

ICA-AP NEWSLETTER

News from members, ICA-AP activities,
ICA-EU Partnership update & more!

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Appeal for donations for Australian bushfire relief from BCCM



Image credit: David Gray / Getty Images

The bushfires raging in Australia for the past few months have been devastating. They have taken a major toll on the environment and wildlife of the country, and destroyed homes and lives in the process. Relief efforts have been ongoing, but have faced challenges due to climatic conditions that are worsening the fires.

Cooperatives and Mutuals in Australia have been contributing to relief and rehabilitation for those most affected by the bushfires. They have opened the call for donations to international cooperatives as well. If you are a cooperative and you wish to donate towards the cause, please click on this link for further information (<https://australianmf.org.au/2020/01/07/australia-bushfire-appeal-2/>).

ICA Global Youth Forum, Kuching, Malaysia

The Global Youth Forum 2020 (GYF20) will take place from February 3-7, 2020 in Kuching Malaysia. It brings together young entrepreneurs and professionals from all around the world to offer them quality training sessions to improve their skills and knowledge. The entrepreneurship training approach is expected to lead to new solutions and recommendations, help the participants learn from best practices and foster new ideas and innovation in the field of youth and cooperative entrepreneurship.



File image of Kuching, Malaysia.

The Forum will focus on the role of young entrepreneurs and professionals and their needs outside of the traditional education and professional training; and bring innovative approach to their learning tools and objectives. The GYF20's programme is structured around a series of training sessions designed to improve the professional development of the participants and the opportunity to attend panel discussions, brainstorming sessions, workshops, ex-cathedra sessions etc.

Each of the regions (Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe) are sending participants and trainers who have been selected through a rigorous process from a large pool of applicants! Here's a sneak peek at some of the young budding cooperators and trainers who we will meet in Kuching.

Participants

Alireza Banaeifar



Alireza is the International Affairs Manager at the Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC). Alireza has been pivotal in connecting top cooperatives in Iran with their counterparts in other countries, coordinating ICC activities and implementing corporate talent management processes for employees. He holds an MBA from Istanbul University and has previously worked as a Commercial Expert for international companies.

Nurlan Tokobaev



Nurlan comes from the Regional Institute of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the International Kuwait University in Bishkek. Nurlan's focus areas are food security, economic growth and development, statistics for social research and economic analysis.

Phoebe Marie Ramirez



Phoebe works as a cooperative auditor with NATCCO (National Confederation of Cooperatives) in the Philippines. Phoebe has been a part of the cooperative movement since she was a student in elementary school. She has majored in cooperative financial management and accounting and an advocate of Financial Literacy for every Juan. She is currently pursuing an MBA to better serve people and cooperatives.

Salonie Muralidhara



Salonie works with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Co-operative Federation, India. She has extensive research experience having worked with the International Labour Organisation on social inclusion in the future work place and contributed to providing the gender perspective on various policy issues. Salonie is currently working on a research project for a National Human Rights Council project on sexual harassment among low-wage women workers in Bombay and Ahmedabad.

Trainer

Zoljargal Munkhsaikhan

Zoljargal from the Mongolian Co-operative Training and Information Centre will be facilitating sessions on business models. She will help participants learn how to organise, articulate and implement business ideas using the business model canvas tool created by Alex Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur in their top selling book: *Business Model Generation*. This training session will introduce participants to a key tool in creating and analysing business models.

World Cooperative Monitor 2019



The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and the European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (Euricse) recently released the 2019 issue of the World Cooperative Monitor (WCM), now in its eighth year. The report explores the economic and social impact of the largest cooperatives and mutuals enterprises (CMEs) worldwide; ranks the Top 300 and provides an analysis of CMEs contributions to meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The top 300 CMEs report a total turnover of over two trillion USD (2,034.98 billion USD) based on 2017 financial data. This year's results show an increased presence of the insurance sector in the Top 300; insurance accounts for 39%, agriculture 31.7%, wholesale and retail trade 17.7%, banking and financial services 7%, industry and utilities 1%, and health, education and social care 1%. There is also new data on employment and cooperative types. In the Top 300, based on the ratio of turnover over gross domestic product (GDP) per capita ranking, two Indian producer cooperatives are in the second and third positions, the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Limited, and the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited. The report contains a special analysis of the top 300 and SDG8 (inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all - SDG 8) and includes three case studies from Up Groupe (France), KRIBHCO (India), and SOK (Finland).

