

# Youth and Cooperatives

Report of Regional Seminar



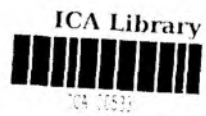
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# YOUTH AND COOPERATIVES



Regional Seminar on  
**YOUTH AND COOPERATIVES**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
22 May - 2 June, 1983

REPORT—  
Conclusions & Recommendations



Jointly held by  
**Commonwealth Youth Programme  
Asia Pacific Centre**

and



**International Cooperative Alliance**

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# Foreword

## Introduction

The subject of Youth and Cooperatives is one that is off and on referred to, sometimes with anxiety and concern, sometimes with complacency or indifference, in various cooperative and other fora. The references generally tend to refer to some aspects such as the following: Youth are not interested in Cooperatives; there should be more Youth in our Cooperatives both as members and as policy makers; Cooperatives are a good source of employment for Youth, both men and women; the subject of "Cooperation" should be introduced into the school curricula; school/university cooperatives should be encouraged to help students to appreciate the ideology and the practice of Cooperation; Cooperatives are voluntary organisations and the Youth are free to join if they are really interested.

Whatever the nature of the references be, it is evident that in many countries in the region the subject has been one only of passing interest to cooperatives. Very few already on-going cooperative movements have developed meaningful and effective approaches to get youth to be more involved in cooperatives.

The youth in most countries of the region today constitute over 40 per cent of the population and consequently are a potential source of strength both to the cooperative movements and the national development efforts. In the U.N. projections in relation to youth, it has been shown that within the next 25 years the world youth population will increase by an average of 60 per cent, with the increase in the developing countries being more in the region of 80%. The question is one that is assuming such importance and magnitude that the U.N. has declared 1985 as the "International Year of Youth", to focus attention on the need for priority action in this sector.

Cooperatives who generally play an important role in the process of national development must take notice of these developments and evolve strategies which will enable them to harness the resources available through youth and to provide cooperative solutions to the problems faced by youth, both men and women. It has to be accepted that in many situations, what has been done by the cooperatives in this regard has been on a low key, and on an ad-hoc basis, and that no overall sustained efforts are being made.

On the other hand many a government in the various countries of the region have, over the last several years, been alert to the situation in regard to youth and have set up separate ministries or at least separate departments in some ministries to give special attention to Youth affairs, and have carried out, either by themselves, or with the assistance of external agencies (e.g. the Commonwealth Youth Programme in-so-far as Commonwealth countries are concerned) series of programmes with a special focus on youth. What is more interesting is that the institutional base very often used in such programmes to involve youth in economic activity, has been that of cooperatives—but generally these efforts have tended to be outside the mainstream of cooperative effort and the necessary linkages for collaborative effort are yet to be established.

It is against this background that a series of discussions were held in New Delhi among ourselves, to see how best the extensive experiences in the respective fields gained by the two organisations we represent, be brought before a common forum to help in developing suitable strategies for effective action in this sector. The outcome of the discussions was a general acceptance that much could be gained by joint action between organisations working in this field and thus emerged the idea which led to the holding of a jointly sponsored **Regional Seminar on Youth and Cooperatives**, with the following objectives :—

- (i) to examine the problem of youth in the various countries of the Region and to exchange experiences in regard to various efforts made to find solutions to the problems;
- (ii) to examine the role of cooperatives vis-a-vis youth; and



- (iii) to identify strategies which will facilitate an integrated cooperative approach to the problems of youth and to work out guidelines which will help the cooperatives to play a more meaningful role in collaboration with the various concerned organisations.

We are indeed happy that our proposal for a jointly sponsored seminar was accepted by our respective headquarters; the CYP in London, and the ICA in Geneva. We are also happy that even though the ICA ROEC had not made budgetary provision for this activity during the financial year 82-83, the Swedish Cooperative Centre agreed to utilise some savings to financially support the seminar.

The seminar was to be of an exploratory nature, to see the efficacy of joint effort and also to exchange experiences over a wide field of activity—both cooperative and youth. To get the best benefits of such a seminar we had to ensure that the venue was right and that the participants were such as would reflect the wide experiences which we were hoping to share and build on.

The CYP has over the past several years carried out many successful programmes in the field of youth and was of the view that locating the seminar in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, would be most convenient and useful. We are indeed most grateful to the Government of Malaysia, and in particular to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports for very willingly agreeing to host the seminar in Kuala Lumpur and to provide the necessary supporting services inclusive of a Study Tour-cum-Outing for the participants. We are also deeply grateful to Hon. Dato Wan Mansor Abdullah, Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture and Youth, for inaugurating the Seminar.

Invitations for the nomination of participants were extended, in-so-far as the Commonwealth countries in the Region were concerned by the CYP and in respect of the other member countries of the ICA, by the ICA ROEC, with each of the organisations looking after the costs of the respective participants invited, and a sharing of the costs in regard to the common

facilities used during the Seminar. Secretarial and all other local support like internal travel and study tour, hospitality etc. were provided by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of the Government of Malaysia. The participants came both from the Government Ministries/Departments concerned with Youth, and with Cooperatives as also from the non-official sector of Cooperatives. In all 12 countries were represented by 20 participants and in addition, there were two observers. The wide cross section of representation provided a very lively forum for exchange of experiences and for discussion. Background papers relating to the experiences in each of the participating countries were presented at the Seminar, with at times each of the country representatives presenting a special paper covering experiences in his particular specialised field. We express our thanks to the participants for those useful background papers.

Two special papers, which broadly reviewed the efforts made in our respective areas of specialisation were contributed by the CYP and ICA ROEC. Several papers dealing with the Malaysian Youth Cooperatives were presented by Mr Mohd. Wahiduddin Abdul Wahab (Managing Director—KOBENA) and Mr. Mohd. Soffian Abd. Rahim (Director General—Youth Division, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports). A paper with a special focus on Women based on the experiences of the Co-operative Consumer Education Project for Women in Sri Lanka was presented by Ms. Jayantha C. Tennakoon, Director, Women's Project, Sri Lanka. We are deeply grateful to all those who presented the special papers as they helped in a big way in giving greater depth and dimension to the discussions.

The Seminar arrived at a wide ranging set of conclusions and recommendations. These appear in the text of the report. Some of the major areas of emphasis may be summed up as follows:—

- (1) Cooperatives are an important vehicle for youth development in all countries in the region. There is much common ground between the objectives of cooperatives and those accepted as important by governments and the community generally. It is therefore considered desirable to pursue cooperative solutions to youth needs and aspirations.

- (2) There is a need to intensify efforts to communicate the benefits of cooperatives to young people. One of the ways in which this could be done is to include cooperative education in both formal and non-formal education programmes both for in school and out of school youths.
- (3) Cooperative approaches could be either by setting up exclusive youth cooperatives, or by existing cooperatives developing meaningful activity programmes for youth. In any event there is a need for greater collaboration between the generality of cooperatives and the youth cooperatives on the one hand as also between the various government Ministries/Departments concerned with youth development and with Cooperative Development. Further the National Cooperative Organisations and other cooperatives at all levels should establish linkages to strengthen their efforts in this regard.
- (4) Because of the Socio-cultural situations in some countries at least for the present, there was a need to set-up separate cooperatives for women and young girls. However, special programmes should be developed for young women, through both the separate cooperatives and other cooperatives, in the fields of nutrition and health education, family welfare, skills development etc. and opportunities provided for income generating activities.
- (5) There is much to be gained by bringing the youth workers and the cooperative workers together—their experiences could be self enriching. Further there is a need to expose the youth workers to cooperative ideology and practice while cooperative workers should be exposed to aspects like human relations, group dynamics, leadership development, community work etc.

