



ACTIVITIES' MAPPING OF ICA-AP

1st Training Course on “Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives”, Thailand and Japan

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan has chosen the International Cooperative Alliance to implement an umbrella Project on “Capacity Building in Agricultural Sector in Asia and Africa” for three years starting from 2017. Under this project, the 1st Training Course on “Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives” was held in Thailand and Japan from 16th July to 10th August 2017. Eight women participants from eight countries, namely, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam attended the Training Course.

The objective of the training course was to assist capacity building of women leaders from rural areas in the areas of organizational management and organized business activities.

Part-I of the program – field study visits with a focus on observation of the activities of cooperatives/women groups and social institutions – was held in Thailand from 16th to 25th July in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT), a member organization of ICA.



Visit to the Co-operative League of Thailand

Part-II of the program held at the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) from 26th July to 10th August included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural cooperatives in Saitama, Yamanashi and Kanagawa Prefectures of Japan. Lecture-cum-practical field

study visits assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women's associations and the general activities of agricultural cooperatives in Japan. Some of the key subjects covered at IDACA were: (a) Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan; (b) Women's Associations of Japanese Agricultural Cooperatives; (c) Rural Women's Entrepreneurship (marketing and local agro-processing); (d) Women's Participation in Rural Development; (e) Finalization and Presentation of Action Plans; and (f) Reporting and Evaluation.

Based on the experiences gained by the participants through class room lectures, field visits in Thailand and Japan, the participants were able to prepare their Action Plans which they would be recommending to their respective organizations for implementation.

The course evaluation conducted at the conclusion of the training on 9th August showed that the participants felt the training course was very relevant for them and it should be continued. A Certificate of Participation was awarded to each participant at the concluding session held at IDACA.

17th ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives" in Singapore



Participants of the Workshop at the Fairprice Training Institute.

The 17th ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives" was held in Singapore from 25th to 27th July. The workshop was organized under the aegis of the ICA-AP Consumer Committee and hosted by NTUC Fairprice (Singapore). 19 co-operators and 3 observers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Japan attended the three-day training workshop. The objectives of the workshop were to: learn effective operation of the small- medium sized store; study the experiences of two organizations; and to establish an international network of consumer cooperative leaders and managers.

The program started with a welcome address by Mr Amano Haruyoshi, Manager, International Department, Japanese Consumer Cooperative Union (JCCU). This was followed by lectures by NTUC Fairprice staff on "Overview of NTUC Fairprice" by Ms. Juliana Tan, Training and Development Manager; "Retail Operation of NTUC Fairprice", by Mr Traves Tan General Manager, Supermarkets and Fairprice Shop; "Products, Placement, Pricing, Promotion, House-brand & Trading" of NTUC

Fairprice by Mr Tng Ah Yiam, Deputy CEO; and "Supply Chain Management of NTUC Fairprice" by Mr Mark Teo, Deputy Director, Fresh Food and Logistics.

The second day of the training began with, two case studies on "Effective Operation of the Small - Medium sized store" presented by Ms Adeline Woo, Group Manager, Fairprice Store ; and Ms Nguyen Bich Ly, Director, Co.op Food, Saigon Co.op (Vietnam). After the lectures, group discussion session was held on the topics, "What are the key learning points for business of NTUC Fairprice?"; "What are the features and strategies of the Fairprice Shop and Co.op Food Chain? "; and "What kind of store will be suitable for meet the requirements in your community? " This was followed by a debriefing on the presentation by Ms Tan. During the afternoon, the participants visited NTUC Fairprice's stores (Warehouse Club, Fairprice Xtra, Fairprice supermarket, Fairprice Shop) and the NTUC Fairprice Distribution Centre.

On the third day, each participating organization presented what it had learnt from the workshop as well as an action plan. This was also a means for sharing information among the participants. Several participants praised the program and were confident of sharing their learning with other co-operators in their country.

ICA-AP and DAMC Training of Trainers on “Building Management Capacity of Women for Co-operative Development”

The ICA-AP-DAMC Training of Trainers program on “Building Management Capacity of Women for Co-operative Development” was held from 1-5 August 2017 in Thimphu, Bhutan. The 5-day program had a combination of lectures, hands-on exercises and study visit to meet co-op members and co-operatives in Bhutan.