The entire report can be read by clicking [here](#).

President Ariel Guarco's interview at the ICA Global Conference held in Kigali



President Ariel Guarco. Image credit: ICA

ICA President Ariel Guarco was interviewed by foreignaffairsnews.com, a Nepal based online global news portal, during the Global Conference held in Kigali in October 2019. The interview touched upon a wide variety of issues were including; the reach of cooperatives, contemporary challenges faced by cooperatives, ICA's dynamic relationship with international agencies and ICA's role in achievement of the SDGs. Please click here to read the entire interview (<https://foreignaffairsnews.com/cooperative-contributes-10-in-world-gdp-ica-chief/>).

ICA-AP ACTIVITIES

ICA-AP Partnership with IRMA

In 2018, ICA-AP and the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA), one of India's premier rural management institutes, signed an MoU to collaborate on areas of mutual interest. These included research on legal framework for cooperatives and exploring work and ownership in Indian cooperatives, workshops to assert the impact of cooperatives in empowering young people and supporting youth entrepreneurship, and trainings for cooperators, among other areas.

A significant milestone has also been the engagement of students of the Executive Post Graduate Diploma in Management (Rural) PGDMX (R) course in internships at ICA-AP as well as with some of our members. The PGDMX (R) course prepares young managers to assume challenge-filled responsibilities in rural cooperatives and development organisations. Since 2018, ICA-AP has had one intern join each Summer for a three-month internship where the candidates have worked on research, policy and communication related assignments.

This year, two students from the PGDMX (R) course, are undertaking their Project Work Module Internship with ICA-AP members. Mr. Manvir Singh is interning with ANGKASA (the Malaysian National Cooperative Movement) to 'Examine Factors of Production in Scaling up Dairy Production', and Mr. Yogesh Kumar Joshi with the Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd on the 'Design and Development of Business Plan for The Tulasibhanjyang Small Farmers Agriculture Cooperative Limited'. ICA-AP is proud to facilitate this exchange and act as a bridge between academic institutions focusing on cooperatives and international cooperative movements.



(L-R) Mr. Manvir Singh and Mr. Yogeshkumar Joshi.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Second ICA-AP & KFCC Capacity Building Workshop on Sustainable Development Partnership among Credit and Banking Cooperatives

The Second ICA-AP and KFCC (Korean Federation of Community Credit Cooperatives) Capacity Building Workshop on Sustainable Development Partnership among Credit and Banking Cooperatives was held in Korea from December 23 to 28, 2019. The objective of this workshop was to reunite and strengthen the credit and banking cooperatives in the region by establishing a vibrant

platform. Nine delegates representing China, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Vietnam participated in the workshop and discussed ways to further develop and activate financial cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region.



Participants of the workshop. Image credit: KFCC

The participants paid a visit to one of the local community credit cooperatives, Seongnamjeil Saemaul Geumgo in Gyeonggi province. At the welcome ceremony, President & Chairperson of KFCC, Mr. Park Cha Hoon extended his warm wishes and said that this workshop will improve communication and cooperation to provide new impetus for financial cooperatives in the region. KFCC will continue to promote the transfer of Korean financial cooperative model (Saemaul Geumgo) and share achievements and progress of the workshop with member organizations of ICA-AP committee on Credit and Banking.

CREATHON 2020 organised by SNCF

The first Creathon 2020 was organised by the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) on January 18 and 19 at 'A Good Space' at Clarke Quay (<https://www.facebook.com/AGoodSpaceSG/>). 200 young individuals participated in two categories: School category for secondary school students and Open category for youth in the age group of 17-35. The objectives of Creathon were to:

- Raise awareness about cooperatives
- Create new cooperatives that address social issues
- Foster strong social enterprise community
- Instill entrepreneurship and cooperative mindset when young

The event was kickstarted by an opening address from Mr. Kwek Kok Kwong, Chairman, SNCF. This was followed by a session on the basics of cooperatives which included introduction to cooperative principles, the global cooperative scenario, comparison of cooperatives with other enterprises, and steps to set up a cooperative in Singapore. The first session in the open category was by Mr. Justin Lee from the Institute of Policy studies, Singapore. His presentation on, 'From Designing Cooperatives to Designing Cooperation' touched on the application of 'design thinking' in the development of cooperatives. Mr. Mathew Poh, from The Caffeine Experience motivated the audience through his personal experience from being an offender to an entrepreneur. Mr. Aaron Soon, co-founder of Bev.Eat Pte Lt shared his insights on how the first two cooperative principles ensure cooperatives are structured to scale and sustain social impact. After the knowledge sessions, the participants gathered in groups to fine tune their ideas.