It was the general feeling of the seminar that youth should be looked upon, not as a problem, but as a process and that given a better understanding of the potential of cooperatives, the cooperatives could be supported to provide satisfactory

solutions to youth needs and aspirations. But much would depend on the depth of understanding and the extent of collaboration possible at all levels.

It is our sincere hope that the collaborative effort made by the two organisations we represent will pave the way to greater collaborative effort both at the international level and also at the national and other levels within the countries concerned, and that cooperatives will be provided the necessary recognition and support in playing a more effective role in the field of youth.

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# I

## The Regional Situation

An overall brief summary of the material contained in the Background and Special papers presented at the Seminar

The youth in many countries in the Region were generally a disenchanted lot. They were dissatisfied with the established order, the on-going systems of education and even of government. They found little relevance in the education they were exposed to. Many could not have access even to that education and those who did have access often found that the education had not provided them with the skills required in a developing economy. Though many came from rural homes, they could not be satisfied continuing with their parents rural occupations. Education had raised in them an expectation of a better life, with less toil and less risks and uncertainties. But the systems prevailing had little encouragement for them. Drift to the cities was inevitable. It was generally thought that cities were able to provide the youth with opportunities for meaningful activity—when these were not available, turning to drugs, prostitution and other social evils was not uncommon.

In many countries, the voting age had been reduced to 18 years and many a youth found himself deeply involved in the political milieu, often taking a radical stance against the establishment.

Overall the general feeling among youth was one of frustration, a feeling of being let down, with the prospect of their best years being wasted in futile attempts at seeking a place in the established order.

### **Approaches to youth problems :**

Finding solutions to the problems faced by youth has been the concern of many governments for over a long period of time. In some countries special Ministries for Youth Affairs

were set up as far back as 1964—but in most others, serious approaches were made in the 1970s only. Many have set up separate Ministries or at least departments in Ministries with a focus on Youth, and the overall approaches made can be classified as follows:-

- (i) Vocational guidance and counselling through the schools system—trying to help the students to choose areas of study which had better employment prospects and which could fit in with the child's capabilities and aspirations.
- (ii) Skills development through a multiplicity of schemes—pre-vocational and vocational schools, polytechnics: Apprentice programmes developed with collaboration between industry and governments, school-to-work transition programmes in collaboration with technical and further education colleges, training in handicrafts, embroidery, sewing, wood-work, motor car repairs, electric wiring etc. etc.
- (iii) Job generating programmes of government sanctions worked in collaboration with community based organisations. These have taken various forms and involve an element of skills training while helping essential community needs to be satisfied through such schemes—eg. construction of roads, bridges, wells, play fields, school buildings, restoration of old tanks and reservoirs, tree planting schemes, etc.
- (iv) Cultural, sports and recreational programmes, combined with emphasis on political awareness, national consciousness, developing leadership qualities and social responsibilities. Many governments have encouraged the setting up of youth clubs, youth centres, young farmers clubs to enable the youth to develop proper attitudes and values and to help them become partners in the national development efforts.
- (v) Involvement of youth in community development programmes initiated by governments.

Many non-governmental voluntary organisations as also religious organisations had, over a long period of time deve-

veloped programmes of their own to improve the skills of the youth and also to train them to play a useful role in the community. Often such programmes were financially supported by governments.

In the initial stages there was more emphasis on sports and recreational activities, but with increasing unemployment and ever increasing difficulties in job opportunities, such activities like skills development, non-formal education, and functional literacy programmes etc were developed.

The efforts of various governments and voluntary agencies, were often supported by international and national agencies both government and non-government, providing facilities for skills development, supply of necessary equipment to assisting in such programmes, by arranging youth exchange programmes and also by assisting youth volunteers to take part in infrastructure development, and cultural exchanges. In-so-far as the Commonwealth countries are concerned, the Commonwealth Youth Programme has played a significant role in mobilising resources and by providing leadership development programmes for youth.

The Cooperatives have generally looked at youth as future members of cooperatives and have sought to inculcate in the youth the idealism and the values of cooperative organisation and practices. This they have sought to do while the youth were still at school. The most common approaches have been—

- (i) Setting up of schools cooperatives in various schools and colleges and in some countries also at university level—these cooperatives had a mixture of students and staff and provided such services as recreation facilities, cooperative shops for the supply of books and other student requirements—some even cultivated the school garden through the cooperative society, all these providing the student with an opportunity to learn the *ideology and the function of cooperation*.
- (ii) Introducing the subject of cooperation into the school curricula—several countries have successfully launched on this scheme in collaboration with their Ministries of Education; working out detailed syllaby, producing the necessary text-books and training the teachers.

- (iii) Many cooperative movements have actively worked towards the introduction of cooperation as a field of study at university at graduate and post-graduate levels. Today there are several universities in the Region offering such facilities.
- (iv) In some countries special cooperative training colleges have been set up offering courses of varying duration from three months to one year, and many who have successfully completed these courses have found employment in the cooperative sector and sometimes also outside.
- (v) The approaches by the cooperatives have tended to concentrate mostly on the educational aspect with a focus on students and school leavers. In the generality of cooperative activity however cooperatives have, until recently, not had a special focus on youth.
- (vi) Even where there have been programmes with a focus on youth, cooperatives have tended to treat the youth as an integral part of the community—not as a separate and distinct sector and have attempted to encourage youth activity by setting up youth wings within the cooperatives and letting them work alongside the cooperatives, helping them to develop leadership, critically evaluate the functioning of the cooperative and encouraging them to make innovations for the improvement of the services by the cooperative.
- (vii) In some situations special programmes have been developed to help women, more particularly the young women, to increase their awareness in regard to such matters as health, family welfare, nutrition, consumer protection, environmental sanitation etc. and also helping them to find cooperative solutions to their economic problems by encouraging savings, introduction of household budgeting and initiating them into income generating activities which will help to increase family income.  
These approaches have helped to motivate youth to take up leadership roles and to enhance their involvement in the mainstream of cooperative activity.
- (viii) Another development in the cooperative sector vis-a-



vis youth has been the setting up of special youth co-operatives under various government sponsored programmes—e.g. youth settlement cooperatives, young farmers cooperatives, specialised cooperatives mainly for young women in the industrial cooperative sector covering such activities like doll making, dress making, handicrafts, embroidery, textile weaving, etc. But these have generally tended to be ad hoc approaches and sometimes tended to be inactive when government support and thrust from the various government ministries concerned with the various types of activity diminished. Many cooperative movements themselves had no plans for continuing such activity.

- (ix) With governments increasing focus on youth and the setting up of specialised Ministries/Departments for youth, meaningful steps have been taken in many countries to mobilise the youth and make full use of the valuable asset for nation building. In their approaches the concerned Ministries/Departments have generally resorted to the cooperative form of organisation to provide the institutional base for carrying out the many programmes in this sector.
- (x) One of the earliest approaches on this basis was that of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of the Government of Malaysia, and is one that has aroused a lot of interest in many countries both in Asia and Africa. In this approach one sees the institutionalisation of youth initiatives and organisations in a centralised cooperative society, which is supported financially and otherwise by the government. Thus KOBENA, short for Koperasi Beka Nasional (National Youth Cooperative) has emerged in Malaysia, as a financially viable organisation, consisting of youth cooperatives and members of registered youth organisations. It has been able to venture into many fields of activity and provide jobs to a large number of youths. By the skilful management of the surpluses both by reinvestment and by sharing with the membership KOBENA has built up the potential for attracting youth to cooperative effort and their orientation to the national development process.

