

# ICA-AP NEWSLETTER

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

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## Opinion Piece: A Framework for Cooperative Curriculum at Schools and Higher Education Institutions



*By Yashavantha Dongre, Visiting Professor, College of Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University, Japan & Co-Secretary, ICA-AP Committee on Cooperatives in Educational Institutions*

Education, Training, and Information dissemination constitute one of the basic principles (Principle 5) as well as core values of the cooperative movement. Building cooperative identity by spreading awareness about cooperatives as well as imbuing professionalism among leaders, members, and staff of cooperatives, is an important and perpetual process. The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) has stated that “cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the public – particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of cooperation”. The need for and modalities of facilitating education, training and information dissemination is elaborated in detail in the [Guidance Notes to the Cooperative Principles](#). It is clearly emphasised that “a cooperative’s commitment to education is not simply inward-facing to members, elected members, managers and employees, but outward-facing too. It requires cooperatives to “inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperation”. This obligation to inform others about the nature and benefits of cooperatives applies “particularly” to “young people and opinion leaders.” The same sentiments are resonated in the [United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/128](#) that identified the need for “integrating cooperative values, principles and business models into educational programming, including school curricula.”

Even though the need for cooperative education, to the youth, in particular, is seen as an important requirement for a long time now, the ground level situation does not seem to be very positive. It is rightly stated that “the inclusion of cooperative content within all stages of education from primary school through to adulthood is needed – or, at least at some stage(s)! At a minimum, cooperative curriculum should be integrated into existing secondary school courses”. But experiences suggest that in places where cooperative curriculum should be covered without question, such as in the college and university programmes, it is mostly absent. Given this scenario, there is a need to pursue concerted efforts to promote cooperative education and facilitate building cooperative identity among the next generation of leaders, professionals and entrepreneurs. While designing and introducing the curriculum related to cooperative movement at school and college levels is one way of doing it, starting cooperatives in the campuses is another equally important strategy. The curriculum helps to provide theoretical and technical knowledge about cooperatives and the presence of a cooperative on the campus serves as a laboratory, giving opportunity for hands-on learning. The Asia Pacific region has ample examples of the development of campus cooperatives in which the entire campus community - teachers, staff, and students - become members, participate, and serve their

needs on a self-help basis. In India, campus cooperatives, especially school cooperatives were encouraged by the leaders of the freedom struggle, for they believed that these cooperatives can be effective instruments of collectivism and to nurture future leaders. School cooperatives in countries like Malaysia have demonstrated their ability to make the young students learn about the importance of cooperatives and mutuality. University cooperatives in Japan and Korea have developed into educational and student support service organizations providing all-around support to the academic community.

The ICA-AP's initiative of starting a separate sectoral committee on campus cooperatives is indeed an important milestone underscoring the importance of such cooperatives as micro-level institutions imbuing the cooperative spirit among the youth. By renaming it as Committee on Cooperatives in Educational Institutions (ICEI), ICA-AP has provided it with the opportunity to address varied aspects of support services required for those pursuing education. While promoting the formation of campus cooperatives needs to be pursued aggressively, there is an equally important need of making cooperatives part of the curricula in general education. The ICEI's initiative to organise a webinar on cooperative education and curricula in the coming months is, therefore, a welcome step.

The curriculum must be designed to provide a general understanding of cooperatives at the school level and national and international cooperative movement at the higher education level. However, there are constraints in accommodating varied aspects of society and economy at the school level learning; therefore, it is not practical to introduce a separate course/ paper on cooperatives. High school level looks ideal starting point to introduce some modules and this can be done as part of a general subject such as Economics or Social Studies. For higher education (post-metric or university/college level), there are greater options. At this level, students normally opt for programs that make them job ready. This should be considered while designing the curriculum. Most universities/ higher education institutions offer Open Elective courses both at undergraduate and graduate levels. This is one of the best ways of making youth studying diverse courses, to study cooperatives. Apart from this, post-metric and post-graduate yearly diplomas fit better as the students get to study cooperatives within a shorter duration and stand a chance to be employed in the cooperative sector. At a professional level, such as graduate studies in Business, Economics etc., cooperatives can be an elective/ specialized stream. The modus-operandi of offering these courses are also equally important. Technology has inroaded into the education systems in a big way. Online courses, credit transfers, joint/pooled degree programmes, etc. are becoming the order of the day. This is a good opportunity for making the cooperative education curriculum available to the young population around the world. If such courses are offered online through reputed educational institutions, they can attract a lot more students. ICA-AP can play the role of a catalyst in this process. The HRD Committee, Research Committee, Youth Committee and ICEI will have to jointly plan and initiate a set of measures, through member organizations of ICA as well as through academic institutions, to facilitate designing and offering education curriculum on cooperatives in educational institutions.

Article: Principle 5: Education, Training, and Information – A reflection on developing a pedagogy for tertiary level co-operative education at the University of Newcastle, Australia



*By Dr Sidsel Grimstad Senior Lecturer and Ann Apps, Lecturer, College of Human and Social Futures, University of Newcastle, Australia*

Most cooperatives in Australia do a good job of ensuring that their members have the training and information they need to help their cooperative business to develop and grow. However, they are not always as good at the second part of the 5<sup>th</sup> principle: “.. inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders about the nature and benefits of cooperation.” The coop sector has also found it difficult to find business advisers and lawyers having enough knowledge about cooperatives to provide sound commercial advice to cooperative enterprises. In 2016 the Senate Economic Reference Committee handed down the [report of its inquiry into cooperative mutual and member-owned business in Australia](#). The report was prepared after the committee heard evidence from business leaders, academics, community groups and individuals on how cooperatives had contributed to the social, economic and cultural development of Australia. It also identified the barriers faced by cooperatives and other member-owned businesses when trying to compete against ‘mainstream’ for-profit businesses. The committee heard that *“The co-operative sector is largely ignored in both secondary and tertiary education which limits knowledge about the co-operative business model.”*

Against this background, we were excited when in 2017, our Faculty (Business and Law, at that time) at the University of Newcastle decided to commence a Masters in Cooperative Management and Organisation. As academicians with an interest in the cooperative business model, we were tasked with developing a curriculum for the new programme from scratch. To make things even more challenging, only a few business or law textbooks even mention cooperatives. We sought advice from the cooperative and mutual sector, and fortunately, we received strong support from the [BCCM](#), Australia’s peak body for cooperatives and mutuals, and its CEO, Melina Morrison. Melina helped us recruiting members for an Industry Advisory Board (IAB), who represented a broad cross-section of cooperative and mutual businesses including mutual banks, a fishermen’s cooperative, a large retail cooperative, housing cooperative peak organisation and disability support services cooperative. The IAB provided us with constructive advice, including that we should reduce the programme to a one-year Graduate Certificate with three specialised coop courses. These could also be selected as electives in an MBA with a specialisation in cooperative and social enterprise management. Industry representatives were positive about the online format of the courses, as this would provide opportunities for participation in coop education in rural and regional areas in our vast continent. They also advised that the courses needed to focus on coop governance skills and member engagement. The first course in the trio of specialised courses was a foundation course, providing students with a broad overview of the cooperative business model and its intersection with other disciplines including history, law, economics, and management. The second course focused on cooperative law and

governance and compared the regulation of the cooperative model with the investor-owned company. The third course introduced students to innovation and entrepreneurship and considered different ways of organising to achieve social change, with reference to design thinking, 'co' processes, social procurement, and platform cooperativism.

Between 2017 and 2021, more than 150 postgraduate students completed one or more of the specialised cooperative courses. Sadly, the Graduate Certificate was disestablished, and the three specialised courses were discontinued from the beginning of this academic year, along with many other smaller programmes. This was partly due to lower enrolment numbers and partly influenced by the impacts of the pandemic on the University's economic position. In the four years of running the courses, we were rewarded with wonderful students, who participated enthusiastically in the programme. 2018 was a special year when we delivered two courses to participants in a government-funded [Farming Together](#) programme aimed at promoting collaborative business models for the agricultural sector. Our students were involved in establishing or strengthening their agricultural cooperative businesses. We adopted a tailored and practical approach to our assessment design, so that our participants had opportunities to network and exchange ideas, while at the same time developing practical skills, such as chairing and holding meetings, participatory decision-making, networking and collaboration, and research skills.

