fee of CHF 200 to attend the entire conference from 1-5 November.

To make this year's conference even more accessible, a bursary scheme is allowing ten delegates from around the world to attend the Cape Town event.

From a list of 116 applicants, ten winners of CHF 2,500 prize have been chosen to allow them to attend the conference.

3 winners are:

- Gabriela Micevska, Center for Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development, Republic of Macedonia
- Zoljargal Munkhsaikhan, Mongolian Cooperative Training & Information Center, Mongolia
- Indana Saramita Rachman, Indonesian Women Cooperative, Indonesia
- Juan Francisco Cuervo Carrillo, Cooperative 'La Cruz Azul', Mexico
- Miguel Angel Reyes Gallardo, Mesa Regional Cooperativa de la Araucania Wallmapu Cooperativa de Ahorro y Credito Temuco Ltda, Chile
- Emily M Lippold Cheney, USA Cooperative Youth Council, USA
- Jacob Doe Adzikah, Young Farmers League Cooperative Society, Ghana
- Francis Mwongela Mikwa, The Co-operative Univ. College of Kenya, Kenya
- Ticharwa Kagu, Zimbabwe Nat'l Association of Housing Cooperatives, Zimbabwe
- M. Karthikeyan, Ambo University, Ethiopia

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## Survey: Help ensure co-operatives are in the UN's post-2015 development agenda



Co-operatives have an opportunity to influence the United Nations post-2015 development agenda.

The International Labour Organization's Co-operatives Unit, in collaboration with the International Co-operative Alliance, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and other partners, has launched an initiative to allow co-operatives to contribute on issues of sustainable development.

The UN launched its current development agenda, centred on the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. By 2015, it had aimed to achieve eight goals in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and empowerment of women, child and maternal health, environmental sustainability, reducing HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases, and building a global partnership for development.

At the UN conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, "Rio +20", the process was started for designing a sustainable development goals which will build upon the MDGs.

As part of the ILO initiative a background study is being drafted to be presented in policy roundtables, conferences and seminars in 2013-14. The study will be informed by a survey and in-depth interviews with representatives of the co-operative movement from around the world to gather information on how co-operatives have contributed to Sustainable Development and their potential to contribute to the achievement of the proposed Universal Goals.

Rio 20+ recognised the actual and potential role of co-operatives to achieving sustainable development, reducing poverty and creating employment. But in May, a High Level Panel appointed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon published its report on its vision and recommendations for post-2015, which did not have any real emphasis on co-operatives, according to the ILO.

The ILO said that co-operatives are instrumental in providing opportunities for productive employment as well as offering services such as health care, education, credit, improved infrastructure and sustainable energy. It added that co-operative enterprises are guided by values of social dialogue and democracy, and they are often rooted in local communities, making them a sustainable option for achieving development.

6

To help the co-operative voice be heard, the ILO has launched a survey on co-operatives and the post-2015 sustainable development framework. The survey is intended to have the movement heard by world leaders during the ongoing discussions around the issue. By providing an input co-operatives will contribute to communicating the critical role the movement plays in achieving sustainable development goals.

[Click here to take the survey](#)

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## Movement faces challenges to reach equality

26 SEP 2013



*Inés Mendoza, ICA Americas Gender Equity Committee, outlines the challenges facing co-operatives on the path to reach equality . . .*

With the co-operative movement flourishing and the challenges for a Co-operative Decade ahead of us, it is an ideal time to talk about the demand for better governance and democracy that is growing among co-operatives in order to elevate participation within membership and governance to a new level.

There are strong reasons for promoting social integration and inclusion, and even more when participation and good governance are on the table.

Deep disparities, a product of unequal distribution of wealth and/or differences in a person's background, reduces social mobility and ultimately exerts a negative impact on growth, productivity and the well-being of society as a whole.

Nevertheless, in almost all countries, the near-exclusion of women from centres of power, whether at national, regional, or household level, has ensured wide disparities between men and women in economic, social, and political spheres. Currently women make up less than 10 per cent of our parliamentarians, and hold an even smaller share of top positions.

A recent study of the Inter-American Development Bank shows female workers earned 26 per cent less than male workers, but what is the inequality in the co-operative sector? Do we have facts to demonstrate to the world that co-ops have gender equality strategies and good practices, which create better conditions for sustainable economic growth and development?

There are no cookie-cutter solutions to answer each governance problem that exists today, and because political science is not really a "science" but an "art", technical solutions — no matter how cutting-edge they are — will fail if unaccompanied by a new and higher practice of the art of good governance.

The first challenge is in nurturing democratic values. Although member participation is a difficult process requiring vigilance and constant nurturing, it is essential to good governance. To approach this challenge it is necessary strengthen the pool of prospective female and male leadership; enhance member education on co-operatives values; and establish indicators of

progress toward improving the building blocks of inclusion and democracy: for example, gender policies, transparent systems, young inclusion policies and enhance government structures.

The second challenge involves the role of the membership. The task is for all men and women to move forward from where they are. The actions for a Co-operative Decade should assure the representation of all the diverse composition of the co-operative and promote intensely the female participation.

The third challenge is to mainstream women in politics and public administration, starting with their representation on the co-operative's board. As we come to understand the links between responsive and effective governance and development more fully, we learn that governance not representing both sexes is neither participatory, nor inclusive, and thus cannot move a society forward. The absence of women's voices and perspectives has contributed to an impoverished debate, and, often, distorted policies.

The fourth challenge is to improve the capacity of a co-operative's organisation and people for better governance and participation. A co-operative-oriented education must prepare people to be voters, to participate in public discussions, and to work together across traditional boundaries.

At the International Co-operative Alliance in the Americas, gender is a cross-cutting theme in all of our programs. This is the time to reflect on the enormous contributions of women to the development of their countries. Now is the time to get the politics right for advancing women.

Men in leadership must join empowered women to speak out for genuine gender partnerships. Nothing will be a more powerful hallmark of the transformation of our societies than enduring gender partnerships achieved across the co-operative movement.

• Picture: [Equality is an issue on the agenda of co-operatives across the world](#)

(<http://www.thenews.coop/article/co-operative-group-set-equality-target-boards-and-committees>).

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## International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation calls for action from governments

26 SEP 2013



The International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation (ICFO) is urging governments to establish fisheries co-operatives and safeguard the rights of fishers.

International Co-operative Alliance's sectoral organisation adopted a declaration that calls upon national governments to establish clear policies regarding the role and positioning of fisheries co-operatives within their national development programmes.

The declaration, which came out of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Fisheries Co-operative Day held in Indonesia in June, highlights the main issues governments should take into account when drafting such development programmes.

According to ICFO, fisheries co-operatives can help to address the global challenges of poverty, social disparity, unemployment and the destruction of marine and fish resources. They also play an important role in guaranteeing safe fishing activities, mitigating maritime disputes, maintaining fish stocks and reducing accidents at sea.

The document recommends protecting the rights and increasing the incomes of fisheries throughout the world by revitalising the activities of fisheries co-operatives.

To help grow the sector, co-operatives need to benefit from a dynamic legal framework, making sure they are deemed equal with private and public enterprises. The declaration emphasises that co-operatives should not be adversely affected by private enterprises that aim to maximise their profit by pushing aside economically weaker fisheries co-operatives.

It also underlined that governments should ensure that the rights of fisheries that join co-operatives are protected, while making sure capital-weak fisheries co-operatives can run their business democratically and independently.

While reaffirming the importance of the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, the declaration is asking national governments to take the necessary steps to provide a special and independent Fisheries Co-operative Law.

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## Cooperatives Europe calls for more renewable energy co-operatives in Europe

25 SEP 2013



Cooperatives Europe is helping to promote a co-operative option for the renewable energy sector in Europe.

Across the EU member states, more than 2,000 energy co-ops have been established, with 700 of them based in Germany.

In 2011, the International Co-operative Alliance's regional body for Europe set up a working group on energy and environment with the aim of developing an overall strategy and implementing concrete actions to raise the profile of renewable energy co-operatives.

The group includes a combination of organisations and individual co-operatives involved in the energy sector, including Eurocoop, Cecodhas Housing Europe, the Co-operative Group, Co-operatives UK, the Co-operative Energy, Legacoop, Kooperationen and SOK Corporation.

As part of its efforts to promote renewable energy co-operatives, Cooperatives Europe participated in the EU Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels in 2012 and 2013, helping to organise high-level conferences on renewable energy topics. Through this, the regional body established direct contacts with the relevant EU Commission services and EU Parliament committees.

If countries such as Germany and Denmark have already reached the 20 per cent renewable energy goal, other EU member states have still to meet the 2020 target. According to Klaus Niederlander, Director of Cooperatives Europe, 'old economy' energy utilities are trying to defend their threatened economic interests by embarking on a lobbying battle in Brussels.

To address this growing wave of initiatives aimed at getting rid of feed-in tariffs within the EU and defend citizen-led renewable energy initiatives, Cooperatives Europe appointed an energy advocacy officer this year.

It has also teamed up with REScoop.EU, a three-year project funded by the EU, which brings together renewable energy co-operatives from across Europe. REScoop includes 12

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Cooperatives Europe calls for more renewable energy co-operatives in Europe | ICA: International Co-operative Alliance

organisations from 17 countries, all aiming to contribute towards reaching the share of the EU's energy consumption produced from renewables to 20 per cent by 2020.

Out of REScoop, the [European Federation for Renewable Energy Cooperatives \(http://rescoop.eu/\)](http://rescoop.eu/) has formed and in September it became an associate member of Cooperatives Europe.

Through the project, European renewable energy co-operatives can share ideas and experiences, while contributing to REScoop's database. REScoop is working on developing an inventory on existing renewable energy co-operatives while testing methodologies based on best practices.

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## President of Guatemala backs agricultural co-operatives for rural development

25 SEP 2013



The President of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina, has praised agricultural co-operatives for the sector's contribution to the economic development of the country, especially in rural areas.

During a television programme broadcast from the agricultural co-operative Chicoj, Mr Perez Molina explained how the co-operative movement is responsible for 7.3% of Guatemala's GDP.

According to the President, co-operatives generate 27 billion quetzals, the equivalent of USD 3.4 billion, each year.

He described co-operatives as "a movement that develops more and more every day, that is growing and generating jobs, improving the lives of people in Guatemala, especially in rural areas".

Mr Pérez Molina also highlighted that co-operatives help to improve the lives of women across Guatemala. There are currently 900 co-operatives in Guatemala with 1.3m members and around 43 per cent of these are women. "We have to support co-operatives and ensure they will continue to grow", he added.

The President, who was joined by the executive director of the Confederation of Co-operatives of Guatemala, Rodolfo Orozco, and Leonardo Delgado, director of Fedecovera, said his government would continue to back co-operatives.

Coffee co-operatives faced a challenging year in Guatemala this year due to an outbreak of coffee leaf rust. In order to combat this, the government pledged 40m quetzals (USD 5 million) to help farmers fight the rust.

Although the most developed co-operative sector is the credit union one, agricultural co-operatives have a great potential to grow, said Mr Delgado.

Fedecovera, a confederation of 38 co-operatives, has become the main producer of forest products of Guatemala. To boost rural development, the confederation has developed a series of energy generation projects.

"Co-operatives are working with different government ministries. We have just signed an agreement with the Ministry for Agriculture to develop a programme that will help many small producers that grow cardamom," said Mr Delgado.

Rodolfo Orozco also highlighted the sector's great potential for growth. He said he wanted to see co-operatives taking part in discussions on food production and retail, as well as education and health. Mr Orozco added that Guatemalan co-operatives are working with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in the USA to assess how co-operatives could enter the energy sector.

Photo: President of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina, with Rodolfo Orozco and Leonardo Delgado at the agricultural co-operative Chicoj.

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## New Director of Policy for the International Co-operative Alliance

25 SEP 2013



The International Co-operative Alliance has appointed Rodrigo Gouveia as its Director of Policy.

Mr Gouveia is currently Secretary-General of Euro Coop, which represents the interests of European consumer co-operatives, and at the ICA he will be charged with advancing the mission of the Alliance with intergovernmental organisations and development agencies.

When he starts in January, he will also represent the co-operative movement within the United Nations and its specialised agencies, and build strategic relationships with select intergovernmental organisations.

Mr Gouveia, who is also currently Secretary-General of Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW), the international sectoral organisation representing consumer co-operatives, will facilitate the creation and implementation of a global co-operative development agenda with the co-operative development community.

He holds a degree in Law and two post-graduate degrees in Consumer Law and in Public Economic Regulation. Having worked for co-operative organisations for 15 years, Mr Gouveia has extensive experience and knowledge of the movement, as well as of representation and advocacy activities.

Delighted with his new role, he said: "It's a great pleasure for me to work for the International Co-operative Alliance and help advance the cooperative business model. It is a big challenge but I know I can count with the valuable help of members, regional offices and sectoral organisations in a combined effort to raise the voice of co-operatives and shape the political

agenda of global institutions.”

Charles Gould, Director-General of the Alliance, said: “We are very excited to have Rodrigo joining the team at the International Co-operative Alliance. We have had the opportunity to work with him in his roles at Euro Coop and CCW and know that he brings the co-operative knowledge and policy expertise that we need to advance our ambitious agenda.”

Duncan Bowler, President of Euro Coop, added: “Euro Coop members wish Rodrigo all the best in his new role. Rodrigo was an excellent Secretary-General of Euro Coop and we shall miss him. We are very pleased that he will continue to serve the co-operative movement”.

Anne Santamäki, President of CCW, commented: “Rodrigo has been a valuable Secretary-General for CCW and I am sure he will continue to serve the co-operative movement in a professional and highly competent way as Director of Policy for the ICA.”

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**sabitha**

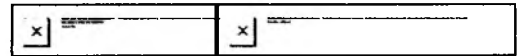
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**To:** Ms. Sabitha Venkatesan  
**Subject:** July 2012 eDigest from the ICA

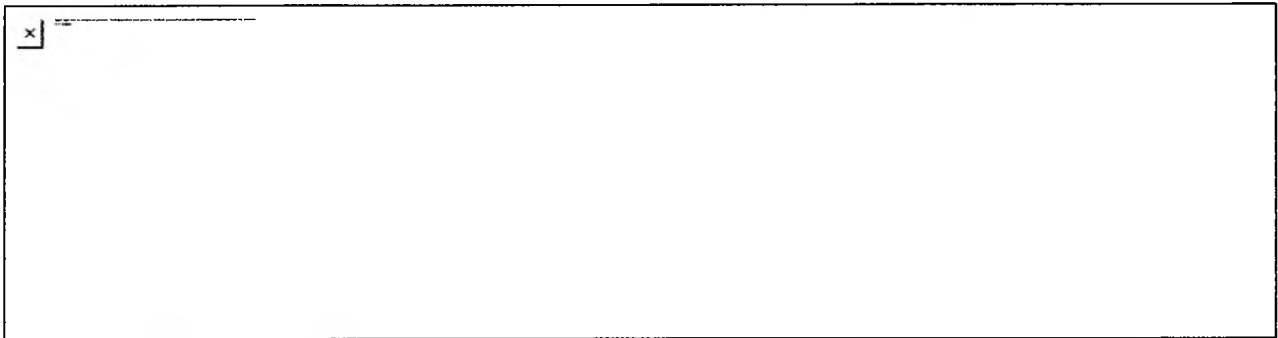
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























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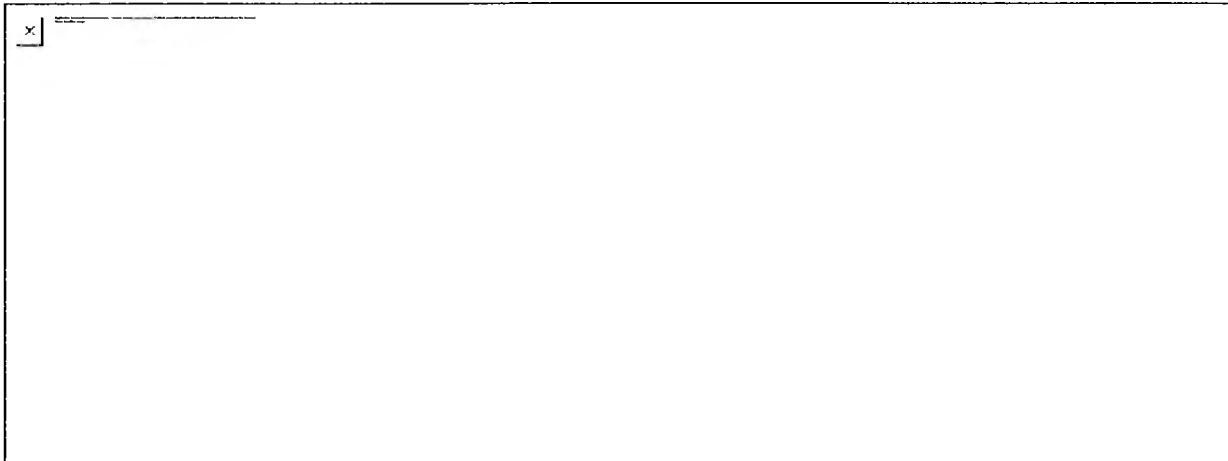


 Hello Co-operator

This month Dame Pauline Green and I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you as we travel around the world promoting the co-operative message. And news that the Rio+20 declaration recognised co-ops as important to solving the challenges facing sustainable development has been a real boost to us all. This eDigest is available in English, French and Spanish. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Chuck Gould  
Director-General, ICA

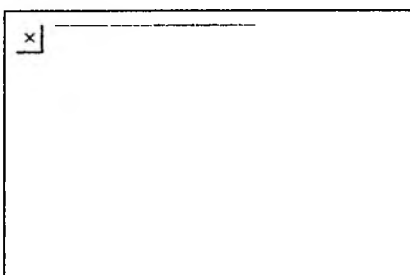


## Leaders celebrate International Day of Co-operatives

Co-operators will be celebrating a unique International Co-operative Day on 7 July as it falls during the 2012 International Year of Co-operatives.

[Read more](#)

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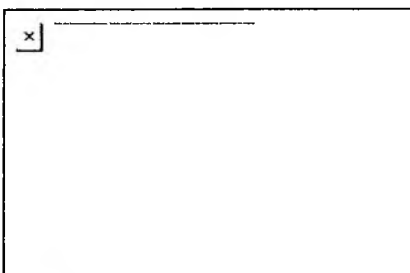


### Take part in the World Co-operative Monitor

Co-operatives are being invited to take part in a global research project to build upon the International Co-operative Alliance's Global300 report.

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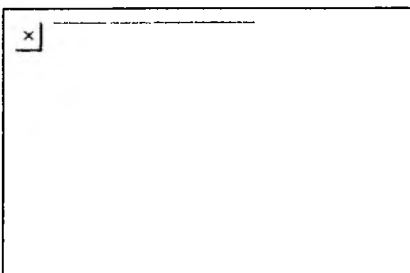


### Special co-op day highlights global fishing crisis

Japan and Vietnam lead celebrations for World Fisheries Co-operative Day last month.

[Read more](#)

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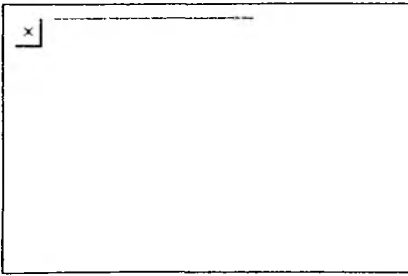


### Americas region develops a 100% co-operative logo

The Columbian Confederation of Co-operatives (CONFECOOP) has developed a '100% co-operative' logo in collaboration with ICA Americas. This is a project that seeks to highlight organisations in the sectors which lead their activities according to the co-operative principles.

[Read more](#)

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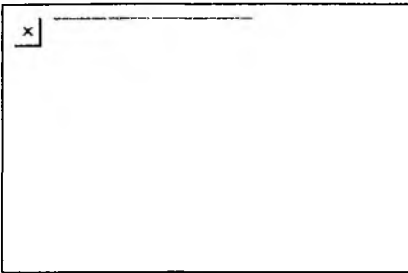


## Italian co-ops work together in earthquake aftermath

Co-operatives in the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna were devastated during the earthquake and aftershocks that hit the city on 20 May.

[Read more](#)

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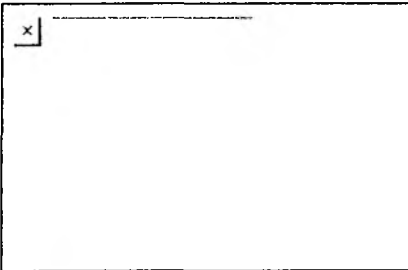


## Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel supports co-op model

Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel has praised co-operatives as a business model for the future.

[Read more](#)

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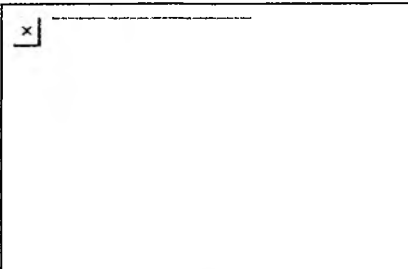


## Co-operatives make history at Rio+20

Co-operatives made history as nations from across the world acknowledged co-operatives as important for agricultural development, jobs and poverty reduction at the Rio+20 Conference.

[Read more](#)

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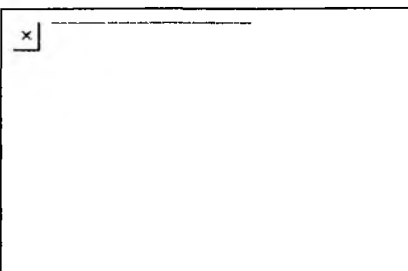


## Thousands of co-operators come together as one in Singapore

Thousands of co-operators and families danced, walked and read together as part of the Co-opaliciouz event in Singapore.

[Read more](#)

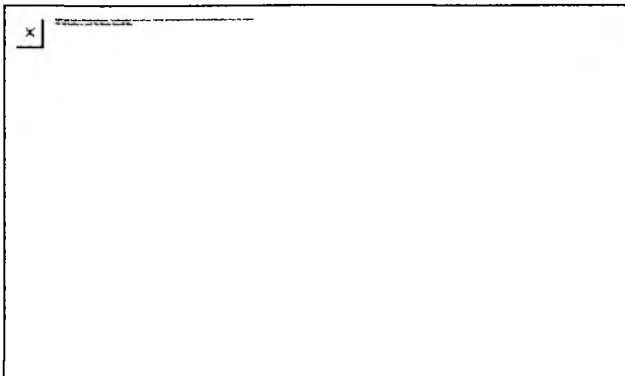
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## Co-operative flags fly on top of the world

Flags of co-operation were flown at the highest point of the world, as a group of co-operators from Nepal reached the summit of Mount Everest.

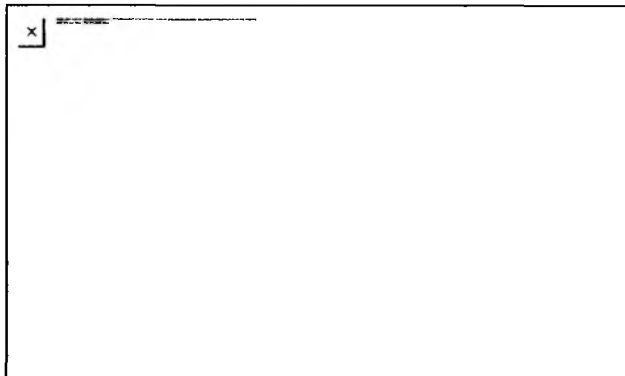
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### Getting their attention

Co-operatives received some important high-level recognition this week when ICA's President, Dame Pauline Green, and I were able to join representatives from China's co-operative sector in a meeting...

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### Global IYC Appeal now stands CHF 662,320.91

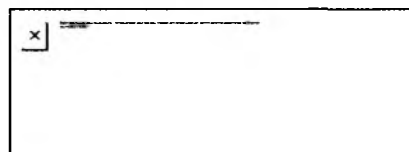
The worldwide co-operative community continues to show their support for the ICA's Global Appeal for the International Year of Co-ops. In the last month this figure has crashed through the...

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## IYC2012 GLOBAL APPEAL

# CHF 662,320

RAISED SO FAR. TARGET 1.5 MILLION SWISS FRANCS.

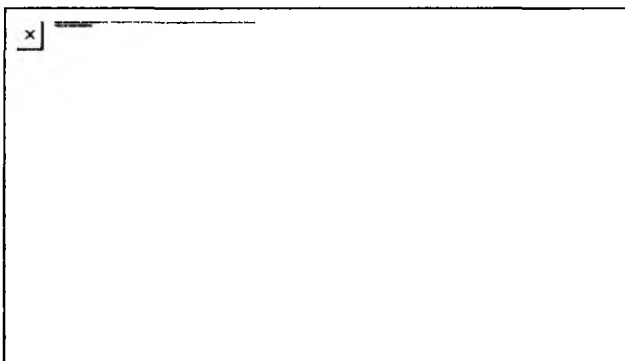


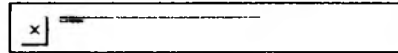
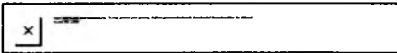
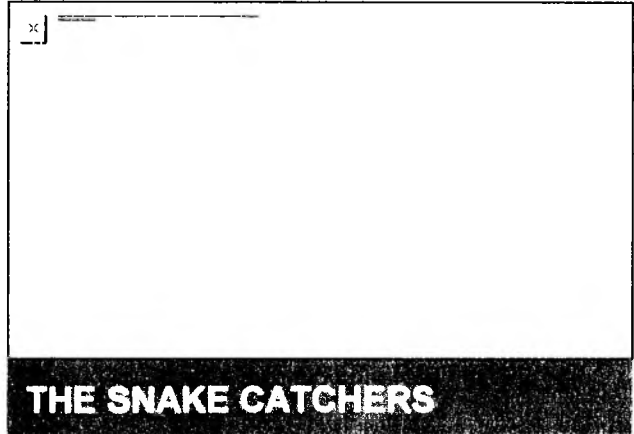
### IN THE SPOTLIGHT: YOUTH

The ICA Youth Network has been very active during the IYC. The ICA's CoopArt Competition for youth just closed and the winner will be announced soon.

During the week of 2 July, stories.coop will focus on youth in co-operatives. The Young Cooperative Leaders Forum was held in June on Youth – the Present and the Future of the Co-operative Movement.

Representatives in the Asia-Pacific region have created a newsletter called Young & Co-operating, and in the Americas region, the Regional Youth Committee is writing a book on the experience of youth in the co-operative movement and will co-ordinate and organise the Youth Congress 2013.





**2**  
JUL

### UN Economic and Social Council 2012 (ECOSOC)

**3**  
JUL

### Mainstreaming Co-operation: An alternative for the 21st Century? Conference

**3**  
JUL

### The Co-operative Week

**7**  
JUL

### International Day of Co-operatives

### 2012 International Summit of Co-operatives

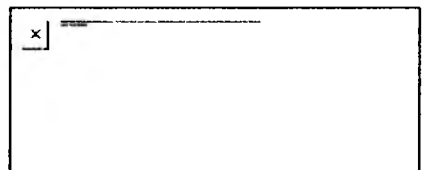
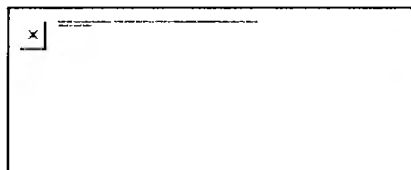
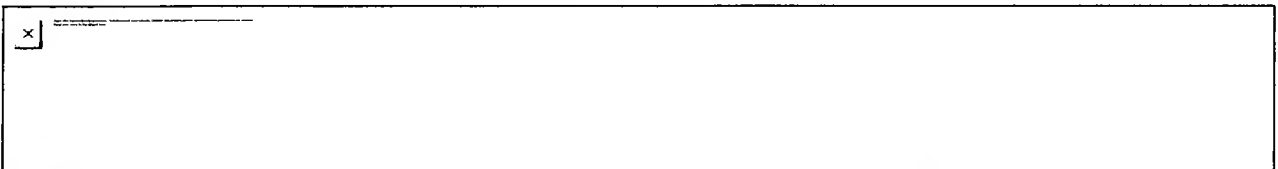
Set to unite global decision-makers to discuss issues that will ensure prosperity of co-operatives, the event has announced former United States Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright as a speaker. Book now!