The second day began with Mr. Roy Chong, a founding partner of FRESHER, an online meal delivery service, explaining that while starting any enterprise, one must tackle different elements like strategy, competitors, sales, human resource and to address the right elements in their order of importance. Mr. Daniel The, who defined himself as the offender turned social entrepreneur,

highlighted the social element of his venture, Popejai Pte. Ltd. He shared that 90% of Popejai's workforce is derived from marginalised sections of the community. The final session was by Ms. Tan Bao Yi of NVPC Knowledge and Insights on, 'Sector insights of 2019', with special emphasis on environment, low income and mental health .

The final session was the pitch by participants on their cooperative business plans to a five-member panel of judges. The evaluation criteria included: idea/ concept (40%), social impact (30%), application of idea (20%), and quality of pitch (10%).

The first prize in the open category was bagged by the team for their pitch to set up a tourism cooperative.



The winners in the open category

VAMNICOM celebrates its Foundation Day



LtoR Bust of Shri. Vaikunth bhai Metha; Director Dr. K.K. Tripathy addressing the gathering

The Vaikunth Bhai Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VAMNICOM) celebrated its 54th Foundation Day on January 15, 2020! The dignitaries invited were Shri. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries; Dr. T.N. Prakash Kammardi, Professor (retired), University of Agriculture Sciences, Bengaluru; and Mr. Balsubramanian Iyer, Regional Director ICA-AP.

Dr. K.K. Tripathy, Director VAMNICOM and Center for International Cooperation and Training in Agricultural Banking (CICTAB), in his opening address touched upon the achievements of the Institute in developing new curriculum (cyber security, gender budgeting), bringing out research papers, ensuring successful campus placement and developing infrastructure to lay the foundation for growth. Shri. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, in his video message, highlighted the importance of cooperative education and the vital role played by VAMNICOM. Prof. Kammardi in his keynote address on, "Doubling Farmers Income through Cooperatives to help India Attain \$5 Trillion Economy," touched on price pressure faced by farmers and their inability to be price makers. He cooperation is an ideal solution as it enhances collective bargaining power, provides economy of scale, and creation of utilities in time, space and form. Some of the measures he suggested were:

farm equipment aggregation and distribution, precise forecasting and supply projection, precision farming, and online cooperative platform to market agriculture and horticultural commodities.

Mr. Iyer in his address said that commitment to education has been one of the cooperative movement's core Principles since they were first formulated. Early cooperators lived in societies where education was reserved for the privileged. They recognized then that education was fundamental to transforming lives. This philosophy can be seen in the thinking of Shri Vaikunth bhai Mehta who realized the importance of cooperative education and training for the successful functioning of the cooperative movement in the right direction. As Minister, he got the Cooperative Societies Act amended to make it statutory obligation for all cooperatives making profit to contribute to the education fund of the institute to manage the cooperative training colleges and schools established in the districts. When cooperatives fail, it is mainly as a consequence of members not knowing their responsibility, directors not fulfilling their fiduciary duties, and staff not being trained adequately. This inability of members of societies to manage the affairs of their own societies is owing to lack of education in cooperation and training in business. The remedy lies not in tightening the reins of control but in providing more and more of education for the general body of members and for office-bearers, and in fostering habits of self-government and mutual control. He called on VAMNICOM, with its proud privilege of association of Vainkuthbhai's name to continue to translate into action Vikuthbhai's vision and aspirations regarding cooperative education and training. This required **education** which is forward looking; culture which is **entrepreneurial**; and developing students with a sense of **empathy** for the people.

NEW MEMBER

Cooperative Work Agency, Palestine

The Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) was launched towards the end of 2017, following the approval of the Law on Cooperative. It was established to fulfil two major roles:

- a) Legal role/function covering the registration, financial and administrative audit of cooperatives, and other regulatory procedures such as liquidation of cooperatives and investigation into cooperative financial/administrative issues. This role is currently active.
- b) Promoting and supporting the development of cooperatives through education/awareness raising (to be institutionalized through the Cooperative Development Institute) as well as facilitating cooperative access to funding and capacity building in the area of business planning (to be institutionalised through the Cooperative Development Fund). These will take some time to fully operationalize.