While our farmer/ participants/ students were busy setting up and reorganising their coops, we were also keen to learn from their experiences, therefore, we designed and implemented a research project. Our objective was to find out how their tertiary education experience impacted their work with their new coops. Based on our student reflections and follow up focus groups, we were able to make recommendations to the BCCM about developing a sound pedagogy for cooperative education at the tertiary level. Our recommendations are available in two [reports](#) that included:

- Encouraging students to map their skills and experience with cooperatives to enable them to contribute effectively to cooperative governance
- Provide them with the opportunity to explore different types of participative governance processes
- Help them to better understand the legal requirements for board governance
- Provide opportunities to practice board organization, meeting skills, and reflect upon the importance of board diversity
- Encourage the use of web conference technology to enhance connectivity within and among cooperatives
- Consider the benefits to students of the longer (semester or trimester) courses which provide enough time for students to reflect and develop a deeper understanding of cooperatives.

Some of our former students have recently participated in the [BCCM's Cooperative Farming project](#) and podcasts of their conversations about cooperative businesses are available [here](#) and [here](#). We are also very proud of our alumnus, Deb Bogenhuber, and her team, for their work in establishing and developing a social enterprise, [Food Next Door](#). In this [video](#) developed by Sidsel, Deb explains the importance of coop education and their unique multi-stakeholder cooperative design.

The most important lesson learnt from our experience is that most of the education and training provided in the cooperative sector involves 'short form' courses and training, over a few hours, or days. But there are incomparable advantages in delivering a tertiary level programme of cooperative education over a longer period (a year or multiple years for part-time students). It takes time to learn about and understand the practical and philosophical underpinnings of the cooperative principles and values and how they shape a unique cooperative governance and management system. If our future

lawyers, accountants, and corporate managers are not given the opportunity to engage with cooperatives at this deeper level, they will not understand the potential of the cooperative business model contributing to the resolution of contemporary social and economic problems. The challenge is to attract adequate student enrolments in the early stages and to convince the University that the investment is worthwhile.

Article: VAMNICOM's Best Practices in the Implementation of Cooperative Principle 5



By Hema Yadav, Director, Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM)

Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM) is a premier National Institute for Cooperative Management in India that fosters the 5<sup>th</sup> Principle: Education, Training and Information of Cooperatives through training and education programmes. Understanding that the cooperative business requires specific education and training for those who wish to operate it, VAMNICOM has taken a lead in designing and delivering need-based training. VAMNICOM, through its programmes, aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, and attitude of cooperative members and personnel to enable them to accomplish their jobs, motivate the workers, build effective organizations and strengthen the capabilities of human resources in cooperatives.

### Cooperative Training

Training activities are designed to develop the know-how and skills that create functional ability, productivity and proficiency. The Institute organizes comprehensive programmes for member's involvement and empowerment, training of staff and members of boards of directors, training of youth for their engagement in the cooperative sector. The training programmes delivered include,

- **Leadership Development Programmes** - The Leadership Development Program is designed for the career progression of the executive rank officers in cooperative societies.
- **Management Development Programmes** - VAMNICOM's Centre for training and development programmes conducts more than 100 short-duration Executive/ Management Development Programmes for Senior Officials and non-officials of the cooperative sector. Orientation training programmes for the Chairpersons and Managing Directors of National level Cooperative Organizations like the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative Limited (IFFCO), other Cooperative Institutions on leadership and decision making.
- **Skill Development Programmes**- Focused on capacity building and skill development in governance, management, entrepreneurship, business planning, human resource development, information technology and management. The personnel from cooperative sectors such as credit, banking, dairy, FPO, sugar, fishery etc are regularly trained.

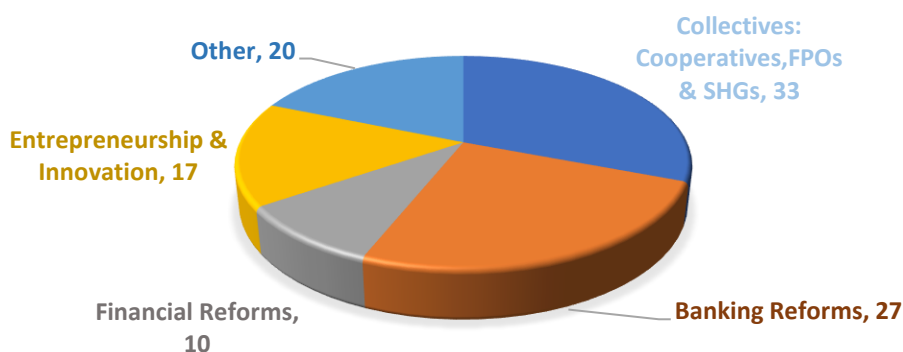
During April 2019-Dec 2020, VAMNICOM organized 193 training programmes with 6,973 participants including long-term and short term courses, seminars and workshops.

After the COVID-19 pandemic hit, VAMNICOM being the apex institution for cooperative training in the country, took several steps to reach out to the cooperative societies and shifted to the online modes of training.

### Alignment with Regulations and Reforms

Over time, the cooperative and banking sectors in India have witnessed reforms and regulations. The cooperative training programmes have been aligned to address the requirement of training by the personnel to understand reforms and enable them to work in tune with the policy changes. The banking reforms such as the focus on FPO, SHGs, Financial Inclusions, Compliance to GST, FINTECH, Entrepreneurship and Innovations are the changes that are being addressed by VAMNICOM through its various programmes planned in 2021-2022.

*Training programs planned from April 2021- Mar 2022*



### Education Activities

ICA states that education means engaging the minds of members, elected leaders, managers and employees to comprehend fully the complexity and richness of cooperative thought and action. In this direction, VAMNICOM runs two education programmes.

1. **Post Graduate Diploma in Co-operative Business Management (PGDCBM)** – It is a core programme being conducted from 1967-68. Its mandate is to train the middle and senior level functionaries of cooperatives on management. The program exposes the participants to field level issues, challenges, solutions and best practices.
2. **Post Graduate Diploma Management-Agribusiness Management (PGDMABM)** – It is a two-year programme, approved by the All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi and is being conducted since 1993. The programme is recognised as equivalent to MBA Degree by the Association of India Universities, New Delhi since 2001 and has been accredited by the National Board of Accreditation, New Delhi. It nurtures the young students to enable them to shoulder the managerial responsibilities in Cooperative societies.



### **Consultancy and Advisory Services**

The institute offers consultancy services both at the State and National levels, viz recruitment of personnel for cooperatives, information technology support through the formulation of IT & Cyber Security Policy, the conduct of system audit, support to computerize cooperative organizations.

### **Research and Publications**

VAMNICOM through its “Centre for Research and Publication” formulates policies to nurture quality research culture and facilitate research endeavours. The insights from research enable the institute to offer policy support and thereafter effective training. The Institute publishes a quarterly journal named Cooperative Perspective, a referred journal that invites articles, case studies and book reviews in different areas of co-operatives.

### **Centre for Gender Studies**

The centre organizes capacity building activities catering to women cooperatives, women collectives like self-help groups and cooperative banks. The thematic areas include financial inclusion models and best practices, financial literacy, adoption of technology, women micro-entrepreneurship development, financial management and business development for women collectives.

### **Centre for Entrepreneurship Development**

The centre aims at providing opportunities to the youth to gain skills and start an entrepreneurial activity in the agribusiness sector and develop the entrepreneurial capability among the members of the cooperative sector.

### **Collaboration and Partnership**

The institute collaborates with National and International Cooperative Organizations and State Universities. VAMNICOM has signed MOU with National Forensic Sciences University, Gujarat in India. International collaboration includes MOU with National Co-operative College, Mauritius, Agriculture Development Bank Ltd., Nepal, National Institute of Cooperative Development, Sri Lanka, Cooperative League of Thailand, Cooperative College of Malaysia and The Cooperative College, Manchester, U.K. etc.

### **Centre for International Cooperation in Agriculture and Agricultural Banking (CICTAB)**

CICTAB administers and manages activities to promote international cooperation for training in agricultural banking and facilitates the exchange of experiences, success stories and information on national systems of finance and banking for agriculture and rural development with special reference to the countries of the SAARC region.

VAMNICOM plans to continue its work with the same effectiveness and reach enviable heights in future. With a separate Ministry of Cooperation being formed in India, the responsibilities and expectations from VAMNICOM are manifold. The institute is gearing up for the same and envisions reaching out to the 3 million cooperatives worldwide and serve 8 lakh cooperatives in India.