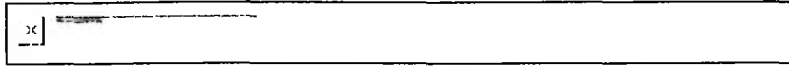
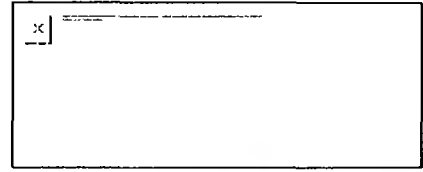
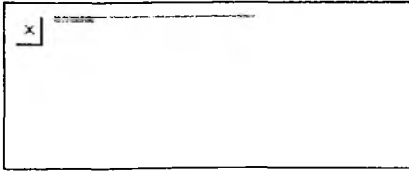
[Read more](#)

### Co-operatives United

The global culmination for the International Year of Co-operatives will be held in Manchester, UK. Find out how you can get involved in this key event, which also hosts the ICA Extraordinary General Assembly and ICAEXPO. Book now!

[Read more](#)





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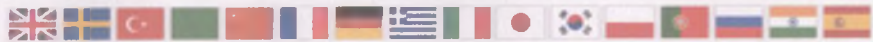
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Friday, 27 July, 2012 9:37 AM

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To: sabitha.venkatesan@yahoo.co.in

From: ICA - International Co-operative Alliance [mailto:ica@ica.coop]  
Sent: 26 July 2012 23:30  
To: Ms. Sabitha Venkatesan  
Subject: August 2012 eDigest from the ICA

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AUGUST 2012

# ICA eDigest

The global voice of co-operatives 2012.coop

2012 International Year of Cooperatives

The International Year of Co-operatives: our gift from the United Nations

Hello Co-operator

We've begun to see the world's eyes drawn toward co-operatives. Last month, co-operatives received world-class attention across three continents — [read more in my blog](#). Many of these success stories are shared in this issue of eDigest too, with International Co-operative Day [celebrations happening worldwide](#) to strong support being received at high-profile meetings. Read this edition in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

Chuck Gould  
Director-General, ICA



Not just business as usual

The Director General's blog



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## UN's food chief to headline Co-operatives United

The Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN (FAO), José Graziano da Silva, will join thousands of co-operators at the Co-operatives United event on October 31.

[Read more](#)



## Co-operatives build a better world for International Day

As part of celebrations for International Co-operative Day, co-operatives helped to raise the public awareness of the sector around the world.

[Read more](#)



## Jamaica hosts first conference to build the movement

Jamaica held its first conference on the wider co-operative sector last month, with ICA Director-General Chuck Gould as keynote speaker.

[Read more](#)



## Praise for sector at UN Development Co-operation Forum

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon hosted a high-level breakfast meeting on co-operatives at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on the last month in New York with senior dignitaries.

[Read more](#)



## ILO conference backs co-ops to tackle youth unemployment

The International Labour Conference has launched a call for action to tackle the youth employment crisis; and said that co-operatives can provide solutions.

[Read more](#)



## Nominations are open for Movement's highest honour

Co-operators are being urged to enter the Rochdale Pioneers Awards, which will be awarded near the home of the Rochdale Pioneers in October.

[Read more](#)



### [Israel experiences a new wave of co-operatives](#)

Israel is witnessing the emergence of a new co-operative movement. As part of the social-economic protests currently taking place across the country, more people are recognising co-operatives as an alternative way to regenerate the Israeli economy.

[Read more](#)



### [Italian co-operators mark International Year](#)

Italian co-operators came together to celebrate the International Year of Co-operatives and the International Day of Co-operatives last month.

[Read more](#)



### [ICA collects Pepe Miquel Award for outstanding achievements](#)

The International Co-operative Alliance has received the 2012 Pepe Miquel Award, which is organised by Confederación de Cooperativas (Valencia), and recognises the ICA's work to promote and sustain the co-operative model globally.

[Read more](#)



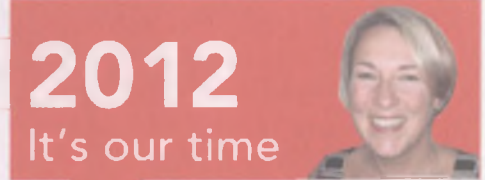
**Real  
democracy  
in action**

**The Humanitus blog**  
by Dame Pauline Green

### [Rocky road in sunny Spain](#)

I'm travelling to Valencia in Spain's sunny south tomorrow. While the sun may shine on its inhabitants much of the year, news that the Spanish Government may hike taxes on basics like...

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**2012  
It's our time**

**The IYC2012 blog**  
by Nicola Huckerby

### [Free eBook shows how co-ops create a fairer food system](#)

The ICA has teamed up with the Global News Hub, the Co-operative Group and Co-operatives UK to launch a series of eBooks to show how co-operatives provide an ethical alternative for business across...

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### [IYC2012 GLOBAL APPEAL](#)

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Our  
Partners





### IN THE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNICATIONS

Co-operators may notice this month that we will switch off our old website at [ica.coop](http://ica.coop). This legacy website will redirect to our International Year of Co-operatives website at [2012.coop](http://2012.coop), this new-look will also take us forward from 2013.

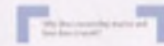
If you have saved any favourite pages from the old [ica.coop](http://ica.coop) these will soon be removed, but much of the content has been transferred over or condensed into new sections at [2012.coop](http://2012.coop), which has a wealth of resources, the latest news and events.

ICA is also accessible through social networks, including [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#). To find out more and how to promote your IYC activity, visit [2012.coop](http://2012.coop).



[IYC 2012 THEME SONG VIDEO TRINIDAD](#)

## Who actually owns a co-op?



Join the ICA 

### [THE FOUR CO-OPERATIVE MODELS](#)

### Events this month

4 AUG [Seward Co-op's 40th Anniversary Party](#)

21 AUG [Concred - 9th Brazilian Congress of Credit Cooperatives.](#)

### Event highlights

#### [2012 International Summit of Co-operatives](#)

Eight international studies on the financial and economic dimensions on co-operatives will be presented at the Summit in Quebec City from October 8, along with 130 keynote speakers covering various sectors. Book now!

[Read more](#)

#### [Co-operatives United](#)


Bookings are now live for the ICA's General Assembly and other events at Co-operatives United. International delegates can secure their place through the dedicated website; and for group bookings the ICA is offering one free place for every ten people. Book now!

[Read more](#)

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# COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES BUILD A BETTER WORLD



NOT JUST BUSINESS AS USUAL

July 21, 2012

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## A co-operative trifecta

We've begun to see the world's eyes drawn toward co-operatives. This past month, co-operatives have received world-class attention on three continents, a trifecta of sorts, garnering, in the immortal words of Aretha Franklin, that R-E-S-P-E-C-T that co-operatives deserve.

First, in the Americas, at Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainability, member-states acknowledged co-operatives as a solution to the world's most intractable problems. Not once, but three times, they saw fit to include co-operatives in their agreed outcome document—for poverty reduction, for jobs, and for sustainable agriculture—a trifecta of its own. And a core building block in ICA's long-term public policy strategy, a goal we set a year ago, and systematically worked to achieve since then.

Then, last week, in Asia, the Mumbai bureau of the influential Financial Times 'discovered' that behind the most famous advertising mascot in India—the cartoon character the Amul girl—is a co-operative, in fact 16,000 village co-operatives and over 3 million farmers. Amul is India's largest dairy products company and it has featured the Amul girl for 50 years to comment on contemporary social and political issues. In so doing, it has become one of India's most trusted brands.

Between the lines of the article, you can see the correspondent coming to grips with the puzzling fact that this economic powerhouse and trusted oracle of contemporary Indian society is not a multi-national corporation or a government enterprise, but in fact a co-operative. ICA's President, Dame Pauline Green, who was interviewed for and is quoted in the article, makes the case that only a co-operative could actually fulfil this role. Read the entire article at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6f5d46cc-d189-11e1-bb82-00144feabdco.htm>.

And now, in Europe, the Financial Times again, on their home turf, where they are the indisputable powerhouse of British financial reporting, and often the apologist for the multi-national corporate view of the world, has written these satisfying words: 'The sophisticated bankers from the City have been comprehensively outmanoeuvred by the innocent non-bankers at the Co-operative Group.' In an assessment of the Co-operative Group's acquisition of over 600 banking branches from Lloyds Banking, one of the major banking coups of our time, they tip their hat not only to the skills of the 'Co-op kids', as they say, but to the merits of the co-operative model. Their conclusion: 'It's hard to see the Co-op being invented today, but we'd be worse off without it. It's now big enough to be a credible competitor to the four big, ugly and (sometimes) corrosive banks which dominate the industry.' You can savour the words at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/41875c2e-d16b-11e1-bbbc-00144feabdco.html>.

In preparing for the International Year of Co-operatives, the ICA identified raising public awareness as our highest priority. We have engaged Fenton and Sommerson Communications, both of whom were integral to the Amul article, to guide our media relations strategy and implementation this Year. Our greatest advantage is that we don't have to create the story; it's happening every day in communities around the world, as Amul and the Co-operative Group demonstrate. We just have to tell the story. If we do that well, the co-operative will be seen as the world's premier example of

Charles (Chuck) Gould, ICA Director-General



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sustainable enterprise, and will become the model preferred by the people. That is what could make it the fastest-growing form of enterprise by the end of this decade. And that, indeed, would build a better world.

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2012  
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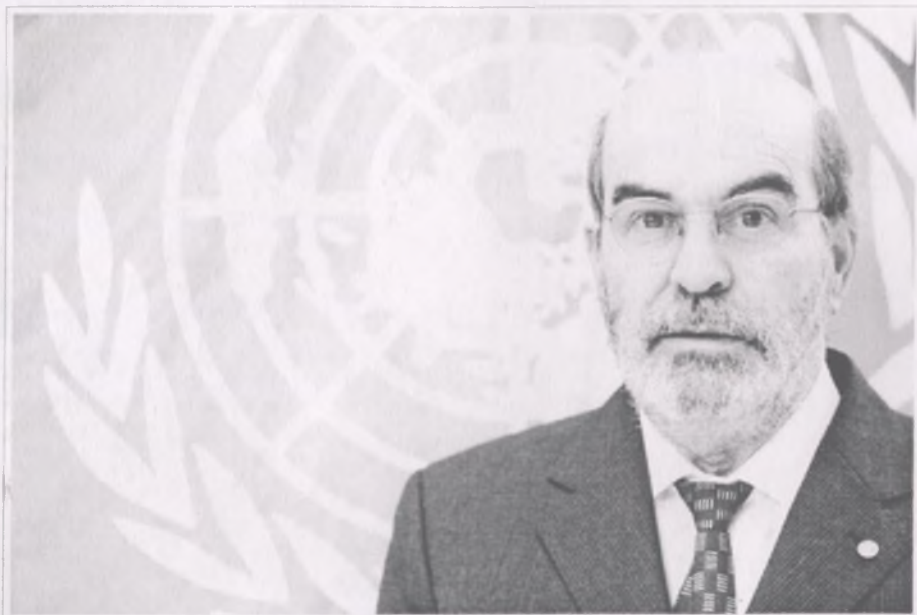


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24 JUL 2012



The Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), José Graziano da Silva, will join thousands of co-operators at Co-operatives United.

Delegates from around the world will travel to Manchester for the ICA's culmination event of the International Year during a week of activities from October 28-November 2, which includes the

Mr Graziano da Silva will be a keynote speaker at the ICA's opening ceremony on October 31 at Manchester Central, UK. Throughout the International Year he has been a strong advocate of co-operatives; and he recently outlined his vision for food and agricultural co-operatives: "Co-operatives and producer organisations have a key role to play in bringing about a future without hunger. Standing alone, a smallholder has fewer opportunities.

"When farmers get together, they have better condition to negotiate of price and better access to assets and services such as information, communication, input and output markets, natural resources, from local to international levels."

The FAO has continued to show its support for co-operatives. In June the Director General appointed two Special Ambassadors for co-operatives (<http://www.thenews.coop/article/un-promote-co-operatives-fight-against-world-hunger/>), with the mandate to promote the role of co-operatives in the fight against hunger; and last month he opened a liaison office for co-operatives and producer organisations (<http://www.fao.org/news/story/item/151201/code/>), at the organisation's Rome headquarters, which also included the offer of meeting space for the ICA.

This year's World Food Day (<http://www.fao.org/getinvolved/worldfoodday/en/>) on October 16 has also adopted the theme "Agricultural co-operatives — key to feeding the world", which will highlight the role of co-operatives contributing to the eradication of hunger and in improving food security.

Mr Graziano da Silva has made strong strides in food security world. As Brazil's Minister for Food Security and Fight Against Hunger he implemented the "Zero Hunger" ("Fome Zero") programme, which helped lift 24 million people out of poverty.



And this year with the FAO, he is working with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to identify new ways to support co-operatives. At the launch of the International Year of Co-operatives, Mr Graziano da Silva said: "FAO needs strong co-operatives and producer organizations as key partners in the effort to eliminate hunger for some 925 million people."

ICA is working with co-hosts the Co-operative Group and Co-operatives UK, to attract 10,000 visitors to Manchester for the event, which will also be broadcast through the [Global News Hub](#) (<http://www.thenews.coop/virtualevent/>) to allow co-operators worldwide to take part.

• Group bookings are now live for Co-operatives United. To book your place, visit: [www.manchester2012.coop/book-now](http://www.manchester2012.coop/book-now) (<http://www.manchester2012.coop/book-now>)

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ABOUT US

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CONTACT THE ICA

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Fax: +41 22 735 41 22

E-mail: [ica@ica.coop](#)





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## International Day



As part of celebrations for International Co-operative Day, co-operatives helped to raise the public awareness of the sector around the world.

In the days leading up to and following the Day, co-operators successfully communicated that Co-operative Enterprises Build a Better World in their activities.

In South America, Costa Rican co-operatives launched a co-op-themed stamp that promotes equality and solidarity. The 30,000 stamps have been supported by the country's national organisations including CONACOOOP and INFOCOOP.

Around 5,000 co-operatives descended on Las Tablas, Panama, in a traditional annual celebration. During the day, the government handed USD 4 million to agricultural co-operatives in the country and USD 1.9m towards housing projects.

In Vietnam thousands of people travelled to Hanoi including the Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. He said that the Vietnam Co-operative Alliance will play an important role in fulfilling Vietnam's targets to develop into a modern industrialized country by 2020.

Canada, which has over 9,000 co-operatives representing 8.8 million members, showed that the survival rate of co-operatives is two times better compared to private companies over a period of ten years. The country's Parliament also moved ahead with its commitment to create a special committee on co-operatives, and held a consultation meeting in Ottawa on July 10.

In the United States, the National Cooperative Business Association revealed that almost a third (29 per cent) of the population belonged to a co-operative and 72 percent of Americans think co-operatives such as credit unions and rural electric co-ops, are "helpful to consumers".

While the UK reported strong economic growth for co-operatives, which outperformed the British economy for four consecutive years. Co-operatives UK reported the movement has grown 1.5% in 2011, which is twice the rate of 0.7% in the national economy.

In Europe, the ICA's sectoral organisation CICOPA issued research that identifies the mechanisms which reinforce the resilience of co-operatives. It noted that the resilience is down to worker-members being co-owners and sharing the responsibility of short and long-term strategies.

Over the past eight years in Morocco, the movement has doubled from 4,619 co-ops to 9,722. In 2011 a new co-operative bill was approved by the Council of Ministers allowing them to make it easier to create co-ops and allow for better transparency.

Malta, a country with only 55 co-operatives, submitted a bill to Parliament on 6 July to help the creation of more co-ops and to encourage existing ones to help in social aspects.

• To share your co-operative's activities, email the [eDigest team](mailto:edigest@ica.coop) (<mailto:edigest@ica.coop>), or follow these [promotional steps here](http://2012.coop/en/international-co-operative-day/promote-your-activity/) (<http://2012.coop/en/international-co-operative-day/promote-your-activity/>).

Picture: Co-operators celebrate the International Co-operative Day in Panama with IPACOOOP's Executive Director Ana Giselle Rosas de Vallarino.

Tags: [edigest](#) ([/en/tags/edigest](#))

## ABOUT US

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## movement

24 JUL 2012



Jamaica held its first conference on the wider co-operative sector last month, with ICA Director-General Chuck Gould as keynote speaker.

The two-day symposium and exhibition on co-operatives, 18-19 July, looked at how co-operative enterprises build a better world, which was organised by one of the ICA's newest members [TIP Friendly Society](http://www.tipfriendly.com/tip/main?view=Index) (<http://www.tipfriendly.com/tip/main?view=Index>). The event, which attracted 121 members from 35 co-operatives and friendly societies, aimed to raise awareness of the importance of co-operatives in the local regional, and national development of Jamaica.

s-Abraham  
effective

regulatory framework for all co-operatives, credit unions and agricultural societies operating in Jamaica. She stressed the importance of co-operatives in Jamaica's economic development, with "over 1.4 million people are members of these co-operative and friendly societies" compared to a population of 2.7m.

The symposium was co-organised with the [Department of Co-operatives and Friendly Societies](http://www.dcs.jamaica.org/) (<http://www.dcs.jamaica.org/>), which is driven by its pursuit to combat poverty and improve the standard of living of Jamaican people through co-operation. Its activities have set solid foundations for meaningful change and sustained growth in many sectors of the economy. It consisting of 220 Co-operatives and 468 Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act.

One of these co-operatives is the [Jamaica Creative Cooperative](http://creativejamaicans.com/) (<http://creativejamaicans.com/>), which also had a stall at the exhibition. The coop was formed in June 2010 to support the work of creative Jamaicans through marketing initiatives and promote their products and services to local and international markets. Members produce authentic and unique handcrafted art, craft, gift and souvenir items. Other exhibitors included Co-operative Credit Union, Cave Valley Multipurpose Co-operative and Christiana Potato Growers Co-operative Association.

Following the symposium Mr Gould said: "As one of the most recent countries to join the ICA, the co-operatives in Jamaica demonstrated their commitment to the global movement with this conference in celebration of the International Year of Co-operatives. Their intent is to use this conference to launch an annual training and networking event. They have a clear vision of their role in the Jamaican economy and of the opportunities they see ahead."

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## operation Forum

24 JUL 2012



United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon hosted a high-level breakfast meeting on co-operatives at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on the last month in New York with senior dignitaries.

The Ministerial Breakfast on "Promoting productive capacity for sustainable livelihoods: the role of co-operatives", held on July 5, focused on what drives change and on how the movement can help future global development.

One of the main speakers at the event, José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Director for the Employment Sector at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), praised co-operatives for the contribution to creating jobs for young people as well as the ability to ensure the sustainable development of local communities.

"Co-operative ideals address young people's concerns for democracy, autonomy, independence, social and environmental responsibility, and ethical business practices. Co-operatives are also major instruments for those working in the informal economy. Through co-operatives they can access productive inputs, output markets, build self-confidence, and achieve self-organisation and collective voice

markets, and receive a larger share of the value added than would be possible for them individually. At the other end of the chain, consumer cooperatives sell these goods at affordable prices to the general public," he said.

Mr Salazar-Xirinachs added that co-operatives contribute to the green economy, create green jobs and play an important role in food security. He gave examples of how co-operatives help build a better world. In Argentina, co-operatives provide 58% of rural electricity, while in India the needs of 67% of rural households are covered by co-operatives. In Switzerland, the largest retailer and private employer is a co-operative and in Japan, nine million family farmers are members of co-operatives. Furthermore, the top 300 cooperatives in the world in terms of turnover exceed USD 1.6 trillion.

The ILO official also said that co-operatives have also been playing a role in confronting the challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. He added that important changes have occurred in recent years in the co-operative legislation of various developing countries.

During the meeting, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bob Carr, also emphasised the

importance on co-operation in dealing with humanitarian disasters such as the Haiti earthquakes, the Indian Ocean tsunami and the humanitarian crisis in the Sahel.

"The world is changing and development cooperation needs to respond in an innovative way. This year's United Nations International Year of Co-operatives reminds us that we need to put people at the centre of this change — to empower them to make development happen," the Foreign Minister said.

"Support for co-operatives is important because it creates new markets and new business opportunities where they have been destroyed by famine or conflict. Australia is also a keen supporter of partnerships that combine different sources of expertise, including south-south cooperation."

The biennial event is hosted by the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which was created in 1966 to bring together national leaders to review trends in international development. The DCF is a universal body which brings together decision makers from both developing and developed countries, parliamentarians, civil society organisations, local governments and the private sector. Its core aim is to promote economic development in the least developed countries.

Tags: [edigest \(/en/tags/edigest\)](#)

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## unemployment

17 JUL 2012



The International Labour Conference has launched a call for action to tackle the youth employment crisis; and said that co-operatives can provide solutions.

A draft report was released recently following the meeting in May, which was based on the International Labour Organization's previous document, "[The Youth employment crisis - A time for action](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_normy---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_175421.pdf)" ([http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed\\_normy---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_175421.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_normy---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_175421.pdf)).

### The report from the Committee on Youth Employment

([http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/reports/committee-reports/WCMS\\_182840/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/reports/committee-reports/WCMS_182840/lang-en/index.htm)) included guiding principles on how to respond to the crisis and co-operatives were described as key actors in the process of recovery. The report concluded that promoting youth entrepreneurship could encourage growth within sustainable enterprises such as co-operatives.

It also stressed that co-operatives can encourage initiatives and provide opportunities for young people to create their own enterprise and become self-employed. And encouraged governments to enable a favourable environment for social economy, small and medium enterprises and co-operatives. The document also called on governments to introduce students to co-operative concepts and include information about co-operatives within national curricula.

The Committee underlined that employers, including co-operatives, should place a strong emphasis on providing appropriate training for young people, engaging with governments in developing youth entrepreneurial programmes, and promoting young entrepreneurs' networks within their organisation. The ILO's role within the process would be to continue to provide technical assistance to co-operatives.

The important role of co-operatives in providing employment for young people was discussed at the Youth Employment Forum held at the ILO between the 23 and 25 of May in Geneva.

One of the speakers was Mi Ling Chng of the Singapore National Co-operative Federation, a 27-year-old Senior Marketing Executive also provided examples of how co-operatives in Singapore provide jobs for young people whilst financing the creation of more co-operatives and offering training to spread co-operative awareness.



The Conference on Youth Employment was part of the ILO's Co-operatives Branch initiatives, which aim to promote local economic development through co-operatives.

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## honour

17 JUL 2012



Co-operators are being urged to enter the Rochdale Pioneers Awards, which will be awarded near the home of the Rochdale Pioneers in October.

A special international dinner in Manchester on 31 October, following the General Assembly at Co-operatives United, will recognise an individual, or under special circumstances an organisation, that has contributed to innovative and financially sustainable activities that have significantly benefited co-operative members.

\_\_\_\_\_ served an ICA member organisation. Organisations that are nominated must be an ICA member, or an affiliate of a member.

ICA Director-General Chuck Gould said: "The Rochdale Pioneers Award, by its very name, signals that we all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. It's so rewarding to see ICA's members call out, through this award, those individuals to whom future co-operators will owe a like debt of gratitude."

The deadline for the award is 15 September and to celebrate the International Year of Co-operatives, the selection committee is seeking nominees that have made a strong contribution to increasing the global visibility of co-operatives.

• To submit your entry, along with supporting documentation, email Director-General Chuck Gould by 15 September: [gould@ica.coop](mailto:gould@ica.coop) (<mailto:gould@ica.coop?subject=Rochdale%20Pioneers%20Awards>)

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16 JUL 2012



Israel is witnessing the emergence of a new co-operative movement. As part of the social-economic protests currently taking place across the country, more people are recognising co-operatives as an alternative way to regenerate the Israeli economy.

Protests started in Israel about a year ago due to a rise in house prices, which subsequently led to an increase in food prices. Even though the economy is experiencing growth, the buying power of the middle class has decreased. Yifat Solel, one of the supporters of the new co-operative movement in Israel, explained how co-operatives came to be regarded as part of a solution to the socio-economic crisis: "After several decades of a capitalist way of thinking, co-operatives were considered something no longer relevant. Protests created a huge change in the way in which people look at things due to the establishment of a huge public university on the streets.

"A year ago I started giving lectures and was invited to different places in order to talk about co-operatives in general and to give specific ideas of how to start new initiatives. Creating a co-operative is now considered the thing to do. We recently opened a co-operative pub, which is now the coolest place to be in Tel Aviv. Even two MPs came at the opening of the Kaima pub, which translates as 'sustainable'."

A civil rights lawyer by profession, Mrs Solel is looking to draft a new law on co-operatives, which would include co-operative principles: "Israeli law has not been updated since 1933. It has not changed much over the years and has no co-operative values within the law, which means co-operatives in Israel are co-ops by name only. They do not have to operate according to the co-op values and principles."

Yifat Solel believes the new co-ops created within the last year are very different, because they are based upon social justice and co-operation. "Most of the old co-op movement is gone," she said. "Old co-operatives have de-mutualised. And many people within the few remaining co-ops are sceptic about the new wave of co-operatives. We just have to prove them wrong."

Mrs Solel also said co-operatives could be a solution in addressing social-economic issues, not just in Israel, but also across the world: "It is the only thing that we can actually do without having to wait for anyone else to do it. It is very difficult to win on social-economic issues in the

elections. The public thinks social issues are the important, but most of the political arena is either not interested, or not aware of them."

The new co-operative movement emerged as an initiative conducted by people of different backgrounds, from social workers to IT technicians to students, who are trying to "transform the protests into something concrete-through co-operative initiatives".

"They are mostly young people, but not only. They are very dedicated to the cause, and they are creating an addition to the economy and society. All the new public initiatives are very rooted in the co-operative principles and the bylaws of the new co-operatives. People just go and start doing things, taking control on their issues, their interests, creating a civic-economic power," Mrs Solel added.

The movement has many other new initiatives and aims to open several more consumers' co-ops, from restaurants and pubs to student co-operatives.

Picture: Yifat Solel at the opening of the Kaima co-operative pub in Tel Aviv.

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# Cooperatives

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9 JUL 2012

Italian co-operators came together to celebrate the International Year of Co-operatives and the International Day of Co-operatives last month.

Officials from co-operatives including the Alliance of Italian Co-operatives, Legacoop and Confcooperative gathered in Rome on July 5th to raise the profile of the sector.

The keynote speech was delivered by ICA President Dame Pauline Green, who praised the work of the Italian co-operative movement and spoke about the challenges the sector continues to face. She praised the Italian movement, and described some of the co-ops she had visited including a ham and salami co-operative (CLAI and SACMI), which she said was "the largest workers' manufacturing co-op that I have ever seen, with tremendous global reach."

However she outlined that there are still challenges ahead: "While we are a European and global movement, we do not have a European or global 'brand', in the traditional sense of 'brand', and that make us difficult to see and hear in a global economy.

"Our co-operative identity or 'brand' is not about selling a monolithic corporation, a product or service, but for us something bigger. Our model of business is sustained because it developed according to local needs, local culture and member demands, and which have a proven track record of sustainability."

Along with Dame Pauline, the event saw speakers such as Luigi Marino, President of Confcooperative and the Alliance of Italian Cooperatives, and Giuliano Poletti, President and Co-Chairman of Legacoop Alliance of Italian Cooperatives.

Mr Marino explained: "The crisis has led, in the world and in Europe, to the rediscovery of the co-operative, many of which have resisted and reacted to the difficulties better than other companies. 2012, proclaimed as the IYC, is a recognition that enhances our responsibility and we are committed to new targets in Italy, the European Union and worldwide."

Mr Poletti, added: "It is necessary to create a new development model, based on the support of the people and communities, a new social model, the need to work for a future where there is more balance between individual and community, economic activities and the economy, between public and private initiative."

The event was held in the Parco della Musica Sinopoli Hall, in Rome. The Alliance of Italian Co-operatives represent over 90% of the co-op sector: it employs 1.3 million people, has a turnover of 140 billion euros and over 12 million members.