Group photo of the participants

Mr. Rinzin Dorji, Hon'ble Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Royal Government of Bhutan delivered the opening address, where he acknowledged that the cooperative movement in Bhutan is new when compared to other countries, but working through cooperatives is a strategy which is highly relevant in Bhutan. He spoke of Bhutan's challenges in agriculture, despite the sector being the mainstay of its economy. Therefore, working together in groups and cooperatives to gain the benefits of economy of scale makes a lot of sense. With little push from the government, farmers have

therefore come forward and many groups and cooperatives have sprung up in the country. As of now, they have 55 cooperatives and 300+ farmer groups involved in various kinds of activities – from the growing of crops and rearing of livestock to processing of food and marketing to savings and credit business and also in the service sector.

Youth unemployment is a growing concern in Bhutan and it is heartening to see young people taking initiatives to form groups and take up different kinds of business ventures. Likewise, women participation is very promising in terms of membership, women constitute around 45 percent in Farmer groups, and 47 percent in cooperatives. However, in terms of leadership, there is room for improvement. Only around 20 percent of the office bearers in cooperatives and farmer groups are actually women. He said that “I personally believe that cooperatives offer a viable platform for promoting people’s participation in the socio-economic development process and eventually in the nation building” and urged all the participants to make the most of this training to learn and imbibe valuable lessons and experiences.

The technical training session was divided into the following sessions:

1. Status of women empowerment and gender equality in co-operatives
2. Sustainable Development Goals and Co-operatives
3. Leadership for successful coop business - Importance of Leadership skill in co-op success: The essentials of good leadership
4. Establishment, growth and development of saving and credit co-operatives
5. Financial Management of a Co-operatives Business
6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Coops: handholding at the initial stage

We were privileged to have Dr. P.A. Kiriwadeniya, Chairman, Federation of Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies Ltd (SANASA) as a resource person. SANASA has established itself in Sri Lanka as a pioneering credit coop movement and has 7% population of the population as it’s member. During his session on savings and credit co-operatives and financial management, he covered several topics including, ‘examples of credit and saving co-ops in Sri Lanka’, ‘why do some co-ops fail: keys to success’, ‘working in harmony: how can we build trust and bonding between members’ etc.

The other resource persons during the training were Ms. Savitri Singh, Program Director; Mr. Mohit Davie, Research Officer, ICA-EU Project; and Mr. Changa Dorji, ADB consultant and trainer

The training concluded with discussions on the way forward and with the participants completing a feed-back form. *The training was conducted with the support of JCCU and the ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development: People Centered Businesses in Action.*

Co-operative Summit in Mindanao



Co-operative Summit in Cagayan de Ora

Around 450 co-operators gathered at the Grand Caprice Hotel in Cagayan de Oro on August 25 to take part in the Mindanao Cooperative Summit. The five regions of Mindanao have within them around eight thousand co-operatives with over 5 million members. Despite being the “food basket” of Philippines and an area rich in natural resources, the region has 14 of the 20 poorest provinces in the country. The Marawi region of the island is at the center of an ongoing battle between the Philippines security forces and militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Abu Sayyaf Salafi jihadists groups. The Summit organized by the Cooperative Development Authority under the Chairmanship of Mr. Orlando Ravanera provided an opportunity for co-operatives in the region to present their work to address critical issues in the region. An interesting initiative is the One Mindanao Energy Cooperative Federation that plans to compete against giant private power companies to buy out hydropower complexes by the Agusan River. The aim of the nascent co-operative group is to tap more renewable energy sources and reduce dependence on coal-fired power plants in the island. The Federation hopes to keep resources in Mindanao in the hands of Mindanaoans and is in the process of mobilizing money from co-operatives. If successful, the co-operative will open way for regular members to become owners, put power into the hands of the consumers, and make electricity costs more competitive. The Co-operatives attending the firmly committed to adhering to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and to become truly Transformative Cooperatives for People, Planet, Prosperity and Peace.

A TÊTE-À-TÊTE ON CO-OPERATIVES WITH Dr. P.A. KIRIWANDENIYA



Photo credit: Businesstoday.lk

The SANASA movement in Sri Lanka represents one of the best examples of how co-operative development through micro-finance can work wonders. As a matter of fact, the movement has been profoundly influenced by the consistency and effectiveness of its leadership. While there have been several individuals who have contributed to its success, a key role has been played by SANASA's Honorary President, Dr. P.A. Kiriwandeniya. Excerpts from his interview:

Q: Why co-operatives? What was your early motivation?

A: Growing up as a devout Buddhist, I was naturally drawn to finding a “middle way”; I always keen to find a practical but honourable method to accomplish what needs to be done. Before starting SANASA, I spent time studying and understanding both Marxism and Gandhian community programs, neither of which, in my view provided a satisfactory blend of ethical and economic dimensions. I found that mixture within the philosophy and methods of the co-operative community banking movement.