## Opinion Piece: How does the formation of the new Ministry of Cooperation advance the cooperative movement in India?



*By Shri Dileep Sanghani, President of the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI)*

It is a matter of great pleasure for us that the Government of India has recently formed a separate Union Ministry of Cooperation after long concerted efforts by the Indian cooperative movement. This development is welcome and will strengthen the cooperative movement in the years to come. Here, I would like to mention that the NCUI has always emphasized on creation of a separate cooperative ministry at central government. Recently, the Government of India had decided to set up a separate administrative structure for the development of Multi-state Cooperative Societies and to provide the necessary support to strengthen the capacity of cooperative institutions to be able to compete in the open market. In the current volatile socio-economic situation, such structural reforms are necessary to make cooperatives a sustainable and successful business model.

Based on this decision, the former Union Minister of State for Cooperatives, Shri Parshottam Rupala invited suggestions from the Indian cooperatives on what should be the framework/ administrative structure of the new ministry to serve the cooperatives in the best possible way. Hence, the NCUI organized a national level discussion with the Minister seeking suggestions and opinions from the cooperative leadership across the country on strengthening the administrative structure of the new Ministry as well as the cooperatives.

Presidents/ Managing Directors of National Federations were present in this discussion. It was a common consensus that there is a need to set up a separate Ministry of Cooperatives to strengthen the cooperative movement at the grassroots level and to find solutions to the problems of various cooperatives centrally. The cooperatives highlighted the fact that over the years, they have been neglected in the planning/ budgeting process of the government. If a separate ministry will be set up, the issues of cooperatives can be taken on priority. I am glad that the Ministry of Cooperatives has been established only after few months of initiating this discussion.

Recently, a delegation led by NCUI consisting of the Chairmen/ Managing Directors of prominent national cooperative federations such as IFFCO, KRIBHCO and NAFED etc., met the Hon'ble Union Cooperation Minister, Shri Amit Shah and had a detailed discussion with him on issues concerning the cooperative sector. Shri Amit Shah showed commitment to strengthen the cooperative movement and talked about organizing a conference of senior representatives of all the national and state level cooperatives. We sincerely hope that with the interest taken by the Hon'ble Minister, a lot of positive changes will take place in the coming years for the betterment of the cooperative sector. With the creation of a separate ministry, the role and responsibility of the NCUI and other national-level cooperatives have increased even more. We will have to make every effort to strengthen the

cooperative movement under the guidance of the Ministry along with all the cooperative institutions and bring to the notice of the Ministry various challenges faced by the cooperatives.

There is also a need to review the National Policy on Cooperatives 2002 to make it relevant to the ever-changing socio-economic aspirations of cooperative members. After the formation of the new ministry, I sincerely hope that the government will form a new National Cooperative Policy. To make the proposed formation of cooperative policy relevant and need-based, the concern of the cooperative movement must be addressed appropriately and their suggestions and opinions should be considered to make the process participatory. By resetting the cooperative policy, the challenges faced by the cooperative movement can be addressed effectively and the institutions can be further strengthened based on the universal values and principles of cooperation. Besides, the national cooperative policy is expected to create a conducive environment so that people should have trust in the cooperative business model, and more people get organized and embrace cooperatives as means of livelihood in every business sector.

The cooperative education and training sector has to play a critical role in creating awareness among people, policymakers, and other stakeholders. The NCUI is playing an important role in this regard and organizing several educational and skill development programmes to address the needs of the members and is supporting the national, state unions and the junior cooperative training centres at the district level across the country.

NCUI has outreach at the grassroots level as well including the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) through its 41 Cooperative Education Projects. A team of 150 staff is working at 41 districts located in various states where the staff is directly helping in skill development and capacity building of the ordinary cooperative members and community. We hope that with the creation of the new Ministry, the capacity of the NCUI will be strengthened further in serving 40 crore individual cooperative members organized in 8 lakh cooperatives in the country.

## Opinion Piece: Constitution (97th Amendment) Act 2011 & Supreme Court Verdict 2021



*By Bhima Subrahmanyam, Managing Director, National Federation of State Cooperative Banks (NAFSCOB), President International Cooperative Banking Association*

The spontaneous reactions to the verdict of the Supreme Court of India on 20 July 2021 for an appeal made by the Government of India against the Judgement of Gujarat High Court on 22 April 2013 on the Constitution (97th Amendment) Act 2011 (herein after called as Act 2011), depicted a sense of shock, unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and disappointment! Some even expressed the need to relook into the discrepancies, eliminate the loopholes in the Act 2011, and reintroduce it in Parliament. In the context of these developments, it may be helpful to understand the background of the issue, the

efforts put in to draft the Constitution (111th Amendment) Bill, 2009, the details of the verdict by both Gujarat High Court and the Supreme Court on the validity of the Act 2011, and the suggestions to be considered for future course of action to ensure the main objectives of the proposed Constitutional amendments as related to the cooperatives are met.

**Background:** On 22 November 2004, a national level meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Sharad Pawar, the then Union Agriculture Minister, to consider the proposals for constitutional amendments ensuring autonomous, democratic, and professional functioning of the cooperatives. Pursuant to this suggestion, a 13-member committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Late Dr S. S. Sisodia, the then President, NCUI, met on 27 November 2004 to finalise the proposals. The committee discussed formulating a strategy, primarily because under the Government of India Act, 1919, the subject 'cooperative societies' was originally contained in entry 13 of the Provincial list and continued in entry 33 of the Provincial list by the Government of India Act, 1935. Later, the subject of 'cooperative Societies' was continued by the Constitution of India as a part of entry 32 within Schedule VII List II, i.e., the State List. I was part of both the above meetings. Subsequently, a conference of Ministers of Cooperation of various states held on 7 December 2004 resolved to amend the constitution on the lines of the above proposals i.e to address key issues of empowerment of cooperatives.

The consultations by the Government of India resulted in identifying eight areas for Constitutional Amendments: i) Number and term of members of the board and its office bearers, ii) Election of members of the board, iii) Supersession and suspension of the board and interim management, iv) Audit of accounts of cooperative societies, v) Convening of general body meetings, vi) Right of a member to get information, vii) Returns, and viii) Offences and penalties.

**Constitution (111th Amendment) Bill, 2009:** As a result, this Bill, 2009 was drafted, widely discussed, and introduced in the Parliament to further amend the Constitution of India to ensure the contribution of cooperatives in the country's economic development, to serve the interests of members and the public at large, and to ensure cooperatives' autonomy, democratic functioning, and professional management. The sitting Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture (PCA) invited me on 18 June 2010 to present my views on the proposed amendments, particularly on issues such as insertion of new article 43B, promotion of cooperative societies, definitions, incorporation of cooperative societies, application of multi-state cooperative societies (MSCS), application to Union Territories, the continuance of existing laws etc. Finally, the Act 2011 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 22 December 2011 and by the Rajya Sabha on 28 December 2011. It received the assent of the President of India on 12 January 2012 and the amendment came into force on 15 February 2012 after its notification in the Gazette of India of 13 January 2012.

**Continuation of Existing Laws:** The Act 2011 through the amendment provided one year, from the date of its commencement to the states to amend the state laws on cooperative societies. A National Conference was organised by NCUI on 12 October 2012 under the leadership of Dr Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, Ex. Member of Parliament & the then president of NCUI, wherein, all the states/ union territories were requested to take necessary measures to amend their State cooperative Societies' Acts in tune with the Act 2011. By September 2012, 22 states amended their state laws according to some provisions of the Act 2011.