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## achievements

9 JUL 2012



The International Co-operative Alliance has received the 2012 Pepe Miquel Award, which is organised by Confederación de Cooperativas (Valencia), and recognises the ICA's work to promote and sustain the co-operative model globally.

Dame Pauline Green, President of the ICA, collected the prize on 10 July in Valencia, which is the first time an organisation has received the annual award. She said it is a privilege for the ICA to receive the recognition, especially in the context of the International Year of Co-operatives: "I am conscious that this award is given to the ICA for the work that it has done over its 117 year history as steward of the values and principles of our global movement and for its work to drive the development of co-operatives across the world.

"But in reality, it also represents the intrinsic recognition of the work of the billions of individual co-operators who are the real heroes and heroines," she said. "As co-operators, we know that the world would be a different place if just a fraction of the public money that went to bail out the big commercial banks across the world, had been put into co-operative development."

The ICA President also praised the contribution of the ICA's 296 members and the billion co-operative members from all over the world. She told the 200-strong audience that co-operatives have been promoting sustainable development by boosting economic growth and putting the global economy "at the service of people" rather than "leaving people at its mercy".

At the event, Dame Pauline added that co-operatives could also help regenerate the Spanish economy, which has been severely affected by the financial crisis. She also congratulated the government of Mariano Rajoy for increasing finance for the social economy to more than 940 million euros, which includes the development of worker co-operatives.

Dame Pauline said: "The ICA's key strategy for the coming decade is to grow the co-operative model of business across the world — this is a real prize for all of us!

"The ICA Board sees this International Year as the beginning of a modern, confident, outward



looking and creative co-operative movement. This award is a great moral support and motivation for us to continue that work with the worldwide co-operative movement and I thank you on behalf of this great movement from the bottom of my heart."

On the jury, which handed out the eighth Pepe Miquel award, were representatives from the co-operative, university and political worlds. The prize is normally awarded every year under two categories — the lifetime achievement co-operative award and the prize for the best journalistic work. This year's journalistic prize went to newspaper Levante-EMV (Editorial Prensa Ibérica).

Emili Villaescusa, President of Confederación de Cooperativas, also said that since the beginning of the financial crisis in in Spain the number of job losses within the co-operative sector had been ten per cent below the country's average, proving that co-operatives can be part of the solution to the economic crisis.

"This award granted to the ICA is very special. This is the first time the Pepe Miquel prize for co-operation goes to an institution, and we are proud that the person who came to collect it is a major representative of the co-operative movement in the world, Dame Pauline Green, who was also the first woman to come to the stage and collect the prize," he added.

uring a visit

to Consum Cooperativa's warehouse, which is the largest consumer co-operative in the Mediterranean with 600 supermarkets. Talking with Consum's President Francesc Llobell, Dame Pauline said that "in an environment where unemployment figures are becoming less encouraging, co-operatives continue to increase their profits and their staff, creating stable and quality employment". She added that "in a year when most of the business faltered, Consum has managed to grow profits in a sustainable manner".

During her tour around Valencia, Dame Pauline also visited Anecoop, which is Spain's leader in marketing fruit, vegetables and salads, as well as being a world leader in citrus fruit exporting. She said that both of the co-operatives "have put in strong financial performances in difficult economic circumstances".

Picture: Dame Pauline is pictured with fellow award winner Ferrán Belda, Director Levante-EMV, with (left) Alberto Fabra, President, Generalitat Valenciana and Emili Villaescusa.

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## Dame Pauline Green

### Rocky road in sunny Spain

Posted on 9 July 2012

I'm travelling to Valencia in Spain's sunny south tomorrow. While the sun may shine on its inhabitants much of the year, news that the Spanish Government may hike taxes on basics like milk, bread and sanitary items as part of continuing austerity measures has hit a population already reeling from one quarter of its population being without a job, with the figures for young unemployed being particularly cruel at around 50 per cent.

But, amid all of the difficulties the Spanish people are facing, co-operatives in Valencia added jobs in the past year. Anecoop and Consum, two co-operatives I am very much looking forward to visiting, have put in strong financial performances in difficult economic circumstances. Consum has even found the impetus and funds to dramatically improve its environmental performance. That's the co-operative difference!

And the government of Mariano Rajoy is doing its bit to help fund entrepreneurial activity and self-employment in the social economy by boosting its spending in this area. With this in mind, just consider if some of the funds that have been used to bail out failing banks in the past months, or allocated to the now *nonetheless desired* high court probe into Bankia – Spain's fourth largest bank – had been put into co-operative development? That would have done much to help the Spanish people get through the pain, and helped Spain jump the very real hurdles in front of it on the bumpy path to economic recovery.



# 2012 - It's OUR time

## Free eBook shows how co-ops create a fairer food system

The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) has teamed up with the Global News Hub to launch a free eBook that shows how co-operatives create a fairer food system. The eBook is available for download from the ICA website.

The eBook is a 100-page guide that provides a comprehensive overview of the co-operative movement and its role in the world's food system. It covers the history of co-operatives, their structure and governance, and the challenges they face in the 21st century. The eBook also provides practical advice on how to start a co-operative and how to work effectively within one.

The eBook is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the co-operative movement and its role in the world's food system. It is available for download from the ICA website.

The eBook is available for download from the ICA website. The first eBook will be published in English and the second eBook will be published in French.

Posted 19 hours ago



Hello, I'm Nicola Huckerby and I work at the International Co-operative Alliance HQ in Geneva. 2012 is a big year for us and a momentous year for co-operatives across the world - an opportunity to relaunch the co-operative brand. I hope that my Blog will keep you up to date with what's happening on the International Year of Co-operatives and that you will share your thoughts on how we can all make the most of this gift of a year from the United Nations.

Ask me anything

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What a great statue to mark #coops2012 from @midcountiescoop <http://t.co/hogIQNrU>

The theme for World Food Day 2012 will be "Agricultural Co-operatives - Key to feeding the World" <http://t.co/zrPrQWY6> #coops2012 @FAONews

Well co-operated! 200 #ilovecoopsutd tweets for @coopsutd. Our reward? A clip of The Rochdale Pioneers film <http://t.co/g4IKo47y> #cobps2012

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The global voice of co-operatives [www.2012.coop](http://www.2012.coop)

May 2012

## Creating a fair food chain with co-operation



Co-operatives in Europe are laying the foundations for a fair and competitive food supply chain, according to a panel of European Union representatives. As part of Co-operative Week across Europe, officials from co-operatives and the EU discussed the idea of co-operative principles forming part of a future Common Agriculture Policy for the food industry.

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### COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES BUILD A BETTER WORLD



#### General Assembly set to look forward to Co-operative Decade

Exactly one year after the United Nations' official launch event in New York, the birthplace of the modern co-operative movement will play host to the global culmination event for the International Year of Co-operatives. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



#### Green parties pledge support for co-operatives

Green parties around the world are backing co-operatives; now help the ICA spread the movement's message by connecting with your local group. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



#### Quebec Summit to discuss future of agriculture sector

Ten speakers from the co-operative movement's biggest sector are set to address the International Summit of Cooperatives, which is jointly hosted by the ICA. [Read more](#) | [Leer en](#)

### *In this issue*

[General Assembly](#)

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[Rodgers to step down](#)

### *It's our time*



Show your support for IYC 2012. Join us on [Facebook](#)



The Director-General's Blog

#### Co-op Capitalism

Noreena Hertz, at the School of Finance at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, has written recently about the need, in this post-luxe era, to





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**Co-operatives build a better world through Fairtrade**

For World Fair Trade Day, the ICA is encouraging co-operatives to show how the movement builds a better world for Fairtrade farmers. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**UK movement sends donations to IYC fund**

Co-operatives across the UK have shown support for the ICA's International Year of Co-operatives fund with global donations now totalling CHF 463,000. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**Campus Cooperatives**

**First co-operative summer school for France**

Budding co-operators have the opportunity to take part in the first summer school about co-operation. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**Help movement flourish in new sectors, say academics**

Co-operatives contribute to the development of their communities and sectors, according to a 'final declaration' from a group of academics. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**An IDEA to help dairy co-operatives**

Dairy co-operatives in developing countries have been given access to a learning network to strengthen competition. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**David Rodgers announces ICA Housing retirement**

ICA Housing President, David Rodgers, has announced his retirement from the sectoral organisation at the end of his term in 2013. [Read more](#) | [Leer en español](#) | [Lire en français](#)



**New member from Ireland joins ICA**

ICA welcomes Co-operative Support Services as an Associate member. CSS promotes, develops and supports the co-operative and social enterprise sector across Ireland and Northern Ireland. The organisation encourages and helps immigrants to unlock their full potential by pooling their skills and resources to develop co-operative businesses. Find out more: [www.css.coop](http://www.css.coop). [Click here to see the full list of ICA members.](#)



**USA visit for ICA President**

ICA President Dame Pauline Green visits the United States: where she'll meet with the Obama Administration – read more in the June eDigest.



**Workshop to discuss the change of co-operative law in Galicia**

The Department of Labour Relations of the Department of Work and Welfare celebrates the International Year of Co-operatives in collaboration with associations representing cooperatives during this event. [Read more](#)



**The Raiffeisen idea – a model for the future, Germany**

International Conference with prominent speakers from politics, economics and society. Target audience: IRU members; politicians; and international organisations. [Read more](#)



**Doors Open Karma, Canada**

Founded in 1972, Karma Co-operative is the oldest member-owned food co-op in Toronto. During this 40th anniversary, Karma has been selected to be part of Doors Open Toronto, which will allow members of the public to tour the building! [Read more](#)

replace Gucci capitalism with coop capitalism. She describes Gucci capitalism as assuming that we are selfish, super-individualistic beings who care only about maximising our wealth, salaries and resources, in contrast to co-op capitalism, which prioritizes collective destiny—it values the network. [Read more.](#)



2012 - It's OUR Time

The IYC2012 Blog

**Chuck Gould seeks views of ICA membership**

Director-General of the ICA Chuck Gould has this month written to ICA members, requesting their input into ICA's planning process. That process includes a review of the subscription

system, membership categories, the ICA proposed co-operative structure, and the post-2012 strategic plan development. [Read more.](#)

Post your IYC2012 Event



Upload your events to the Official IYC 2012 calendar

Browse ICA Events



**Tweets**

Funeral Co-op Movement Growing Year By Year! [tumblr.co/Zxz6UxkDokIu](http://tumblr.co/Zxz6UxkDokIu)

Cirque du Soleil to perform at International Summit [tumblr.co/Zxz6UxJaid\\_M](http://tumblr.co/Zxz6UxJaid_M)

I support UN Year of Cooperatives, show your support! [s.coop/tw/lbbon](https://www.coop/tw/lbbon)

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**Conference on the economic future, Spain**

Discussion of the current global economic situation and future prospects from Forokoop. [Read more](#)

**Spanish co-op weathers financial storm**



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**In California cooperatives spur economic growth**



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## Cooperative Decade

30 APR 2012



Exactly one year after the United Nations' official launch event in New York, the birthplace of the modern co-operative movement will play host to the global culmination event for the International Year of Co-operatives.

Thousands of co-operators are set to celebrate the close of the International Year and the launch of a Co-operative Decade in Manchester, UK, this October.

Co-operatives United is the global culmination event for the International Year of Co-operatives and the ICA's closing ceremony for the Year at Manchester Central. It will also look forward to the next ten years of co-operation.

Organised in association with co-hosts the Co-operative Group and Co-operatives UK, the event (29 October to 2 November), which is expected to attract 10,000 visitors, will include the ICA General Assembly and will be broadcast globally online to allow members worldwide to take part.

ICA delegates will debate the 2020 vision of a Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, also under discussion will be the ICA's strategic plan, its legal status and membership subscription formula. The ICA's first World Co-operative Monitor, which replaces the Global300, will also be published during the event and the results of Coop'Art the ICA's [global artistic competition](http://www.2012.coop/en/get-involved/competitions) for young people.

Chuck Gould, Director-General of the International Co-operative Alliance, said: "We're delighted to be working with co-hosts the Co-operative Group and Co-operatives UK on the delivery of Co-operatives United. Plans are well and underway and I'm confident that it's set to be truly global event as we celebrate the close of the International Year and the official launch of a co-operative decade."

Delegates will gain access to a number of other events taking place in the exhibition complex that week, which include:

The focus of these events is to encourage business between co-operators, — most suppliers from all continents in sectors such as agriculture, banking, housing and retail.

• Co-operative Living, which will be a life-size town square with a number of retail outlets

themed to mirror successful co-operative businesses.

Other conferences taking part during the week-long event will cover Fairtrade, co-operative enterprise, schools, values and principles and a young filmmakers' festival.

To find out more about the ICA General Assembly, and Co-operatives United, visit the [ICA's special page](http://www.2012.coop/en/events/ica-general-assembly-2012-co-operatives-united) (<http://www.2012.coop/en/events/ica-general-assembly-2012-co-operatives-united>).

Picture: Manchester Central.

Tags: [edigest](#) ([en/tags/edigest](#)), [General Assembly](#) ([en/tags/general-assembly](#))

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25 APR 2012



For the first time, young French speakers will have the opportunity to learn about co-operation in a special summer school.

Students between the ages of 18–35 will take part in the school, organised by the Regional Union of [Scop of Poitou Charentes \(http://www.scop-poitoucharentes.coop\)](http://www.scop-poitoucharentes.coop), in Poitiers, France, from July 2–14 to learn more about co-operatives.

The campus follows the model of Sherbrook's summer school, in Quebec, where over the previous three years, French students studied the co-operative model.

Johan Bauferton, one of the coaches at the Campus and regional delegate of the Scop (Société Coopérative et Participative), said the school is based around the scenario of organising their own 'Scop', which is a form of co-operative where employees are the majority shareholders.

"The main role of the Regional Union", commented Mr Bauferton, "is, from one hand, to show that Scops exist. From the other hand, they constantly promote and make young people interested in co-operative entrepreneurship. The aim of the school is to promote the creation of co-op enterprises in people as young as possible."

Divided into groups of four or five people, students will have 15 days to create a Scop. During the time, they will be supported by expert coaches who will support them in the organization of their own project. Participants will be also involved in conferences and workshops about co-operation and co-operative enterprises.

According to Mr Bauferton, the campus will be a period of training and action; young people will increase their competences, and, at the same time, they will learn to work together, co-operatively.

• The deadline for candidates is May 31. To sign up to the school, visit

[www.campuscooperatives.coop](http://www.campuscooperatives.coop) (<http://www.campuscooperatives.coop>)

Tags: [edigest](#) ([/en/tags/edigest](#)), [education](#) ([/en/tags/education](#))

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20 APR 2012



Green parties from around the world have shown their support for the co-operative model.

At the [Global Greens Congress in Dakar](http://www.globalgreens.org/dakar2012) (<http://www.globalgreens.org/dakar2012>), hundreds of delegates from 76 countries backed a call for national Green parties to lobby governments to nurture the creation, growth and sustainability of co-operatives.

Proposed by the Australian Greens, the resolution, which was unanimously supported by attendees, acknowledged the close alignment between the ICA's Co-operative Principles and those of the Global Greens, which is a partnership of Green parties and political movements.

The Congress also agreed that co-operatives have a significant impact on reducing poverty and in "securing a sustainable and renewable future for the planet".

Sam Byrne, a member of the Australian Greens and Chair of Alfalfa House food co-operative, Sydney, presented the motion to the group of Green parties. Mr Byrne says: "To me, and now the Greens worldwide, there is a lot of alignment between Greens principles and co-op principles.

"The motion gives co-operatives and their national and international organisations an opening to engage Greens parties and MPs on issues relating to co-operatives. It also should encourage them to promote co-ops. In quite a few countries and regions now Greens are in key parliamentary positions."

Green parties have also pledged to promote co-operatives throughout the International Year of Co-operatives; and on the International Day of Co-operatives (July 7).

In a letter addressed to the Congress, ICA President Dame Pauline Green said: "In this International Year of Co-operatives, each day that we spread the word of the importance of this values-based enterprise model and it takes stronger root, is a day in which more citizens will find jobs, there will be greater gender equality, youth employment, greater focus on climate change and peace initiatives and more effective sustainable development. Co-operatives are a critical part of all of that and more."

• Reach out to your local Green party to help spread the co-operative message. There are over 100 parties worldwide, find your local campaign group here: [www.globalgreens.org/parties](http://www.globalgreens.org/parties)

<http://www.globalgreens.org/parties>

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## sector

26 APR 2012



Agriculture has been given a platform at the International Summit of Cooperatives in Quebec.

As the biggest co-operative sector, according to the ICA's Global 300 list, agriculture and agri-food will be a key topic at the Summit with ten guests from around the world discussing the industry's future.

The panel of speakers appearing at the October 8–11 event includes Won-Byong Choi, National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, NACF (South Korea); Leonardo Delgado, FEDECOVERA (Guatemala); Patrice Gollier, InVivo (France); Claude Lafleur, La Coop fédérée (Canada); José Hugo Lares Sierra, Triunfo Verde (Mexico); Yves Le Morvan, Coop de France (France); David Moroney, Co-operative Bulk Handling, CBH Group (Australia); Denis Richard, La Coop fédérée (Canada); Serge Riendeau, Agropur (Canada); and Svend Erik Sørensen, Danish Crown (Denmark).

One of the speakers, Leonardo Delgado, told eDigest that he is looking forward to the opportunity to talk about the [Federation of Cooperatives of the Verapaces](http://www.fedecovera.com) (Fedecovera) in Guatemala. Fedecovera is the overseeing organisation of 36 co-operatives across the northern region of the country, which is made up of 60,000 people.

Mr Delgado, Fedecovera general manager, said: "When I knew the subject of the conference, I thought that I could introduce Fedecovera as an agricultural co-operative with a high social value."

Since 1976, Fedecovera's entire membership has been built-up from the indigenous Maya population, which also supports 80,000 farmers separated into 33 groups. The organisation's primary economic activity is a sustainable forestry development and the cultivation of the



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## Fairtrade

30 APR 2012



For World Fair Trade Day, the ICA is encouraging co-operatives to show how the movement builds a better world for Fairtrade farmers.

On 12 May, people around the globe will mark the day for multi-billion dollar industry that gives money back to villages that produce items from coffee to cocoa to cotton to carnations. This Fairtrade premium helps to bring a better life to villagers.

Co-operative models are helping Fairtrade enterprises around world. The Hop Tac coffee co-operative in Vietnam has been thriving in a difficult year for the coffee industry, which is experiencing volatile prices. The co-operative has used training and support to increase its exports; and the Fairtrade premium has allowed a meeting space to be built for the community.

In the Dominican Republic, CONACADO co-operative provides cocoa products to Green & Black's, Lush Cosmetics and Ben & Jerry's ice cream. The 10,000 farmers make up 25 per cent

The Manduvira Co-operative in Paraguay is a leading sugar producer, which can now afford to build its own mill rather than paying rental and transportation costs to another factory over 100km away.

Nicola Kelly, ICA Director of Communications, said: "These stories, and many more, show that co-operatives are the successful structure behind Fairtrade; and there is no better time than the International Year of Co-operatives to shout about this.

"Three out of four Fairtrade products sold come from co-operatives of small producers, while some products such as coffee and cocoa are entirely sourced from co-operatives. These are amazing facts that show co-operative enterprises do build a better world."

• Find out more about World Fair Trade Day: [www.wftday.org](http://www.wftday.org) (<http://www.wftday.org>)

Picture: Hop Tac coffee co-operative

Tags: [edigest](#) ([/en/tags/edigest](#))



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30 APR 2012



Co-operatives across the UK are the latest supporters for the ICA's International Year of Co-operatives fund with global donations now totalling CHF 463,000.

Donations totalling CHF 39,360 were made in the main by UK retail consumer societies, which make up the bulk of co-operative membership in the country. This round of 2012 funding, co-ordinated by the apex body Co-operatives UK, came from Midlands Co-operative, Midcounties Co-operative, East of England Co-operative, Anglia Regional Co-operative, Lincolnshire Co-operative, Southern Co-operative, Channel Islands Co-operative, Chelmsford Star Co-operative and Scotmid Co-operative. Additionally, healthcare provider Benenden also made a contribution.

These ten co-operatives join the Co-operative Group, which continue to support ICA activity throughout the UK. The Group and Co-operatives UK are co-hosting Co-operatives United, the IYC culmination event to celebrate the International Year, which will be held in Manchester from 29 October to 2 November 2012.

Shelagh Everett, International Year of Co-operatives Programme Leader at Co-operatives UK said: "Despite the difficult economic times, co-operatives and mutuals in the UK have chosen to make a significant financial contribution to the ICA and Co-operatives United, as well as running their own ambitious campaigns to raise awareness of the co-operative way of doing business. We're delighted that the UK co-operative sector has got behind the International Year of Co-

Separately, Sanford Housing Co-operative also made a gift to the IYC fund. The co-operative is Britain's oldest purpose built housing co-op, having been established in the 1970s.

Chuck Gould, Director-General of the ICA, thanked all the donors: "These donations make a real difference to our work on the International Year of Co-operatives enabling us to deliver our aim of raising public awareness of the co-operative model during the year."

• To find out more about how you can donate to the ICA's Appeal to support the International

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## academics

27 APR 2012



Co-operatives contribute to the development of their communities and sectors, according to a 'final declaration' from a group of academics.

Following on from the "Promoting the understanding of cooperatives for a better world" conference in Venice, organised by research institute Euricse, an overview document of the event found that co-operation is emerging in the public service sectors and that better regulation to stimulate co-operative growth is needed.

The conference brought together scholars from various countries and disciplines to discuss the economic and social importance of cooperatives.

Academics discovered the emergence of co-operatives in public service sectors such as education, health and social services was an answer to local and national services run by other organisations that were deemed as inadequate.

To help support the growth of co-operatives, the conference held the belief that better regulatory framework was of paramount importance in traditional and new sectors. Delegates backed calls for governments to recognise co-operatives as a business model that should enjoy the same freedoms, access and support as other enterprises.

They also believed organisational and governance rules would allow co-operatives to develop, especially in sectors that have been traditionally dominated by public-run entities. Equally, market regulation and anti-trust laws should take into account the unique goals of co-operatives, which are to be run in line with the interests of their workers, producers or consumers.

The report declared: "The genetics of co-operation reveal an ability to adapt and transform that enables cooperatives both to react positively to difficult situations and to actively contribute to social and economic development, though their usefulness is clearly not limited to times of crisis.

"The contributions of the scholars who participated in this conference highlight that the interest





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30 APR 2012



Dairy co-operatives in developing countries have been given access to a learning network to strengthen competition.

Launched in Nairobi, Kenya, the International Dairy Enterprise Alliance (IDEA), which has been established to deliver the initiative, started the first 'Co-operative-to-Co-operative Learning Series' last month.

The Cooperative Development Program (CDP) is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and managed by Land O'Lakes International Development to provide information, resources and technology to help dairy co-operatives thrive in national and regional markets.

The learning series brings together industry thought leaders, co-operative managers and board members to share experiences. Over 40 participants attended the first session from a variety of co-operatives afar afield as Nicaragua, India and the United States; and despite the differing sizes they found similar problems existed around the world.

Rebecca Savoie, Practice Manager for the CDP, said: "The informal nature of the event created a space for connection. The stories that these high-level executives were telling about their business problems resonated profoundly with all participants.

"The event was magical. Participants walked away with actionable items and took back ideas to their cooperatives to help transform their businesses."

Taking part in the event were co-operatives, development organisations, research organisations, input suppliers, government bodies and nongovernmental organisations and other private sector partners.

transformational," said Ms Savoie.

In addition to the events, the IDEA network will develop a knowledge management portal to allow members to collaborate and share strategies and tools.

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## retirement

30 APR 2012



ICA Housing President, David Rodgers, has announced his retirement from the sectoral organisation at the end of his term in 2013.

Mr Rodgers, also Chair of the [ICA Housing Board](http://www.ica.coop/ical-housing/), started his career in 1971 as a founder member of Sanford Housing Co-operative, London, which today maintains a successful sustainable community and recently made a contribution to the International Year of Co-operatives fund.

Eight years later, Mr Rodgers was appointed as Chief Executive of CDS Co-operatives, London, where he has grown the organisation over the past 30 years to the largest co-operative housing service agency in England.

At the end of July, Mr Rodgers will depart from CDS, but remains with the ICA until 2013. He said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed the years I have spent as CDS's Chief Executive. Every day, it has been inspirational to work with tenants and residents and to support and enable them to use their often neglected talents to control their own homes and neighbourhoods. I retain my passionate commitment to housing co-operatives."

Retiring in the International Year of Co-operatives, Mr Rodgers said it is the right time to step down: "I retain my passion for and commitment to housing co-operatives in particular, and to the wider Co-operative Movement in general. I intend to continue promoting and developing housing and other co-operatives which, with over 900 million members worldwide, are increasingly important as enterprises that are good for people, good for societies and good for the planet, but I think it is the right time for me to step down and for CDS to appoint a new CEO."

• To find out more about the Chief Executive vacancy at CDS, visit [ICA jobs](http://www.2012.coop/en/co-operative-jobs/)

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**SUNDAY, 27 MAY 2012 TO MONDAY, 28 MAY 2012**

#### Karma Co-operative

739 Palmerston Avenue  
Toronto Ontario M6G 2R3  
Canada



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Audience: NATIONAL

(/EN/EVENT-AUDIENCE/NATIONAL)

LOCAL (/EN/EVENT-

AUDIENCE/LOCAL)

Region: AMERICAS

(/EN/REGIONS/AMERICAS)

Founded in 1972, Karma Co-operative is the oldest member-owned food co-op in Toronto. With about 1000 members, this nonprofit food store is also the largest organization of its kind in Ontario. During this 40th anniversary, Karma has been selected to be part of Doors Open Toronto!

"The City of Toronto presents the annual Doors Open Toronto — one weekend, once a year — when close to 150 buildings of architectural, historic, cultural and social significance open their doors to the public for a city-wide

*Celebration "doors open website"*  
~~The event will take place during last weekend in May.~~

when Karma will invite the public through its doors for: store tours, informational lectures about food politics and practices, and a fascinating panel discussion from some of the founders, who will be sharing stories from the co-op's four decades of history.

In addition, Karma's Members Room will become an archival gallery, featuring materials from over the course of the last 40 years, and a peak at what's to come.

**Contact person:** Amy Andre

**Email:** [manager@karmacoop.org](mailto:manager@karmacoop.org)

**Website:** <http://www.karmacoop.org> (<http://www.karmacoop.org>)

Event type: [Free to attend \(/en/event-type/free-attend\)](#)

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# ICA - Asia and Pacific Digest

January 2009 - August 2010

SELF-HELP • SOLIDARITY • CO-OPERATION



## THE FRATERNITY

### THE GROWING ICA-ASIA AND PACIFIC FAMILY

A substantial number of Co-operative organisations from several countries in the region have joined the ICA family since the last Regional Assembly held in Hanoi, Vietnam during the winter of 2008. During the period after the Regional Assembly Dec'2008, the ICA-Asia and the Pacific has made substantial efforts in facilitating the exchange of ideas and views on co-operation amongst the co-operators of the region. ICA-Asia and the Pacific is determined to serve this association in the best possible manner especially in the wake of various international crises emerging from economic and environmental issues.

We proudly inform that the following Co-operatives have been inducted as the new members of the ICA-Asia Pacific:

1. All China Federation of Handicraft & Industrial Co-operatives (ACFHIC), CHINA
2. International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Co-operatives (ICCIC), CHINA.
3. National Federation of Fishermen's Co-operatives Limited (FISHCOFED), INDIA
4. National Labour Co-operatives' Federation of India Limited (NLCF), INDIA
5. Iran Oilseeds & Vegetable Oil Processing Factories Coop CO (Farda Oil), IRAN
6. iCOOP Solidarity of Consumer Co-operatives, Rep. of KOREA.
7. Korean Association of Social Economy Enterprises (KASEE), KOREA
8. National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Co-operatives (NAMAC), MANGOLIA
9. National Co-operative Federation & Development Centre (VICTO National) PHILIPPINES
10. Republican Union of Consumer Societies (Soyuz Tadjikmatlubot), TAJIKISTAN
11. Indian Farm and Forestry Development Co-operative Ltd. (IFFDC) India

Following are few more Co-operative Organizations who may join us in the near future as their applications are under process.