Q: Forty years back, did you know SANASA will be a household name in Sri Lanka?

A: I started SANASA with five people. Every day in the evenings, I vividly remember, we used to get together and discuss mundane, routine issues of the co-operative. In 1977, the government introduced a market economy for Sri Lanka. This was an era with emphasis on liberalization and a rapid move towards market economy reforms that aimed at facilitating the country to reap maximum benefits of globalization. Who are the victims here? Victims are the poor who have no access to capital, they can't do business in market without capital. It was then that we started taking initiatives with the village leaders and Buddhist monks, and started mobilising capital through our credit society. When I started there were only 935 societies and total asset was 13.5% that's about 13 million rupees. Now after 40 years, our total asset, total financial mobilisation, our total turnover is more than Rupees 150 billion! You need capital if you want to face the market economy, so we got together, formed groups, laid down the bye-laws and got our act together. Co-operative, my friend, is a sleeping elephant! (Smiles)

Q. What keeps you going at 76 of age?

A: Four sublime states of mind have been taught by the Buddha: metta (love or loving-kindness), karuna (compassion), mudita (sympathetic joy) and upekkha (equanimity). Whether you fail or succeed, don't change your lifestyle, you keep as it is. Existing values and existing lifestyle are the key. We've been following these practices for 2,000 years, THESE ARE WHAT CO-OPERATIVES PREACH TOO

- co-operative is home-grown. Why do we want to think it's come from Manchester, Brussels or Geneva? It's in our own culture! This keeps me on the move.

Q: What would be your one advice to the new generation co-operators?

A: You must have heard this quote by Bill Gates: "If you are born poor it's not your mistake, but if you die poor it's your mistake". So what does that mean if you are born poor it's not your mistake? Really it's not up to you which family you are born into. You could be born into a royal family and never work a day in your life, or you could be born into poverty. Either which way, it can never stop a truly motivated person in living their dream in being successful. Learning never stops, it goes on till the last breathe. I want my younger friends to keep learning, keep moving, keep growing.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

JA-ZENCHU appoints its new President



Mr. Toru Nakaya

JA-Zenchu (Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives), the apex body of Japan's agricultural co-operative movement, appointed Mr. Toru Nakaya as its new President on 10th August during its General Assembly.

Mr. Nakaya, who was previously the President of the Wakayama Prefectural Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, takes over from Mr. Choe Okuno. Mr. Nakaya has been both a Board Member as well as the Vice-President of JA-Zenchu in the past. He has also held the position of President of JA Kinan, his local primary cooperative, which is located in an area that produces a variety of agricultural products, including the famous Japanese apricots ("umes") and mandarin oranges.

He has been part of panels at prestigious conferences and forums like the International Cooperative Summit 2016 in Quebec, Canada, and the conference on 'Co-operatives: Empowering people for sustainable development and zero hunger' held in Milan, Italy in July 2015,

JA-Zenchu will hold an inauguration party on the 5th of September to introduce the new President to a broad range of people, including co-operators, officials of related companies, politicians, government officials, media, etc. We at ICA- Asia and Pacific wish him all the best in his new role!

Proudly co-operative: Fonterra wins the Co-operative Business of the Year award

New Zealand's biggest co-operative, Fonterra has been recognised by its peers at a celebration of the people-centred, values-based co-operative business model. Fonterra Co-operative Group won the Co-operative Business of the Year category – one of eight awards presented at the Cooperative Business New Zealand's Annual Awards Dinner.

A stunning financial turnaround, generous social responsibility programmes and a high-profile television campaign proudly proclaiming its Kiwi farmer-owned, co-operative status were key factors in winning the award. Fonterra Shareholders' Council Chair Duncan Coull says farmers should take real pride in this special recognition for their co-op. "Our farmer shareholders set themselves high standards, and it's their daily hard work and commitment that drives the success of the co-op. I also want to recognise the energy and contribution of our staff in helping build a co-op that returns such value to shareholders, local communities and the New Zealand economy."

Cooperative Business New Zealand represents the growing business sector of co-operatives, mutuals and societies which employ more than 48,000 Kiwis and generates over NZ\$43 billion a year in revenues for the NZ economy. That's almost 20% of this country's GDP while almost one-in-three Kiwis is currently served by a co-operative, mutual or society as a member.



Cooperative Business NZ 2017 Annual Award winners are, from left: Duncan Coull (representing Fonterra); Oliver O'Neill (Ruralco); Neil Cowie (Mitre 10); and Brian Cameron.

