



### **Third Gulf Cooperating Countries (GCC) Cooperatives Forum**

The Third Gulf Cooperating Countries (GCC) Cooperatives Forum was held in Kuwait from January 5 to 7. The forum was organized under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Aqeel Ahmed Jassim, Director General of the Executive Office of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Council of Ministers of Social Affairs in GCC States to discuss, "role of Cooperatives under Market Economy and its Mechanisms." Delegates from Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Cooperative Union, and the International Cooperative Alliance participated in the Forum. The workshop was inaugurated by H.E.Ms. Hind Subeeh Barrak Al-Sabeeh, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour and Minister of State for Planning and Development in Kuwait who spoke on the need for development of common goals and objectives in the GCC for the enrichment and diversity of cooperatives. Among the recommendation of the Forum were the need to adhere to the principles of cooperative and interests of citizens; importance of and the need for training members, boards of directors and executive management; establishment of a national institute for cooperative to raise the technical capacity in cooperatives; unify the financial, administrative and accounting systems in all cooperative societies; reduce the restrictions that limit the freedom of movement and creativity for cooperative societies; strengthen mutual trust between the government and cooperatives and avoid interference; collaboration among cooperatives on sales and marketing; emphasis on the authority of the General Assemblies in the regulatory and operational policies for the development of cooperative societies work; and the establishment of a Gulf Cooperative Development Fund to provide financial support for the development of cooperative sectors.

## **Cooperatives on campuses in Delhi**

Despite being a nation with over 600,000 cooperatives; direct participation of 250,000,000 citizens; and a 110-year old history, India's largest segment, the youth, barely understand the potential or/and, have a misconstrued idea of cooperatives. The root cause can be laid at the dearth of formal education on cooperatives at almost all levels. To redeem this situation, ICA-AP Youth Committee (ICYC) has been engaging with the Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC), University of Delhi in piloting an initiative on financial literacy for youth since December 2014.

The student-exchange visit by the students of the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire to SRCC provided a fillip to the initiative to engage youth. An interesting exchange took place between Meryl an exchange student and the students of SRCC. Meryl said she was associated with cooperatives as her parents were members of a local grocery cooperative and she saw the benefits; one of which was the discounts. This led the student group to wonder why Meryl's parents received the discounts and this was something Meryl and her other exchange fellows seemed to identify cooperatives with? The answer came out in the discussion that Meryl's parents were able to raise capital along with other members and jointly create the demand for the groceries cooperative! In other words, collective bargaining resulted in a simple yet good deal! The lively exchange between students reinforced the idea of cooperatives as a proven alternative to the profit maximizing model of enterprise. The SRCC initiative is being taken forward in 2016 by the ICYC-Secretariat and an effort is underway to form a student cooperative in SRCC.

## **Davos Diary: co-ops to lead by inclusion and purpose**

Alliance president Monique Leroux, representing the International Co-operative Alliance at the World Economic Forum, sends her observations: "The forum's speakers emphasize that financial inclusion is critical to achieve stability, not only in emerging economies, but also in developed nations. A striking finding is that 73% of the world is financially excluded. Exclusion and inequality cause major societal issues like black markets and violence. As pointed out by Joseph Stiglitz at the forum: GDP is not a good measure of economic performance, but it is a good measure of well-being. Financial inclusion is the basis to be recognized in society. It empowers people and is the basis for self-help, a dignified and sustainable way forward. Co-operative banks and credit unions play a significant role in improving financial inclusion and they should increase their global reach." Inequality extends beyond personal finance. In education in particular, barriers need to be removed and inclusion encouraged. The best way to deal with inequality is to empower people. Again, co-operatives are an important tool - empowerment is about self-help.

Read more at: <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/davos-diary-co-ops-lead-inclusion-and-purpose>

## Fostering Core Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives-2015

The Training course on “Fostering Core Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives-2015” is going to be organized by ICA-AP in Thailand and Japan between February 14 and April 09, 2016. The overall objective of the training program is to assist fostering of the core leaders, who are expected to play the leading roles in agricultural cooperatives and farmers’ groups that will contribute to the improvement of agricultural production and income of the farmers in the LDCs of Mekong River countries and South Asian Countries. 16 participants will attend the training course from Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam. The training program will be implemented by the ICA-AP with the collaboration of Co-operative League of Thailand (CLT), Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kingdom of Thailand, and Institute for the Development of Agriculture Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), Tokyo (Japan). The Training Course is being funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan.

### **COOP Marque and .COOP Domains - *Working Together for a Better World***

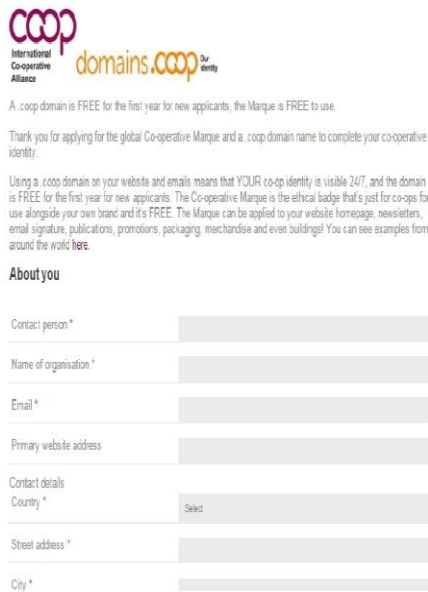
A small film called [What if?](#), has been doing rounds in cooperative networks since May 2015. The 2015 Alliance Global Assembly featured it as one of the key messages to be taken forward by the movement as a whole; in united voice. “*What if*” takes the international call for [cooperatives to build a better world](#) made in 2012 and poses questions that focus on roles cooperatives have played in the lives of members so far, and *what if* cooperatives work together to build a world that is accessible, equal and equitable for everyone? The question that lurks is this: can cooperatives across the world share a unique personality that can effectively deliver the message of the [International cooperative Identity Statement](#) to the world at large? How large is the scope of this task? Who will articulate it in the contours and depths of the societies of the world?