The effort is one that will be of interest to all concerned with youth development and continuing success would depend to a large extent on the capacity of the organisation to be responsive to youth hopes and aspirations and its potential to find suitable programmes for the increasing numbers of new youth and the superannuating youth.

- (xi) Overall however, the generality of cooperatives in many countries have not developed suitable integrated programmes to meaningfully involve youth in the mainstream of cooperative activity. In that matter many a cooperative movement had not even established linkages with the on-going efforts through governments and others in this sector. The need was therefore most urgent for cooperatives to establish the necessary linkages and to evolve meaningful programmes which would help the youth to contribute effectively to the mainstream of cooperative activity in all the countries of the Region.

## II

# Group Reports

### Issues for Group Discussions

1. What are the major problems faced by youth in the countries of the region? What types of activities are being organized in response to these problems? (A broad and general survey).

2. Please identify the basic components of cooperatives. In what ways can they be useful for youth development?

3. Having regard to the above components, please develop an appropriate strategy for finding cooperative solutions to youth needs and aspirations especially in relation to following issues:

- (i) Ways and means to educate youth about the philosophy of cooperation and to popularize the concept of cooperatives among youth.
- (ii) Basis of involving youth in cooperatives.
- (iii) Special areas of concern and/or emphasis in involving youth in cooperative activities.
- (iv) Role of existing youth clubs, non-government youth organizations and educational institutions.
- (v) Role of youth workers and cooperative functionaries and what special training is required for them.
- (vi) Collaborative role of Ministries/Departments responsible for youth work and various Cooperative Organizations at different levels including the National Co-operative Organization of the country.
- (vii) Problems likely to be faced in this task and how to tackle them.

# Report of Group-I

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5. Mr. Mahmud Yusof
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## Introduction

The following report attempts to summarize the thoughts of group one on the major issues facing young people in the South-East Asian region, and the possible strategies that can be implemented to assist young people tackle these issues through 'Co-operative Principles and Structures'. It needs stressing right from the start that the group believes strongly that Cooperatives are a vital vehicle for youth development in all countries of the region. However, strategies for implementation will be affected by social, cultural, political and economic variables in the country in which they operate.

## I. Problems Facing Youth in the South-East Asian Region :

Young people face a multitude of problems that limit their full participation in society. Many of these problems are inter-related. The following have been identified as of major concern:—

1. Unemployment and its relating problems.  
—lack of adequate income: underemployment for many people etc.

2. Problems deriving from the *migration* from rural to urban areas—less developed countries to more developed countries.
    - eg. —development of slum areas with poor housing, lack of basic services, increased crime. etc.
    - growing youth prostitution.
    - increase in abuse of drugs.
    - growing shortage of labour in rural areas
    - distaste for manual work.
    - in some areas, migration has disturbed the sex ratio
  
  3. *Vocational Training Problems*
    - insufficient opportunities
    - emphasis on academic over practical
    - transition from vocational training to employment.
  
  4. *Adult Domination* of society that allows limited opportunities for youth to participate in decision making and operation of activities (including youth activities).
  
  5. *Illiteracy*
  
  6. *Break Down* of many traditional values—
    - eg. —break down of community spirit and cohesion
    - growth of individualism over collective thinking
    - growth of materialistic attitudes
    - uncritical adoption of western ways.
- However, there are some positive developments in attitudes.
- eg. —growth in entrepreneurial spirit.
  - dropping of the negative shackles of rural life like the caste system etc.
7. *Disillusionment* that some youth feel towards government and their programmes.

## II. Present Response to the Foregoing Problems

Throughout the Region a range of educational and Youth work responses exist. These include—

1. Youth organisations providing youth clubs and related activities. Many of these clubs are attempting to provide needs of young people. New forms of youth work exist in some countries like detached youth work. drop in centres etc.
2. Vocational training institutes.
3. Assistance to youth to form their own business— capital, land, technical advice etc.
4. Separate youth ministries/agencies with the roles of co-ordination, support and listening to young people.
5. Domestic and International Exchange programmes
6. Social Assistance programmes for those moving from rural to urban areas.
7. Drug rehabilitation centres.
8. Leadership training.
9. Establishment of youth sections by bigger community organisations.

### **The Cooperative Response**

In spite of the above programmes, there still exists the need for new initiatives that cater for the social and economic needs of young people. The youth cooperative is one such initiative that needs developing.

#### **A. Basic Components**

A cooperative is an economic enterprise based on the following unique principles—

- voluntary and open membership
- democratic structure—one member, one vote
- member participation and responsibility
- return to members depends on patronage
- limited return on share capital
- social commitment to its members and their community
- commitment to education of members and the wider community
- active cooperation among cooperatives.

## **B. Value of Cooperative Activity**

Cooperatives can bring many benefits to young people and their communities—

1. Economic development—they create jobs.
2. Provides training—vocational, entrepreneurial human relationship, leadership.
3. Vehicle for youth development/participation
4. Imparts and teaches democratic principles
5. Encourages self-help and mutual aid
6. Create employment that allows young people to be involved in ownership, decision making etc.
7. Rural cooperatives encourage young people to stay in rural areas.
8. Encourages thrift, wise use of money
9. Helps develop international relationships.

## **C. Strategies Necessary**

Youth cooperatives can achieve the above benefits. Thus it is vital that strategies to be developed:

### **Popularization of Coops among Youth**

It is vital that a comprehensive programme at promotion and education be developed. It should include—

- (a) Awareness of cooperatives and the cooperative way of life to primary school children.
- (b) Teaching of cooperative practice in secondary schools. Content needs to include—principles, operations, types, social responsibilities of Coops etc.  
Approaches need to include—  
—incorporation within the classroom curriculum  
—operation of a practical cooperative (s) within the school.  
For the above to be successful, the following are vital—  
—genuine participation by young people (not teacher dominated)

- Practical project operates more than just a business providing cheap goods, but as a real learning experience for all participants.
  - Practical project seen as a part of the school curriculum; not extra-curriculum.
  - teachers specially trained at both pre-service and in-service levels.
  - Specific teachers are assigned to the task—and recognized as a responsibility and as part of their teaching load.
  - Curriculum materials be produced that are innovative and attractive to make teachers and students see their relevance.
- (c) *Higher Education*—Tertiary institutions be approached to offer courses up to Ph.D. level on different aspects of cooperative life—(as exists in India and Thailand).
- (d) *Education and Promotion Units*—these be established by each cooperative and that the national Federation and/or appropriate government ministry provide coordination and assistance (e.g. printing, films, seminars etc.).
- (e) *Youth Organisation/Youth Clubs*—They can play a key role in promotion amongst youth. More details are given below.

### **Bases for Involving Youth**

Target clientele for possible youth Cooperatives could include different groups—

- (a) Skilled interest groups like young farmers, fishermen, artisans etc.
- (b) Out of-school unemployed youth
- (c) Special populations like disabled young people, young wives, lower caste members etc.

### **III. Special Areas of Concern in involving young people in Cooperative activities**

There are a number of key issues that need examining—

- (a) Cooperative legislation needs to be as *flexible* as possi-



ble to allow the development of a variety of cooperatives, and this needs to include reducing the required minimum number of members in some countries.