Cooperation among Cooperatives: IFFCO (India) and Nonghyup (South Korea) organize youth exchange in India



A delegation of 26 university students from the Republic of Korea visited India on an exchange visit in August, to know more about the country, its people and co-operatives. The students were sons and

daughters of the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Korea members. The exchange was facilitated by the Indian Farmers Fertilizers Co-operative (IFFCO) Ltd. and the NH Foundation (subsidiary of NACF). The young persons' exchange was conceptualized by a team led by Mr. Aditya Yadav, IFFCO Director and ICA Board member along with Mr. Jeong Tae Kim, Director Business Management Division of the NH Foundation. The students visited Dhaula in Haryana which is working towards becoming a smart village under a Government of India scheme. They interacted with students and engaged in learning activities and team building exercises. The students jointly painted the walls with messages on developing reading habits and importance of education to the girl child. The highlight of the trip according to one of the Indian students was Korean students giving training on making fans using solar energy! IFFCO educated the group of students on 'balanced use of fertilizers' and engaged students in a tree planting campaign. The students took part in cultural activities and also visited the Taj Mahal.

AROUND THE WORLD IN COOPS

Ta'awon: Making Co-operatives fun and accessible



"Ta'awon" is an educational game that markets the new cooperative logo "coop" and the principles of co-operatives. The idea of this game is very simple and straight forward. The players can move forward until they stand on a coloured box that determines the colour of the card; each colour stands for one of the seven cooperative principles. Each card contains a right or wrong statement about the principle, and an order that makes you go back or go forward. The player then pulls the cards, reads it, then carries out the order on it. For example, the first principle is "Open Membership", one of the card states that "you registered on your choice after you knew about the invitation to become a coop member" which is a right action, so the card orders you to move one step forward.

ILO unveils its 'Decent Work' platform



The ILO has recently unveiled a digital platform that seeks to demystify the needs and efforts of ensuring decent work for the youth. This platform forms part of a larger [initiative](#) of the ILO to tap into the tremendous resource power of the youth, and empower them with a respectable and sustainable livelihood. It has a 'dedicated program for youth employment operating through a global network of specialists working across ILO at its headquarters in Geneva.' The digital platform seeks to connect organizations, collectives and people willing to share and learn 'good practices' of ensuring decent work for the youth. One can also contribute ideas to this website, which might get included in their report on the same. This is an interesting initiative towards spreading knowledge, building possible partnerships and advocating for more youth-friendly policies, especially around employment.

COMMUNICATIONS WATCH

Co-op Mic 2.0 with Ms. Ishita Chaudhary



Ms. Ishita Chaudhry during Co-op Mic.

The International Co-operative Alliance- Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP) hosted the second edition of 'Co-op Mic' on August 14 at its office in New Delhi.

The invited speaker was Ms. Ishita Chaudhry who spoke on the topic of 'Youth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Opportunities and Challenges'. Ishita Chaudhry is an Ashoka Fellow, an INK Fellow and the Founder and Managing Trustee of The YP Foundation, a youth-led and run non-profit organization based in India.

The inclusion of youth in co-operatives and subsequently for the realization of SDGs is a strategic priority for ICA, and therefore it was interesting to host this talk, which put up relevant points of discussion.

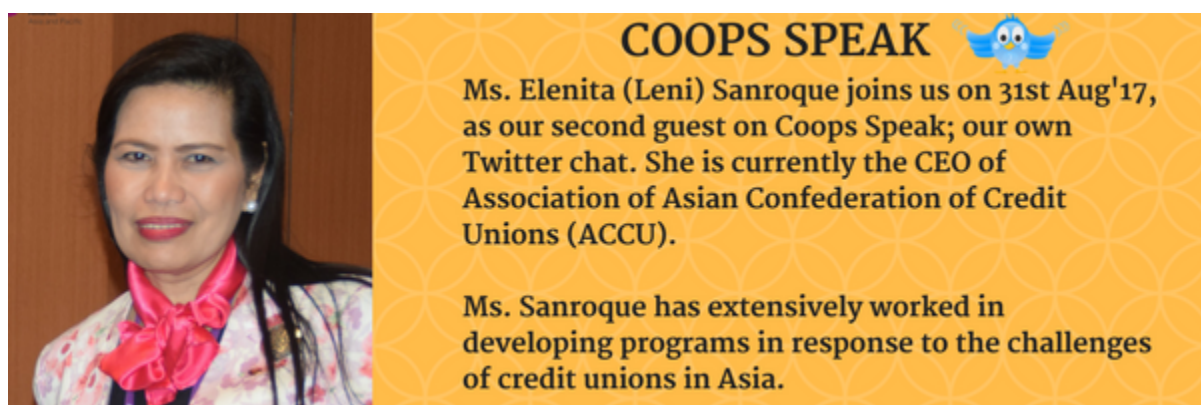
Titled 'On leaving no one behind: Deciphering young people's leadership in the SDGs, through our work at The YP Foundation', Ms. Chaudhry's presentation was an eye-opener as it built a strong case for empowering the youth to achieve human rights. She placed human rights as the basic foundation of development of any kind. She highlighted that it's imperative to empower young people, by increasing their access to information and services, focusing on helping them understand and realise their rights.