**Gujarat High Court Verdict 2013:** The Gujarat High Court on 22 April 2013 passed the judgement – *“the amendment is violating the basic structure of the Constitution so long as the subject of “Co-Operative Societies” is in the List II of the 7th Schedule and at the same time, the provisions of Article 368(2) has not been complied with. The Constitution has not permitted curtailment of the power of the State Legislatures over the subject mentioned in List II without taking recourse to Article 368(2). We,*

*therefore, allow this Public Interest Litigation by declaring that the Constitution [97th amendment] Act, 2011 inserting part IXB containing Articles 243ZH to 243ZT is ultra vires the Constitution of India for not taking recourse to Article 368(2) of the Constitution providing for ratification by the majority of the State Legislatures. This order, however, will not affect other parts of the Constitution [97th amendment] Act, 2011.” Further, the prayer for ‘stay order’ of the judgement was refused.*

**Supreme Court Verdict 2021:** The Bench of the Supreme Court perused the impugned judgment of the Gujarat High Court and presented the judgement -

*“The judgment of the High Court is upheld except to the extent that it strikes down the entirety of Part IXB of the Constitution of India. As held by us above, it is declared that Part IXB of the Constitution of India is operative only insofar as it concerns multi-state co-operative societies both within the various States and in the Union territories of India. The appeals are accordingly disposed of.”*

The reportable dissenting judgement mentioned, *“... More importantly, once the Court has painted the relevant provisions, which are the substantial provisions (Article 243ZI to 243ZQ), with the brush of unconstitutionality, rendering those provisions, still born, it would appear that the provisions contained in Article 243ZR and Article 243ZS would not have the crutches without which these provisions cease to be workable and are impossible to sustain. The unconstitutional part, which is to be an integral part of Article 243ZR and Article 243ZS, must continue to exist, if the provisions’, in question, are to bear life. In other words, to sustain these provisions the court would have to resurrect the dead provisions contained in Article 243ZI to 243ZQ and Article 243ZT. The Doctrine of Severability must apply on surer foundations. It is my view that unless the provisions, which have been found unconstitutional, are kept alive, Articles 243R and 243ZQ are plainly unworkable. In this view of the matter, I respectfully disagree with the view taken by my learned and esteemed Brother in regard to the application of the Doctrine of Severability. In this view of the matter, the Appeals are dismissed.”*

**Suggestions for Future course of Action:**

- The verdict by the Supreme Court does not rule out the possibility of one or more states/ UT governments deciding to amend (reverse) the provisions of their cooperative Societies’ Acts. Such likely possibilities, if any, should not be allowed to take place.
- Now, there is an urgent need to expedite the amendments in the MSCS Act 2002 to impress upon the need to incorporate the identified eight areas of the amendment. Any further delay in amending the MSCS Act 2002 may impact the credibility of the efforts by the Government of India. Such delay shall also cause indefinite uncertainty for the state governments to bring in amendments in their state cooperative laws.
- In the context of the Verdict by the Supreme Court, the provisions of the Banking Regulations (Amendment) Act, 2020 emerged out of the amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (AACS), as related to cooperative banks may perhaps require a re-examination of the regulation.
- Union Ministry of Cooperation may also simultaneously hold consultations considering the amendment shall also require to be ratified by the Legislatures of not less than one-half of the States by resolutions to that effect, passed by those Legislatures, before the Bill making provision for such amendment in future.
- The Government of India shall always keep into consideration that the power to make laws for the States in respect of matters listed in List II in the 7th Schedule is exclusively that of the State Legislatures.”

## ICA-AP Updates

### Consultation with Office Bearers of ICA-AP Committees



The ICA-AP regional office organised an online consultation of regional thematic and sectoral committees on 14 July 2021. The consultation was planned in the context of this year's theme for International Day of Cooperatives (IDC) – Rebuild Better Together.

The consultation was attended by Office Bearers and Secretaries of nine Committees (agriculture, credit and banking, consumer, education, forestry, research, trade, women, and youth). Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP in his welcome address thanked the Committee Office Bearers and Secretaries for joining the consultation and their active work. The opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Li Chunsheng, Chairperson, ICA-AP Regional Board. Mr. Li noted that the theme of this year's International Day of Cooperatives 'Rebuild Better Together', is relevant as the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown light on the importance of solidarity more than ever. He commended the RO for organising the consultation with Committees to know more about their activities and challenges. He underscored the need for deeper solidarity, resilience and collaboration between Committees and cooperators in the region to continue making difference and contributing towards just recovery post COVID-19.

The Committee Office Bearers presented an overview of their structure, activities, and challenges. Most common challenges related to membership: increase membership in unrepresented member countries of ICA-AP, limited involvement of members in Committee activities, limited communication between members and Office Bearers; and need for enhanced visibility of activities and impact of Committees. The need to integrate youth and women in activities and governance of Committees was also discussed. There was a suggestion to better align the annual activities and budget of the Regional Office and Committees.

## National Strategy for the Cooperative Movement in Jordan



Picture credit: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Prime Minister Dr. Bisher Al-Khasawneh, the Jordan Cooperative Corporation (JCC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the National Strategy for the Cooperative Movement (2021-2025) on 3 July 2021 at the Hilton Hotel, Dead Sea. The launch presented the overall national strategy of the cooperative movement, which aims to build "a prosperous, autonomous, inclusive and self-reliant cooperative movement in Jordan," and contribute to better cooperative services, including those that facilitate refugee and host community members' access to decent work.

Agriculture Minister Mr. Khalid Hneifat, who deputised for Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Dr. Bisher Al Khasawneh, praised the efforts of all development partners. The minister, who is also chairman of the JCC, highlighted the need to expand Jordan's cooperative sector due to its important contributions to local community development. He noted that the JCC and the ILO have developed an executive plan to support the organisations' joint role in implementing projects with cooperative institutions to realise comprehensive sustainable development.

JCC's Director-General, Mr. Abdulfattah Shalabi highlighted that this year, the International Day of Cooperatives is celebrated under the theme "Rebuild Better Together." He said that the annual celebration was a good occasion to announce the strategy, recently approved by the Cabinet, which gives clear performance indicators and timeframes aimed at developing the cooperative sector. Mr. Frank Hagemann, the ILO's Deputy Regional Director for the Arab States, said that the ILO pays great attention to cooperative institutions for their role in enhancing social justice. He noted that ILO has been supporting cooperative work for 100 years.

The adoption of the National Strategy of the Cooperative Movement in Jordan reflects a critical inflection point for the cooperative movement in Jordan. It demonstrates the power of consultative processes, done in coordination with workers and employers, as well as national stakeholders, to identify strategic areas where cooperatives will make investments in the coming years. The initiative is supported by the Government of the Netherlands within the framework of the Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS).

ICA-AP's programmatic focus in Jordan has been intended to enhance linkages and networking activities of cooperative organizations active in development. The National Report on Cooperative



Legal Frameworks for Jordan that was prepared as part of the ICA-EU project looks at why cooperatives in Jordan need an enabling environment that strengthens their autonomy and facilitates their access to financial and technical support. It was also shared with the JCC and ILO, more information is available on <https://www.coops4dev.coop/en>.

### UK Retail Co-ops support India COVID Crisis



Picture credit: [www.uk.coop](http://www.uk.coop)

Organised by Co-operatives UK, the UK movement came together with their retail cooperatives to provide over £100,000 to support/ assist SEWA Cooperative Federation during the COVID-19 crisis. The support allowed SEWA to provide essential basic supplies through their female networks, including masks and paracetamol, critical supplies including oxygen, and supporting Indian coops to restart their businesses after lockdown. Over the coming months, Co-operatives UK will be working with SEWA to 'Build Back Together' towards a more sustainable future for their co-operatives. To know more, click [here](#).

### ILO Action Week on the Convention on Violence and Harassment at Workplaces



*By Joselita F. Cardona, CEO, Most Holy Rosary Multipurpose Cooperative*

According to the 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority, one in four Filipino women aged 15-49 has experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence by their husband or partner. It is indeed alarming that despite efforts to address the concern, the violence against women persists.



The Most Holy Rosary Multipurpose Cooperative conducted a **“Self Defence Awareness Workshop”** for women employees on 25 June 2021 to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This activity was facilitated by the Philippine National Police in Montalban Rizal Philippines. The activity aimed to create awareness on the rights of a woman and their important role in the community. The workshop empowered the women with self-defence skills.

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS

### NCF-EUD Nepal Follow Up Meeting



The National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF) virtually met the European Union Delegation to Nepal (EUD Nepal) to explore potential areas of collaboration between the organizations. The meeting was also participated by the ILO Nepal.

Ms. Eloisa ASTUDILLO-FERNANDEZ, Deputy Head of Cooperation, EUD Nepal noted that decent work opportunities, division of labour, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), could be interesting areas to consider as women do not have access to financing services at the grassroots level. She said the EU could support the digitalization of cooperatives as well so they could serve better. Ms. Fernandez mentioned that the collaboration with cooperatives is good and the EU and its partners are ready to strengthen the collaboration. There is a need to narrow down the requirement and ask for specific support needed to initiate the work.

Dr. Ranjan Prakash Shrestha, Senior Programme Manager, EUD Nepal mentioned that the EU has worked closely with cooperatives while implementing the EU funded Renewable Energy Project. The services provided by cooperatives to increase access to energy were very commendable. He said that the partnership with cooperatives and NCF would be instrumental to extend services to rural and poor communities where other financial services providing institutions are not present. He said that the cooperatives reach those areas, probably where the sun could not reach.