- (b) Encouragement of the active *involvement* of youth in the management and operation of both existing and any new cooperatives. This can be achieved in part by—
  - Legislative changes to ensure that a minimum number of young people are appointed to the Board of Directors.
  - Cooperatives develop their own in service training, and/or send young members to leadership training programmes to enhance their confidence, ability, skills.
  - Complementary activities be conducted that have special relevance to young people.
- (c) *Resource Mobilization*—If we hope that young people will establish their own cooperatives, then certain provisions need providing—
  - e.g. —access to finance
    - technical assistance by government agencies, other existing coops.
    - guidance from experts lent from existing Coops and businesses, retired people
    - training

## VI. Role of Youth Clubs and Non-Government Youth Organisations

Such groups are vital in the development of cooperatives because they—

- have access to young people,
- are community based often with extensive community support,
- already organised with extensive resources,
- often incorporate economic objectives within their philosophy, and
- enable cooperatives to be a natural extension of their activities which already have the social component.

Such groups can provide the following roles—

- emphasize the economic aspects within their range of goals.

- Fulfil an educative/promotional role among members and the wider community.
- set up a cooperative(s) within their organisation
- Act as catalysts in helping young people establish their own cooperatives.

## **V. Role of Youth Workers/Cooperative Functionaries**

(a) Youth workers play a vital role in the lives of young people as they move from childhood to adulthood. Youth workers are often very significant in helping young people to lead fulfilled lives including full participation in their communities. In seeking to do this, youth workers are often involved in—

- mobilizing organised youth into youth organisations/youth clubs.
- Planning/organising activities for young people that enhance their social, economic, physical and spiritual development.
- helping in the administration of clubs
- strengthening existing organisations,
- counselling young people
- helping in raising funds.
- educative role. etc.

Thus they are key individuals in developing the initiatives outlined above for youth clubs/organisations in regard to cooperative development.

(b) Cooperative functionaries can fulfil two important roles—

- establish youth wings within existing coops.  
work in partnership with youth workers in helping establish youth cooperatives.

(c) Special training is required for youth workers and Cooperative functionaries if they are to be successful in the above roles. Such training needs to include—

- (i) Education in the practices and principles of cooperation—this should include such areas as

- history and principles of Cooperation,
  - business management skills,
  - self-employment;
  - legal procedures;
  - simple accounting procedures etc.
- (ii) Awareness of human relations and group dynamics— including conflict resolution, consensus, motivation, leadership skills.
- (iii) Community development skills—skills involved in mobilizing community support etc.

Cooperative functionaries would need, in addition, some understanding of the practices and principles of youth work, and a knowledge of young people.

## **VI. Collaboration**

It is recognized that a variety of government and non-government agencies have some responsibility for young people and/or cooperatives. It is vital that such bodies seek to cooperate together so that resources can be maximized. This can be only achieved by open regular dialogue and sharing. Regular seminars and meetings need to be organized which will bring together leaders and officials so there is understanding and an exchange of information.

In addition, it is vital that both government ministries and National Cooperative Organisations provide training, financial and technical assistance. In collaboration, it will be easy to develop support programmes similar to self-employment programmes that now exist in several countries.

As example of practical collaboration, federations and government ministries could combine forces to establish cooperatives and introduce cooperative teaching within the vocational training institutes. The co-operatives, would assist the youths to establish themselves on their own, upon completion of their training or they could continue to work in the cooperative.

## **VII. Problems to be overcome**

The path to an extensive development of youth involvement

in cooperative activity will not be easy. There are many potential problems like—

- The destructive forces of vested interests, jealousy, empire building, personality clashes etc—common in many organisations.
- bureaucratic red tape—many young people can become disillusioned very easily.
- many young people find existing coops unattractive and irrelevant.
- the long procedure involved in arranging legislative changes.
- lack of source funding.
- overload for youth workers already involved in so many activities. etc.

The above require more than just simplistic answers. Overcoming them will require much work. A special role falls on the youth workers and the cooperative functionaries who need to operate as link people between young people in the wider context.

### **Conclusion**

It is the strong belief of our group that cooperatives represent a new creative vehicle for youth development in the South-East Asian region. Hopefully the above recommendations can contribute towards their successful use.

## Report of Group-II

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10. Mrs. Prakobsri Peacharasawang
11. Mr. C.S. Lee

### Youth and Cooperatives

- With very few exceptions, all countries in the Region face unacceptably high levels of unemployment as well as under-employment particularly among young school leavers.
- Government at all levels have initiated policies and programmes to assist young people make a smooth transition from school to working life. While the approaches adopted differ between countries, subject to economic strategies and capacities and social considerations, there is overwhelming concern to ensure that young people may:
  - participate fully in the economic development of each nation and the Region as a whole and to
  - share in the resultant prosperity
  - have access to education, training, employment and social activities to enable them to develop to their maximum capacity in economic, social and cultural terms.
  - Young people, particularly those who seek, but have considerable difficulty finding rewarding full-time employment, have a strong desire to contribute to and be involved in the processes of decision-making concerning matters which directly affect their development. Such aspirations are

increasing, particularly as the educational attainment levels of youth increase.

### **Problems of Youth**

- In general terms young people in the Region face not simply one but a combination of problems. The major concerns are:
  - unemployment, which is particularly high among the less educated as well as females who traditionally have had fewer occupational choices available to them.
  - under-employment caused by the unavailability of sufficient full-time jobs and made worse by the impact of technology and the resultant conversion of full-time to part-time jobs with less income in traditionally female dominated employment areas.
  - drift of population from rural to city areas with associated social and adjustment problems often made worse through a lack of general employment opportunities.
  - propensity of young people to change jobs frequently and entering the labour market.
- At the same time, as young people face these problems they hold high job aspirations, which, for a variety of reasons, are beyond the capacity of government and the community to satisfy.
  - government initiated programmes may not be responsive to the needs of young people particularly if they have been developed without proper consultations with young people.
  - not only must youth programmes and activities be appropriate, they must be seen to be appropriate.
- Education and vocational training can contribute to the development of skills necessary for working life but often inadequate attention is given to such important aspects as career guidance and vocational counselling in the conduct of overall economic and manpower planning.
  - given that even where planning efforts are undertaken the job market is often unpredictable and more thought should be given to ensuring that educational courses and programmes are broad-based rather than skill specific.

- such approaches will enable young people gain a wider range of knowledge and skills to fit the changing patterns of industry and commerce and enhance their employment prospects.
- in developing educational strategies the social and other life skills needed by young people are often given second or no attention. However, many young people in the Region face problems associated with:
  - adjustment from rural to city life and simple survival skills often have to be learned at great personal and community expense.
  - frustration and lack of satisfaction combine to create the potential for anti-social behaviour.
  - lack of knowledge about community services including youth clubs and government assistance and advice, often affects personal health.

### **Youth Assistance Measures**

- The problems, faced by young people are not simply a matter for government action alone. The responsibility must be shared by all members of the community, including parents, teachers, employers, trade unions, voluntary organizations and young people themselves.
- It is widely acknowledged that governments at all levels have already taken a variety of steps to assist youth because of the realization that they constitute both the largest single group in the community and the most valuable future resource of any nation.
- While education, training, work experience and social support programmes of all types proliferate, many countries are still developing their strategies. The following aspects are suggested as potential areas for fuller consideration and action.
- increased emphasis on the teaching of a national language in those countries where communication is hampered by specific regional languages.
- greater attention to lifting the literacy and numeracy levels of all young people through appropriate school level education programmes.
- provision of a wider range of broadly-based vocational edu-

- cation, including on the-job and formal programmes.
- greater integration between education and job-based programmes of assistance aimed at giving young people a period of initial work experience.
  - establishment of youth consultative bodies to provide a forum for young people to exchange views on issues of major concern to them and to communicate directly with governments on these matters with the view to contributing to youth policy formulation.
  - increased emphasis by youth organizations on involving young people in the development and organization of activities beyond the traditional social, cultural and sporting spheres.