The YP Foundation has adopted a multi-faceted approach where it has programs on not just skill-building, but also policy advocacy, arts programs as well as strengthening access to information crucial for the youth.

She shared some thought-provoking insights from the High Level Political Forum on SDGs held between 10th-19th July'17 at the United Nations in New York. The civil society organizations (CSOs) flagged issues of rising inequalities in countries, reduced public sector expenditures on important human development indicators of education, health; as well as shrinking spaces for CSOs to highlight the shortcomings of governments vis-à-vis the realization of SDGs.

Making a reference to co-operatives, Ms. Chaudhry spoke of how collectives need to include people from different background and thought processes. Co-operatives can harness the ideas, innovations and aspirations of the youth, and provide sustainable solutions for unemployment, economic and social inequalities, and other issues faced by the youth in several countries.

Deciphering the role of credit unions in SDGs, and more on Coops Speak with Ms. Elenita Sanroque



COOPS SPEAK 

Ms. Elenita (Leni) Sanroque joins us on 31st Aug'17, as our second guest on Coops Speak; our own Twitter chat. She is currently the CEO of Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU).

Ms. Sanroque has extensively worked in developing programs in response to the challenges of credit unions in Asia.

Coops Speak was envisioned as a way of connecting experts and leaders in the Asia-Pacific co-operative movement, to those who support the movement, in varying capacities.

In our second edition, we spoke with Ms. Elenita (Leni) Sanroque, CEO of the Association of Asia Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU), Thailand, on August 31. The questions to Ms. Sanroque were on the interplay between credit unions and the SDGs, youth and financial inclusion, and the upcoming

2017 ACCU forum in Sri Lanka from September 19 to 21. Leni said that credit unions have an important role to play in the SDGs. For credit unions to perform better on the SDGs front, she felt that they need to reach to the grassroots level. They have to reach the poor in order to be truly contributing to the SDGs. The Annual Forums in 2015 and 2016, which is attended by credit unions and co-ops from several countries, was used as a platform to discuss and pledge towards different SDGs.

On the topic of youth and credit co-ops, she said that all universities in Thailand have credit unions. Ms. Sanroque believed that in order for credit unions to attract more youth, across other countries, they need to modernize their systems as well as services which cater to the needs of their target group. She also mentioned about their work on pooling and sharing of resources in technology, HR recruitment, excess liquidity and centralized marketing to ease costs and achieve scale.

Support for 'Co-op Mic' and Coops Speak is provided by the ICA Domus Trust and the ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development: People Centered Businesses in Action.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

September 2017

- Co-operative Development Meeting (CDM); Manila, Philippines; September 6-7, 2017.
- ICA-Japan training course on Fostering Coordinators to Build Food Value Chains; Thailand and Japan; Sept 12-Oct 6, 2017
- Consultation on 'Autonomy - focus on self-reliant co-operatives' co-organized by ICA-AP and Access Livelihoods Consulting India Ltd, September 14-15, 2017, Hyderabad, India.

October 2017

- Capacity Building and Cooperative Development Seminar; Ulan Bator, Mongolia; October 25-26.
- Second meeting of ICA-AP Committee on Forestry; Yeongju City, South Korea; October 20, 2017. The meeting will be held in conjunction with "2017 Korea Culture Forest EXPO," under the auspices of the National Forestry Cooperative Federation of Korea.

November 2017

- Policy Event on Bridging the Gap in Co-operative Law for Youth, Bhutan, November 2017
- 12th ICA-AP Cooperative Research Conference, "Co-operatives: The key solution for Social Innovation"; Seoul, Korea; November 11-12, 2017. Organized with the Department of Management of Cooperatives at the Graduate School in Sungkonghoe University
- Global Workshop on University and Campus Co-operatives; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

December 2017

- 'Re-work, Re-Imagine, Re-Shape': Advancing women CEOs in Co-operatives; Changsha, China, December 5-7, 2017