1. China Fisheries Association (CFA), China.
2. Supervision & Central Coordination Union of Rural Agricultural Co-operatives (SCURA), Iran.
3. National Association of Labour Banks, Japan.
4. Mongolian Coop Training and Information Centre (MCTIC), Magnolia.
5. Co-operative House Building and Finance Corporation Ltd. India.

### LEADERSHIP

The ICA-AP witnessed a change in the leadership and administration. Dr. Chan Ho

CHOI joined the ICA-AP as the Regional Director with effect from January 2010 after Mr. Shil Kwan Lee retired as the Regional Director in December 2009. There have been changes in leadership of the Co-operative Members in the region as well due to periodical elections.

The following are the Asia-Pacific Board Members as on August'2010.

1. Mr. Li Chunsheng, Chairperson.
2. Dr. Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, Vice-Chairperson
3. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Vice chairperson
4. Mr. H.A.M. Nurdin Halid, Member, Regional Board
5. Mr. Godofredo E. Lising Jr., Member, Regional Board
6. Mr. Won-Byung Choi, Member, Global and the Regional Board
7. Mr. Bandu Ranawaka Member, Regional Board
8. Dr. Mohd Ali Baharum Member, Regional Board
9. Mr. Han Tee Seng Member, Regional Board
10. Mr. Mongkalut Pukanut Member, Regional Board
11. Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan Member, Regional Board
12. Mr. Teo Say Hong, Member, Global Youth Representative

### Glimpses of 2009-2010

- The ICA Asia and Pacific Regional Board Meeting was held in Tokyo in June 2009.
- The Second Regional Board meeting was held in Bangalore in October 2009.
- The Third ICA-Asia and Pacific Regional Board Meeting was held in Geneva, Switzerland in November 2009.
- Iran's Deputy Minister of Co-operatives, Dr. Hosseini Nia visited India along with a 20 member delegation in January 2009.
- A delegation from Ja-Zenchi, Japan visited Indian Farmers' Fertilizers Co-operative, New Delhi, India. The ICA-AP coordinated the meeting.
- Mr. Shil Kwan Lee retires as the Regional Director of the Asia and Pacific Region in December 2009.
- Dr. Chan Ho CHOI joined as the Regional Director with effect from January 2010.
- The International Day of Co-operatives July 3, 2010 was celebrated by members in the region. The ICA sent out a message on the occasion with the Co-operative Day 2010 theme: "Co-operative Enterprises Empower Women" to all its member organizations.
- United Nations proclaims year 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives
- The Regional Board meeting takes place at Seoul, Korea in April 2010
- The Regional Assembly and Coop Forum and related events are scheduled from 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2010 in Beijing, China
- The Global ICA-EXPO 2010 is to be

held in Bangalore, India during 8-10 December 2010.

- A group of Students from the Audit Department of the Natesan Institute of Co-operative Management, Chennai, India visited the ICA-Asia and Pacific office in New Delhi to learn about the functions of ICA in the region.

### Landmark Events In The Offing From The ICA

#### ICA-Global Expo- 2010

The ICA Global Expo is scheduled to be held in Bangalore, India during 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> December 2010. This mega exhibition and



sale of Co-operative products and services is being held in collaboration with the Indian Farmers' Fertilizers Co-operative (IFFCO). The first edition of this Expo was held successfully in Lisbon, Portugal in 2008 that attracted over 8000 visitors. The Expo is seen as a unique opportunity as this fair intends to promote the growth of the Co-operative business and the practice of inter-co-operation among participants along with furthering strategic alliances.

#### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ICA Regional Office for the Asia and the Pacific (1960-2010)



The Regional office for the ICA-Asia and the Pacific region was inaugurated on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1960 in New Delhi by the first Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. Year 2010 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary Celebrations of the same and ICA-Asia and Pacific is slated to hold a special event in New Delhi during the Indian Co-operative Week from 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> November 2010. A book commemorating the achievements of ICA in the Asia-Pacific

region is being compiled and will be released this year.

#### Co-operative Day Celebrations - July

The International Day of Co-operative celebrated on the first Saturday of month of July every year. The aim of 'Day' is to increase awareness on co-operatives, as well as strengthen and expand partnerships among the co-operative movements and other stake holders. In 1994 the United Nations recognized co-operatives are vital in the economic, social and cultural development and two years earlier, on December 1992, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the first Saturday of July as the International Day of co-operation marking the centenary of ICA establishment. July 2, 2011 will be celebrated as the International Co-operative Day.

#### Co-operative Ministers' Conference the Asia-Pacific Region - 2011

The ICA-AP Co-operative Mini Conference is held biennially to send the governments and policy makers the prospects of Co-operatives as the business entities for economic and social growth. This assists the Government develop progressive policies legislations for the Co-operatives in the world. The forthcoming Regional Assembly in China is scheduled to be in a Coop-Govt. dialogue as an preparation for the Ministers' Conference to be conducted and facilitated by the ICA-AP in 2011.

#### International Year of Co-operatives-

A truly delightful moment came for the Co-operative movement when the United Nations accepted the recommendation and declared 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives.

The International Year of Co-operatives offers a unique opportunity for the Co-operative movement to showcase its achievements and to appreciate the role of co-operatives in the development of the world. The ICA will work closely with the UN to ensure the success of the International Year of Co-operatives. Several programs are being planned for the year and the

intends to conduct various International and Regional programs and activities during the time. The UN has initiated programs in various countries request the governments to set-up national committees.

#### ICA-AP Regional Assembly- 2012

The next Regional Assembly of the ICA-Asia and the Pacific will be held in 2012



# MEMBER SERVICES

## National Conference on Revival of Rural Co-operative Credit Structure: India



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab, Mr. Ivano Barberini and Hon'ble Coop Minister of Punjab lighting lamp at the Conference

The National Conference on Revival of Rural Co-operative Credit Structure was held in the state of Punjab from 8-12 February 2009. It was organized by the co-operative movement of Punjab. Mr. Ivano Barberini, the late President of ICA was invited as Chief Guest. The conference was also attended by co-operative Minister of Punjab and other senior ministers along with the co-operators.

Mr. Barberini focused his speech on the role of financial institutions especially co-operative banks in recovering from the financial crisis.

Mr Barberini also said that the co-operatives had understood that they must be

competitive with the best companies. He referred to following set of guidelines for an assured success of co-operative enterprises:

- Long term vision should be combined with a business strategy containing day-to-day common sense and competitiveness with a strong identity;
- The organizational structure be such that it improves efficiency and effectiveness of the co-operative institution;
- All the resources like human, financial, and social be used optimally and managed professionally, and that too in the right balance.

## ICA-Japan Project: Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Cooperatives



Participants of the Training course with the officials of IDACA and President JA-ZENCHU

The 3rd & 4th ICA-Japan Training Course on "Enhancement of Farmers'

Income and Poverty Reduction through co-operatives" was held in 2009 and 2010 respectively in collaboration with IFFCO in India, CURACI/ICC in Iran and JA ZENCHU/ IDACA in Japan.. Twelve participants are selected from member countries to attend the program every year. The duration of each program is about 4 months.

The focus of the Course is on strengthening of farm guidance method, joint collection, shipment, safety and improvement in quality of farm products aimed at increasing farmers' income as a new development for the training course.

## ICA-CCS Conference on Co-operative Development: Myanmar



Chairman of CCS addressing the Conference on Co-operative Development in Myanmar

The Conference on co-operative Development in Myanmar was held 16 & 17 June 2009 at Yangon. The Conference was organized by ICA Asia Pacific in collaboration with the Central co-operative Society, Myanmar with the objective of "garnering policy support from the Government of Myanmar for promoting co-operatives as an alternative of

More than 70 participants from Government's co-operative Department and various co-operatives in Myanmar attended the Conference.

The basis of deliberations was thematic presentations made by experts from ICA-AP and top ranking officials of successful co-operatives like NACF, IFFCO & FSCT that have an established track record in transforming the core co-operative values into practice.

The participants after having listened to and seen the presentations made by the experts discussed in smaller groups, the scope of co-operatives in the context of Myanmar and the kind of policy environment required for the development of co-operatives.

Following is the gist of recommendations made by the groups:

1. There is a great need of an enabling policy environment on co-operatives in Myanmar. The Government should come out with a clear long term policy on co-operatives. The policy should focus on the relevance of co-operative ventures in the inclusive growth of economy for a sustainable economic development.
2. The co-operative law of Myanmar should be made simpler and more clear wherever required and be reviewed in the context of global economic recession. The regulatory features of the law may be made more pronounced and facilitative. The law on co-operatives must clearly mention the roles and responsibilities of various tiers of co-operatives together with effective governance mechanism in the spirit of ICA's co-operative identity statement.
3. A National co-operative Development Board should be constituted with representatives drawn from various relevant Ministries of the Government and other agencies like successful co-operatives, successful enterprises from relevant field, experienced co-operative leaders, senior academicians and distinguished faculty members of co-operative training institutes.
4. Government must leverage international perspective on co-operative preferably through ICA, the global apex of co-operatives, as special adviser to the Board so as to bring in international experience, knowledge, information and collaboration with successful overseas co-operative enterprises in the region. It will broad base the scope of co-operatives in various innovative and emerging sectors of the economy.
5. Periodical training and education of co-operative facilitators, members, leaders and managers must be made mandatory in the co-operative law and government must commit it self with financial and technical support for setting up co-operative education and training centers in various parts of the country.
6. The government needs to introduce creative and friendly means to generate awareness about good things co-operative actions can do and accordingly come out with a comprehensive co-operative development strategy involving various ministries and departments through the aforesaid National Board.
7. Considering the challenging nature of the job of co-operative facilitators and promoters, the government must provide extra allowances and benefits to the government staff working for the development of co-operatives. It will help government to retain loyalty and dedication of the workers entrusted with the job of developing co-operatives in the country.
8. co-operatives must be considered as the vehicles for financial inclusion through micro credit and micro finance interventions. There is a need to formulate clear and simple law on MFIs. The government must announce special tax and fiscal benefits to make co-operatives popular and useful.
9. The co-operatives being community based organizations must be preferred and considered for spreading awareness on issues of global concerns like MDGs of the UN, global warming, HIV/AIDS etc. in collaboration with other actors in this field.

## Addressing Economic Crisis in the Region



Group photo of the distinguished delegates at the Conference

The Conference on Enhanced Role of co-operatives in Recovery from the Economic Crisis was organized by ICA Asia Pacific in collaboration with co-operative League of Thailand and Indian Farmers Fertilizer co-operative.

The objective of the conference was: Creating a shared vision on the scope and role of co-operatives in the global economic crisis so as to devise a common strategy to REPOSITION co-operatives as preferred form of enterprises and Global Alternative of Significance.

75 participants from co-operatives and Governments of 16 countries in the Asia Pacific region attended the conference. The basis of deliberations was subject

specific presentations made by experts from ICA and top officials of successful co-operatives namely NACF, IFFCO, JCCU, and SNCF. The presentations were focused on impressive track record of co-operatives that had transformed the core co-operative values into practice.

The Conference deliberated on various critical and crucial aspects about co-operatives as mentioned below-

- Why Co-operatives?
- Main Challenges before Co-operatives
- Notion of Recovery and the way forward
- Measures required

The conference arrived at the following conclusions:

co-operatives should be geared to drive through both the conventional and innovative non-conventional sectors like SMEs, health, education, technical professions, environment, special community services and infrastructure & local resource management with middle to long term strategy truly in the spirit of co-operative identity ensuring democratic controls and promoting indivisible reserves.



- It would be a big move forward to evince interests of governments and accordingly meso and macro level measures should be based on a strong partnership with governments at all administrative levels supplemented with greater visibility and hard edged information campaign on co-operatives being proud of their modesty and emanating from humble origins.
- Enabling policy environment of the governments on co-operatives must be maintained and accordingly the legislative features of the law on co-operatives are reviewed and

improved. ICA system together with ICA members, multilateral international organizations and UN system should be used to coordinate world level lobbying and networking.

- The co-operatives being community based must be preferred and considered for spear heading demonstrative and replicable awareness campaigns both at local and global levels on issues of global concerns like MDGs of the UN, global warming etc. in collaboration with other actors in this field.

## Capacity Building for Marketing: ICA Japan Project



Group photo of the distinguished delegates at the Conference

ICA-Japan Training Project for "Capacity Building for Marketing" has been designed as a new training course to be implemented by ICA, based on an arrangement among ICA, Central

Union of Agricultural co-operatives of Japan (Ja-Zenchu) and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) and Ministry of Agricultural, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) in 2006. As per the agreement, each year two training programs will be held.

Accordingly 2 programs have been held in Year 2009 and one in 2010. 2<sup>nd</sup> programme of 2010 will be held in November, 2010.

40 participants from 10 ASEAN countries are being trained in this program every year.

## Leadership Development: ICA-SNCF



Participants of first ICA-SNCF Business Seminar in Singapore

The 1st ICA-SNCF Business Seminar for co-operative Leaders was held on 23-24 October 2009 in Singapore. The main objective of this seminar was to provide co-operative leaders, especially from ASEAN countries, with an insight of competitive co-operative business that will catapult their careers even on this global economic crisis and forge and foster camaraderie and integration with the different co-operatives within Asia and the Pacific region. Hosted by Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), 18 co-operative leaders from 8 countries (India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) participated in the two-day seminar.

Mrs. Dolly Goh, Chief Executive Office of the SNCF, welcomed all the participants and made an inspiring presentation on the co-operative Movement in Singapore. Following her presentation, Dr. Charles Chow nominated by the Management

Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) facilitated the seminar. He gave suggestive presentations on the following topics:

Appraisal of present co-operative business in Asia & Pacific.

- How to fulfill the crucial role of co-operatives in the recovery from economic crisis.
- Blue Ocean Strategy = value innovation
- Nine Windows : problem space and solution space
- Unique Advantage (resilience)
- Viable System Model (self-regulation)
- Hidden Champions
- Green Positioning
- Management capacity building in changing economic scenario.
- Leadership Perspective
- Leadership Endurance
- Evaluation of Business Options

On the basis of his presentations, all participants divided into four groups discussed following themes:

- Future business options generating profit which various co-operative sectors in Asia & Pacific region can equally share.
- Detailed implementation plan for the above-mentioned business options (ownership, time frame, etc.)

As a result of the group discussion, participants chose an option standardizing education/training programs carried out at co-operative educational/training institutes in Asia and Pacific and setting up a certification business by the ICA-AP as their first choice.

## Co-op Reconstruction Programme for Cyclone Affected Co-operatives Myanmar

The disaster that struck Myanmar on 2nd and 3rd May 2008 in the form of cyclonic winds and rainfall killed 150,000 persons and displaced over 2 million people.

395 co-operatives in southern and south-eastern Myanmar faced the wrath of the disaster. In all 259 members of these Co-operatives died and 8544 were rendered homeless.

The ICA, in response to its call to global Co-operative fraternity, received a generous support from its following member Co-operatives for the revival of most affected and marginalized Co-operatives in Myanmar:

JCCU, Japan  
IFFCO, India  
ACFSMS, China  
JAZENCHU, Japan  
ZENROSAL, Japan  
Teachers' Co-op, Singapore

The CCS identified 09 most marginalized primary coops, 6 in Yangon area and 3 in the Ayarwaddy Delta area, for direct reconstruction support of 59,000 USD under the ICA's programme.

Besides, two major interventions one the Conference on Co-operative Development in Myanmar and another Lessons Learned



Post cyclone physical reconstruction of co-operative in Myanmar

Workshop were also made out jointly by ICA-AP and the CCS.

CCS and the Unions of Coop Syndicate in Yangon and Ayarwaddy conducted the survey and identified the needs of each of the following nine identified coops and supported as under.

- 12445 \$ - Ayar Arman Agri & Production Coop Society for reconstruction of barn building and office building. Status: Completion verified personally by the DRD, ICA AP. Grant utilized properly.
- 13,248 \$ - Mya Ayar General Trading Co-op Federation for reconstruction of salt iodization unit, installation of new machinery and landing stage with jetty. Status: reconstruction completed,

production not started - verified by DRD ICAAP Grant properly utilized.

- 1275 \$ - Kunchankone Towns General Trading Co-op Federation roofing and waling of warehouse. Status: reconstruction completed production not started - verified by DRD ICAAP Grant properly utilized.

- 5826 \$ - Pyay Thare General Trading Co-op Society for reconstruction of poultry units in Tamwe in Yangon. Status: reconstruction completed verified by DRD, ICAAP Grant properly utilized.

- 1275 \$ - Seikgyi Kha Naun Township General Trading Co-op Federation, Yangon for new office building & store - Status: reconstruction completed - verified by DRD, ICAAP Grant properly utilized.

- 14,452 \$ - Gyun Thiri Trading Co-operative Federation, Mawlamya Gyun Township for reconstruction of rice mill building, barn house and land stage. Status: Fully accomplished CCS has verified it physically.

- 1638 \$ - Kawhmu Township General Trading Coop Federation for store house and office building. Status: Fully accomplished CCS has verified it physically.

- 2367 \$ - Kyau Tan General Trading Co-op Federation Yangon for office building - Status: Fully accomplished CCS has verified physically.

- 5826 \$ - Shwe Pazon Agriculture and Livestock Production Co-

Society for 5 poultry units, office building & fish pond banding - Status: Fully accomplished CCS has verified physically.

The coop development conference was conducted at the national level with the objective of garnering policy support from the Government of Myanmar promoting co-operatives as means inclusive development.

Considering the importance of community in mitigating the impact of disaster, less learned workshop was organized to address the agenda of disaster preparedness to Co-operatives. The

workshop was attended by the officers Co-operative department, leaders, managers and members of affected Co-operatives and officials of CCS.

## CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

### Mainstreaming of HIV issue in Co-operatives

HIV/AIDS has been targeted as a health issue requiring immediate and critical attention, and co-operatives have been identified as ideal vehicles to deliver education, training and information aimed at mitigating the impact of the epidemic on the community. It is no more an urban disease as it has extended its reach to the rural areas as well. Co-operatives are suitable for serving as conduits for delivering information, training and services to rural communities and families as they have a unique presence and reach

within the communities. ICA, along with NCU and NCCT implementing a project on HIV/AIDS holistically address and sustain the burden of HIV/AIDS. In 2004, ICA collaboration with NCU conducted National workshop in India, sensitization of the co-operative leader policy makers, directors and trainers various aspects related to the spread HIV/AIDS. In 2006-07, ICAAP with support of DFID working for the same cause implemented a project in four states





Participants of the sensitization workshop at Bangalore

of the country namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. Currently, ICA is implementing a project "Mainstreaming of HIV issues in the education and training system of co-operatives" in 11 states (Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh) of the country with focus on 7 states in the first phase initially and 4 states in the second phase and in totality it would reach out to 230 million people. The first phase (January 2009-July 09) of the project is under implementation and has three critical components - sensitization workshops, Training of Trainers and Awareness Campaigns for the co-operative leaders, out of which sensitization workshops have been successfully carried out in the respective seven targeted states of the country covering about 400 co-operative leaders and decision makers. 50 co-operative leaders in seven states from Primary, District, and state level co-operatives actively participated in the workshop. These leaders in turn will function as the torch bearers and will spread information and knowledge to their co-operative members, family and to the community, thus, multiplying to 1000 people in the village communities. This project strives to create an enabling environment within the National and State level Co-operative leadership and training system to mainstream HIV concerns and issues in the mandate of Co-operatives. This initiative of ICA, thus, attempts to provide a platform to the co-operative leaders and policy makers to discuss openly on the facts about the disease and make policy decisions to implement all effective means of prevention. Attempts to provide a platform to the co-operative leaders and policy makers to discuss openly on the facts about the disease and make policy decisions to implement all effective means of prevention.

## Training



Group photo of the participants

**T**raining of co-operative Trainers (ToT) is one of the essential components under the project 'Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in training and Education system of the co-operatives'. The project is being implemented in 11 states of India with the objective to reduce the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among the members of agriculture, weavers, fisheries and dairy co-operative members and their communities. There are trainers at various levels of co-operative education and training system. These staff members/trainers conduct regular training programmes throughout the year on various aspects of co-operative management for the co-operative leaders, managers, staff, general members and prospective members. HIV/AIDS project attempts to train these trainers in a 5 day ToT programme comprising, 4 days of classroom sessions and one day study visit to treatment/care centre. The objective of the ToT is to create

the co-operative members through their regular co-operative training programmes. A five-day residential ToT programmes on HIV/AIDS were organized in states of Rajasthan and Manipur in India in May 2009. Total 75 co-operative trainers, 28 female and 46 male co-operative trainers actively participated in both the programmes. Institutes of the co-operative Management, Jaipur and Imphal organized the event respectively with the support of ICA-AP. Resource persons in Rajasthan were identified with the support of Rajasthan State AIDS Control Society and in Manipur; Manipur Aids Control Society cooperated to decide on the resource persons for the training programme. The training programme focused on the below mentioned topics:

- Scenario of HIV/AIDS in the state and the country.
- HIV/AIDS and co-operatives and Productivity
- HIV/AIDS, Basic Knowledge
- High Risk behaviour
- Sexually transmitted Infections, Reproductive tract infections
- HIV/AIDS, myths and misconceptions
- Treatment and support services
- Living positively with HIV/AIDS
- Using life skills for prevention of RTIs/STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Adult learning principles
- Facilitation Skills
- Effective Communication
- Designing a training session
- Mock sessions
- Field visit

## HIV/AIDS Awareness Camps: India

**T**he HIV/AIDS Awareness Camp for co-operative members were held in Orissa and Chattisgarh states of India in October, 2009. The one day camp was held on 8th October in Raipur and on 10th October in Berhampur respectively. The events were held in collaboration with UNDP, India, National AIDS Control Organisation of Government of India, the National Co-operative Union of India and the ICA-AP. The

resource persons were invited from the State AIDS Control Societies of the respective states. More than 100 co-operative members, leaders and officers from various co-operative sectors in the state attended the programme. There is a strong possibility of replicating the experience in other vulnerable states in India and the matter is under active consideration of concerned authorities.

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING

### Empowering Women

**W**omen development and gender mainstreaming in co-operatives is one of the priority areas of ICA. We are concerned about low and negligible participation of women at all levels of co-operatives 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 co-operatives 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 co-operative movement of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur from 28 June to 3 July, 2009. This programme aimed at assisting the co-operative 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



Participants and guests of the training program in Malaysia

followed by education and training on various skills crucial for quality participation in co-operative 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.

## Entrepreneurship Development for Women - LAO PDR

The ICA organised a training on "Capacity Building of Women Co-operative Leaders for Entrepreneurship development" for the women co-operative leaders and extension staff of Ministry of Agriculture of Laos.

The training was held from 21-25 December, 2009 in Vientiane City under the ICA-Agriterra joint project. 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 ICA-AP 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. Lassaye made a presentation on Lao national decree on co-operatives.

The topics covered during the training were:

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

## Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women: ICA Japan Project

The International co-operative Alliance-Asia and Pacific [ICA-AP] in collaboration with the JA-ZENCHU [Central Union of Agricultural co-operatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia [IDACA] held the 4th Training

Enterprises for Rural Women" from 20-25, September 2009 in Vietnam and Japan. The generous financial assistance was provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan to conduct this program. Twelve women participants, two each from





Group photo of the participants of the training course

Cambodia, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam attended the Training Course. The main objectives of the Training Course were: (a) to learn methods of enterprise development by rural women through case studies; (b) to study management methods of micro-enterprises by rural women and

(c) to learn methods of encouraging women to be involved in rural communities' development.

Part-I of the program Comparative Study Visits was held in Vietnam from 20-29, August in collaboration with Vietnam co-operative Alliance [VCA], a member-organization

of ICA.

Part-II of the program held at IDACA from 30th August to 25th September 2009 included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural co-operatives in Saitama and Aomori Prefectures of Japan. Lecture-cum-practical field study visits

assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women's associations and the general activities of agricultural co-operatives in Japan.

In view of the experience gained by the participants through class room lectures, field study visits in Vietnam and Japan, the participants were able to develop brief outlines of their Action Plans which they would be recommending to their respective organizations on return to their home countries.

An end-of-the Course Evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the Training Course. The participants felt that the training course was very relevant for the women leaders of agricultural co-operatives in Asia and hence it should be continued. They also expressed their greatest appreciation to the Ministry of

Agriculture, Forestry and Fish (MAFF), Government of Japan providing financial support for Training Course. They hoped that MAFF would continue to support training program in the future also for development of rural women in developing countries.

A Certificate of Participation was awarded to each participant at the conclusion session held at the IDACA in Tokyo on September.

The concluding session was attended by Mr. Fuminori Miyatake, Deputy Director, International Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fish (MAFF); Mr. Kenjiro Miyazaki, Manager, Director of IDACA; Mr. K. Madhavan, Planning Officer/Program Coordinator, ICA Asia-Pacific; and

## Enhancing the Role of Women in Co-operatives



Participants of the workshop in Manila, Philippines

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

The consultations during the workshop focused upon co-operative endeavour to promote women's interests for gender mainstreaming in co-operatives. The 3 days programme consisted of one day workshop

followed by 2 days study visits to few successful co-operative 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 the Filipino co-operatives.

The next program was held in Iran on 25 May, 2010 followed by 2 days exposure/study visit to agricultural and rural co-operatives in Shiraz Province of Iran. The programme was 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, Sri Lanka and India attended the programme. The co-operative members from Iran were also present.

The objective of the program was to

provide a common meeting ground to Asian Co-operative 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 workshop opened with the welcome address by Mr. M.R. Raeesi Nejad, Managing Director of the CURACI. He welcomed Ms. Maria Elena Chavez, Deputy Director General of ICA, ICA-AP coordinators and the participant to Iran. Ms. Maria-Elena Chavez Hertig, Deputy Director-General of the ICA was invited as special guest to attend the workshop. She extended a warm welcome to participants and wished them a successful visit to Iran. She talked about the ICA activities and how gender mainstreaming is one of the priority areas for it. She mentioned that CURACI

and CORC are the special members and thanked Mr. Raeesi Nejad for his operation in hosting the workshop. She thanked ICAAP for the opportunity to work with cooperators in Iran.

Business session commenced after formal opening.

The first part of the session was introductory session for environmental building in which experience/ information sharing was done by the organizers from each country. Ms. Lida Sadhighiyan, Head, Women Affairs of Rural Co-operative Division of CORC made a presentation shared detailed information on how she has developed projects for helping women through co-operative business model.

Mr. Masoud Samayee, Managing Director of Sabahang Co-operative of Iran made presentation and focused on how multipurpose co-operative is helping gender mainstreaming.

## The Co-op Story - Iran

Ms. Saahla Moini, Director of Sepidanwomen rural Co-operative made a presentation on "Rural women co-operatives in Fars Province of Iran" during the workshop on 25th May 2010.

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 Co-operative companies have been established which caused enhancement of development in agricultural sector.

The most important activities of Women Rural Cooperatives 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 Co-operatives 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 Co-operative companies

No. of Co-operatives: 26

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 Co-operatives-ICA Global Perspective".

Mrs. 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 Co-operatives as given below:

1. All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives, China
2. ANGKASA, Malaysia
3. The Raj Laxmi Women Co-operative Bank, Jaipur, India
4. The District Co-op. Bank, Muzaffar nagar, India
5. The Consumer Co-operative Federation of Sri Lanka
6. The Valley Multipurpose Co-operative Ltd., Kathmandu, Nepal

The second and third day were devoted to visits to agriculture and rural co-operatives, especially women co-operatives. The participants visited the

1. Fatemieeh Rural Women Co-operative, Tafihan
2. Fatemieeh Rural Women Co-operative, Shaporgan
3. Passargad Rural Co-operative Union and its member Co-operatives.

At the end of the workshop Dr. Yashwantha Dongre presented the draft resolution which was unanimously adopted by the participants. Poster presentations, group work and country reports were the main event of the workshop in which participants explained the situation of Co-operatives in their respective countries.