Mr. Richard Howard, Country Director, ILO Nepal informed that women in Nepal are actively involved in forestry, agriculture and value chain programmes. Working with cooperatives is important to strengthen skills and ensure social protection. However, there is a need to connect the producers and

the market to implement the immediate activities through pilot projects. Mr Howard also proposed to have a technical meeting to identify the common areas of work without further delay.

Mr. Andrew Bonges, a consultant from the ILO Nepal office noted that in the labour market, one in every three persons is a woman, therefore, it is important to focus on areas empowering women including GESI and violence against women. He said that the task is challenging in terms of reality on the ground. It is important to understand the capacity of the women and how we could extend support to women in the areas of empowerment, low carbon economy, and green growth. He emphasized on connecting the targeted people with the value-added integrated activities and added that the role of cooperatives for realizing the targeted people is imperative.

Mr. Prakash Pokharel, National Programme Manager, ILO Nepal noted that ILO is looking forward to mitigating differences in the work categories. Working with cooperatives is important to cater to all the services, especially accelerating financial services. He said that cooperatives are trusted institutions where every woman and household are involved. This is why ILO has chosen to work with cooperatives in various sectors. He also emphasized the growing needs for cooperatives to work with the marginalized section of the society, stressed initiating the immediate work as a ground for the next project. He also expressed his experience of a good working relationship with the NCF for women empowerment and gender inclusion.

Mr. Min Raj Kandel, NCF Chairman, delivered the vote of thanks to EUD Nepal for organizing the follow-up meeting. He expressed his happiness to EUD Nepal for its consideration to include cooperatives in the EU Country Road Map. Mr Kandel opined that the motto of cooperatives is to fulfil the economic, social, cultural and environmental needs of the members and communities based on mutual collaboration. Partnership in line with achieving such objectives is needful.

Ms. Om Devi Malla, Global Board Member of ICA and Senior Vice-Chairman and Constituent Assembly member, NCF expressed gratitude to the EU for its collaboration with ICA. She emphasized on the need for a joint project on gender empowerment to reach the deprived people in remote areas through cooperatives. She urged for the partnership with EUD Nepal as ICA gives high importance to promote GESI. She said cooperatives are the most effective tool to empower women and continued their work in various areas during the pandemic situation as well.

Ms. Chitra Kumari Subba, General Manager, NCF noted that sustainability is the DNA of cooperatives and informed that there is 56% women participation among the 7.3 million members in cooperatives in Nepal. She said that NCF is playing an active role in implementing the SDGs through cooperatives. Agreeing with the view of ILO colleagues, Ms Chitra said that the partnership between ILO and NCF was very good in the past and wished to continue the collaboration.

Babul Khanal, Deputy General Manager, NCF, agreeing with the view of the need for a cooperative approach for the benefit of the poor. He said that there is a need to launch the green economic development project for poverty alleviation while capacitating cooperatives. He noted the need for livelihood promotion activities targeting the COVID-19 affected migrants and deprived people through an integrated approach as an immediate action for collaboration.

Mr. Ramesh Prasad Pokharel, Vice-chairman, NCF, Mr. Amit Adhikari, Programme Officer, and managers of the different project components from EUD Nepal were also present on the occasion.

The meeting concluded with the need for identifying the tangible activities to be launched immediately in line with addressing the COVID-19 pandemic affected people, focusing on migrants and jobless returnees to create self-employment and livelihood opportunities. The delegates also

agreed to continue the dialogue and initiate the immediate activities as a pilot to extend it in the future.

## NEW MEMBER



*Centre for Cooperatives and Livelihoods – Autonomous (CCL) at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)*

The Centre for Cooperatives and Livelihoods joined ICA in July as an Associate Member. It is a non-profit society registered under the Uttarakhand Cooperatives Society Act, 2003, with registered offices at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie, Uttarakhand in India under the chairmanship of the Director (LBSNAA). LBSNAA is a premier training institution for civil services in India. It is headed by a Director (an officer of the level of Secretary to the Government of India) and is an attached office of the Department of Personnel & Training, Government of India.

The Centre for Cooperatives and Livelihoods was earlier called the Centre for Cooperatives and Rural Development (CCRD). It provides capacity building services to government servants and undertakes research and studies related to the cooperative sector. Read [more](#).



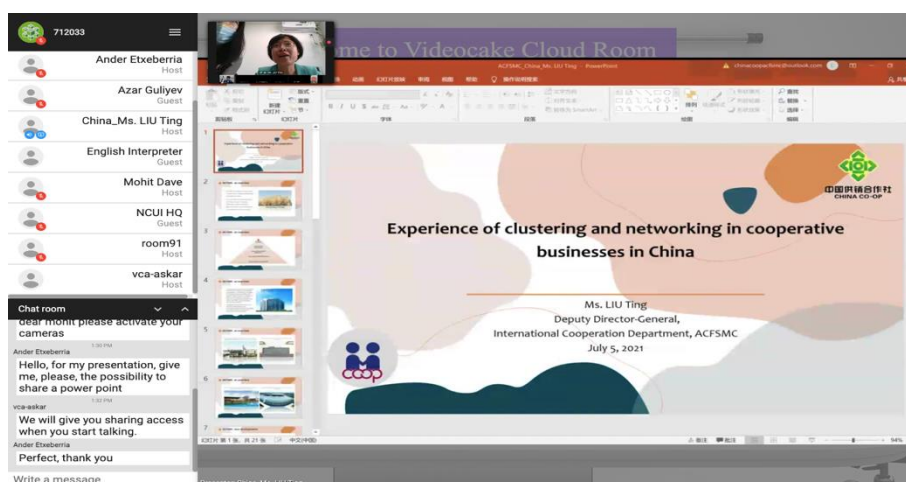
## INDCOSERVE

*The Tamil Nadu Small Tea Growers ICTFs Federation Ltd. (INDCOSERVE)*

INDCOSERVE is India's largest Tea Cooperative Federation with 16 industrial tea factories as its members. They work with around 30,000 small tea farmers who are members of the industrial tea factories, manufacture about 13 million kgs of black tea annually. The value chain of INDCOSERVE includes sourcing of green tea leaves from its member growers, processing, distribution and trading operations. Set up in 1965 by the Government of Tamil Nadu, INDCOSERVE provides much-needed guardianship to small tea growers in Nilgiris District as a catalyst. INDCOSERVE's product range is marketed across the country and includes "Mountain Rose Tea (Leaf & Dust Grades)", "BlueMont Tea (Premium Dust)" and "Ooty Tea" offered through "Fair Price Shops" under the Public Distribution System of Government of Tamil Nadu, India. Read [more](#).

# ICA-EU Updates

## International Webinar on Experience of Successful Models of Clustering and Networking in Cooperative Businesses



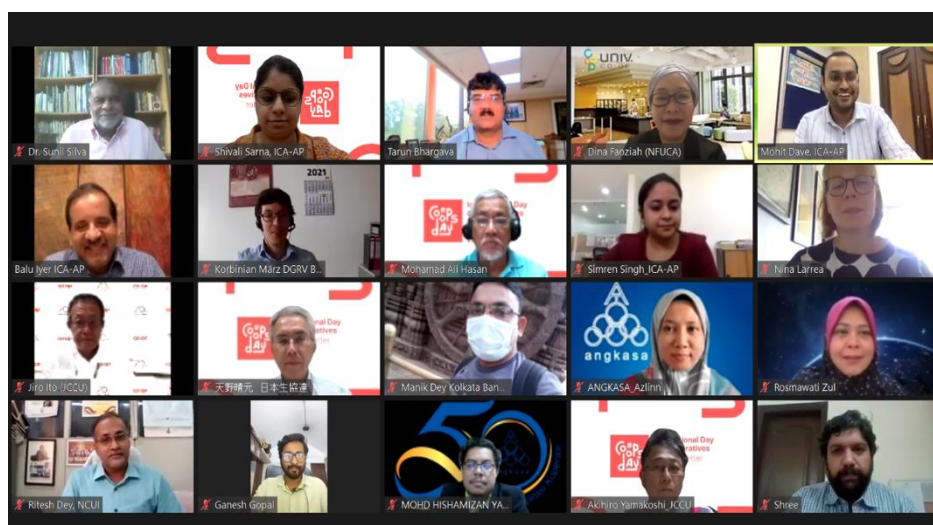
The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran held the third international webinar "Experience of Successful Models of Clustering and Networking in Cooperative Businesses in Selected Countries", on 5 July 2021. The event was organised by the Department of Cooperative Extension, Education and Research within the Deputy Office for Cooperatives, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare. Over 15 participants attended the event, representing the cooperative sectors of France, Italy, Spain, China, India, and the ICA-AP office.