### **Youth Development and Cooperatives**

- Cooperatives have a long history in most countries in the Region and have been established in such areas as consumer, credit, marketing and industry. Many cooperatives perform several functions while others are for single purpose. Inspection of their outward appearance, however, show cooperatives are based on a number of important principles:
  - one person, one vote is applied irrespective of financial shares held
  - social aspects placed equally with economic objectives
  - individual member involvement in decision-making
  - profits and dividends belong to the members
  - voluntary participation
  - education and sharing of cooperative principles and concepts among co-operative members.
- These basic components have enormous appeal to many young people and for these reasons cooperatives have considerable potential for satisfying youth aspirations and contributing to theirs and to the Nation's development. In essence cooperatives:
  - provide the opportunity for involvement in an occupation and income
  - foster cooperation and understanding between members striving for a common goal where economic success gives rise to wide ranging social benefits.



- constitute in a unique way self-development, including character building and the attainment of personal potential
  - develop managerial, organizational, planning and responsibility qualities
  - foster democratic processes
  - provide income by achievement of success based on collective risk taking and personal productive input.
- There is much common ground between the objectives of co-operatives and those often held up as important by governments and the community generally. It is therefore important to pursue cooperative solutions to youth needs and aspirations.

### **Cooperative Youth Strategies**

If cooperatives, especially industry-based models, are to become a viable element in overall youth development and take their place alongside other programmes offered by the government and non-government sectors for the youth,

- all sectors of the community must understand the strengths and limitations of cooperatives.
- Youth workers, youth club organizations and cooperatives need to interact to share experiences and expertise.
- coordination of cooperative activities and other youth areas must take place to avoid costly duplication of effort particularly at the level of governments and National Cooperative Organizations.

In order to achieve such objectives, it is recommended that the following areas be actively pursued in each country in the Region and particularly through Governments involvement and assistance.

#### *(a) Education*

- educational planning, curriculum development and delivery must take into account the principles of cooperation at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- secondary schools to include special subjects on co-operatives covering not only business but also inter-personal and behavioural subjects.

- consideration to be given to modifying existing youth worker courses to also include elements of cooperation.
- promotion of school-based pre-cooperatives as a practical training ground for young people.

(b) *Promotion/Publicity*

- media campaigns using all available outlets both at the national and local level covering the purpose, principles and practices of cooperatives to all sections of the community.
- information sessions conducted by existing cooperatives and directed to schools and youth organizations.
- establishment of special product displays, including “Cooperative Weeks”, oratorical and essay competitions and fairs.

(c) *Youth Involvement*

- involvement of youth in the decision-making processes of cooperatives is a basic and important area and particularly in large scale cooperatives, strategies need to be developed to give young members such opportunities.
- small industry based cooperatives have greater potential for cohesion and collective decision making and may offer greater appeal to young people.
- National organizations, whether political, service or otherwise should establish “Youth wings” to expose young people to and involve them in all areas of community development.
- Youth cooperatives should establish lateral and vertical contacts in order to obtain expertise and broader horizons.

(d) *Young Women*

- Women need to be given special consideration in the control of cooperatives and equal opportunities for work involvement should be made available irrespective of the type of activities pursued, considered with equality of

opportunity objectives.

- Young women may, find job satisfaction in the final instance through more traditional activities undertaken by cooperatives, including nutrition, health and family planning education programmes.
- Where governments do not provide pre-school kindergarten services, young women should receive some basic training to perform such functions.

(e) *Finance*

- arrangements for financing the establishment of cooperatives need to comprehend self-financing through the pooling of individual savings, low interest loans by governments, non-repayable grants by governments or non-government organizations.
- systematic savings by members of existing cooperatives may well assist capital formation for expansion of activities and assist in obtaining interest bearing loans.

(f) *Legal*

- legislation often provides impediments to the full involvement of young people under the age of 18 years in the management of cooperatives and requires special attention by government legislators.

(g) *Age Restrictions*

- Youth cooperatives are not to be dominated by older age groups particularly at the executive level. Accordingly serious considerations should be given to adopting youth charters which:
  - restrict point of entry on membership to 15—25 year olds not in full time education.
  - executive office holders to be aged 18-30 years inclusive.
  - no age restriction on
    - general membership, subject to compliance with point of entry conditions.

—consultative/advisory boards to be established to draw on the experience and expertise of the over 30 years age group.

(h) *Youth Organization Involvement*

—existing youth clubs and non-government youth organisations to encourage participation in youth cooperative education programmes.

- promote mutual understanding of the roles and objectives of cooperatives.
- mobilize youth population and obtain additional membership for cooperatives.
- facilitate lateral communication and provision of physical resources.
- invest financially in cooperative.
- foster international and national exchanges between the sectors.

(i) *Role and Training of Youth and Cooperative Workers*

- Youth workers to be educated/trained in cooperative methods, including business and economics, through formal and inservice programmes.
- training programmes for cooperators to include group dynamics, community resources, inter-personal relations, human interactions and social needs.
- cooperatives to utilize the services of youth workers to reach the most disadvantaged youth to survey the positive features of cooperative membership and to utilize the broader community contacts established by youth workers.

(j) *Role of Governments and Cooperative Organisations*

- Governments to involve national and local cooperative organisations in the planning and implementation of government programmes for youth.
- establishment of co-ordinating machinery at the different

tiers of government, non-government, cooperative and youth organisations.

- National level youth bodies to present the views of youth to government and to
  - influence policy decisions
  - train members at all levels
  - facilitate the production of newsletters
  - secure adequate financial resources
  - develop future directions in consultation with the membership.

In order for cooperatives to reach the maximum potential as active contributors to broad economic development, while at the same time satisfying the needs of individual members, it is essential for Governments and Cooperative Organisations to ensure that

- inter-agency liaison is firmly established to avoid unnecessary duplication.
- a sound data base is created covering both qualitative and quantitative information to assist planning and development.
- wide ranging educational programmes are implemented.
- cooperative funding is provided as an integral part of the normal government budgetary planning cycle.
- existing private sector and trade union interests are preserved.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

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### Introduction

This report summarizes the major issues facing young people in the Asian and Pacific region, and suggests strategies to assist young people tackle some of these issues through 'Cooperative Principles and Structures'. Cooperatives are an important vehicle for youth development in all countries of the region. However, strategies for implementation will be affected by social, cultural, political and economic variables in the country in which they operate.

### 1. Major Issues Confronting Youth in the Asian and Pacific Region

#### (a) *Unemployment and Under-Employment*

With very few exceptions, the most important problem in all countries of the Region are unacceptably high levels of unemployment and under-employment of youth.

—unemployment is particularly high among the less educated as well as females who traditionally have had fewer occupational choices available to them.

- under-employment is caused by such factors as non-availability of sufficient full-time jobs, the impact of technology and the resultant conversion of full-time to part-time jobs with less income.

(b) *Population Shifts*

Drift of population from rural to urban areas are common within the region and give rise to associated social and psychological adjustment problems often made worse through a lack of general employment opportunities. These difficulties tend to manifest themselves through:

- creation of areas with sub-standard housing and lack of basic services
- increased crime
- growing youth prostitution
- increase in drug abuse
- growing labour shortage in rural areas
- male/female population imbalance.

(c) *Vocational Training Problems*

Education and vocational training plays an important role in the development of skills necessary for employment opportunities but often lacks adequate attention from governments.