## RESEARCH Co-operatives, A Better Business Model

The International co-operative Alliance-Asia Pacific, the highest co-operative body at Asia Pacific region in collaboration with IFFCO organized a seminar on 'co-operatives a better Business Model: Emerging Opportunities' from October 23-24, 2009. The Chief Guest, Mr. Shail Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA Asia Pacific on this occasion said the co-operatives have by and large remained unaffected by the global economic crisis,

which otherwise has severely affected investor owned corporate structure further said that AMUL, IFFCO, co-operative Banks and state level co-operatives have continued to achieve level of business turnover and profit co-operative business model members owned, member controlled service oriented in nature deserved to be a preferred for economic models in the context of crisis of capitalism. He informed delegates from five countries about decision of UN to declare year 2012 for co-operatives.

Dr. G.N. Saxena, Chairman of Regional Committee of the ICA Asia Pacific Director, IFFCO urged the co-operative fraternity to give priority to co-operative research and studies in the region, the co-operatives could add on strength and become more competitive in the era of globalization. ICA Regional Committee will look into the areas, issues and suggest feasible ways to overcome these challenges.

Mr. JNL Srivastava, Ex. Secy Agriculture, Govt. of India delivered key note speech on the theme of the seminar and dwelled upon the values co-operatives adhere to in terms of development human capital that remains one of the biggest challenge before societies at present. Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Dy. Regional Director, ICA, Asia Pacific presented recommendations of the eighth Multipurpose Co-operative Conferences on co-operative Policy Legislation and laid emphasis on the need of an enabling policy environment,





Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICAAP lighting the lamp at the inauguration of the seminar. Also seen are Dr. G N Saxena, Mrs. Anita Manchanda and delegates from Thailand and Mauritius

co-operative legislation more effective, clear, simple and crisp.

The deliberations at the seminar resulted in the following strategic aspects:

1. co-operatives need to showcase their strength by sharing success stories of successful co-operatives to gain

confidence of the stakeholders and policy makers.

2. ICA and National co-operative Federations should institute an Award for the best ten research papers on co-operatives in different sectors.
3. Community Media to be more pronounced and directional.
4. co-operatives need to communicate more effectively with the primary members by using latest communication modes like SMS, voice messages for illiterate and visually impaired.
5. The students in school and colleges must be given hands on experience on co-operatives as it would help build the social capital of the country.
6. The meeting of the Research Committee should be held every year to learn from the research studies.

## NURTURING YOUTH

### Pilot Project on Empowerment of Youth and Women : Sri Lanka

The project on Empowerment of Youth and Women through co-operatives in Sri Lanka has been funded by IFFCO for a period until October 2009. The following activities have been carried out by NCC:

1. *Designing of the questionnaire:* The questionnaire has been finalized in time with the facilitation of ICAAP and accordingly data was collected in 6 Districts, namely, Kegalle (Ke), Kandy (Ka), Badulla (Ba), Kurunegala (Ku), Trincomalee (Tr), Matara (Ma)
2. *The Feasibility study was carried out in five districts through base line survey of the target groups to assess their needs and constraints.*

The following data on needs and constraints were gathered through the following categories in the targeted communities:

- a) Personal details; b) co-operative involvements and benefits; c) Leadership; d) Governance and democratic control; and e) Empowerment through business opportunities and innovation institutional arrangements and facilitation

3. Induction training for volunteers on questionnaire management and processing.

A two day induction training program was organized in the premises of NCC, Colombo and the volunteers cum community facilitators attended the program. Their survey, communication and articulation skills were strengthened and necessary education on co-operative philosophy was imparted by Mr. Rajiv Mehta who was invited as technical resource person.

4. *Base line survey:* The survey was conducted successfully and critical information regarding the youth co-operative leadership was collected.

The surveyors managed to collect data from the small groups as well as CBOs already engaged in MFI activities. The social

mobilization participatory development approach, institutional strengthening strategies, capacity building of community youth leadership and managerial skills development of executives were identified through the discussions.

5. *Analysis of the survey findings:* Root causes of the vulnerable issues facing the youth cooperators, both men and women as a 2nd layer of the co-operative leadership were diagnosed. The survey results revealed that obstacles of the 2nd layer of the societies are, mainly, lack of governance practices, leadership skills, women backwardness and lack of facilities to develop leadership through training and education programs. Further, unflinching leadership and irregular system in election procedures has added to the woes of second line leadership.
6. *Camps:* Two Youth Camps were conducted as a strategy to strengthen and improve the quality of the youth leadership, both young women and men by involving different districts representatives in a field level. The Youth camp was organized on 25-27 October, 2009 and the co-operative Women Committee was conducted on 20-22 March, 2009.

The Camping environment was instrumental in carrying out the change in the co-operative governance and empowerment practices at primary level in the targeted villages.

Mental development, spiritual counselling, sports, recreation, nature, knowledge building, yoga, time management, conflict management, stress management, ethnic harmony, peace building, human rights, business planning, strategic development, project planning and project budgeting and institutional capacity development were a few of the subjects taken up in the camps. The participation in the camps was found to be very effective and empowering.

Institutional Development of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education, Indonesia.

Two study visits were arranged to give practical insight into the working of university/campus Co-operatives.

During the study visits the participants planted more than 200 trees. Official inauguration of the workshop took place during the welcome dinner. The President Univ/Campus Co-operatives, Governor Jogjakarta, representative from Ministry of Co-operative and SMEs and Regional Director ICA-AP were the main speakers at the opening. While delivering his opening remarks Dr. Chan Ho CHOI Regional Director of ICAAP mentioned about the UN declaration of 2012 as The Year of Co-operatives and the International Year of Youth 2010-2011. He wished success of the workshop.

During the workshop presentation on the following sub themes were made and discussed by the resource persons.

- Significance of students support services in ensuring access, equity and quality **STUDENT SUCCESS** by Dr. Adelaida Fronda, Dean of students Affairs for Far Eastern University, PHILIPPINES.
- Contribution of the campus Co-operatives in providing efficient student support services by Mr. Toshiaki Wada, General Director, NFUCAJAPAN.

- Addressing the impact of climate change The co-operative way- by Dr. Chan Ho CHOI, Regional Director, ICA-AP.

Group Work were divided in 6 sub themes and each were given a facilitator to discuss the theme.

Following sub themes were discussed and facilitated by the committee members.

- Significance of students support services in ensuring access, equity and quality of higher education facilitated by Dr. Yashvantha Dongre, Co-secretary of the committee.
- Contribution of the campus Co-operatives in providing efficient student support services facilitated by Ms. Heira.
- Addressing the impact of climate change The role of Co-operative-facilitated by Prof. Ali Hasan, Vice Chair of the Committee.
- Ways and means of enhancing student participation in campus Co-operative activities facilitated by Prof. Zenaida Diola.
- Role of Youth in global peace and solidarity facilitated by Ms. Payal Goswami, Secretary of the Committee.
- Innovations in Co-operative business facilitated by Dr. Sun Teck Tan.

## MANAGEMENT OF CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES

### Coop Innovations through Consumer Co-operatives: Sri Lanka



Distinguished delegates at the inauguration of the seminar

In the context of global economic crises, an "International Seminar of Coop Innovations through Consumer co-operatives was organized in Sri Lanka" on 17th March 2009 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo. The Seminar was jointly organized by IFFCO, India and Coopfed, Sri Lanka. It was attended by the leaders, managers and Senior Officials from the Government body working on the issue of co-operative. The participants included Chairmen, General Managers and Managers from 16 Multi Purpose co-operative Societies in Sri Lanka affiliated to Sri Lankan Consumer co-operative Societies Federation Ltd, Commissioners of co-operatives from the Central Government, and three Provincial Governments and Secretary to the Government, Additional Secretary to the Government and special Adviser to the

Ministry. Experts on the issues relating to co-operative were invited as Resource Persons to share their knowledge, experience and ideas with the participants; Ms. Tran Thi Kim Quyen-General Manager, Saigon Coop, Vietnam; Mr. Kumar S.P. Travelogue Division NDTV, New Delhi; Mr. Sudhash Pant Formerly Registrar co-operatives, Government of Rajasthan, India)

The following presentations were made by the experts on various issues of co-operative:

1. Mr. A.P.G Kithsiri (Commissioner of co-operative Development and Registrar) and Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Dy. Regional Director, ICA-AP.

*Past and Present situations in the co-operatives of Sri Lanka*

2. Mr. Prashad Fernando (Consultant, Sri Lanka Consumer co-operative

## Workshop

An Asia Pacific workshop on university/campus co-operatives was held from 21st to 25th June 2010 at Yogyakarta, Indonesia. "Campus Co-operatives:

Responding to Emerging Challenges of Higher Education" was the main theme of the workshop.

Around one hundred participants including students from Japan, Korea, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia attended the workshop.

The key note address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Hubert Gijzen, Director of UNESCO, Jakarta, Er. Hendarman, Director for



Societies Federation Ltd.)

*Case study of Developing Sri Lankan co-operative movement*

3. Mr. Rajiv Mehta (Deputy Regional Director, ICA-AP)

*Role of co-operatives in Recovery from Economic Crisis*

4. Ms. Quyen, (General Manager, Saigon Coop Federation, Vietnam)

*Market Penetration Strategy of Saigon Consumer co-operatives in Vietnam*

5. Mr. Kumar P.S. Travelogue Division (NDTV, New Delhi)

*Tourism Delight through co-operatives*

6. Mr. Subhash Pant (Formerly Registrar co-operatives, Government of Rajasthan, India)

*Innovative Services through co-operatives A case study of Rajasthan*

The outcome of the Conference in Colombo:

1. In the era of economic recession and market shrinkage, co-operatives have a greater role to play.
2. The co-operatives need to be more innovative and creative in diversifying the range of their services to better capture the potential market size.

## Development of Consumer Co-operatives: Vietnam



Participants at a Coop Consumer store

A joint workshop with ICA-AP and Vietnam co-operative Alliance (VCA) was held on 8-9 April 2009 at Hue City, Vietnam. Forty-five leaders from 15 co-operatives of Thua Thien Hue Province attended the workshop.

At the workshop, lecturers from Singapore and Japan gave suggestive presentations on "Basic Principles in Operating Small-Sized Stores", "Basic Methodology of Store Comparison" and "Home Delivery Business by Consumer Co-ops in Japan", while Ms. Le Thi Huong, Chairlady of Thuan Thanh Consumer co-operative, analyzed major challenges surrounding consumer co-ops in Vietnam.

According to her analysis, average turnover of consumer co-ops in Ho Chi Min city accounts for only 10.9% of average consumption per capita, while other economic sectors serve 89.1%. She drew on the advantages of private sector and disadvantages of co-operative sector in Vietnam as follows:

### Private Sector

- Organizational structure: Very simple
- Sources of capital/funds: Sufficient own resources save time for making

## Management of Consumer Co-operatives: Asia-Pacific

The 9th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific" was held on 24-26 August 2009 at Costa Sands Resort (Downtown East) in Singapore. Hosted by Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) and supported by NTUC FairPrice, 17 managers of consumer co-operatives from four countries (Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) actively participated in the three-day workshop.

3. The co-operatives must serve the market on mutually beneficial and better customer friendly/market friendly terms.

4. The governments must recognize the co-operative advantages and accordingly formulate proactive policies to ensure inclusive growth of economy.

5. There is a need to augment, diversify and supplement income portfolios of the members of co-operatives for assured sustainability in the times of crisis.

6. co-operatives should venture out in the unorganized and non-conventional sectors for greater productivity and economic empowerment and

7. co-operative connectivity at all strategic levels: local, national and international must be encouraged for greater successes of co-operative enterprises.

The leaders and managers of co-operatives at the seminar expressed that it is a rare opportunity for them to come together and discuss their concerns about co-operative activities. The participants felt enriched with the knowledge gained and committed themselves to plan the future progress of this sector as per the discussions and decisions taken.

### decision

- Interests/Benefits: Gained 100%, need not to share or contribute

- Social responsibility: Need not to pay much attention

### co-operative Sector

- Organizational structure: Not simple

- Sources of capital/funds: Taking time in making decision, so lose opportunities

- More Interests/Benefits: Being distributed to a variety of funds, which causes lack of capital and affects the competitiveness of co-operatives

- Social responsibility: Always being cared, even in case of price hike in the market, co-operatives are expected to keep the price for stabilizing the market

Based on her analysis, all participants discussed major challenges they are currently facing and arrived at their own long-term and short-term solutions to cope with the difficult situation. They also participated visited the 1st store of Thuan Thanh Mart near Hue Imperial Palace. Ms. Juliana Tan from NTUC FairPrice, Singapore, gave useful advice on display, store layout and merchandise assortment to the participants.

The workshop was highly appreciated by all participants and the ICA-AP was expected to continuously hold these workshops in some provinces, cities of Vietnam over the coming years.

Comparison".

Ms. Eriko Sakurai (Trainer, Cash Register Group, Store Operation Department of Co-op Net Business Federation, Japan) was invited as a resource person this year. She made a presentation on "Customer Service Strategy in Store Operation of Co-op Net" and conducted a practical training on customer service. All participants actively participated in the practical training and learnt the importance of finding "unconscious expectations" of customers.

The participants visited a hypermarket, a

## Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops

### Review for the year 2009

The ICA Training program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops has been implemented since 2001. This year, sixteen managers who work for consumer co-operatives applied for the program in Japan. The two training courses have already been carried out successfully with attendance of ten selected trainees from five countries.

### Miyagi Course 2009

Managers of consumer co-ops from India and Philippines learnt about history & basic values of Miyagi Co-op, present situation of Miyagi Co-op business and direction, planning & opening of co-op stores, sales promotion, merchandising strategy, purchasing policy and buyer education, home delivery business, member's involvement in business.

They also visited co-op stores and rival stores, Miyagi Co-op daily food center, Miyagi Co-op re-cycle center, senior citizen's day service home. On the last day of the training course, all the trainees made presentations on their action plans to be implemented after the training course. They drew up plans to change store layout, to improve display, to increase

convenience store and two supermarkets of NTUC FairPrice, and its competitors' stores on the second day. They learnt about practical techniques for store operation such as merchandise assortment, display and pricing.

On the last day of the workshop, the participants were divided into 4 groups and made a group discussion on the "solutions" to the scenarios given on the first day. After the discussions, the participants made presentations on the "solutions" based on their own SWOT analysis.

membership/sales/product assortment, to train staff, to collect members' opinions, to prevent shoplifting, and so on.

### Tokyo Course 2009

Managers of consumer co-ops from India, Singapore and Vietnam learnt about Outline of Co-op Tokyo, basic policy on store operation, daily duty of a store manager, countermeasure against rival stores, merchandizing policy, home delivery business, members' activity, member's involvement in business, environmental conservation activities. They also underwent a practical training at a co-op store and visited Co-op Net distribution center, laboratory and co-op members' houses. On the last day of the training course, all the trainees made presentations on their action plans to be implemented after the training course. They drew up plans to change store layout, to improve display, to monitor suppliers for controlling product quality, to improve standards of opening new stores, to control costs (especially labor costs), to collect members' opinions, to encourage members to take part in environmental conservation activities, to develop "bento" to the busy lifestyle customers, to organize the Japan Food Fair, and so on.

## Management of Consumer Co-operatives-2010

The ICA Regional Workshop for Managers for "Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific" was held on 28-29 April 2010 at NTUC FairPrice Training Institute (FPTI) in Singapore.

Hosted by Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) and supported by NTUC FairPrice, 23 managers of consumer co-operatives from seven countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam) actively participated in the two-day workshop.

The workshop commenced with the welcome address by Mrs. Dolly Goh, Chief Executive Officer of the SNCF, followed by opening address by Dr. Chan Ho Choi, Regional Director of the ICA-AP, and a detailed briefing on NTUC Fair Price by

Ms. Juliana Tan, Manager of the FPTI.

During the two-day workshop, Mr. Beng Lee Kao, Ms. Juliana Tan and Mr. Ngee Chiang Tok from NTUC FairPrice covered four important areas of retail business, (i) Store Management, (ii) Merchandizing (iii) Store Comparison and (iv) Staff Training. The participants also learnt about good customer service from the GEMS (Get the Extra Miles for Service) which is a nationwide movement to improve service levels in Singapore.

On the second day the participants visited three supermarkets of NTUC FairPrice and a competitor.

They learnt about practical techniques for operating stores such as merchandise assortment, display, pricing and store comparison by using a check list.

## NEWS FROM THE REGION China

### ACFSMC Workshop for Agricultural Exporters

The All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Coops organized a National Workshop for Agricultural Exporters in Beijing, China from August 5 to 7, 2009.

The workshop was attended by more than

70 managers and leaders of primary agriculture co-operatives in various parts of China.

The workshop was addressed by the officials from Ministry of Commerce, Vice President of ACFSMC, experts on expo



policies, trade friction, import barriers and quality management.

Resource persons from USA Mr. Mark Fagan, Japan Ms. Yao Jun and ICA-AP Mr. Rajiv Mehta made presentations on Strategies for marketing Chinese products to US buyers, Agriculture market in Japan and marketing strategies for Japanese Buyers and Business cooperation between co-operatives in Asia Pacific Region respectively.

The workshop was quite enriching for both the participants and speakers.

#### NEW ZEALAND

The following announcement has been received from the New Zealand Co-operatives Association:

#### MUTUALITY AT WORK

##### Ensuring a Successful Co-operative Business

A seminar will be organised by the New Zealand Co-operatives Association on 19 & 20 August 2010, Wellington, New Zealand.

What makes a member-owned Co-operative or mutual business sustainable, one that serves more than a single generation of members? This question will be examined in depth by a number of speakers from New Zealand and Canada during this two day seminar.

##### Inquiries and reservations:

E-mail : nzca@nz.coop Fax: +644 801 6966

Phone : +644 384 4595

Cost : NZ\$1125 per person includes accommodation

on 19 August.

#### NEPAL



A Training session in progress

Co-operative Strengthening programme in Nepal supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UNFAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have a joint project Job for Peace with the target of creation of job for youth.

The project has various components/programmes. One of its components/programmes in the strengthening of agricultural Co-operatives and the creation of jobs for their youth members in Rautahat and Parsa districts of Nepal.

In order to implement the programmes, an agreement has been made between FAO Nepal and the National Co-operative Federation of Nepal (NCF) which is the apex body of Co-operative movement of Nepal.

The Co-operative strengthening programme has several activities mostly in the areas of training i.e Co-operative Trainers of Training, Leadership Development Training, Capacity Building Training for Co-operative Managers, Member Awareness Campaigning, Agriculture Marketing Training, Product Diversification on Agro Products, Success Case Replication etc.

Likewise, the project has other activities development of model Co-operatives, support to women co-operatives and distribution of seed money for the expansion of agriculture business related to production and marketing through Co-

operatives.

The project includes some major objectives of enhancing the capacity of existing Co-operative through training activities, helping replicate co-operative activities by making study visits and observation and the case studies, developing co-operatives as small and micro-enterprises, supporting for capacity building of community-based organization through training activities, monitoring and evaluating programme and activities of co-operatives regularly.

In Rautahat 14 Co-operatives and in Parsa 16 co-operatives have been selected for the implementation of the Co-operative programme.

The project activities have been launched since the date of 17th March 2010 in two districts Parsa and Rautahat. In Rautahat 205 male and 201 female altogether 406 Co-operative members and employees have been trained. Similarly in Parsa, 289 male and 328 female altogether 617 Co-operative members and employees have received different types of trainings.

494 male and 529 female altogether 1023 Co-operative members and staff have been trained during the activities completed. So far as on going programme is concerned almost 40 percent activities have been already completed.

#### INDIA

##### National Co-operative Union of India

The National Council for Co-operative Education of NCUI, India has organized various training programmes for different level/sectors of co-operative members in the country.

The following capacity building programmes were held from April-June, 2010:

##### Leadership Development Programme for the Chairmen/Directors of Tribal Co-operatives in Orissa State

The main objectives of this programme is to sensitise the leaders of Tribal Co-operatives about the problems, issues and challenges being confronted by the Tribal Co-operatives and to find out suitable strategy to solve them.

##### Refresher Course in Cooperation for the Readers/Lecturers of Colleges and Universities Programme Profile

###### 1. Objectives

To sensitise the participants about the current issues, problems of Co-operative movement and emerging new challenges, in view of the liberalised economic environment.

1. Appraise the participants about the importance, scope of Co-operative education and research in different Indian universities
2. Equip the participants with latest techniques, approaches and strategies of Co-operative Education teaching, training and research.
3. To provide the participants an opportunity to share their experiences on problems and prospects of co-operative education and research.

In addition to the core faculty of NCUI and NCFE, the guest faculty for the programme are being invited from other national and international organisations.

Lecturers/Readers/Research Scholar engaged in Teaching/Research on Co-operation at under graduate and post graduate levels in Colleges/ Universities are eligible to attend.

The course contents are:

1. Co-operative Values and Co-operative Principles.

2. Multi State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002.

3. Sectoral Progress of Co-operative Movement in India.

4. Management of Co-operative Enterprises under the

free market environment.

5. Human Resource Development in Co-operatives -

Role of colleges and universities

6. Member Participation and member control in co-operatives

7. Role of Co-operatives in XIth Five Year Plan

#### FISHCOPFED

A one day workshop on 'Co-operative Insurance' was organized by National Federation of Fishermen's co-operative Ltd. (FISHCOPFED) on 30th June, 2010 in Shimla (Himachal Pradesh). The workshop was inaugurated by the Director of Fisheries (H.P.). The President, Managing Director, officials of FISHCOPFED and officials from Oriental Insurance Company and fisheries department attended the workshop.

#### GUJARAT STATE CO-OPERATIVE UNION CELEBRATES GOLDEN JUBILEE



Opening of the Golden Jubilee celebration

On completion of 50 years, the Gujarat State co-operative Union celebrated Golden Jubilee and State level Co-operative convention at Adalaj, Dist. Gandhinagar on 27th June 2010, which was inaugurated by Hon'ble Governor of Gujarat, Dr. Smt. Kamlaji.

Shri Ghanshyambhai H. Amin, Chairman, Gujarat State Co-operative Union & Vice-Chairman, International Co-operative Alliance, Asia Pacific Region Board presided over the function while the Hon'ble Shri Dinsha Patel, Union Minister for Small & Medium Enterprises, Government of India and Hon'ble Shri Dilipbhai Sanghani, Agril. & Cooperation Minister, Gujarat State were chief guests of the function. About 3000 delegates from primary, taluka, district and state level Co-operative institutions attended the function.

While inaugurating the function by lighting auspicious lamp, Hon'ble Governor praised the meritorious role played by the Gujarat State Co-operative Union in the field of Co-operative education, training, publicity, propaganda and providing information and

## INFLUENCE 50 Years of ICA-AP

The ICA-AP is proudly celebrating 50th anniversary this year. This office was first set up as ICA regional Office & Education Centre for South East Asia on 14th November 1960 that gradually evolved as full fledged office of ICA known as ICA-Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP). The office of ICA was inaugurated in November 1960 by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India.

The year 2010 marks completion of 50 years of ICA in Asia-Pacific region and there is every reason to celebrate the history and glory of ICA-AP that has been serving the co-operative members in the biggest and most vibrant region of the world. There would not be a better way to unravel the contribution made by the ICA during last 50 years in this region than releasing a book

supportive services for the development of the entire Co-operative movement of Gujarat during these 50 years. While congratulating the Office Bearers and Board of Directors of Gujarat State Coop. Union, Hon'ble Governor remembered and paid tributes to the great leaders of Gujarat. Shri Dinsha Patel, Union Minister, Shri Dilipbhai Sanghani, Agri. & Cooperation Minister of Gujarat State, and Shri Jaantilal V. Patel, President, National Sugar Federation addressed the Co-operative convention. The commemorative souvenir brought out on the occasion was released by Shri Dilipbhai Sanghani, Hon'ble Minister for Agri. & Cooperation, Gujarat State.

At this function, Shri Ghanshyambhai Amin was felicitated with shawl and Sanman Patra by the Hon'ble Governor for his dynamic and innovative leadership provided for the development of Co-operative movements at National and International level as the President of National Co-operative Union of India and Vice-Chairman, International Co-operative Alliance, Asia Pacific Region.

During last 50 years, the sectors like dairy, sugar, banking etc. have flourished in Gujarat State. Amul was the first milk Co-operative to be established in Gujarat which started its business with the initial collection of 250 liters per day. Today there are 16 district Co-operative milk producers unions established on the Amul pattern in Gujarat State. For marketing milk and milk products, the Gujarat State Coop. Milk Marketing Federation was established in the year 1976 as marketing strategy for all these milk unions. This Federation is collecting 90 lakh liters of milk daily from the milk producer members and disburses Rs.20 crore daily to the milk farmers.

With a strong and dynamic Co-operative leadership and a supportive Government, the Co-operative sugar factories flourished in Gujarat, where there is not a single sugar factory established in private sector. The Khedut Sahakari Khand Udyog Factory at Bardoli in Surat District is the first of its kind in Asia.

Similarly, so far as banking sector is concerned there are one State Co-operative Bank, 18 District co-operative banks, 280 urban Co-operative banks and 8240 agricultural credit societies in Gujarat.

There were about 13,000 Co-operative societies around the time Gujarat State came into being in 1960 and now there are 63,000 Co-operatives in Gujarat with a membership of one crore and thirty five lakhs. The Gujarat State Co-operative Union specially produced a documentary film on the theme of development of various sectors of Co-operative movement of Gujarat which was repeatedly screened at the function and was applauded for its content.

containing salient features of ICA's evolution to present form.

It is our keen desire to capture this historic occasion as launching pad for spreading awareness about the relevance and significance of co-operatives in general and UN year of co-operatives-2012 in particular.

It is proposed to start 50th anniversary celebration at the 9th Regional Assembly of ICA-AP in Beijing in China. The culmination of anniversary celebrations will be at the 2nd ICA Expo in Bangalore (India) in December 2010. ICA will also hold special event in New Delhi in November 2010 in conjunction with the celebrations of Indian co-operative week from 14th to 21st November 2010 to mark



# ICA at the 53rd session of United Nations Commission on Status of Women-2009



Mrs. Savitri Singh, Adviser-Gender Programme of ICA-AP, speaking at the 53rd session of UN Commission

The 53rd session of United Nations Commission on Status of Women was held in New York from 2-6 March, 2009.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Adviser-Gender Programme of ICA-AP, on behalf of the ICA and the Gender Equality Committee, attended the opening of the 53rd session of UN Commission on the Status of Women-2009 and high-level round-table on the theme "Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care

giving in the context of HIV/AIDS".

She was also invited as a panelist from ICA to speak at a side event held on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at UN Plaza, New York.

The topic of the discussion was "What does equal sharing of responsibilities mean for the rural women"? Mrs. Savitri Singh emphasized on the need of reduction of work over-load on rural women by creating infrastructure.

About 50-60% of the working time of average rural woman and girls is spent in fetching water, collecting fire wood for cooking and fodder for the cattle.

Cooperatives help creating infrastructures and facilities such as water hand pumps, wells and ponds in the village. These facilities will save a lot of time and reduce hardship of women and young girls and in turn they will get some spare time for rest and pursuing education or recreation.

## International Women's Day 2009: Message from ICA

The International Women's Day, marked on March 8 each year, called on all ICA member organizations and co-operators to mobilize and use their socioeconomic strength to contribute to the global struggle against all forms of violence against women and girls.

A joint statement issued by ICA president, Ivano Barberini, and chair of the ICA Gender Equality Committee, Stefania

Marcone, notes that co-operatives can start making a difference simply by removing all obstacles that prevent or limit the direct membership and active participation of women in all types of co-operatives. By promoting gender equality, co-operatives can make a serious impact on improving the lives of women and girls. Full message at <http://www.ica.coop/gender/index.html>

## 3rd GCC Co-operative Societies' Forum



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP at the Riyadh Co-operative Development Conference

The Ministry of Social Affairs in the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia organized 'The Cooperative Societies Forum' in Riyadh from 24 to 26 May 2009 with the objective of promoting the scope and potential of cooperatives in the biggest country in the GCC sub-region. The ICA, an international organization committed for the promotion and development of co-operatives world over was invited to the forum to add a global perspective to the deliberations at the forum. The ICA's presence in the GCC sub-region was marked by the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies of Kuwait a couple of years ago and in the year 2007 the Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE took a new initiative of expanding the scope and base of cooperatives in the GCC

sub-region of Asia.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, UAE organized two meetings of the Cooperative Forum in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the years 2007 and 2008 respectively and contributed in the ushering of cooperative era in prosperous part of the world.