From the Asia and Pacific region, All-China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC), the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), and the ICA-AP office shared their experiences. NCUI presented the role of cooperative supporting institutions in creating and developing cooperative clusters in India. ACFSMC explained the methods of supporting the clustering of cooperative businesses in China. Both organisations described successful experiences of economic value chains by networks and cooperative clusters.

Mr. Mohit Dave, Programme Manager, ICA-AP shared the significance of creating cooperative clusters in rural development and increasing the share of the cooperative sector in the selected countries from Asia-Pacific. He used specific cases to highlight the social impact of cooperative clusters on member cooperatives as well as in industry growth and job creation.

The webinar was useful as it shared the successful experiences of countries in business development policies and planning for the creation of clusters and value chains of cooperatives. It helped develop an understanding of the appropriate model for economic activities in the cooperative sector by examining the methods of creating clusters and networking.

## Roundtable Discussion on the International Cooperative Development & COVID-19



The International Day of Cooperatives 2021 (#CoopsDay) was celebrated on 3 July 2021 with the theme “Rebuild better together”. ICA-AP along with the ICA-EU Partnership organised an online roundtable to bring together stakeholders in the region to facilitate discussion between cooperative organizations and development actors and share experiences in international cooperative development.

Mr. Li Chunsheng, President, ICA-AP in his opening address highlighted how a human-centred business model, sustained by the cooperative values of self-help and solidarity and the ethical values of social responsibility and concern for community, can reduce inequality, create shared prosperity, and respond to the immediate impacts of COVID-19.

Mr. Amano Haruyoshi, Head of International Relations at the Japanese Consumer’s Cooperative Union (JCCU) shared his views from his long track record in international cooperation. He showcased how JCCU is meeting the COVID-19 pandemic crisis with solidarity and resilience and offering communities a people-centred and environmentally just recovery.

Mr. Korbinian März, Project Coordinator at DGRV and IRU (International Raiffeisen Union) said that to rebuild better together, after the devastating impact of COVID-19 on lives and livelihoods, the Asia-Pacific region needs to strengthen collaboration between cooperative development organisations and raise visibility and knowledge about the role cooperatives play in international development. Ms. Nina Larrea, Regional Director, We Effect Asia, said that we need to encourage partnerships that are more aware of the specific skills and expertise of the partners. A joint front is required to enable external actors (policy and funding) to better understand the advantages of cooperative development as an important development approach.

Mr. Tarun Bhargava, General Manager (Cooperative Relations) at the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO) and Chairperson of the International Cooperative Entrepreneurship Think Tank (ICETT) explained how many organisations have shifted their thematic and geographic priorities in light of the pandemic. Youth integration, gender mainstreaming, technology adoption and resource mobilisation were highlighted as some of the common themes for collaboration.

Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director (ICA-AP) delivering the closing remarks said that the roundtable provided a good platform for potential collaboration to promote common interests and priorities. He noted that partnerships will support ICA members’ growing capacity in the region to advocate for and work with multilateral actors and national governments to (a) secure conducive policies on the part



of international organizations where the pertaining national government is a member, and (b) provide members at the national level with instruments to substantially improve the policy environment for the development of cooperatives. This will also help highlight and share good practices and tools within the cooperative development work.

The roundtable laid the foundation for a potential joint front to promote cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific region with international actors, including foundations, aid agencies, regional bodies etc. Invoking the 6<sup>th</sup> cooperative principle of Cooperation among Cooperatives, ICA-AP encourages members to forge a joint front with other coops to serve their members effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement.

## Webinar on Rethinking Kurien: Changing dimensions of Cooperatives and Collectives



ICA-AP and the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), Gujarat, India in collaboration with the ICA Domus Trust and ICA-EU Partnership organized a webinar on “Rethinking Kurien: Changing dimensions of Cooperatives and Collectives” on 22 July 2021. The webinar brought together over 185 participants from across India and elsewhere to mark the birth centenary year of Dr. Verghese Kurien, IRMA’s visionary founder and recipient of the first ICA Rochdale Pioneers Award.

Dr. Verghese Kurien is one of independent India’s most significant institution builders. He understood that organising farmers around an economic enterprise for their development is a necessary condition to improve their wellbeing and to strengthen true democracy. Known as the "Father of the White Revolution" in India, he was a social entrepreneur whose "billion-litre idea", Operation Flood, made dairy farming India's largest self-sustaining industry and the largest rural employment sector.

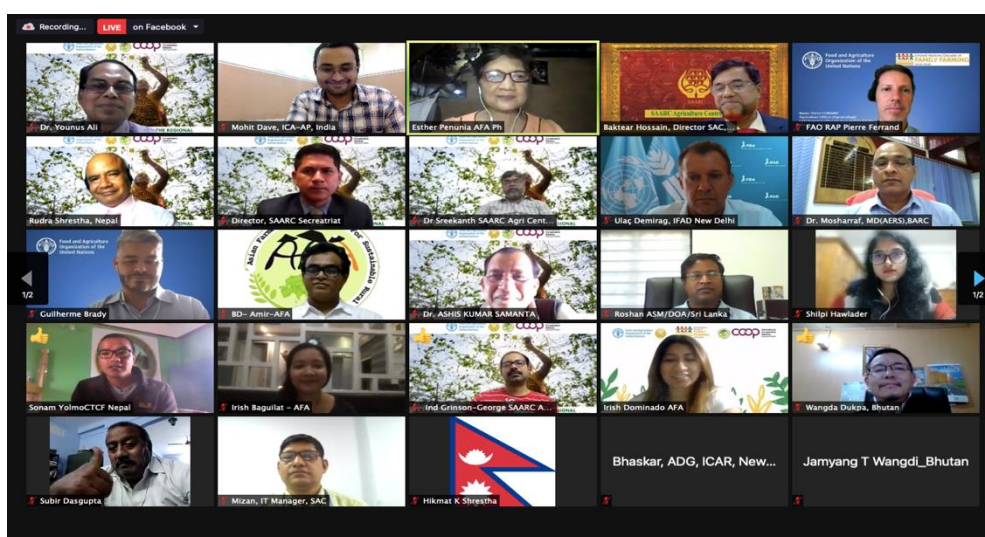
The key speakers were Mr. V. Vivekanandan, Director (FishMARC), Vrutti, Mr. D. Narendranath, Executive Director, PRADAN, Ms. Switha Grandhi, CEO, Chitrika and Mr. Emmanuel Murray, Senior Advisor, Caspian Impact Investment Adviser. The webinar was structured to be a lively discussion in three rounds, 1) importance of Dr. Kurien on speakers’ work, 2) newer forms of collective engagement and action; and 3) covid impact and the emerging legal and policy framework in India. The opening remarks were given by Prof. Umakant Dash, Director, IRMA. He highlighted the need to build upon Dr. Kurien’s legacy for cooperative education, governance and management in the coming years. The speakers agreed that cooperatives are in a process of transformation. However, collective action through traditional farmer organisations, cooperatives, and the new producer collectives continue to

provide economic and social benefits for their members. Cooperatives and similar people-centred organisations have the power to steer the recovery measures in the post-pandemic world.

Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP and Prof. C. Shambu Prasad, Professor, IRMA moderated the discussions. They observed that with the emergence of new technologies and youth's leadership in global issues, it is only natural that new forms of cooperatives will continue to emerge. The socio-economic needs of human beings evolve and aspirations manifest themselves into a common will to make this world a better place.

Given the vast experience of the speakers in working with collectives and having interacted with Dr. Kurien, the webinar was a good opportunity for the academic and development practitioners' to engage on the topic. The webinar was useful to deliberate the future of cooperative enterprises, collective action, and rural management as a discipline.

### Follow Up Regional Consultation Meeting on UN Decade of Family Farming



ICA-AP and the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) in collaboration with Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) and Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO RAP) organized, "Review and Finalization of the Regional Action Plan for Family Farming in South Asia," on 29 July 2021. The consultation brought together over 75 participants from SAARC countries, government, family farmers organizations, cooperatives, civil society and research institutions.

The consultation was to officially launch the book, "United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028: Regional Action Plan to Implement the UNDFP for Achieving the SDGs in South Asia." The book was produced out of the first consultation in November 2020. The webinar was also to present, validate, and endorse the draft Regional Action Plan for Family Farming in South Asia. The book, published by SAC, FAO, AFA and ICA-AP compiled the status of family farming in SAARC countries and recommended contextualizing the different pillars of the Global Action Plan for Family Farming in the South Asian context.