*What if you can begin by applying for a .coop domain and a **COOP Marque** as an ethical badge unique and accessible only to cooperatives, to promote your cooperative’s global image and brand?*

**.COOP** as the [collective identity](#) of cooperatives can be used as an internet domain for your business and the Cooperative marquee or **COOP** in merchandising your services & products, can help take local coop brands an important step in becoming internationally relevant economic players.

This distinct model of enterprise has reached out to one billion individuals around the world, and this network’s socio-economic character is largely in the identity of being a cooperative. A .COOP domain ensures your enterprise is untied with the rest of the cooperative movement represented by the International Cooperative [Alliance](#) at the highest levels of policy advocacy and business.

Applicants for the COOP Marquee and the (dot) COOP domain can be official representatives of a registered cooperative or an organisation guided by the cooperative principles. The application FORM is simple and easy to complete. The Identity team will contact you shortly after you apply either for the COOP Marquee **[FREE of cost]** and the (dot) COOP domain **[FREE only for the first year]** to help your cooperative use cooperative identity tools for growth, strength and pace in business and welfare. Screenshots from the COOP [Identity portal](#) placed are below.



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International Co-operative Alliance

**domains.coop** Our identity

A .coop domain is FREE for the first year for new applicants, the Marquee is FREE to use.

Thank you for applying for the global Co-operative Marquee and a .coop domain name to complete your co-operative identity.

Using a .coop domain on your website and emails means that YOUR co-op identity is visible 24/7, and the domain is FREE for the first year for new applicants. The Co-operative Marquee is the ethical badge that's just for co-ops for use alongside your own brand and it's FREE. The Marquee can be applied to your website homepage, newsletters, email signature, publications, promotions, packaging, merchandise and even buildings! You can see examples from around the world [here](#).

**About you**

Contact person \*

Name of organisation \*

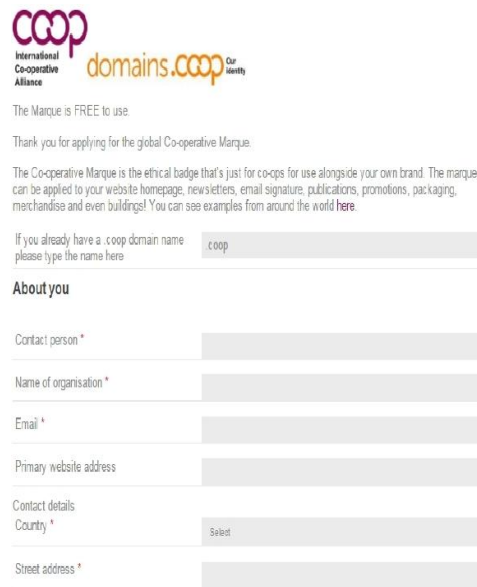
Email \*

Primary website address

Contact details  
Country \*

Street address \*

City \*



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**domains.coop** Our identity

The Marquee is FREE to use.

Thank you for applying for the global Co-operative Marquee.

The Co-operative Marquee is the ethical badge that's just for co-ops for use alongside your own brand. The marquee can be applied to your website homepage, newsletters, email signature, publications, promotions, packaging, merchandise and even buildings! You can see examples from around the world [here](#).

If you already have a .coop domain name please type the name here

**About you**

Contact person \*

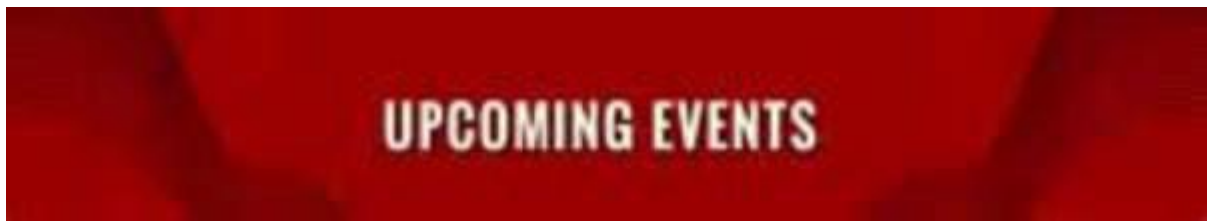
Name of organisation \*

Email \*

Primary website address

Contact details  
Country \*

Street address \*



1. Fostering Core Leaders of Agriculture Cooperatives, Japan February 1 to April 19, 2016.
2. "Tagaytay+20" third Regional Conference on status of Women in Cooperatives. Philippines, February 9-12, 2016
3. Cooperative to Cooperative Trade – Enhancing Business Opportunities in Top 5 Cooperative Products in Kuala Lumpur; organized by ICA-AP/ Angkasa ACFSMC; March 27 to 30, 2016. Last date for nomination is February 22, 2016. Contact: Frank Cao at [frankcao@icaroap.coop](mailto:frankcao@icaroap.coop)

4. Workshop on Agricultural Cooperatives System in Korea; organized by ICA-NACF; April 25-29, 2016; last date for nomination is March 20, 2016. Contact: Mr. K.Kukreja at [kukreja@icaroap.coop](mailto:kukreja@icaroap.coop)



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