- educational courses and programmes should emphasise broad-based rather than skill-specific provision in view of rapidly changing industry and labour market conditions and to enhance adaptability.

(d) *Adult Domination*

Society allows limited opportunities for youth to participate in decision making and operation of activities (including youth activities), thus retarding the overall self-development of young people and their capacity to contribute to community and national development.

(e) *Illiteracy*

Rural-based youth in the Region in particular has a very low

level of literacy and numeracy which inhibits chances of finding satisfying employment, including self-employment.

(f) *Social Breakdown*

Many traditional family and community values, and cohesion are breaking down, partly as a result of a growth of individualism and adoption of materialistic attitudes.

—many governments in the Region have made attempts to tackle the various issues facing the youth, however, many young people feel a degree of disillusionment towards government and its programmes. Such feelings are frequently due to a lack of adequate consultation and involvement of the young in the development of responses to their problems.

### 1.1. Responses to Major Problems

Throughout the Region a range of educational, training, welfare and employment responses exist. These include:

- (i) *Youth organisations*, providing youth clubs and related activities which attempt to provide for many non-institutionalized youth needs. Many such organizations have expanded into new areas in some countries and have developed detached youth work and voluntary drop in centres catering for the longer term unemployed and other interested sections of youth.
- (ii) *Vocational training institutes*, have expanded and diversified their courses.
- (iii) *Assistance to youth*, to start their own business through the facilitation of capital, land, technical advice and other resources.
- (iv) *Youth ministries/agencies*, have been established in several countries with responsibility for coordinating youth policies and programmes, provision of career and vocational resources and broader support functions, including the fostering of regional cooperation among youth.
- (v) *Domestic and International Exchange Programmes*, have



gained wide acceptance with youth and have seen considerable expansion through positive government support.

- (vi) *Social Assistance Programmes*, for those moving from rural to urban areas have been implemented in a number of countries to facilitate labour mobility and to help young people in their transition phase.
- (vii) *Drug rehabilitation centres and programmes*, assist young people regain their self-respect and in reconstructing their lives to enhance their employment opportunities.
- (viii) *Leadership training*, to help young people play a more effective role in the community.
- (ix) *Establishment of youth wings*, by bigger community organisation and political parties.

However, many of the responses now being pursued in most countries in the region are inadequate and are often poorly propagated, thus failing to meet the expectations of youth. There is an urgent requirement to improve and increase responses as well as introduce some activities which would have an inherent, self-generating and self-improving mechanism that would eventually satisfy the aspirations of youth.

## 2.0 The Cooperative Response

2.1. Cooperatives have played a significant role in the economic and social history of all countries in the region and have been established in such areas as consumerism, credit, agriculture, marketing and industry.

2.2. Cooperatives are economic enterprises based on the following unique principles:-

- voluntary and open membership
- democratic structure-one member, one vote
- member participation and responsibility
- Benefits to members based on their patronage
- limited return on share capital
- social commitment to its members and their community
- commitment to education of members and the wider community.

- active cooperation among cooperatives.

Such principles have enormous appeal to most young people and for these reasons, cooperatives have considerable potential for satisfying youth aspirations and contributing to their and the nation's development.

2.3 In essence, cooperatives have the potential to:

- achieve economic development and create new jobs,
- create employment that allows young people to be involved in ownership, decision making and the like,
- contribute in unique ways to self development, including character building and the attainment of personal potential,
- provide training in vocational, entrepreneurial, human relationship and leadership areas,
- develop managerial, organisational, planning and responsibility qualities,
- provide opportunities for vocationally trained youth to find employment,
- foster democratic qualities,
- encourage self-help and mutual help,
- become a vehicle for youth participation,
- foster cooperation and understanding between members striving for a common goal where economic success gives rise to wider ranging social benefits, and
- help develop international relationships and cooperation.

There is much common ground between the objectives of cooperatives and those held as important by governments and the community generally. It is therefore considered desirable to pursue cooperative solutions to youth needs and aspirations.

### 3.0. Cooperative Youth Strategies

If cooperatives, especially industry-based models, are to become a viable element in overall youth development and take their place alongside other programmes offered by the government and non-government sectors for the youth, all sectors of the community must understand the strengths and limitations of cooperatives. Youth workers, youth club organisations and cooperatives need to interact to share experiences and expertise.

Coordination of cooperative activities and other youth areas must take place to avoid costly duplication of effort particularly at the level of governments and National Cooperative Organizations.

In order to achieve such objectives, it is recommended that the following areas be actively pursued in each country in the Region and particularly through Government's involvement and assistance.

### **3.1. Educating the Youth and Cooperatives**

To communicate the benefits of cooperatives to young people, strategies on cooperative education should be developed to include formal and non-formal education programmes involving both in-school and out-of-school groups.

#### *3.1.1. Formal Education Responses*

Education within the school structure should include :

- (a) at the primary school level, an awareness of cooperatives and the cooperative way of life
- (b) at the secondary school level, teaching of cooperative practice forming part of the overall curriculum and covering principles, operations, types, as well as inter-personal and behavioural subjects
- (c) at the tertiary level, the development of courses up to Ph.D. level on different aspects of cooperative life. Such development could build on initiatives of the kind which have already occurred in several countries in the Region.

Approaches which should be pursued, particularly at the school level, include the promotion and operation of school-based pre-cooperatives and cooperatives to serve as practical training grounds for young people.

For the above approaches to be successful, the following are considered vital—

- genuine participation by young people (not teacher-dominated) providing real learning experiences for all participants

- implementation of practical projects seen as a part of the school curriculum, not extra-curricular.
- teachers specially trained at both pre-service and in-service levels
- provision of specific teachers assigned to the task with due recognition of their efforts and responsibility as part of their teaching load
- Development and production of curriculum materials that are innovative, attractive and relevant to both teachers and students.

### 3.1.2 *Non-Formal Education Responses*

Existing youth clubs and non-government youth organisations should encourage participation in youth cooperative education programmes among school leavers. Such encouragement should involve:

- promoting mutual understanding of the roles and objectives of cooperatives.
- encouraging youth to organize self-interest groups.
- mobilizing youth population to obtain additional membership for cooperatives.
- facilitating lateral communication and provision of physical resources.
- investing financially in youth cooperatives.
- fostering international and national exchanges among sectors.

### 3.1.3 *Promotion*

In both in-school and out-of-school groups, there is a need to initiate promotional activities on cooperatives, through print media, films and seminars. The national federation and/or appropriate government ministry should provide coordination and assistance.

## 3.2. **Bases for Involving Youth**

Young people constitute some 40% of the total population

in the Asian and Pacific Region but because of their comparative lack of experience and maturity are often excluded from direct involvement in decision making.

As a group, they also suffer the greatest degree of disadvantage, particularly in relation to employment opportunities. This disadvantage increases under conditions of low or negative economic growth.

Cooperatives provide a unique opportunity for involving youth in the decision making process due to their democratic character and concern to balance both economic and social objectives.

The institutional and operational framework of cooperatives lends itself to assisting a wide range of target groups including:

- skilled interest groups like young farmers, fishermen and artisans;
- out-of-school unemployed youth, especially in rural areas;
- young women and young wives, and
- other disadvantaged groups.

Of particular concern is the lack of equal employment opportunities of young women in most countries in the Region.

- women need to be given equal standing and opportunities for work involvement in cooperatives irrespective of the type of activities pursued.
- however, recognising the various levels of development and other constraints in some countries in the Region, young women may, *as a first step*, wish to become involved in areas like nutrition and health education, family welfare and skills development programmes.