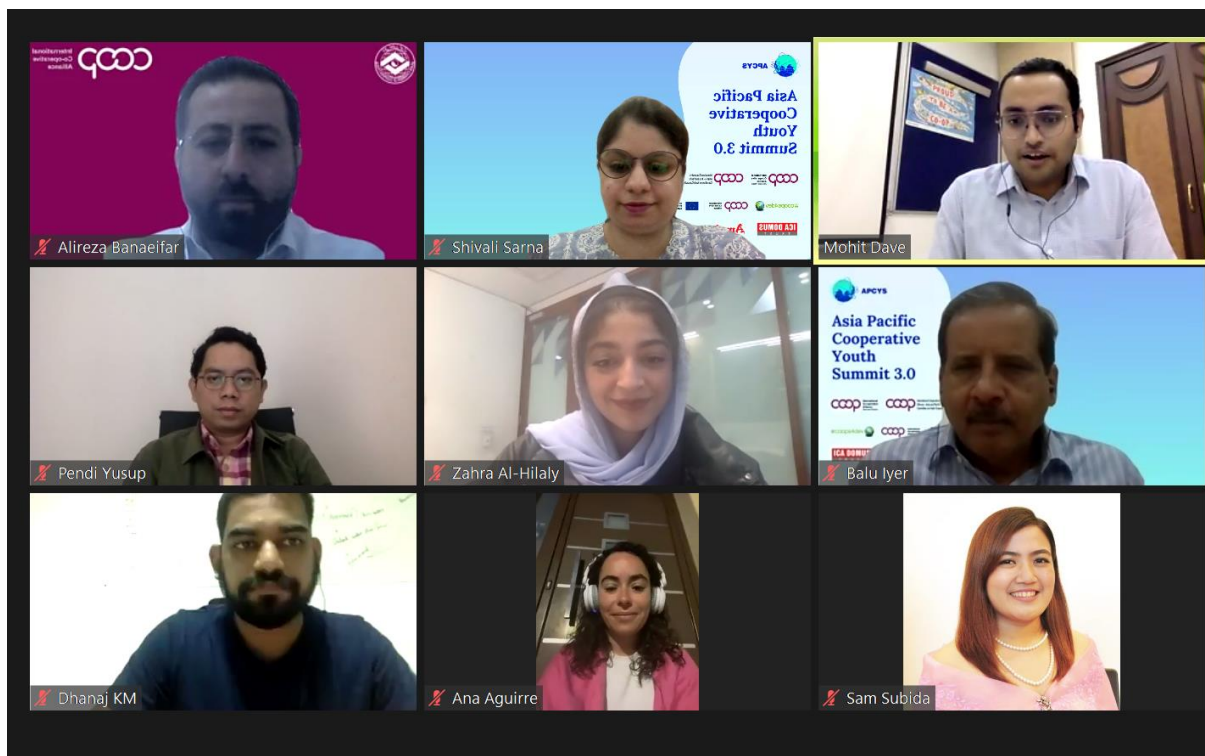
Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP welcomed the participants and shared his opening remarks as a co-organizer. He stressed on the importance and relevance of cooperatives in family farming to achieve sustainable food systems. Mr. Mohit Dave, Programme Manager, ICA-AP coordinated the discussions on supporting youth and ensuring the generational sustainability of family farming. Ms. Meena Pohkrel, Director-in-charge, Nepal Agricultural Cooperative Central Federation



identified key policies, actions, and studies/research that need to be undertaken at the national level and that will further support the development and implementation of a Regional Action Plan for UNDF.

The Action Plan aims to facilitate and accelerate the process of developing national action plans through inclusive multi-stakeholder processes (governments, farmers organizations, civil society, research organizations, cooperatives and private sector), not only putting family farmers at the centre but recognizing them as critical partners. The participants committed to operationalizing the UNDF regional action plan at the country level through the development and implementation of National Action Plans. The virtual consultation was useful to finalize the action plan in an inclusive and participatory manner with endorsements from all relevant authorities.

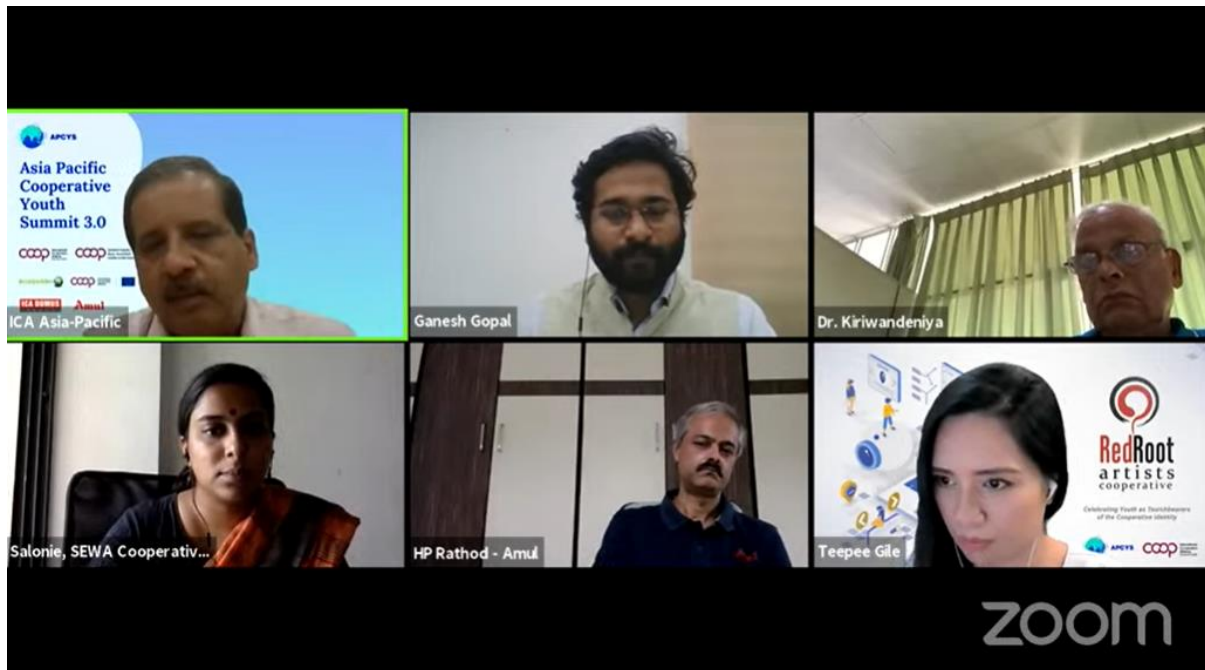
### APCYS 3.0 - Celebrating Youth as Torchbearers of Cooperative Identity



ICA-AP in collaboration with the ICA-EU Partnership, the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), and the ICA Domus Trust successfully organised the third edition of the [Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit \(APCYS 3.0\)](#) from 27 - 29 July 2021. The theme this year was 'Celebrating Youth as Torchbearers of the [Cooperative Identity](#).' The Summit, held virtually, received over 3,500 registrations from 23 Countries – Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroun, CANADA, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, KIRIBATI, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Vietnam.

The Summit featured 30 speakers from 16 countries. Ms. Zahra Al-Hilaly, UN Australian Representative to UN Women's Generation Equality Youth Task Force delivered the keynote address at the opening ceremony and Dr. P. A. Kiriwandeniya, the Founder and Visionary Leader of the SANASA Movement in Sri Lanka at the closing ceremony. Ms. Zahra highlighted the need for equitable representation of youth in decision making and in ensuring that youth voices are being heard. Her powerful speech demanding change motivated the young participants to believe in themselves. She called upon the youth to find their passion and start by making small changes to carve a society that the youth wants. Dr. Kiriwandeniya shared his real-life experiences of building a national cooperative movement that