Inspired by the lead of UAE Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia organized Cooperative Societies Forum in Riyadh that was attended by more than 150 delegates from Saudi Arabia and other countries of the GCC sub-region like UAE, Kuwait, Yemen, Bahrain and Oman.

On behalf of The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, the forum was inaugurated by His Excellency the Minister of Social Affairs and addressed by key cooperators and scholars from Saudi Arabia and participating countries.

Technical presentations on global cooperative perspective were made by resource persons from ICA Asia Pacific namely Mr Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director Mr Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Deputy Regional Director and Mr Zee Yoong Kang the CEO of Singapore National Trades Unions Congress's co-operative training company, NTUC LearningHub.

The forum took note of the following global scenario:

Cooperatives in most of the developing economies have shown considerable resilience as an organisational form and as a voice for the active user members otherwise unable to attain economy of scale.

Co-operatives when performing efficiently represent a private sector model that provides many benefits and opportunities to its members. The resurgence of global interest in co-operatives is not a passing fashion; co-operatives represent a cost-effective and sustainable way to support private sector development ensuring inclusive growth of national economy.

The final recommendations of the forum are:-

1. Suggest and formulate Programs and Projects for the Development of Cooperatives in the GCC region.
2. Attract and Facilitate Enlarged Participation of Private Sector in the Socio-economic Development through Co-operatives
3. Creation of Agriculture Development Fund for Supporting Small Farmers and their Cooperatives
4. Sensitization and Involvement of Media to Promote Socio-economic Development through Co-operatives
5. Creation of Institutional Infrastructure like Cooperative Associations and Councils for Integrated Development of Cooperatives
6. National and International Conferencing on Relevant and Contextual Subject Matters concerning Economy of Co-operatives and
7. Regular Consultation with the Custodians and Leaders of our Countries.

UN Proclamation of International Year of Co-operatives 2012

Geneva, 18 December 2009, for immediate release - The ICA's new president, Dame Pauline Green, expressed today, on behalf of the entire international co-operative community, support for the United Nations resolution on the role of co-operatives in social development, which proclaims 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives. UN Member States approved the resolution (A/RES/64/136) on 18 December at the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The UN resolution recognises that the co-operative business model is a major factor of economic and social development, promoting the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of

people in both the developed and developing world, and that, in particular, cooperatives contribute to the eradication of poverty. The resolution also encourages all governments to create a more supportive environment for co-operative development, particularly when it comes to securing finances for capacity-building.

"The International Year of the Co-operatives is a well timed event that represents the depth of understanding of the entire co-operative movement," said Pauline Green, ICA's first-ever woman president. "The co-operative model is better choice and offers the basis for a more sustainable way to do business when compared to traditional capitalist model now under scrutiny. What sets this model apart from others is that all co-operative, whether they are small farmers or large consumer-owned entities, share the value of democracy, solidarity, equality, self-help and self responsibility, creating businesses that serve the greater good as opposed to maximising profit for the very few."

Iain Macdonald, Director-General of ICA expressed his support for the resolution in a statement at ICA's recent Board meeting indicating that the International Year of Co-operatives is "well timed to remind the world that there is more than one way of doing business and that in a global economy we all have to work together. Whether it is in tackling the economic crisis, the threat of climate change, or food security issues co-operative enterprise offers real hope of solutions to these problems, and I have no doubt that increased profile offered by International Year will achieve great things."

In its 2008 Global 300 report, the ICA notes that the top 300 co-operatives alone are responsible for an aggregate turnover of over a trillion USD, which represents the size of the 10th largest economy in the world (equivalent to the size of Spain alone). The International Year will provide an opportunity to further document the impact of the largest, but also of the small and medium sized co-operatives that significantly improve people's lives around the world.

With this newly approved resolution, ICA will mobilise the global co-operative community in creating a global campaign featuring a series of events around the world and targeted messages which all co-operatives will be able to use to promote cooperative business. It will work closely with the United Nations and its agencies in addition to other co-operative stakeholders to put the co-operative model of enterprise on international and national agendas.

## Co-operative Summit and Women Conference of the Americas-2009

The ICA Americas organized its first co-operative Summit in September, 2009 in Guadalajara, Mexico. The ICA America VI Continental Meeting of Women Co-operators was also held in conjunction with the Summit.

The ICA Regional Office for Americas invited Mrs. Savitri Singh, Advisor Gender Programme to participate at the Summit and continental meeting of the women cooperators. The topic of discussion was, "Global Crises Panorama and its Impact on Women's lives". Mrs. Savitri Singh presented a Report from the ICA-AP Region. The presentation is posted on the ICA-AP website at [www.icarap.coop](http://www.icarap.coop)

The chief guest of the opening was Ms.

Maria Elena Herting, Deputy Director General of ICA.

The International Co-operative Day 3rd July 2010

The International Co-operative Day celebrated every year on the first Saturday of July month.

This is the 88th ICA International Co-operative Day and 16th UN International Day of Co-operatives which was observed on 3rd July 2010 worldwide.

The ICA and UN issue messages on this occasion.

This year's theme is: "Co-operative enterprise empowers women".



This year's theme highlights how the Co-operative 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.

Source: <http://www.ica.coop/activities/idc/2010.html>

## Message of the International Co-operative Alliance on International Co-operative Day-2010

The theme is "Co-operative Enterprise Empowers Women".

All over the world women are choosing the co-operative form of enterprise to respond to their economic and social needs. Whether it is to reach their entrepreneurial aspirations, to access products and services that they want and need, or to be part of business that has ethical values and principles and provides income-generating opportunities, women are finding that co-operatives are attractive options.

Co-operatives are democratically owned and governed enterprises guided by the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. They put people at the heart of their activities and allow members through democratic decision-making set out how they reach their economic, social and cultural aspiration.

For women, 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 women entrepreneurs, co-operatives are an attractive form of enterprise.

By pooling their capital, women are able to engage in income-generating activities and organise their work in a flexible way that respects the multiple roles that women may have in society. From Burkina Faso, India, Japan, Honduras to the United States, women share similar co-operative experiences their women-only co-operatives have allowed women to gain self-confidence, bear professional responsibilities, valorise their skills and improve their livelihoods by deriving income for their work and accessing a wide range of services.

women and men participate. As members and employees, women are discovering enterprises that strive to build mutual respect and equal opportunity. However, it

must be said that more needs to be done to achieve gender equality. Co-operatives are a reflection of their members and the society in which they operate, and so still mirror the predominant societal and cultural biases. They are nonetheless responding to the challenge of making changes in organisational culture, working methods, education and training opportunities to make women's empowerment a reality.

Women's empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of societal change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

The co-operative form of enterprise addresses each of these components and is truly providing empowerment opportunities for women in all parts of the world.

Ms Kumari a successful woman entrepreneur and co-operative member in India summed it up when she related her co-operative experience. She said, 'I would like to thank the women's co-operative bank for making me an empowered woman and allowing me to have my dreams come true'.

On this International Day of Co-operatives, the ICA calls on co-operators to recognise the key contribution women make to economic, social and cultural development throughout the world, to strengthen co-operative commitment to enable women to be empowered in their co-operative enterprises and encourage the participation of women in the Co-operative Movement.

## GOVERNANCE Meeting: Regional Board- 2009

Mr.G.H. Amin, Vice Chairman of the ICA-AP Regional Board chaired the meeting as Mr. Li Chunsheng, President of ICA-AP could not attend the meeting.

At the outset, the meeting paid homage to Mr. Ivano Barberini, the late president of ICA.

Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General, ICA

expressed his happiness on coming to Japan after 14 years. He informed the members about the sad demise of Mr. Barberini. He said that Mr. Barberini was working until two hours before his death. He had finished a book on co-operatives the day he had died. According to Mr. Barberini the root cause of the economic crisis was capital greed and going beyond the board. He said that Mr. Barberini had termed the crisis as huge but with huge opportunity for co-operatives and accordingly the theme of Geneva General Assembly of ICA in November 2009 would be "Global Crisis co-operative Opportunity".

Mr. Jakhar, Chairman IFFCO cum Board



Group photo of the participants at ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting in Tokyo

Member of ICA greeted the participants and expressed his deep sorrow on the sad demise of Mr. Barberini. He termed him as the crusader against co-operative imperfections and a great philosopher cum co-operative conservationist of the century. He referred to his last meeting with him at his residence in Chandigarh, India where Mr. Barberini had very freely explained the logic behind the shift in criteria of ICA membership from turnover to membership basis. He remembered Mr. Barberini for his profuse liking for the Asia-Pacific region in general and India in particular because of the size of membership. Mr. Jakhar also paid rich tributes to Late Mr. G Cua the Regional Board Member from Philippines

Mr. Jakhar highlighted the role of ICA in the present global economic crisis and committed full support of IFFCO in the resurgence of co-operative movement across the globe.

Mr. Amin commenced the meeting on the note of severe economic crisis that had engulfed the whole world that had affected co-operatives as well. He laid emphasis on the fact that the right time had matured to show the world about the advantages and

## Meeting: University/Campus Co-operative Committee



First meeting of the office bearers of ICA-AP University/Campus coop committee

The 1st ICA Asia Pacific University/Campus co-operative Committee meeting was held in Bangkok on 13th July 2009.

The meeting commenced with the welcome remarks from Mr Peerasak followed by introductory remarks by all the participating members. Prof. Shoji while expressing his happiness over the full-fledged status of the University Coop Committee of ICA-AP reminded the core objectives of the committee and desired to see the University/Campus Coops in the Asia Pacific region transforming great theoretical aspects of co-operatives into reality.

strengths of co-operatives in standing tall during crisis. Mr. Amin reminded the ICA Regional Board about great challenge that lied ahead and important role ICA could play in advocating the importance of co-operatives in insulating the global economy from such turmoil.

Ms. Tanaka made an impressive presentation on the Japanese co-operatives with special reference to Consumer Coops catering to 25 million members with a turnover of 34.1 billion USD for the services ranging from retail sale to home delivery, medical, insurance and housing. She also covered the fisheries coops, university and campus coops, forest owners' coops and workers' coops. Mr. Higuchi from JA-Zenchu made a presentation on the Agricultural Coops in Japan.

Mr. Satoshi Takano, Deputy Director, Management Planning Department, Zenrosai, Japan made a presentation on the IAS and touched upon the peripheral issues relevant to co-operatives focusing on the basic aspect as to how should we tackle with the convergence on "Financial Instruments with characteristics of Equity" between FASB and IASB? He said that ICA IAS working group still had to work to ensure full recognition and understanding of the special nature of the co-operative enterprise by the international accounting standard setters. Mr. Shil-Kwan Lee desired that the IAS working group recommendations could be shared with the members of ICA-AP by the ICAHQ.

Mr. Shil-Kwan Lee made a presentation on the interim activity report of ICA-AP during first part of year 2009 and proposed the revised activity schedule for the rest of the year 2009.

All the members expressed their happiness with regard to the performance and accepted the activity plan as above.

The next meeting of the Regional Board was decided to be held in Geneva in the forenoon of 17th November 2009 in conjunction with the ICA General Assembly.

The meeting concluded with thanks to Mr. G.H. Amin for chairing and conducting the meeting.

Representatives from various countries expressed their concept of developing university/campus coops in their respective countries.

The delegates from Vietnam desired to see greater participation of youths and students through the network of this committee, Malaysian delegate Prof. Ali laid emphasis on the exchange programs among various members of the university/campus coops in different countries for better assimilation of management practices and service options, Indian delegate, Dr Dongre termed university/campus coops as the laboratory to prepare next generation coops, Indonesian delegate wished to see experienced and committed co-operative leaders in the movement through univ./campus coops so on so forth.

The membership proposal of Korea was seconded by Prof Ali from Malaysia and accepted by the Chairman.

The members approved the Manifesto and Constitution of the Committee and also endorsed the Office Bearers of the Committee.



The members desired to have a session on the univ./campus at the Global Youth Conference (GYC) in Geneva and aspired to constitute Global Campus Coop Committee of ICA. Prof Ali suggested for a slot at the GYC.

Prof Dongre and Mr Kuriki gave an account of the activities. The activities in South East Asia and Far east Asia were coordinated by Mr Kuriki while that in the West and South Asia were coordinated by Prof Dongre.

Mr Kuriki shared his interaction with Fiji, Korea and Brunei and lauded his success in bringing Korea as member. Prof Dongre referred to his communication with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and shared his impressions about his visit to Iran last year.

The Chair of the Committee informed about signing a Memorandum of Student

Services to the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education and referred to last para of the memorandum that explicitly set out a stage for the ICAAP Committee. The plan for 09-10 was read out and Mr Kuriki proposed to have the Regional Conference next year by July 2010 in Indonesia preferably around the Indonesian Coop Day.

He was particularly concerned about the sustainability of the activities of the committee in the wake of many private universities emerging in various countries. He suggested working out local resources for the conference.

Considering the accessibility and resource availability the committee chose Indonesia and India as two feasible options for the Conference.

## Meeting: Office Bearer of RWC

The meeting of ICA-AP RWC Office Bearers was held on 7th September, 2009 in Manila, Philippines. Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Chairperson, Ms. Emma Neiva, Vice-Chairperson and Mrs. Savitri Singh, Secretary attended the meeting.

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

The work plan 2010 was discussed at the meeting. The following work programme

has been approved for 2010:

- OBM for preparation of Women Forum and review of Capacity building (TOT) programmes
- RWC Meeting and Regional Women Forum in China-2010
- Enhancing role of women in co-operative business
- Newsletter

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

## ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting: Geneva-2009



Mr. G H Amin, Vice President, ICA-AP, Shil Kwan Lee, Regional director ICA AP, Mr. Jain Macdonald, Director General, ICA and Mr. Li Chunsheng, President, ICA-AP

A meeting of the ICA-AP Regional Board was held in Geneva on Thursday the 19th November 2009 at the International Convention Center, Geneva (Switzerland). Several leaders and officials of the ICA-AP member co-operatives besides the members of the Regional Board attended the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Li Chunsheng, ACFSMC, China and co-chaired by Mr. G.H. Amin, President, NCU, India.

Important among the participants were: Mr. Won-Byung Choi, Chairman, NACF, Korea, Mr. Surinder Kumar Jakkhar, Chairman IFFCO, Mr. Mongkalut Pukanut, Chairman, CLT, Thailand, Prof. Dr. Mohammed Ali Baharum, Chairman, ANGKASA, Malaysia, Mr. Nguyen Van Bien, Chairman, VCA, Vietnam, Ms. Dolly Goh, CEO, SNCF, Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General, ICA, Mr. Chan-Ho CHOI, General Manager, NACF, Korea - Regional Director Select and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Li Chunsheng welcomed all the participating members of the ICA-AP Regional Board. Broaching the objective of the meeting, he highlighted the need of a coordinated action by the members of ICA from the Asia Pacific region in the voting for election of

members for the ICA Global Board. He sought cooperation of the ICA-AP board members in mobilizing effective and meaningful voting by the members from AP region. Mr Li Chunsheng extended a warm welcome to Ms. Dolly the Chief Executive of SNCF and introduced her to the members of the regional board.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee gave a brief account of the activities carried out by ICA AP during 2009 until the end of October 09 and planned for the remaining period. He appreciated the support of IFFCO in supporting special project on women and youth empowerment in Sri Lanka and also supporting pertinent conference on role of co-operatives in mitigating the impact of global economic crisis that was held in July in Bangkok. Referring to termination of the AGRITERA project, he made a mention about the co-operative law in Laos that would soon be passed by the Parliament. He also made a special mention of Mongolia for its networking initiatives for 2012 as the UN year of co-operatives. He referred to his visits to Kazakhstan and Mongolia and mentioned about three new members of the ICA from central Asia.

Mr. Lee briefed about the need of reconstructing the disaster affected co-operatives in Indonesia and shared the contents of the appeal issued by ICA in this context.

Mr. Rajiv Mehta presented a report on the reconstruction support given to co-operatives in Myanmar and highlighted major interventions.

Mr. Lee also presented the statement of expenditure incurred by ICA-AP until the end of October 2009.

Mr. Macdonald appreciated the efforts made by Mr. Lee in expanding the membership base of ICA in the Asia Pacific region. He further advised the ICA-AP office to explore possibilities of bringing Bhutan, Jordan, Yemen, Syria, islands in

Fiji and a few more countries from central Asia in the network of ICA.

Highlighting the importance of Arabian countries, Mr. Ali Baharum advised Mr. Lee to induct a staff fluent in Arabic so as to have more members from GCC countries. Mr. Imbsen offered the services of ICA HO staff till the arrangements are made.

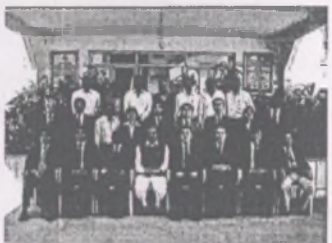
Mr. Li Chunsheng also stressed the need of enrolling more members from the Asia Pacific region of ICA.

Mr. Lee presented the first draft of 2010 budget and activity plan of ICA-AP.

Mr. Jakkhar advised ICA-AP to pay more attention on Agriculture co-operatives and sought support of ICA-AP in facilitating a pilot initiative of MARKFED, Punjab to import agriculture machinery from Korea at a subsidized rate. Mr. Choi, Chairman NACF proposed to set up a machinery bank for the coops.

Mr. Pukanut, Chairman CLT stressed the need of educating leaders, bureaucrats and members of coop community in Laos and Cambodia to learn about Thai model of co-operatives so as to wash away their notion about government controlled coops.

## Meeting: ICA-AP Committee on Consumer Co-operatives



Group photo of the member of ICA-AP Consumer Committee and the delegates of the seminar

The 43rd meeting of ICA Committee on Consumer co-operatives for Asia-Pacific was held on 9th December 2009 at Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of co-operative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune, India. 28 participants from Japan, India, Korea, Myanmar, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, attended the meeting. The meeting was hosted by the National Consumer co-operative Federation of India (NCCF).

The meeting was inaugurated by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, who welcomed the participants and extended the greetings on behalf of ICA-AP. He stressed upon the need of trade networking among co-operatives. He

## Meeting of the ICA-AP Regional Board-2010



Members of the ICA Regional Board

A meeting of the ICA-AP Regional Board was held at the premises of NACF in Seoul (Republic of Korea) on 19th April 2010. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Li Chunsheng, ICA-AP President and Chairman of the Regional Board. 26 persons including members, observers and

Mr. Ali Baharum desired to have real trade facilitation by ICA-AP and advised special supplement on trade on the ICA-AP website.

Mr. Li Chunsheng made an impressive presentation on the 9th Regional Assembly of ICA-AP in Beijing in China in September 2010.

Mr. Lee sought permission of the Chair say good bye with a special thanks to the RB members. He expressed his deep sense of appreciation to all the members of ICA from the region for their kind support and cooperation in making his tenure quite successful and rewarding. He advised the leadership of the region to take coops a step higher by taking best advantage of Asianization process. He reposed confidence in the team of ICA-AP.

Mr. Li Chunsheng thanked Mr. Lee for good role and requested him to share valuable experiences with Dr. Choi making this region progress continuously.

The next meeting of the ICA-AP Regional Board was fixed for early April 2010 Seoul, Korea.

appreciated the efforts of Consumer Committee for the development of consumer co-operative sector in the region.

Mr. Virendra Singh, Chairman, NCCF India welcomed the participants to India and he thanked the participants for making it convenient to attend the meeting. He wished them a comfortable stay in India and requested the delegates to explore possibilities of development of mutual reciprocal trade on import & export consumer goods between the countries in the region. Subsequent to resignation of Mr. Jiro Ito from the position of Chairman of the committee, Mr. Haruyoshi Aman, JCCU was unanimously elected Chairman of the committee.

In addition to the routine agenda, a Special Report was presented on "Consumer co-operatives in Korea" by Mr. Hang-sik Choi, iCOOP Korea. It was also decided in the meeting that next meeting of the Committee would be held in Beijing, China in September 2010 in conjunction with the ICA-AP Regional Assembly. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

After the meeting, a sub-Regional Seminar on "Development of Consumer co-operatives in Asia" was held at Jubilee of VAMNICOM, which was attended by all committee members and 22 consumer cooperators from Maharashtra and Gujarat provinces of India.

ICA Officers attended the meeting. The meeting was hosted by the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) of Korea.

Mr. Won-Byung Choi, Chairman of NACF welcomed the participants and thanked Mr. Li Chunsheng and Dr. Chan Ho Choi for holding the Regional Board meeting in Seoul. He wished the participants a fruitful meeting and a comfortable and memorable stay in Seoul.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Li Chunsheng welcomed all the participating members of the ICA-AP Regional Board. He extended a warm welcome to Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, former Regional Director of ICA-AP; Mr. Hiroshi Tsuchiya, Ex-





# ICA Digest

Issue 57

August 2007

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## Co-ops & CSR: business with a heart

The theme for this year's ICA International Day of Co-operatives and the United Nations International Day of Co-operatives on 7 July 2007 was "Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility".

The theme highlights the fact that co-operatives are, by their very nature, enterprises that balance or integrate economic, environmental and social imperatives while at the same time addressing their members' expectations and stakeholder needs and thus promote corporate social responsibility or CSR.

### International Day of Cooperatives, 2007

"Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility"



In this issue we report on how our members celebrated this day around the world. See pages 4 and 5 for details.

### Feature Interview

"Young people today are looking for organisations that have values other than money."

This month's featured interview is with Gun-Britt Mårtensson the recently retired Chair of Sweden's Union of Housing Co-operatives.



Read about her vision for the future....

## Details and programme for Singapore General Assembly



The ICA's General Assembly is now only a little over 6 weeks away. We carry a report on the latest preparations and also outline some of the main events and activities that will be occurring during this week long celebration of co-operatives.



Garry Cronan  
Editor

“the challenge is to develop a better evidence base for our case..”

Garry Cronan

## From the editor's desk

Welcome to the fifty seventh edition of the *ICA Digest*.

This issue focuses principally on celebrations by our members of the recent International Day of Co-operatives (IDC). We also preview the forthcoming ICA General Assembly in Singapore in October.

The theme for the General Assembly is *Innovation in Co-operative Business*. The theme of the recent IDC was co-operatives and corporate social responsibility.

It is no accident that the ICA is increasingly paying attention to the business aspects of co-operatives.

In the global world of today

we need to be competitive to survive. Our values and principles need to be relevant and our business model sustainable. It is the combination of the two that we should achieve; showing how our principles actually work in practice helping to make our business model more effective. We have to measure and show the social and economic benefits - to measure, if you like, the co-operative difference.

This is the challenge the ICA is setting itself through the development of a better evidence base. This will inform its advocacy, communication and development work and hopefully deliver real added value to members.

Our issue this month also

carries sectoral news, most particularly on housing. Indeed our feature interview is with ICA Board member and recently retired Swedish co-op housing Chair Gun-Britt Mårtensson.

Along with sectoral news we carry reports from our ever active regions. The diversity of these activities eloquently speaks to the value of a global network. It is not all good news, however. In a feature item we are challenged on the role and relevance of agricultural co-ops. Do they have a future given the changes occurring in the marketplace?

As usual we would welcome your comments on or contributions to the *Digest*.

Garry Cronan

## Co-operative trade



“... it is time that our movement maximised the opportunity to expand trade .....”

Iain Macdonald

## ICA Expo 08 - a new initiative

Following successful co-operative trade exhibitions and fairs in various parts of the world, ICA is negotiating with Fenacoop in Brazil to organise a global exhibition and trade fair in Lisbon in October 2008. Exhibition space will be exclusively available to members of ICA from all sectors, but the fair will be open to the general public and buyers to spread the co-operative idea and to showcase the scale and relevance of our business model - as well as the obvious commercial advantages.

The Expo programme will include keynote addresses, roundtable discussions and networking events, to attract the widest attendance and the maximum interest.

A launch of the proposal at the ICA General Assembly in Singapore in October, is planned.

ICA Director General, Iain Macdonald said, “This is a very exciting initiative and the first, I hope, of many.

“Together with the *Global 300*, an exhibition and trade fair next year, should raise our profile even more and convince national and international opinion leaders of the importance of the co-operative movement in the world economy.

“The Fair will benefit our membership in a commercial as well as a

political sense.

“We have seen the role of co-operative trade fairs increase throughout the world in recent years, and it is time that our movement maximised the opportunity to expand trade within the movement as well as with other organisations.”

Watch this space for updates on Expo 08.





## Canadians harness hidden potential

A recent visit to Canada gave ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald, the opportunity to speak to many Canadian co-operators about current ICA initiatives like the restructuring process and **Global 300**. Iain reports back from his visit.

### University of Sherbrooke, Quebec

“I was delighted to be invited by Michel Lafleur, Director of the Institute of Research and Education for Co-operatives and Mutuals (IRECUS) based at the University of Sherbrooke, Quebec to attend their thirty year anniversary celebrations and the twenty-five year anniversary of their Masters Degree in Co-operative Management.



Carol Hunter, CEO of CCA met with the ICA Director-General to discuss a range of issues

My after-dinner speech concerned the importance of co-operative teaching and research linked with practical implementation. I stressed the need to generate a good evidence base and used the **Global 300** as an example.

The IRECUS Anniversary coincided with a conference of the Association of Universities of the Americas in Studies on Co-operatives and Associations

(UNIRCOOP). UNIRCOOP is creating a network of distance learning and co-operative management in Latin America.

I discussed the work of the ICA with conference participants and I also met with ICA-Americas Regional Director, Manuel Mariño.

At a meeting with students studying the Masters Degree, I spoke again about ICA activities, in particular **Global 300**. I also joined Professor Jean-Pierre Girard, a member of our IHCO executive, at his lecture on development and management of co-operatives.”

### CCC

“The annual congress of the Conseil Canadien de la Co-operation (CCC) was held on 22-24 June in Quebec City. My presentation, as part of their theme, “*La coopération: des ponts ouverts sur l’avenir*” (“Co-operation: bridges to the future”) looked at how the ICA supports the French-speaking Canadian co-operative movement.

I discussed the latest initiatives of ICA, its strategy and restructuring process and how the Canadian movement has a very important role to play, not least, in development.

I found the CCC very welcoming and supportive in particular its new Director General, Brigitte Gagné and president, Michel Rouleau. It was a very inclusive conference with a particular emphasis

on youth.”

### CCA

“A few days later, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) held their congress, titled “*Harness the hidden potential*”, from 26-29 June in St Johns, Newfoundland.

Before the conference I met with the CCA board to discuss the current ICA restructuring process in response to concerns about the role of an apex organisation within ICA and proposals for a new subscription formula.

This well organised conference attracted excellent representation from all over Canada. Conference delegates expressed great support for ICA activities and there was particular interest in the **Global 300** project.

At the conference I spoke on: “*Global perspectives on co-operation and partnerships*,” with Jonathan Rothschild, a senior economist at the Canadian International Development Agency and Rizal Malik from Transparency International.

My overall impression is that the Canadian co-operative movement is in excellent shape and keen to be part of an effective global organisation. Our emphasis on profile-raising both within and without the co-operative movement that stresses the essential differences between co-operative and investor owned business, received especially broad support.”

## DG's report



Iain Macdonald  
Director-General

“My overall impression is that the Canadian co-operative movement is in excellent shape

...”

You can read previous DG's monthly reports by clicking [here](#).



# IDC 2007

Read our report on the IDC celebrations around the world

## International Day highlights corporate social responsibility

Media releases, conferences and seminars, radio interviews, articles in national press, contests and awards were among the activities which celebrated this year's International Day of Co-operatives. All highlighted the contribution of co-operatives to promoting social responsibility as part of co-operative principles and values.

mitted to plant one million trees, a symbol of solidarity and co-operation, in the more than 500 events held on the initiative of ICA member, Confederación de Cooperativas de la Republica de Argentina (Cooperar), the Confederación de Cooperativas Agropecuarias (Coninagro) and INAES.



workshop on the

ICA's Board member, Seah Kian Peng, Singapore

theme, "Co-operatives in a Globalised Economy" and held their annual Picture Contest for primary school children and



Márcio Lopes de Freitas, President of the Organisation of Brazilian Co-operatives (OCB) in an interview with United Nations Radio perhaps

"...co-operative culture is about solidarity and responsibility ..."