Apart from specific interest group concerns, there are several key issues which require further consideration and examination

- cooperative legislation needs to be as flexible as possible to allow the development of a variety of cooperatives, and in some countries, this needs to include reducing the required minimum number of members and the capacity of full involvement of those below the present legal age.
- active involvement of youth in management and opera-

tion of both existing and any new cooperatives, needs encouraging. This can be achieved in part by

- legislative changes to ensure that point of entry on membership and appointment of executives be defined by age;
- cooperatives develop their own in-service training, and sponsor some younger members to attend leadership training programmes to enhance their confidence, ability and skills;
- complementary activities be conducted that have relevance to young people.

If young people are to establish their own cooperatives, then certain resources need to be provided, such as

- access to finance, including options for self-financing, provision of unconditional grants, and low interest loans;
- technical assistance by government agencies and other existing cooperatives;
- guidance from experts seconded from existing cooperatives, businesses and retired people;
- training.

#### 4.1. Role of Youth Organisations

Such organizations are vital to the development of cooperatives as they

- have access to young people
- are community based and often enjoy extensive community support.
- are already organised and have greater access to resources
- often pursue economic objectives and activities within their philosophy
- enable cooperatives to be a natural extension of their activities which already have a social component.

These organizations, can provide the following roles:

- active participation in youth cooperative education programmes.
- emphasize the economic aspects within their range of activities:
- contribute financial and human resources

- fulfil an educative and promotional role among members and the wider community;
- facilitate lateral communication;
- set up cooperative (s) within their organisation;
- mobilize youth population for additional membership for cooperatives;
- foster national and international relationships and exchange between sectors;
- promote understanding of the role and objectives of cooperatives.

#### **4.2. Role of Youth Workers**

Youth workers play an important role in the lives of young people as they move from childhood to adulthood. Youth workers are often a very significant factor in helping young people to lead fulfilled lives including full participation in community activities.

They can become key individuals in developing the initiatives outlined earlier for youth clubs and organisations in regard to cooperative development.

Special training is required for youth workers and cooperative workers if they are to be successful in the above roles.

Such training needs to include—

- (i) education in the principles and practices of cooperation,
- (ii) awareness of human relations and group dynamics, including conflict resolution, consensus, inter-personal relations, motivation, leadership skills and social needs.
- (iii) community development skills involving the mobilization of community support.

#### **4.3. Cooperative Functionaries**

Cooperative functionaries can fulfil three important roles

- establish youth wings within existing cooperatives.
- encourage increasing participation and involvement of youth in existing cooperatives.
- work in partnership with youth workers in helping estab-

lish youth cooperatives at all levels.

Cooperative workers, in addition to receiving training in cooperative work also need some understanding of the practices and principles of youth work, including human relations, group dynamics and community development.

#### 4.4. Collaboration

It is recognized that a variety of government and non-government agencies have some responsibility for young people and/or cooperatives. It is vital that such bodies seek to work together so that resources can be maximized. Regular seminars and meetings need to be organised which will bring together officials so there is a greater level of understanding and better exchange of information.

In addition it is vital that both government ministries and National Cooperative Organisations provide training, financial and technical assistance.

Such collaboration may include the following:-

- government involvement with national and local cooperative organisations in the planning and implementation of government programmes for youth.
- establishment of co-ordinating machinery at the different tiers of government, non-government, cooperatives and youth organisations.
- National level youth bodies to present the views of youth to government in order to:
  - influence policy decisions
  - facilitate training of members at all levels
  - secure adequate financial resources
  - develop future directions in consultation with the membership.

#### 5.0 Priority Areas for Action

The issues raised throughout this report constitute the major concerns in relation to the effective establishment and operation of cooperatives, including the active participation of youth workers in the development process.



Particular matters which this conference would wish to highlight to governments and others concerned with youth development is the need to:

- implement continuing education programmes to increase awareness of the nature and potential of cooperatives,
- establish mechanisms at all levels to ensure close liaison and collaboration between organizations with a focus on youth,
- create a sound information and data base to act as a resource in planning and development,
- identify suitable sources of funds to promote co-operative activities and to ensure basic viability,
- provide training opportunities for those working with youth and cooperatives to acquire broader understanding of youth and cooperative work,
- initiate education programmes for teachers at both pre-service and in-service levels,
- foster the establishment of Consultative Councils at both National and Local levels to act as two way channels for communicating youth aspirations and concerns to governments, and
- work towards closer collaboration between countries in the region on matters affecting youth and cooperatives.

The issues discussed during this seminar are of vital importance not only to those who may wish to promote cooperative solutions to some of the problems but also to those who are interested in the broad area of youth work and of cooperatives. The recommendations contained in this document as a part of the strategy to actively involve youth in the cooperative movement, can only be implemented if the agencies responsible for youth work, on the one hand, and for the development of cooperatives, on the other, evolve a mechanism for effective collaboration and cooperation. Cooperatives by their very nature are able to provide a broad ranging response to the many and varied needs of young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged. In view of this the seminar strongly recommends priority action in the area of youth and cooperatives.

## **Appendix-I**

### **Programme**

23rd May 1983	AM	Inauguration. Briefing on Methodology of Seminar.
	PM	Country Papers
24th May		Country Papers.
25th May		Country Papers.
26th May	AM	Special Paper—ICA—Discussions.
	PM	Special Paper—CYP—Discussions.
27th May	AM	Special Paper—Malaysia—Discussions.
	PM	Special Paper—Women's Project Experience—Sri Lanka.
28th May		Study Visits.
29th May		Sunday (free)
30th May		Group Discussions.
31st May	AM	Finalisation of Group Reports.
	PM	Plenary on Group Reports.
	PM	Drafting Committee Sitings.
1st June	AM	Finalisation of Final Report.
	PM	Final Plenary.

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ment Society Ltd.)
- RESOURCE PERSONS
1. Mr. Mohd. Soffian Abdul Rahim  
Director-General, Youth Division  
Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports,  
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2. Mr. Mohd. Wahiduddin Abdul Wahab  
Managing Director.  
KOBENA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
3. Miss Jayantha C. Tennekoon  
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4. Mr. W. de S. Ratnaweera  
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5. Mr. D. Agochiya  
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Chandigarh, India.
6. Mr. R.B. Rajaguru  
Regional Director,  
ICA ROEC New Delhi,  
India.

#### SEMINAR SECRETARIAT

Youth Division,  
Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports,  
Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

*Officers:*

1. Mrs. Mariam bte Ujang
2. Mr. Shah Hime bin Nazir
3. Mr. Vimalan s/o Muthupandian
4. Mr. Soraya bin Selamat

*Supporting Staff*

5. Mrs. Khatijah bte Abd. Razak
6. Mrs. Low Lay Yoong
7. Mr. Abd. Rahman bin Hashim
8. Mr. Abdullah bin Hj. Salleh
9. Mr. Hairani bin Abdullah
10. Mr. Rosman bin Mahadi

## **Appendix III**

### **Commonwealth Youth Programme**

Youth, in terms of their numerical strength as well as quality, represents a vast resource of manpower. The Commonwealth Governments have realised the need to harness their energies, enthusiasms and creative abilities to the tasks of nation building and to the economic, social and cultural advancement of peoples. They are, therefore, actively involved with programmes designed to help young people especially non-student youth, and to direct youth power towards constructive goals.

They have also realised that each country can benefit by learning from the experiences of others not only in diagnosing and analysing youth problems but also in planning and implementing youth programmes. They are also convinced that training sessions with fellow youth workers from other member countries could be beneficial. These realisations have ultimately led to the establishment of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP).