The strategic objectives of CWA as spelled out in the 2017-22 Strategy are as follows: build an institutional environment that enables the cooperative movement to grow and develop, improve the financial and organizational performance of cooperatives, and expand cooperative sectors/areas to include new tapes/modalities of cooperation. You can find out more about CWA by visiting their website- www.cwa.pna.ps.

The ICA-AP region now has 109 from 32 countries.

ICA-EU PARTNERSHIP UPDATE



The articles related to the ICA-EU Partnership in this newsletter have been co-funded by the European Union. The contents of these articles are the sole responsibility of the International Cooperative Alliance Asia-Pacific and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Research watch



Image credit: rawpixel.com

The following research activities were undertaken by ICA-AP as part of the ICA-EU partnership to improve knowledge on cooperatives, share information and promote capacity of cooperatives.

The research on Mapping of Cooperatives launched at a full scale in the Asia and Pacific region

The ICA-AP launched the research on Mapping of Cooperatives in December. The mapping research supported by an online questionnaire seeks to collect exhaustive, consistent and reliable data on the cooperative situation in every region and across sectors, in order to provide an accurate picture of the movement to both cooperators and external stakeholders. In the Asia and Pacific region, Iran and Philippines were covered in the pilot phase. The reports for the two pilot countries have been finalised and will soon be available for public view through the #coops4dev website. We aim to cover as many countries as possible and hope that our members will support us in carrying out the research on mapping of cooperative statistics in their respective countries.

Progress on country snapshots: The status of cooperatives in four countries - Papua New Guinea (PNG), Fiji, New Zealand, and the Philippines were mapped through secondary research. The key parameters included, contribution of cooperatives to the national economy, sectoral distribution of cooperatives, genesis and evolution of cooperatives, historical and current laws on cooperatives, and association of national cooperatives with the international cooperative movement and ICA, amongst others. The country snapshots for nine countries are available on the ICA AP website for public view.

COMMUNICATIONS WATCH

A tête-à-tête with Ms. Devika Singh who has recently joined the AP unit of the #coops4dev team.



Ms. Devika Singh

Q1. Hi Devika! Welcome! Before we start, can you tell us about your background?

Thank you! I have studied English Literature and Public Policy, both at the Masters' level. My past experience has been as a Policy Analyst at a global climate change resilience advisory firm. I've worked on projects in climate change adaptation, climate change and water risk assessments, climate finance, and communications and knowledge outreach at the local, national and international levels. I have also worked in agriculture, trying to set up a small organic farming enterprise.

Q2. That's interesting, Devika. So what inspired you to work intensively on agriculture and climate action?

I initially got into agriculture as my father does organic farming in Uttar Pradesh, India. That experience introduced me to the strong influence of multiple environmental and government policy factors on farming at the local level, which became the push for me to study public policy and work in climate change. I am strongly interested in the policy framework and climate-related factors that form the larger enabling or disabling environment for sustainable food production and livelihoods.

Q3. Great! What is your role going to be at ICA and how does working with cooperatives align with what you have done and want to do?

I will be working with ICA-AP as the Communications and Member Development Officer for the ICA-EU Partnership: Cooperatives in Development: People-centered Businesses in Action. In this role, I will be responsible for implementing the joint visibility strategy and in stewardship of members. From my experience, I feel the cooperative business model can be a very suitable model to address a number of current environmental, social and economic problems: from climate action and sustainable food production to sustainable livelihood generation and economic growth. I'm very excited about working with ICA-AP as it gives me the opportunity to work closely with cooperatives from different sectors, across the region. ICA-AP is also a great platform to disseminate the sustainable cooperative agenda and enable knowledge sharing across sectors and regions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2020

- President Guarco's visit to Malaysia and the Philippines, February 2-8
- Global Youth Forum, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, February 3-7.
- 3rd ICA-MAFF Japan Training Course on 'Fostering Leaders for Management and Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia 2019', Thailand and Japan, February 2- March 18.
- UNDESA Cooperatives Development Workshop for Pacific countries, Fiji March, February 3-5