Márcio Lopes de Freitas, President, OCB, Brazil on United Nations Radio

summed up the message best; "co-operative culture is about solidarity and social responsibility". (Hear the full interview at [radio.un.org/por/story.asp?NewsID=3420](http://radio.un.org/por/story.asp?NewsID=3420) in Portuguese). He shared information on how Brazilian co-operatives were putting the co-operative values and principles into action.

Other media around the world also carried news on the events that ICA members, government ministries and co-operative societies held to celebrate the Day. The ICA message was read, published and referred to in many countries.

In Argentina, co-operators around the country com-

A Haitian newspaper, Le Nouvelliste highlighted the ICA message and reported on the event organised by ICA's member, the Conseil National de Coopératives, and its workshop which co-operators from around the country met to strategise on the future of their movement.

In Japan, the Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives (JJC) organised a seminar where over 250 co-operators, co-op employers and researchers in Tokyo participated including the ICA President, Ivano Barberini who made a presentation on the theme of the day.

In Mauritius, ICA member, the Mauritius Co-operative Union, organised a



You can read more about IDC, the various messages and celebrations by going either [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop) or [www.copac.coop](http://www.copac.coop)



## International Day highlights corporate social responsibility

IDC 2007

Essay Competition for secondary schools. In Romania, where the Day is celebrated annually, ICA member, UCECOM issued



awards to their top ten co-operatives.

While, in the United Kingdom, Black Gold, a film about corporate social responsibility and the lack of it in the international coffee markets featuring

Tadesse Meskela, the General Manager of the Oromia Coffee Farmers Co-operative Union of Ethiopia was screened.

Mr. Meskela addressed the gathering of UK co-operators where the ICA message was also read out.

ICA members translated the ICA message into more than 10 languages and were distributed throughout their own membership.

Some issued media releases like SOKL Finland, other fea-



ICA Board member, Isami Miyata at an event in Japan celebrating IDC

tured social responsibility in their newsletters like the Singapore National Co-operative Federation, see photo opposite, or issued their own messages like CUEDCOOP of Uruguay and information on the day circulated in Malta and Paraguay.

The United Nations and the International Labour Organisation issued media releases in addition to messages which were distributed through their networks and posted on their websites. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) also issued a message as did the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP).

The governments of Myanmar, the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago and South Africa also organised events to bring stakeholders on co-operatives together.

Even non-ICA members from co-operatives in the Canary Islands to food co-operatives in California (USA) carried links to the ICA message as well as the message of ICA's partners.

### International Day of Cooperatives, 2007

"Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility"



As the IDC message notes co-operatives have in many ways been pioneers of CSR. However, the co-operative movement has not done as much as it could have in measuring this co-operative difference. It has allowed others to claim credit for the concept. It is time we developed a consistent and rigorous framework to better measure the way we operate - to demonstrate the combined economic and social benefits, the co-operative difference.

## General Assembly Preview

Up to 1,000 delegates are expected to attend this year's General Assembly.

These bi-annual meetings are the largest regular co-operative event in the world.



18 - 19 October 2007

Raffles City Convention Centre

Theme: *Innovation in Co-operative Business*

The theme for this year's General Assembly is *Innovation in Co-operative Business*.

This subject will be picked up and reflected from a variety of different perspectives in the events which are planned for the week 14-19 October.

The General Assembly itself, will be formally opened on the morning of Thursday 18 October. Speakers in the opening session include Sean Kian Peng, Chair of host, SNCF, Dr Vivan Balakrishan, Singaporean Minister for Community Development and Ivano Barberini, ICA President.

The opening ceremony will be followed by three keynote speakers, see below.

Two concurrent business sessions will commence immediately after lunch and offer participants the opportunity to hear from a wide of co-operative speakers outlining best practice examples of innovation. This will also be the occasion for the launch of this year's *Global 300* list.

The second day of the General Assembly will hear reports on the conclusions of the previous day's business sessions.

This will be followed, by what promises to be a very interesting panel session on the International Accounting Standards and how they are affecting co-operatives.

The afternoon of the second day will deal with ICA statutory business, including elections for the board and the Audit and Control Committee. One of the most interesting discussions is expected to be on proposals for possible governance and restructuring changes for the ICA. The General Assembly will also learn who is this year's Rochdale Pioneers Award winner. The host city for the next GA is also expected to be announced.



José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs (Costa Rica) joined ILO as Executive Director of the Employment Sector in mid-2005. Prior to joining the ILO, he was Chief Trade Adviser and Director of the Trade Unit at the Organisation of American States. (OAS) Trade of Costa



David Cook is Chief Executive Officer of "The Natural Step International" (TNSI) an international NGO founded in Sweden in 1989. The aim of "The Natural Step" is to develop a genuine commitment to, and competence in, sustainable development throughout society. He is currently collaborating with the UN Global Compact.



Lim Boon Heng, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Government of Singapore and concurrently Chairman, Social Enterprise Development Council of the Singapore National Trades Union Congress (SNTUC) which oversees the co-operatives within the Singapore Nation Trade Union Conference, such as NTUC and Fairprice Income.



Tricia O'Malley

### ICA IAS Working Group to hold open meeting in Singapore

Tricia O'Malley, former member of the Board of Directors of the International Accounting Standards Board will join the ICA's IAS Working Group for an informal discussion at 16.30 on 17 October. ICA General Assembly delegates are welcome to attend. Ms O'Malley will address the ICA General Assembly on Friday morning, 19 October and take part in the planned panel discussion on accounting standards.



## Highlights of ICA sectors and thematic committees

General Assemblies are great opportunities to showcase the diversity and strength of co-operatives throughout the world. Almost all of the ICA's sectoral organisations and thematic committees are holding meetings, seminars or workshops in Singapore. Some of the highlights are expected to include:

- ICAO (Agriculture). Challenges in the business environment confronting today's agricultural co-ops will be the focus of a ICAO seminar
- CICOPA. The CICOPA seminar will focus on the development trends of industrial, service, artisan's, worker and social co-operatives in the world today. The seminar will be preceded by a General Assembly of CICOPA.
- ICA Gender Committee. The underlying importance of gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men is a driving force for innovation in co-operatives. The ICA GEC Conference will present case studies on how gender issues drive development and social and economic advancement.
- ICA Housing. "The role the co-operative housing sector can play in combating climate change" will be the theme addressed by housing co-op experts.
- ICA Research Committee. How do co-operatives innovate? What does "innovation" mean within co-operative organisations? Does the co-op model encourage or discourage innovation? The ICA's Research Committee Symposium will address these and other questions.
- All interested ICA members are also invited to attend a meeting on October 16 at 11am to discuss the possibility of re-establishing an Energy Sectoral Committee.



ICA delegates at the last General Assembly in Colombia

## 2007 Global 300 listing to be launched at General Assembly

This year's **Global 300** list will be launched on Thursday, 16 October. It will be unveiled at the start of Session II of the concurrent business streams during the GA.

This year we have greatly expanded our financial analysis of the largest co-operative and mutual businesses in the world. Which ones are performing best? What sectors are competing most effectively in the global marketplace? Are the most commercially successful co-ops also the ones performing best on CSR?



Two new features of this year's **Global 300** programme are:

- A new (draft) measure of Corporate (or Co-operative) Social Responsibility (CSR) has been developed. Detailed case studies featuring best practices examples of CSR and co-operative values and principles will be unveiled at the launch.
- The **Global 300** project has also been expanded to include a new **Developing 300** list of co-operative businesses drawn from up to 30 developing economies.

## Global 300 - National 100 Workshop

A number of countries are now starting to develop their own Top 100 list of co-operatives based on the **Global 300** approach.

The ICA has been (or will) be working with a range of countries including the UK, France, Australia, Canada, Singapore, USA and others to help develop such lists. The UK recently launched the Co-operative UK 100 see [www.cooperatives-uk.coop/live/welcome.asp?id=1522](http://www.cooperatives-uk.coop/live/welcome.asp?id=1522). The Global 300-National 100 programme has the potential to build for the first time a truly global database of co-operative enterprises throughout the world.

Learn how you can do this for your country by attending the **Global 300 - National 100 Workshop** on 16 October at 14:00.

"...the development of the national 100 lists represents a win-win outcome; for ICA members themselves, and for the ICA which can use them to help build the Global lists..."

Pauline Green

## General Assembly Youth

“(we) need to increase the number of committed young members, to enable a process of inheriting the movement to occur...”

Youth conference delegates under 35 years of age have free registration to the GA as observers.

## Youth are the future – ICA Youth Conference 14-15 October, Singapore

Youth is moving up the co-operative agenda in recognition of the need to increase the number of committed young members active in the movement, to enable a process of “inheriting the movement”. ICA too has focused attention on youth issues in the past few years.

The ICA global youth conferences, held in conjunction with ICA GAs, have given young people an opportunity to network and share progress on the participation of

youth in co-operatives.

It has created continuity for youth action and raised expectations about what is possible for a broader participation of young people.

Singapore 2007 promises to be not only a continuation but a step forward in strategic discussions regarding co-operative development and the role youth play in that challenge. The theme of the ICA Youth Conference: “Co-operative business innovation through youth”, proposed by the newly formed ICA Asia-Pacific Youth Committee, is not only appealing but necessary.

“We encourage ICA mem-

bers to enable young people committed to the development of the movement to actively join us,” says Juan Carlos Mejía Cuartas, ICA Youth Network representative to the ICA Board.

**Registration for the ICA Youth Conference has been extended.** [Information](#)



Juan Carlos Mejía Cuartas

## Detailed GA programme and documentation now available

## General Assembly Documents

A range of documents relating to the General Assembly have now become available. These include copies of the ICA’s 2006 Annual Report, the General Assembly edition of the ICA Review, the Agenda and Programme of Meetings, plus Statutory Documentation.

General Assembly registrants will shortly receive their copies of this documentation. Members have also been sent copies of the Annual report. Copies of many of these documents are also available from the ICA website, [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop)



A full programme listing all General Assembly events, keynote speakers, venues and helpful local information



Carries reports on the ICA’s global activities in 2006



The General Assembly edition of the ICA Review. The Review is celebrating its centenary, this issue includes background on the host Singaporean co-operative movement plus other articles



## First CIRIEC world research conference

## Research

The goal of the first international CIRIEC conference on the Social Economy is to highlight the role of the Social Economy in building and strengthening communities in a variety of contexts and cultures. The conference will be held at BC Institute for Co-operative Studies, University of Victoria, Canada, see [www.socialeconomynetwork.ca/hub/](http://www.socialeconomynetwork.ca/hub/)

The conference features four main streams:

- The Social Economy in communities
- The Social Economy facing globalisation
- The Social Economy and governance
- The Social Economy facing the reconfiguration of the State



## Yair Levi - co-operative researcher

Co-operative researchers throughout the world will be sad to hear that Dr Yair Levi recently died. Dr Levi was Scientific Director of CIRCOM (International Research Centre on Rural Co-operative Communities) and Editor of Journal of Rural Co-operation, in Israel. He is the author of a number of books on co-operatives.

As former ICA Research Committee Chair, Dr Roger Spear, has noted "Yair Levi was an outstanding figure in the co-operative landscape; a man with immense energy and experience, he must have travelled the world many times, continually writing, and producing his Journal of Rural Co-operation for many years; he never failed to generate interesting views and ideas".

Dr Levi was one of the passing generation of international co-operative researchers who worked hard to advance the study and understanding of co-operatives. The co-operative world is the poorer for their passing.



## A USA co-operative pioneer profiled

America's farmer owned co-operatives are facing unparalleled challenges in today's fast changing rural environment. A recent publication *Truman Torgerson: Leadership Straight from the Shoulder*, by Randall E. Torgerson documents the story of how one of the most progressive farm leaders of the 20th century led the way towards meeting those challenges through market-oriented business activity. Truman Torgerson, the author's father, was a pioneer in organising and leading Wisconsin's Lake to Lake Dairy Co-operative, a prototype of the successful member-owned business of the future. This collection deals with many issues associated with running a successful co-operatives, it includes important lessons on leadership development, marketing strategies and membership involvement. The author is himself one of the USA's best know co-operative advocates. Copies of the book can be obtained from [www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail.aspx?bookid=34725](http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail.aspx?bookid=34725)

## Publications



ICA's specialist news website [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop) continues to attract record numbers of visitors.

The site now has links to over 20,000 news items on co-operatives. It is probable that this is the largest online collection of co-operative news items and links in the world. <http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail.aspx?bookid=34725>

Our current focus is on extending our direct coverage and links to member activities and sites. We would be very interested in working with members to develop more direct member RSS feeds into our news site. If you are webmaster for your site, and you have your news items RSS enabled or are thinking about doing this we would love to hear from you. Please contact

## ICA news

"...record number of visits to site recorded..."



## Housing

## Gun-Britt Mårtensson: "A cradle for democratic behaviour"



Gun-Britt Mårtensson

Suzanne Henderson, ICA *Digest*, Associate Editor interviewed Swedish co-operative leader Gun-Britt Mårtensson on the eve of her retirement as chair of the largest Swedish apex body for co-operative housing, [HSB: Riksförbund \(Union of Housing Co-operatives\)](#). There are over half a million members of HSB housing co-ops in Sweden and Gun-Britt has been a co-op housing resident since her early teens. A former mayor and current member of the ICA Board, she is a tireless campaigner for promoting "the co-operative difference". Gun-Britt spoke to the *Digest* about her vision for building a better world through 'cooperativism'.

Co-operating on a housing co-op in Uruguay



Celebrating co-op housing HSB style

"Co-operatives the world over, are so important because they are the cradle for learning democratic behaviour"

Gun-Britt Mårtensson

*Digest: How did you become involved in the co-operative movement?*

**GM:** "My first exposure to co-operatives came as a teenager when my family moved into co-op housing in Sweden in the 60s. Becoming a member in a housing co-operative was really something to be proud of as it meant that you could save money (to buy into the co-op) and that you were considered a good family - 'good citizens' if you like. I can still remember the look of immense pride on my father's face when he announced that the family had been accepted into the co-op.

As an alternative to private ownership or rental situations, housing co-operatives have an excellent reputation in Sweden. They are 'tenant owner associations' which

means that you own the right to the use of your flat for an unlimited time, but as a co-owner of the co-operative you have duties as well as rights.

Members are involved in the governance of the co-operative, although most housing co-ops buy in important services such as building maintenance and financial management from the 33 regional organisations that make up our apex body.

I am totally committed to the concept of co-operative housing and still live in one today. It is a mid-size co-operative with 400 members. We come together every fortnight to cook and socialise. There is a yoga club, a choir and many activities for older people.

The retired members have just bought a wine cellar and they have a travel club as well.

In Sweden you can see the difference between rental housing and co-operative housing very clearly. Members get all the benefits of community-orientated living. This idea that your home - your most valuable asset - is looked after by your neighbours helps to shape the co-operative spirit in individuals.

Co-operatives in whatever form, the world over, are so important because they are the cradle for learning democratic behaviour."

**Interview cont. pp 26-27**



## Canadian housing co-ops have 2020 vision

## Housing

The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada), the peak body for housing co-ops in the region, has launched a new initiative to help housing co-ops face the challenges of an uncertain future.

The **2020 Vision** project recognises that the co-op housing movement in Canada is at a crossroads.

"The co-ops we live in are getting older. The needs of co-op members are changing. With very few exceptions, we are not adding new co-ops to our sector," says CHF Canada.

In Canada almost all housing co-ops operate under government housing programs that provide financial assistance, limit their purposes to non-profit affordable rental housing and provide a safety net if co-ops fall into financial difficulty. Over the next decade these programs will end for many co-ops, leaving them to operate without government support.

CHF Canada wants to ensure that Canada's investment in co-op housing is safeguarded and that the principles of member control and non-profit ownership are preserved. The **2020 Vision** project will help housing co-ops build a strong foundation for the future, based on shared co-operative values.

The Project's name comes in part from a question CHF Canada is asking its members: "What kind of a co-op do you want to be in the year 2020?"



To help housing co-ops prepare for the future, **2020 Vision** has developed a series of educational and training resources and a certification programme.

For co-ops that want to become designated as **2020 Co-ops**, CHF Canada has developed a series of benchmarks - for example, a co-op must have a mission and vision that reflects the values of its members. It must uphold the international co-operative principles, keep its operations non-profit and offer housing that is as affordable as possible.

A **2020 Housing Co-op** co-operates with other co-ops through membership in the co-operative housing sector. Sound financial planning and expert property maintenance are other prerequisites.

A **2020 Co-op** demonstrates good governance and principled leadership and understands that sound management is key to operating successfully and offering its members good service.

Finally, a **2020 Co-op** is committed to a sustainable future, both for the co-op itself and for the global community. Just like Arcadia Housing Co-operative, located on the Toronto waterfront, which won a City of Toronto Environmental Award of Excellence in 2006 for its efforts in water and energy conservation.

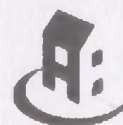
**2020 Vision** is in the early stages, but Canadian housing co-ops are enthusiastic and keen to get involved and to use the **2020 Vision** tool kit as it is developed.

CHF Canada has started a **2020 Vision** website. It can be accessed by going to [www.chfc.coop](http://www.chfc.coop) and clicking on the **2020 Vision** link.

*Arcadia Housing Co-operative in Toronto*

"What kind of a co-op do you want to be, in the year 2020?"

CHF Canada



Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada



## Health

## Asian co-ops boost IHCO

*IHCO president, Dr Guisado and vice-president, Per-Olof Jönsson*



The International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) Board meeting in Mörsil, Sweden on 23 May, unanimously agreed to incorporate the Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation (APHCO) led by Dr Yasuyuki Takahashi, President of the Japanese Health Co-operative Association (JHCA).

IHCO President Dr José Carlos Guisado also reported on ICA strategic planning and

restructuring, and development of the American Co-operative and Mutual Network (ACYM) of which IHCO is a permanent member.

IHCO members adopted a protocol to facilitate development of an ambitious information gathering project on health co-operatives throughout the world, with the 1997 UN Report as the founding basis.

## Public-private co-operation on health systems

Co-operation between public administrations and private agents, especially co-operatives, was the main topic of debate at a conference held in Östersund, Stockholm on May 22. The meeting organised by Swedish health co-operative, Medicoop and sponsored by IHCO brought more than forty medical professionals together to discuss, "Co-

*operation, subcontracting and public procurement within healthcare and welfare*".

A conference manifesto was produced that expressed the desire of health co-operatives to take an active part in improving the quality of healthcare available in their regions, and committed co-operatives to advancing public-private collaboration in order to develop more

just healthcare systems.

The Östersund document also warned: "At the same time, we wish to express our concern that [the] misinterpretation of procurement rules, historical differences and political rigidity risk[s] an impoverishment of public healthcare, and might eventually even lead to an outright oligopoly in this important social sector".

## Way forward in Colombia



*National meeting of health co-ops in Colombia*

More than 300 people met to discuss current issues of concern in Colombian healthcare at a national meeting of health co-ops in Bogota, Colombia on June 7-8. The meeting titled: "Towards the consolidation of a co-operative health model for Colombians", was

organised by the Confederation of Cooperatives of Colombia (CONFECOOP), with support from Saludcoop and Coomeva, leading Colombian healthcare co-ops.

Dr Guisado spoke about the "Current situation of healthcare co-operatives in the world. Convergence and collaboration of co-operatives with governments in the field of healthcare", and described innovative models of collaboration between

healthcare co-ops and public administrations. The event sparked widespread interest in the healthcare sector and Colombian media.

Dr Josep Gras and Estanislau Simón from the Espriu Foundation, described the co-operative healthcare model operating in Spain. Almir Gentil, President Unimed Foundation, spoke about health and social reform in Brazil through medical co-operatives.

## IHCO events

- IHCO GA & Board meeting, 17 Oct, Singapore.
- International Health Co-operative Forum & 50th anniversary of Japanese Health Co-operative Assoc (JHCA), 21-25 Oct, Tokyo.
- 1st meeting of Network América Cooperativa y Mutual (ACYM), 9 Nov, Montevideo.



## Co-op archive recognised



Volunteer in Archive

and new status will help raise the profile and public awareness of these wonderful collections."

Designated collections should work towards the provision of high quality services and improve access

The collections of the National Co-operative Archive at the Co-operative College UK have been recognised among the most important in England through the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's Designation Scheme.

The scheme identifies pre-eminent collections of national and international importance based on their quality and significance.

Mark Wood, Chair of the MLA said, "The award of Designation is very hard to achieve and this success

to their collections, and also co-operate with other institutions, sharing expertise and advice.

The Co-operative Group will provide an endowment of £3 million to support the preservation of the Movement's heritage. The Endowment will generate about £150,000 per year toward the running costs of the Archive and Museum.

The Co-operative Group and Co-operatives UK will be founders of the charitable Co-operative Heritage Trust. They are keen to discuss how other co-operatives can participate in and contribute fi-

nancially to the Trust's work.

Professor Stephen Yeo, Chair of the College Archive Committee said, "This is a really outstanding achievement by the College and the archive team. It shows the enormous distance they have travelled since integrating the major collections that now comprise the National Co-operative Archive. The movement can be confident that the stewardship of the Archive is now of the very highest standard and it should also be deeply proud that the significance of the collections has been recognised in this way."

The College Chief Executive and Principal, Mervyn Wilson thanked historians and academics from around the world who sent letters in support of the application. "I have no doubt that was a major factor in demonstrating to the panel the global significance of the collections," he said.

Contact [Gillian Loneragan](#) learning resources manager and archivist or visit the [Archive website](#)

## Co-op heritage

"The movement can be confident that the stewardship of the Archive is now of the very highest standard."

Professor Stephen Yeo

## China Co-ops Rising

*International Dispatch* is the new E-Newsletter of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA).

The second issue, contains an item on China's new co-operative law.

"July 1st marked the beginning of a new era in rural China. A new law ratified by the National People's Congress is now in effect for millions of small, household farmers seeking competitive advantages in China's red hot economy...

China co-op watchers hope the new law will enable farmers to establish, autonomous, member owned and managed co-operative enterprises helping them to achieve better positions and incomes— in the value chain." [More](#)



## Co-op legislation



## Europe

## Social dialogue in Prague



Keynote: Pauline Green, Co-President Cooperatives Europe



Rainer Schluter, Director Cooperatives Europe



Etienne Pflimlin, Co-President Cooperatives Europe

The 3rd Co-operative Convention on European Social Dialogue, was held in Prague, on 18-19 June. The Convention received the support of EU Commissioner Vladimír Špidla and the Czech Government for the objective of creating social and economic change through co-operatives.

The President of the Czech Parliament, Miloš Věček, the minister of employment and social affairs, Petr Nečas and agriculture minister Petr Gandalovič, underlined the positive role of co-operative values and principles in the Czech national social dialogue.

The [interim results](#) of Cooperatives Europe's Social Partner Programme (SPP) were discussed. SPP will enable Cooperatives Europe to become a European Social Partner.

First data of SPP indicates that Cooperatives Europe represents 231,000 co-operative enterprises that have 120 million members and provide 4.6 million jobs in the agriculture, housing, worker and social co-ops,



L to R Miloš Věček - president of Czech Parliament; Vít Vaníček - DACR Czech Union of Co-operators; Milan Stech -

consumers, pharmacies and insurance sectors.

A discussion on Europe's Social Dialogue explored the added value of Cooperatives Europe becoming a Social Partner.

Etienne Pflimlin, Co-President of Cooperatives Europe, concluded that there was much "food for thought" and perhaps more questions to answer than envisaged.

Best practice presentations for successful social dialogue can be viewed [here](#).



Ray Collins, communication, Cooperatives Europe



Agnes Mathis, deputy director Cooperatives Europe

## EU defends co-ops

Cooperatives Europe has recently received important expressions of support for the co-operative sector from the EU Commission.

Commissioner Vladimír Špidla, exchanging views with Cooperatives Europe on an action plan to defend legal and fiscal frameworks of co-operatives, reaffirmed his support for the co-operative model of enterprise as part

of the Single Market and the wider European social reality.

He told the Board he would need their opinions for the continuing harmonisation of the Single Market procedures and was ready to enter into dialogue with Cooperatives Europe. [More](#).

At a recent meeting with Cooperatives Europe, EU commissioner Günter Ver-

heugen (Enterprise & Industry) discussed the issues of most importance to the European co-operative sector.

Verheugen said he recognised the social and economic importance of the European co-operative sector and would like the 'co-operative difference' to be better articulated and understood better within the Commission. (cont. overleaf)



EU commissioner Vladimír Špidla

## EU defends co-ops cont.

(From pg 12)  
Verheugen said the Competition Policy framework could benefit from 'operating guidelines for co-operatives' that are formulated in consultation with the Co-operative Movement, concerned national governments and

that are in line with co-operative principles.

The key issues discussed at the meeting were: legal actions against some specific tax systems for co-operatives; proposed accounting standards for SMEs; and the promotion of co-

operative societies in Europe.

Regular meetings between the EU Commissioner and Cooperatives Europe will ensure improved follow up of important issues for the European co-operative sector.

## Europe



EU commissioner  
Günter Verheugen

## Memo to Portuguese Presidency

Cooperatives Europe has written a memorandum to the Portuguese Presidency of the EU (Jul-Dec 2007) calling on the Presidency to ensure that the redrafted EU Treaty continues to identify 'co-operative societies' in any definition of 'companies or firms' as is written in Article 48 of the existing Treaty and is included in the constitutions of some Member States.

The Memorandum says: "As enterprises that are built on economic success with a social dimension, co-operatives across Europe call on the Portuguese Presidency to find a way to involve the social partners and stakeholders in the negotiation process and to establish the status of an enhanced social protocol."

Cooperatives Europe is ready to take part in any negotiating process."

[Read the full Memo.](#)

[More headlines](#)



## Communications update

Cooperatives Europe has redesigned their [website](#). Ray Collins from Cooperatives Europe has called on members to e-mail their logos, news items and pictures of their activities to build a European-wide image database.

## Member News

EuroCoop celebrated its 50th Anniversary with the conference titled: "Climate Change: The Major Challenge of the 21st Century: Maximising the response of consumer co-operatives", on 28 June. Further information: [50 Years of EuroCOOP](#)



## New conferences

**23rd International Co-operative Research Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, 14-15 Sept 2007**, hosted by Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague and supported by the Co-operative Association of the Czech Republic. [Visit](#)

**European Forum of Social Tourism, Riva del Garda, Italy, 2-5 Oct 2007**, hosted by the International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) and the Trentino Federation of Cooperation. The theme is "Social tourism: Protagonist of economic and social development in Europe".



Maurizio Davolio, Chair  
of TICA and BITS Board  
member



## ACI- Americas

### Recent activities of ACI-Americas



Ramón Imperial

The ICA restructure was the main topic of the ACI-Americas Consultative Council meeting held in San Juan, Puerto Rico on 10 May. ACI-Americas regional director, Manuel Mariño and

Ramón Imperial, both members of the ICA Administrative Council, led discussion on the Restructuring Working

Group's proposal on membership, fees and sector committees.

The restructure will be discussed again at an ACI-Americas Council extraordinary meeting in San Jose in August.

A panel discussion: "Perspectives on Women's Role in Co-operative Movement Development in Puerto Rico" was held during the Council meeting.

In attendance was the President of the American Region Cooperative

Women's Committee (CRAMC), Maria Eugeni Perez Zea (COOMEVA-Colombia), the vice-president Edith Sanchez (COOPEUCH-Chile) and Nancy Botta (Cooperar-Argentina).

A Financial Cooperatives of America (COFIA) seminar was also held during the Council meeting. The Seminar was part of COFIA's effort to develop and promote finance education courses and technical assistance for financial co-operatives in Latin America.

### Public politics in Panama

Representatives of the National Council of Cooperatives in Panama (CONALCOOP) and the Panamanian Cooperative Autonomous Institute (IPACOOOP) attended a Public Politics seminar on

23-24 May, to train members about how to prepare an incidence strategic plan.

This type of planning tool will allow members to take advantage of political,

social and economic opportunities at national and international level in order to benefit all countries in the region.