#### **Origin**

The CYP was contemplated at a time when the traditional society was shocked by the violent demonstrations of youth all over the world. It was contemplated partly as a defensive reaction to the wave of student unrest in the late 60s and partly as an awareness of youth power, recognition of the place of youth in society and their role in development. The programme was established in 1973 on the recommendation of the Commonwealth Heads of Governments. It was launched to encourage and facilitate flow of ideas and experiences between people involved in youth programmes at all levels from senior government policy makers to frontline youth workers from voluntary agencies.



## Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Programme is to promote the wellbeing and development of youth in the Commonwealth. Its objectives are:

- To encourage and support the active participation of youth in the process of national development;
- To give recognition to the contribution made by youth to the economic, social and cultural development of their society;
- To seek to eliminate unemployment and to alleviate its ill-effects;
- To provide opportunities for increasing international understanding among youth.

## Elements of the Programme

The main elements are:

- a. Training—Regional Centres:
  - to organise training programmes for senior and middle level personnel in youth work to acquire additional knowledge and to improve skills in youth and community work.
- b. Information and Research Services:
  - to collate and disseminate information concerning youth and their development and to investigate youth problems.
- c. Study Fellowships:
  - to enable senior personnel working with young people to visit projects in countries other than their own in order to facilitate exchange of experiences and information.
- d. Support Services for Youth Programmes:
  - to offer technical and financial assistance for formulating new, or revising existing national youth policies, and for planning, establishing and developing youth programmes and projects.

### **Administration**

The Programme, in its operation, formed part of the activities of the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is funded through voluntary contributions by the Commonwealth Governments.

Responsibility for the formulation of general policies governing the operation of the Programme rests with the Commonwealth Youth Affairs Council comprising one representative of each participating Government. The general direction of the operation of the Programme, within the guidelines laid down by the Commonwealth Youth Affairs Council, is the responsibility of the Committee of Management consisting of 13 members elected from among participating Governments and the Commonwealth Secretary-General or his representative.

### **Training**

Training has been a major concern of the Commonwealth Youth Programme since its inception. It is provided through three regional centres—in Georgetown, Guyana for the Caribbean Region; in Chandigarh, India for the Asia-Pacific Region; and in Lusaka, Zambia for the African Region. As a supplement to the courses offered by the Asia-Pacific Centre, a training course specially tailored to meet the pressing needs of the South-Pacific Island countries is being organised in co-operation with the University of South Pacific. These centres offer Commonwealth Diploma Course in Youth and Development every year. Nearly 500 youth field workers and administrators at the middle and senior levels sponsored by Commonwealth Governments have already been trained in these centres.

The courses are designed on sandwich pattern providing a balanced combination of institutional training and practical field work in alternate layers with the primary objective of improving the professional competence of the participants. The central theme of the course is learning through active participation and learning not only with one another but also from one another. Participants with different social, economic and cultural backgrounds having practical experience in youth work in their respective countries and living together for several months, will have ample opportunities to interact with each

other, exchange their knowledge and analyse their experiences. Above all, living together will increase international understanding among them and also strengthen the Commonwealth bonds.

In addition, other activities such as seminars, workshops and short-term courses at regional, sub-regional and national levels and conferences are organised by the Centres to meet the identified needs of the countries in their respective regions. The Youth Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the headquarters of CYP, organises pan-Commonwealth meetings and conferences. The Centres are also developing resource units for providing information and support on all aspects of youth work and development. The Caribbean Centre has recently started an experimental correspondence course to upgrade the skills of grassroot youth workers mainly in smaller island countries who are not eligible for the diploma course.

Alongside the Centre based training programmes, the CYP's Regional directors maintain close contact with Governments in their respective regions to cater for special needs that emerge at national and sub-regional levels.

The CYP has been taking practical steps to increase participation of young people in the deliberations of its operation at different levels. It has also provided a forum for young leaders to meet and discuss the issues affecting them.

With the wide range of activities enumerated above, it can be said that the CYP is the only international programme of its kind in existence for youth development. Despite the limitation of the programme due to scarcity of funds, the services rendered by the Youth Programme to the Governments have been worthwhile. The Programme has been able to bring about an awareness among the Commonwealth countries of the need to organise strong, viable and representative national youth organisations and programmes to meet the expressed needs of the youth. The existence and the activities of the CYP at international level have encouraged Commonwealth Governments to look more closely at youth problems particularly in relation to overall development strategies. The visible shift on the part of Governments to create separate ministries for youth development instead of associating youth with other ministries is worthy of note.

## **Appendix IV**

### **The International Cooperative Alliance**

The ICA is one of the oldest of non-governmental international organisations. It is a world-wide confederation of cooperative organisations of all types. Founded by the International Cooperative Congress held in London in 1895, it now has affiliates in 66 countries, serving over 365 million members at the primary level. It is the only international organisation entirely and exclusively dedicated to the promotion of cooperation in all parts of the world.

Besides the Head Office of the ICA, which is in Geneva there are three Regional Offices, viz., the Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia, New Delhi, India, started in 1960; the Regional Office for East and Central Africa, Moshi, Tanzania, started in 1968 and the Regional Office for West Africa, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, started in 1979.

#### **Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia**

The main tasks of the Regional Office & Education Centre are to develop the general activities of the Alliance in the Region, to act as a link between the ICA and its affiliated national movements, to represent the Alliance in its consultative relations with the regional establishments of the United Nations and other international organisations, to promote economic relations amongst member-movements, including trading across national boundaries, to organise and conduct technical assistance, to conduct courses, seminars and conferences, surveys and research, to bring out publications on cooperative and allied subjects and to support and supplement the educational activities of national cooperative movements. The Regional Office and Education Centre now operates on behalf of 15 countries, i.e. Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The ROEC carries out various types of programmes in collaboration with the member-organisations and at times in collaboration with U.N. Specialised Agencies and other Agencies e.g. CYP. The programmes carried out are basically intended to meet the needs as identified by the member-organisations in the Region. A major part of the financial requirements for carrying out various activities in the Region are met by the Swedish Cooperative Centre in Stockholm while the member-organisations within the Region provide considerable financial and other support for the activities. In addition to the support received from the Swedish Cooperative Centre, support is also received to a considerable extent from the Japanese Cooperative Movement which arranges special programmes through its own organisation, namely, the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA).

The ICA ROEC is advised by a Council called 'The ICA Council for South-East Asia' which meets annually at the invitation of a host member-organisation and which brings together representative leaders of the cooperative movements of the various countries served by the ROEC. The Regional Council acts as a forum for the exchange of experiences and for the identification of needs and the planning and programming of future ICA ROEC activities for the Region. Over the years, the meetings of the Regional Council have played a significant role in strengthening the collaboration between the cooperative movements in the Region.

The Regional Council is supported by several functional Sub-Committees which are generally represented by specialists in the field of the committee's specialisation and provides a useful forum for indepth examination of the problems in that particular sector and in mapping out strategies for strengthening the cooperative activity in the sectors concerned. At present there are five such committees covering the functional areas of Agriculture, Fisheries, Trade, Consumer, Credit and Banking. There is also a Regional Working Party on Cooperative Press for South-East Asia which concentrates on the improvement of the communication systems in their own national situations and also in building up an image for the cooperatives both nationally and within the Region. A sub-committee with a specialisation on industrial cooperatives is in the formative stage at present.

The ROEC works in close collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), Japan, the Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organisation (AARRO) based in New Delhi, the UN, and its Specialised Agencies such as ILO, FAO, ESCAP, UNESCO etc. and in more recent times also with the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) Asia Pacific Centre based in Chandigarh, India.