Manuel Mariño

### Social economy in Dominican Republic

Manuel Mariño visited the Dominican Republic in the last week of June to assist preparations for a research project on the social economy of the Republic. This project forms part of a wider investigation into the social economy of Latin American countries - already completed for Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Dominican co-operative training and education body, ENECOOP, will appoint a Working Group to the project. This activity is part of the Incidence and Cooperative Development Project of ACI-Americas supported by the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC).



### Reminder

The 15th ACI-Americas Regional Conference will be held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 1-5 October 2007.

The theme is "Social cohesion and inclusion: Contribution of co-operatives to a world in balance". Visit [aciamericas.coop/conferencia2007/](http://aciamericas.coop/conferencia2007/) for more information (Spanish and English).

## Focus on training



**III Congreso del Mercosur**  
*Capacitación, promoción  
 y educación cooperativa*  
 5, 6 y 7 de Julio de 2007  
 Centro de Convenciones y Eventos



ACI  
 Americas

The 3rd Congress of MERCOSUR on training, promotion and co-operative education took place in Posadas, Argentina on 5-7 July.

Over 800 delegates from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay came together to discuss training and promotion of the co-operative movement, leadership and public politics.

Manuel Mariño gave the opening address: "Governance, ethics and leadership in cooperatives". The next specialized meeting of cooperatives of MERCOSUR will take place 29-31 August in Montevideo.



Governor Rovira, minister of cooperative action, mutuals, commerce & integration, Province of Misiones, & ACI-Americas' Regional Director, Manuel Mariño.

## Virtual learning centre coming

ACI-Americas will launch its new virtual learning centre which uses the Moodle technological platform to enable access to courses, forums, chatrooms, surveys, databases, video-conferences and a virtual library.

The Centre will provide online education similar to the teletutorial training initiated by the Colombian Cooperatives Confederation (CONFECOOP) which

also provides specialised qualifications and training online.

This initiative is a joint partnership between the University of Cordoba (Spain) and the international consulting firm, Innomades.

The courses are certified by the University of Cordoba, the European Computer Driver License (ECDL) sponsored by Informatics Technicians Association (ATI), FUNDE-

POS University (Costa Rica) and other academic institutions.

[E-mail](#) for more information.

ICA Americas will shortly launch its new virtual learning centre..."



**Biblioteca Virtual  
 ACI - Américas**

## Events

Confecoop Antioquia supported by ACI-Americas held a course on the new online learning platform of ACI-Americas on 26 July in Medellín, Colombia.

The main objective was to promote the new distance-education tools as well as to equip the participants

to be part of the online tutorial team. For more information e-mail [proyectos@aciameericas.coop](mailto:proyectos@aciameericas.coop)

A seminar on "Gender equity in decision-making in organisations" will be held on 27 August at COOP-NAE R.L.

The seminar will work to-

wards a proposal for a Gender Equity Stamp in the Co-operative Movement.

For more information email [proyectos@aciameericas.coop](mailto:proyectos@aciameericas.coop)

"... the main objective of the course was to promote the new distance education tools ..."



## Asia-Pacific Trade fair targets small producers



Indonesia's president launches National Co-operative Day



Opening of Bali Trade Fair

The beautiful tourist destination of Bali, Indonesia, was the location for an international co-operative trade fair on 12-15 July. It was organised by ICA-AP in collaboration with DEKOPIN, the Indonesian Cooperative Council. The Fair was opened by ICA deputy director-general, Maria-Elena Chavez, Adi Sasono, president of DEKOPIN and ICA-AP regional director, Shil Kwan Lee.

The Expo celebrated six decades of the Co-operative Movement in Indonesia. Co-ops from Indonesia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Malaysia and the Philippines exhibited.

On the opening day of the Fair, President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, launched National Co-operative Day of Indonesia, at a celebration at-

tended by more than 5000 delegates from 15 countries.

A program of seminars and meetings was held in conjunction with the Fair. The "Capacity building of co-operatives through HRD networking" seminar and a meeting of the ICA Committee on HRD for Asia-Pacific were held on 10-11 July.

A conference on "Poverty reduction and advantage of co-operatives in protecting small farmers and rural entrepreneurs" was held on 13 July.

On 14 July there was a symposium on trade networking, to encourage and motivate co-operatives in the region to establish business contacts with overseas co-ops to take advantage of market-driven economies.

## Gulf region advances co-ops

Our last issue of the Digest carried a brief report on the first Forum for Enhancing Co-operative work in GCC (Gulf Co-operation Council) countries was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 12-13 June.

This month we provide further details. The Forum attracted more than 100 delegates from UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait.

The Meeting was hosted by the UAE ministry of social affairs in collaboration with ICA and was opened by

Mariam Mohammed Khalfan Al Roomi, minister of social affairs, UAE and Ivano Barberini, president of ICA.

The Forum heard from a number of global co-operative specialists including the regional director of ICA-AP, Shil Kwan Lee; Dr Hans Muenkner from Germany; Kim Yook Kon, NACF Korea; Bhagwati Prasad, NCUI India; Zulkfli Mohd, SNCF Singapore; Tsubasa Nakamura, ICA-AP Japan; Rajiv Mehta, director of development ICA-AP; and Dr Mishra,

India.

The need for more dialogue between the Co-operative Movement and the governments in GCC countries to enhance the potential of co-operatives in this region was discussed.

The Forum acknowledged that the environment for developing policy in the Gulf region reflected inequalities between the corporate and co-operative sectors.

(cont. overleaf)



## Gulf region advances co-ops cont.

(From pg 16)

The Forum acknowledged that the environment for developing policy in the Gulf region reflected inequalities between the corporate and co-operative sectors.

There is an urgent need to build the capacity of co-operatives at primary and secondary levels through public awareness and

knowledge building as well as developing management and strategic operations to use the capital and human resources of co-ops effectively.

ICA-AP indicated it could provide necessary technical support in the process of capacity building.

The AP regional office also said it would be happy to co-ordinate the visit of

Gulf state co-operative representatives to successful co-operatives in other parts of Asia, to enhance the exchange of ideas and best practice.



Dubai Co-op Forum

## Asia-Pacific

## Co-op banks help rural poor

The Strengthening Rural Credit Co-operatives Project supports the Indian Government's program to reform the country's vast network of rural credit co-operative banks (CCBs).

CCBs will be transformed into commercially viable institutions responsive to the financial needs of farmers, with the approval of a US\$600 million loan from

the World Bank.

India's poorest farmers have limited access to finance from formal sources, relying instead on extortionate money lenders. "Better access to finance for India's rural poor is absolutely critical for higher rural growth, for reducing inequality, and ultimately, alleviating poverty," said Isabel Guerrero, World Bank

country director for India.

The project will provide technical assistance to strengthen CCB governance, management and operation. CCB members, particularly small and marginal farmers, will receive training in financial literacy, project management, monitoring and evaluation.



Shil Kwan Lee, ICA  
Asia-Pacific Regional  
Director

## India sets good example for co-op movement in other regions

With the aim of promoting co-operatives in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan, ICA-AP organised a study visit to India for co-op leaders and government representatives from these regions.

The National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM) helped organise the tour and

training program on 21-26 May, for the six participants, who held ministerial positions with responsibility for co-operative development in their own regions.

Program costs were sponsored by ICA Domus Trust and NCUI/VAMNICOM.

Organisers and participants  
of Indian study tour



## Africa

## Co-operative youth inspire in Lesotho



Group work at the Forum

“Student co-operatives offer a model for youth groups that want to combine enterprise with ethics.”

Khotso Matla



UK Co-op College, Principal Mervyn Wilson lead discussions on how to encourage co-ops

2007 International Co-operative Day celebrations were followed by a Student Co-operatives Forum at the Lesotho Co-operative College in Maseru, capital of the mountain kingdom of Lesotho. Developing co-operation in the curriculum and establishing youth and student co-operatives was the clear message.

Two hundred students, teachers and government ministers attended as well as representatives from ICA Regional Office in Nairobi, Professor Suleman Chambo, Principal of Moshi University College of Co-operation and Business Studies, Tanzania and Mervyn Wilson, Chief Executive of the Co-operative College UK.

In his opening address, Khotso Matla, assistant minister Lesotho Department of Trade, Industry, Co-ops and Marketing said, “Student co-

operatives offer a model for youth groups that want to combine enterprise with ethics. It is an enterprise with added benefits, requiring young people to trade ethically and work democratically.”

Youth co-ops were flourishing in Lesotho said Mr Matla. “All of us here are going to witness the turning of a new chapter in the structure of the Co-operative Movement in Lesotho, where for the first time we have fourteen co-operatives owned and governed by young people between the age of 15 and 25,” he said.

Matla contrasted this with the problem of aging membership in many established co-ops and spoke about the government’s concern to main-

tain succession in co-operatives through the involvement of young people.

A highlight of the Forum was the presentation of over twenty case studies by school and youth co-operatives including a co-op whose local language name translates as “youth is the flower”. This co-op provides services to their school and community such as catering, equipment hire, banking and raising poultry - a common income generator among poorer communities in Lesotho.

Another co-op based at a school in Maseru is the *Poverty Fighters Multi-Purpose Co-operative*. It registered in 2004 and is now addressing the challenge of how to sustain the co-op when student-members go on to further education or return to remote mountain villages during the holidays.

(cont. overleaf)

Student co-op member reports to the Forum





## Lesotho co-op youth cont.

## Africa

(From pg 20)

A school co-op in Malealea makes a range of products from stone to sell into the tourist industry. When they discovered the skills they needed to work the stone were found among prisoners, they negotiated with the department for correction to train within the prison service.

The *Young Farmers Development Society* began back in 2002 with six members to create jobs and alleviate poverty through income generation. It has grown to fifteen members and like many other co-ops it has a wider social objective - a focus on HIV/AIDS education, vital because Lesotho has one of the highest HIV infection rates in sub-Saharan Africa.

The *Elephant and Eagle Society* chose their name because the eagle flies higher and can see further while the might of the elephant can make things happen. They have already applied for funding to support a fishery project because they want their co-operative to create jobs and generate income.

Mervyn Wilson, Chief Executive of the UK's Co-operative College, led discussion about what actions were needed by government, schools, established co-ops and young people to create an environment in which co-operatives can flourish.

ish.

He congratulated the Lesotho government for taking the initiative to register student co-operatives and drew on examples from the UK to demonstrate how to get 'co-operation' across a wide range of curriculum areas.

"We will now look at how to build links between the network of business and enterprise colleges supported by the Co-operative Group and the youth co-operatives in Lesotho," he told the gathering.

"More than anything, the involvement of teachers and so many young people committed to bringing about change through co-operative action, and their determination that through self-help they can address the huge challenges their communities face, deserves our support," said Mr Wilson.



port," said Mr Wilson.

"The collaboration between the three co-operative colleges to make this programme possible, and is the type of activity we hope will increase as the new DFID/ILO Co-operative Facility for Africa becomes operational," he said.

*Khotso Matla, assistant Minister for Co-ops at the Maturity Works conference earlier this year*

*Students outside Lesotho Co-operative College*





## Co-op people

### Kent-Olof Stigh elected to HSB



**K**ent-Olof Stigh, has been appointed to chair HSB, Sweden's largest apex organisation for co-operative housing. He succeeds ICA board member, Gun-Britt Mårtensson. Stigh has a long association with HSB having been chair of the board for HSB Gothenburg for the last four years and a member for the last 24 years. A criminal lawyer by profession, Stigh will leave

legal practice to undertake his HSB duties fulltime: "Gun-Britt has given 200% to HSB during her time as chair and president, and I hope to honour that commitment by working as hard." Stigh said housing co-ops are a growing sector in Sweden. "Housing co-ops are a very good way of living. You have your neighbours close and you can get to know them quickly. You don't have to take care of tasks like property maintenance by yourself.

You have the chance to do something collectively," he said.



Stigh has been elected for a four year term. The new president will be Eva Nordström.

HSB has 33 regional associations and more than half a million members of HSB housing co-ops in Sweden.

### CCA Board re-elects Sitaram president



**T**he Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) Board has re-elected Dave Sitaram, from Credit Union Central of Ontario, as President of the association. This is Mr Sitaram's third year as CCA President.

"I appreciate the confidence the Board has shown in my leadership by re-electing me its president," says Sitaram. "I am very pleased with the work of the Board over the past few years and believe that with the dedication and commitment of

our directors, we will continue to strengthen CCA and the Canadian Co-operative Movement."

Sitaram has been a member of Oshawa, Ontario's Auto Workers Community Credit Union (AWCCU) for over 25 years and he is currently their Vice President. He sits on Ontario Central's Audit and Pension Committees, and he is an executive member of the Credit Union Directors of Ontario. Sitaram is the Canadian representative on ICA America's Assembly.

The CCA is a national association for co-operatives in Canada, representing more than seven million co-operative and credit union members from over 3,000 organisations.



### Obituary—Respected Australian co-operator dies



**T**he founding executive officer of the Co-operative Federation of New South Wales (CFNSW), Don Kinnersley, has died. Don retired from his position as CEO of the Dairyfarmers Co-operative in 1993 and was approached by the then Minister for Co-operatives, Gerry Peacock. The Government saw the continuing need for an organisation to represent co-operatives to replace the Australian Association of Co-operatives, which had just gone into liquidation.

"He was executive officer until 2001 and then became Federation Chair for more than two years to assist me to settle into the position and to avoid the sudden loss of all that sectoral knowledge that he had accumulated over a lifetime," said Helen McCall, current executive officer CFNSW. "Even after his retirement from the Board, Don was always available to offer advice and a different perspective - although his attention became healthily diverted by his involvement in Probus and, lately, especially, his fundraising for cochlear implants," said Helen.

## India's first billion-dollar co-op

Indian co-op giant, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) ranked 279 in the *Global 300* listing, exports dairy products to the US, the Gulf Countries and Singapore. The largest food business in India, GCMMF markets the well-known brand Amul. GCMMF is also the largest producer of pouched milk brand in the world and has 2.5 million producer-members.

GCMMF recently reported a jump of 13.4% in revenue

making it India's first billion-dollar co-operative. "This is an extremely impressive growth when viewed against the ban on exports of skimmed milk powder and massive losses suffered by farmers, due to floods during the last monsoon season," said Parthibhai Bhatol, chairman of GCMMF.

Amul recently launched Amul TV; which streams Amul's own feature films, television shows and advertise-

ments. This is an innovative way of marketing co-operatives because these film and television shows have a co-operative theme.



## Member news

### JCCU celebrates 57th GA

The 57th annual general assembly of the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) was held in Tokyo on 14-15 June.

JCCU has been a member of ICA since 1977. ICA president, Ivano Barberini issued a congratulatory message to 830 delegates at the Assembly. JCCU president, Shugo Ogura congratulated mem-

bers, public officials and other parties for passing a bill to amend the *Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law*.

Vice president, Toshifumi Yamashita was appointed the new president of JCCU. JCCU medium-term plan clarifies their intention to serve the everyday lives of members; to live together

with local communities by seeking more open organisation; and to maximise the co-operative role as a consumer organisation. [more](#)



57th general assembly

### Italian co-ops go global

In a major development for the Italian co-operative movement, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Confcooperative and Legacoop, the two main Italian member organisations of ICA, signed an Agreement on the 3 July.

Legacoop and Confcooperative successfully lobbied the Ministry to recognise that the co-operative model is one of the most suitable tools to allow small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to face international markets.

Italian co-operatives can take advantage, for the first time, of a specific Agreement in the field of internationalisation. To improve international trade activities, areas identified for development include networking skills, industrial collaboration, commercial alliances, technology transfer, access to credit, technical assistance for projects aimed at creating productive chains and collaborations using the Italian model of SMEs and industrial clusters.



Legacoop and Confcooperative have submitted the first round of project proposals to be implemented in the framework of the Agreement. Most of the proposals include as possible partners, enterprises and co-operative organisations belonging to the ICA network.



## Special Report

### Farmer-owned co-operatives in a globalised food system

Professor Fabio Chaddad, Assistant Professor, IBMEC Business School, Sao Paulo, Brazil, was keynote speaker at the annual Agribusiness Co-operative Leadership and Governance Forum in Sydney, Australia, in November last year.

Fabio Chaddad is an internationally recognised authority on structural change in co-operatives that have adapted to competitive challenges. A graduate of the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil and the University of Missouri- Columbia, USA, he completed his PhD on agricultural co-operatives with Professor Michael Cook at the University of Missouri and was awarded the Edward G. Nourse Award for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation from the National Council of Farmer Co-operatives in the USA. He has researched and consulted to co-operatives throughout the world particularly in relation to governance structures, investment behaviour and supply chain management. Here, he sets out the challenges and obstacles for co-operatives in a globalised food system. In this article he draws on Australian examples.



“Are co-operatives well-positioned to survive and prosper in an increasingly dynamic, complex, vertically integrated and capital-intensive industry?”

Fabio Chaddad

It is argued by both academics and non-academics that the importance of farmer-owned co-operatives will decline as the agrifood sector becomes increasingly industrialised and global.

Moreover, co-operatives have financial and governance constraints that their for-profit, proprietary counterparts do not have.

Alternatively, co-operatives might increase their participation in the agrifood sector to ameliorate market failures, reduce transaction costs and add value to farmers' incomes. Thus,

co-operatives could increasingly become farmers' 'integrating agencies.'

Agriculture is now integrated with upstream and downstream agrifood chain participants due to rising incomes and urbanisation in the developing world, affluent and demanding food consumers in the developed world and rapid technological change and globalisation.

Generally, these private sector tightly-coordinated supply chains (particularly large multinational food processors, fast-food restaurant chains and global retail chains) have increasingly differentiated markets.

Agrifood markets have high food quality and safety demands, are more concentrated and integrated and are more open to international competition. These changes offer new opportunities to highly competitive farmers' organisations but are a serious threat to less competitive farmers' organisations.

More importantly, the capital-intensive nature of agroindustrialisation can be explained by the increased scale of farms,

agribusiness firms and food processors; the growing importance of intangible and knowledge assets; employment of professional managers; and the increased domestic and international competition fostered by trade liberalisation and reduced government involvement in agriculture.

Traditional co-operative ownership, capitalisation, management, and governance might limit adjustment for agricultural co-operatives during transition periods.

At the same time, globalisation, consolidation and vertical integration are associated with market failures and suggest the need for defensive-oriented collective action in agriculture such as Australia's Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co. Ltd.

In addition, changes in food demand (such as high quality food products with information about guaranteed origin, environmental sustain-



## Farmer-owned co-operatives ...cont.

Special  
Report



ability and fair trade) in both the developed and developing worlds suggest opportunities for value-added strategies for farmer-owned co-operatives such as the Dairy Farmers Group in Australia.

Are co-operatives well-positioned to survive and prosper in an increasingly dynamic, complex, vertically integrated and capital-intensive industry? They might be if able to leverage proximity and trust with their own farmer-members, and find innovative solutions to their structural weaknesses.

The property rights structure of traditional co-operatives often leads to conflicts over residual claims and decision control. In particular, financial management issues (such as acquiring and redeeming members' equity capital) are major constraints to co-operative growth and sustainability.

Traditional co-operatives in advanced agricultural countries are adapting to changes in their institutional and competitive environment by following three broad capi-

tal-seeking strategies:

- 1) the proportionality strategy of internally generated capital;
- 2) the amelioration of the vaguely defined property rights constraints featured by traditional co-operatives, including the emergence of 'new generation' co-operatives with tradable and/or appreciable shares; and
- 3) the acquisition of outside, non-member equity and quasi-equity capital.

Yet, some co-operatives have been forced or have opted to restructure as proprietary firms, have liquidated their businesses, merged with other co-operatives or become targets of a corporate acquisition.

Many co-operative and mutual organisations have converted because they were unable to resolve internal problems such as a disruptive business environment, weak governance systems, a lack of member control, and providing limited horizon members with access to unallocated equity and reserves.

In the future, the success of agricultural co-operatives responding to agricultural industrialisation will depend on competitive strategy, modern organisational structure and the strategy-structure align-

ment.

Yet, it is important for co-operative leaders contemplating organisational change to realise that the choice of organisational form depends on the fundamental orientation of the producer-members especially their communication model.



## Feature Interview cont.

### Gun-Britt Mårtensson - (from page 10)



*Gun-Britt Mårtensson*

“People need to be involved in something bigger than the individual.”

*Co-operative housing members socialising*

*Digest: What has your work in the co-operative sector encompassed?*

*GM:* “I was mayor for many years in Östersund a town in Northern Sweden known for its co-operatives. This region has an above average level of co-operative housing as well as co-ops in other sectors like childcare and aged care.

As part of my mayoral work, I was active in the co-operative movement, and as a housing policies politician in the national arena. I was asked to become chair and president of Sweden's biggest apex organisation for co-operative housing, HSB.

I thought this was a great idea and I took up the position in 1997. Like the ICA, which has the mission to give voice to all co-operatives, to market the co-operative difference, and to foster networking between co-operatives, HSB also seeks to unite and represent and, together with members, to establish better ways of working together.

I was also appointed vice-chair of the Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC), a role I will continue when Kent-Olof Stigh, my successor at HSB, takes over. SCC is an organisation that provides co-operativism as a tool to third world countries.

SCC aims at giving people different ways to co-operate out of poverty. This idea of self-help (not charity) through empowerment is similar to what happened in Sweden in the early 1900s with the setting up of the welfare state.

A hundred years ago, Sweden and Norway were the poorest countries in Europe. What really changed this was the peoples' democratic movements. The welfare state was founded on the idea that welfare is just as much about how the wealth of a society is distributed to all citizens, as it is about the economic state of the nation. It was a question of people coming together, learning how to work as a group and doing it better than as individuals.

I believe that you have to educate the individual through involvement. You can have a lot of 'wealth' in a society without having 'welfare', and co-operativism is a great tool to teach people how to spread the wealth to each other.

*Digest: Describe your involvement in the ICA over the years.*

*GM:* In Sweden there are over 535 000 members of HSB housing co-ops so we need a unified vision. But, without the international experience gained through working for the ICA, I could not have brought my organisation as far.





My first ICA General Assembly was in Quebec in 1999. I heard about "marketing the co-operative difference" and I learnt about the importance of a code of governance. I took the chairs of my 33 regional organisations to Manchester to learn about it too. For me, being part of the international movement is like going to a co-operative university.

I became a member of the ICA Housing committee in 1999 and later the chair of the Auditing and Control Committee. In 2003, I was elected to the ICA Board. The opportunity to take part in global meetings made me realise the importance of a focussed and unified ICA if we truly want the global body to be a custodian of the idea of democratic control.

It is more important than ever to have a strong co-operative movement. People need to be involved in something bigger than the individual.

*Digest: What are your thoughts about the current ICA restructuring process?*

**GM:** "It is important to do what we are doing now, working with the governance and restructuring issues, to cope with a rapidly changing world. We have the same goals as the past, but we need to find new means of reaching those objectives. We are working to find other ways of helping people understand the value of a world-wide co-operative movement and, importantly, to understand that this is worth paying for."

We need to find new ways to involve members and to give something back. Activities like the *Digest*, *Global 300* and exchange of best practice are very important in this regard. *Global 300*, for example, is an excellent way to highlight the fiscal importance of co-operativism in global economies, but its real value is in making people 'alive' to the value of working collectively.

Former UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, spoke often about the rising importance of CSR, or corporate citizenship - and the biggest capitalist enterprises are recognising this too. Young people today are looking for organisations that have values other than making money. While many of the world's largest companies are desperate to attach themselves to one or other of these 'human' values, co-operatives express these values *already*, but they have not been good at publicising them. There are a lot of co-operative "wanabees" out there - and if we are not able to make evident the difference between the original and the copy we are in trouble. We have both the hardware and software, but too little "soulware". We do not tell the story of co-operativism very well.

*Digest: What are your thoughts on the current global co-operative movement?*

**GM:** "If we want all people to have welfare, then I believe that there is only one way and that is through co-operativism. From South Africa to Honduras I have seen co-operativism as a tool for spreading welfare in many parts of the world."

When people come together and realise the strength of collectivism, they are able to do things you wouldn't have imagined possible - they can save money and build housing, leading to other forms of co-



## Feature Interview cont.

operative activity such as child-care, aged care and the spread of gender equality. Cooperativism was founded on the idea of "one member one vote" at a time when the political ideal was "one man one vote", so it has always encompassed the idea of gender equality.

I think the challenge for the global movement is twofold. We need to spread cooperativism to the third world, to get it out there to everybody. Secondly, we need to get better at exchanging best practice.

To me, the most important co-operative principle, in addition to democratic control, is the sixth principle: co-operation among co-operatives. We need to learn from each other, and the more we learn from each other, the better we get together at spreading the co-operative message.

Hence, rather than dispensing aid, which is a 'here and now' solution, we have a long-term learning situation for building a better world."

Playground at housing co-op

"For me, being part of the international movement is like going to a co-operative university."

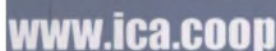
Gardens in Swedish housing co-op





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Remember a more extensive calendar of ICA and related events can be found on our website

Copies of the ICA Digest are archived on the ICA's website [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop)

## 2007 Calendar of ICA events and related co-operative activities

- 24-29 Sept** [ICMIF](http://www.icmif.org) World Congress, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Shaun Tarbuck, [shaun@ICMIF.org](mailto:shaun@ICMIF.org)
- 25 Sep** ICMIF Board Meeting, Brussels, Belgium. Hosted by P&V Contact: Shaun Tarbuck, [shaun@ICMIF.org](mailto:shaun@ICMIF.org)
- 2-5 Oct** European Forum of Social Tourism, Riva del Garda, Italy. Hosted by the International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) and the Trentino Federation of Cooperation.
- 9 Oct** Simposio Internacional: Cooperativismo en Alemania y Venezuela. Reflexiones en Ahorro y Crédito, Vivienda y Agricultura. Auditorio Naranja de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales – FaCES de la UCV. [See program \(only in Spanish\)](#)
- 13-14 Oct** Series of pre General Assembly ICA meetings, Singapore. See full programme of all General Assembly events at [www.icasingapore.coop/](http://www.icasingapore.coop/), including those below
- 14-15 Oct** ICA Youth Conference: "Co-operative business innovation through youth", Singapore. [Information](#)
- 15 Oct** Meeting of ICA Sectoral Organisations Chair, Singapore Contact [Dr Kim](#)
- 16-17 Oct** Meeting of sectoral organisations and thematic committees. ICA General Assembly, Singapore.
- 18-19 Oct** ICA General Assembly, Singapore. See [www.icasingapore.coop/](http://www.icasingapore.coop/)
- 22-24 Oct** 1st World CIRIEC research conference on the Social Economy, Victoria, British Columbia.
- 8 Nov** Meeting for co-operative development agencies, UK Co-operative College. Contact: Mervyn Wilson, [Mervyn@co-op.ac.uk](mailto:Mervyn@co-op.ac.uk)
- 9 Nov** 1st Meeting of the network América Cooperativa y Mutual (ACYM), Montevideo

## Reminder - European Research Conference



The 2007 ICACCR European Research Conference will be held in Prague on 14-15 Sept. The theme is "New Directions for Co-operative Development." Professor Yohanan Stryjan said, "Our previous conferences in this part of Europe were held amidst the turmoil of transformation, and with European Union enlargement still around the bend...Much has changed since then. The prime focus of the conference is, naturally, on development, and proactive strategies for the future." A limited number of fellowships are available to cover conference fees and accommodation. E-mail [Yohanan.Stryjan@sh.se](mailto:Yohanan.Stryjan@sh.se) for further information, also see [www.ica.coop/icaccr/index.html](http://www.ica.coop/icaccr/index.html)

## Recruitment: research centre seeks new director

The University of Victoria, Canada invites applications for the position of Director of the British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies (BCICS). The appointment to begin in July 2008

is for a five-year term (renewable). BCICS fosters enquiry into, and enhances the teaching of courses about co-operatives and co-operative thought. It is also the home of the Canadian Social Economy Hub.

More information about the Institute and the CSE Hub is available on its [website](#).

The closing date for applications Friday, 16 Nov 2007. Please e-mail [cecilia@uvic.ca](mailto:cecilia@uvic.ca)