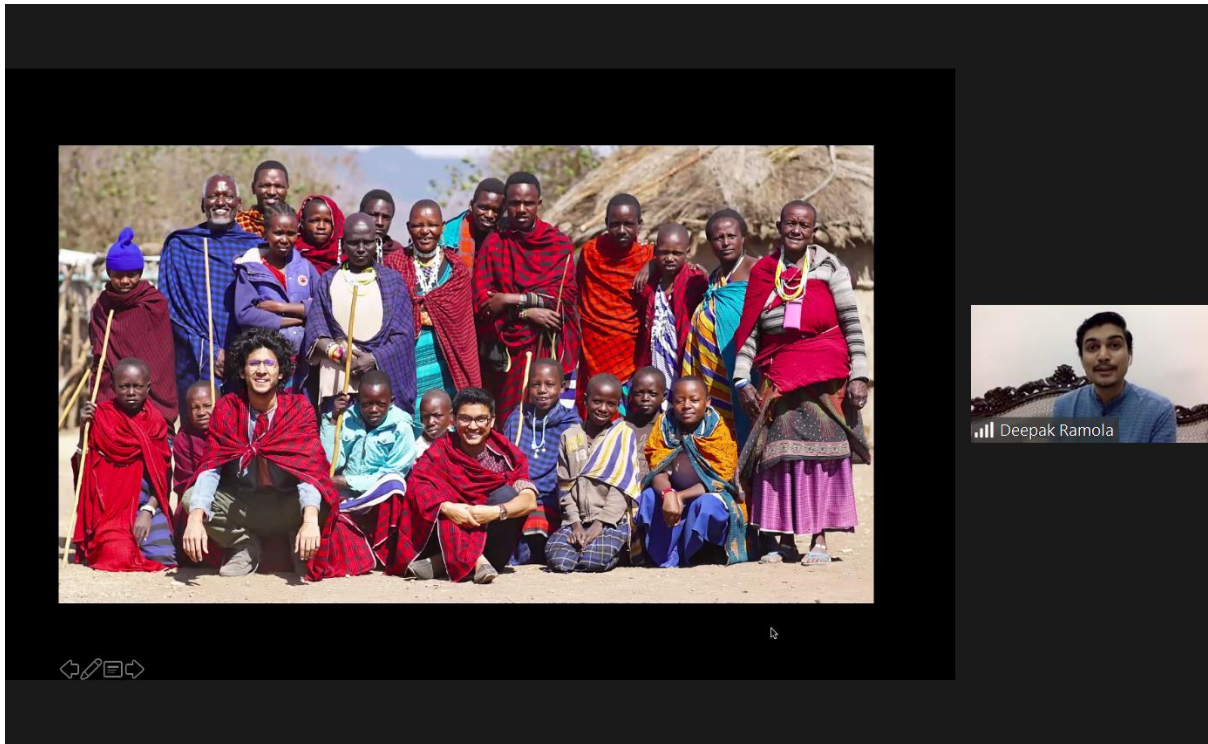
was inspirational for the participants. He motivated them to uphold values and principles in any sector or enterprise they engage in.



Some of the sessions which were a major hit among the participants included –

**Spotlight on Coop Youth Entrepreneurs:** The session highlighted youth who are at the forefront of starting or have started new cooperatives to address needs in their communities. It featured six speakers – Suzana Tang, Founder, Urban Origins, Singapore (Food Security); Annielen Panerio, General Manager, CamSur Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Philippines (Agriculture); Chan Hong, Facility Manager, Minsnail Housing Cooperative, South Korea (Community Housing for Youth); John Hayes, Creator & Co-Founder, MyCoolClass, Poland (Platform Coop owned by Teachers); Navitha Varsha, Co-founder, Karunachal Foundation, India (Environment Consciousness); and Anis Saddah, Co-founder & CEO, Innocircle Initiative, Indonesia (Incubator) who are on a mission to solve real-life issues through coop entrepreneurship.

**Student Cooperative Clubs in Asia and Pacific - Precursor to Community Leadership:** The session revolved around how Student Cooperative Clubs are precursors to youth leadership and introduced participants to unique and essential skills that are quite useful and relevant for community leadership. In the first part, the speakers were Masayuki Yasui, Chairperson, Student Committee from the National Federation of University Cooperatives Association, Japan and Hanis Nabila, Teacher & Creative Product Manager and Ellysaa Ezyanee, Student & Cooperative Board Member from Batu Pahat MARA Junior Science College Coop Ltd., Malaysia presented their work & activities of the university and school cooperative clubs. The second part was dedicated to an experiential learning activity to understand what it takes to form a cooperative. Participants were divided into smaller groups to form campus cooperatives and share their business ideas.



**Get Inspired! A Talk by Youth Entrepreneur:** The Summit aimed to facilitate cultural exchange, sharing of experiences, and enjoying the spirit of cooperation. Participants got the opportunity to listen to the inspirational journey of Deepak Ramola, Founder and Artistic Director of Project FUEL. He is a two-time TED Talk speaker, UN Action Plan Executor & Kindness Ambassador for UNESCO's Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development. He collects wisdom from people while travelling the world and share it in the form of life lessons through innovative education methods. Deepak shared some key lessons – solve a need, ask better questions, build meaningful connections, have a rich list, show gratitude, be wise!

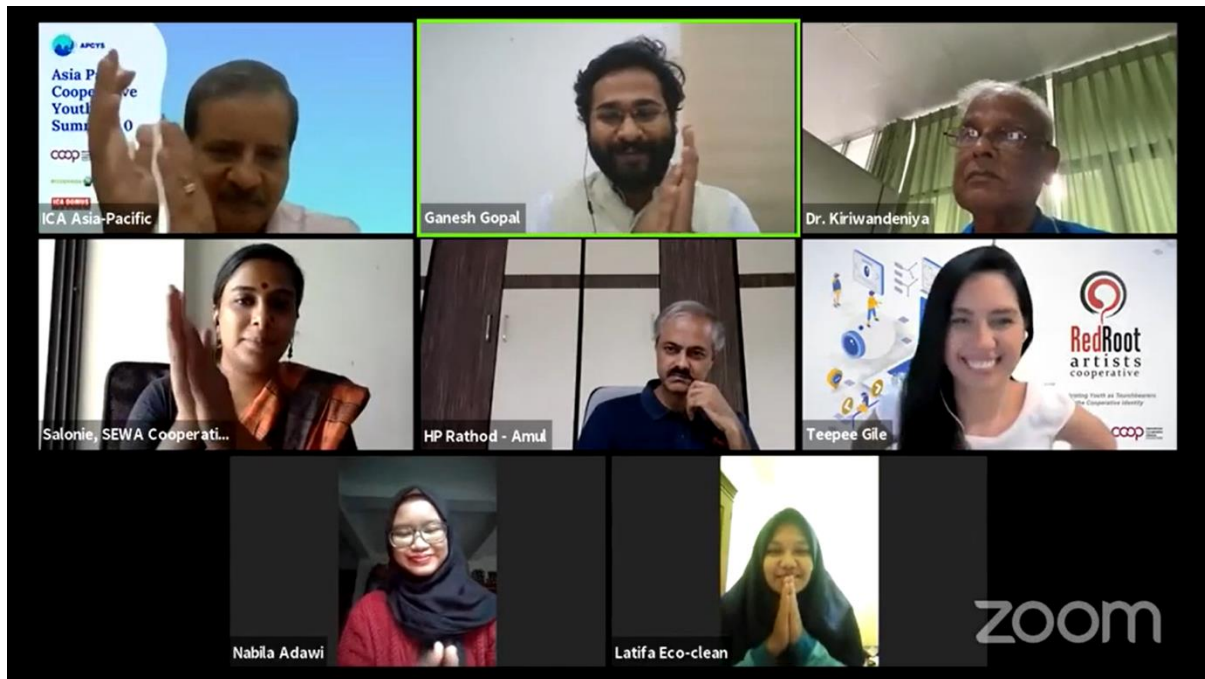
**Panel Discussion on Enabling Environment for Youth in Cooperatives:** The three-day Summit culminated in a panel discussion with experts like Anthony Taylor, Policy Officer, Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals (BCCM) and Francesca Clarke, School Student, Youth Representative of BCCM to Global Youth Network (Australia); Yoneswilliam, Head - Division for Monitoring, Evaluation and Research, LPDB KUMKM, Ministry of SMEs and Cooperatives (Indonesia); Faisal Khan, Registrar, Department of Cooperatives, Government of Fiji; Heira Hardiyanti, Cooperator & Educator, IKOPIN & Co-Founder, MyCoolClass Coop (Indonesia); Suroto Bravo, Cooperative Expert, (Indonesia). They discussed various facets of youth participation that can be encouraged, the inhibiting factors, and how an enabling environment can be fostered for youth in the cooperative ecosystem.

Other sessions on Youth Engagement in Asia and Pacific, Cooperative Identity, Cooperative Cinema and the Cultural Show were beneficial for the participants to understand the thematic aspects of the Summit. All the session recordings are available on the [ICA-AP Youtube Channel](#).

### **Coop Pitch 2021\***

A key highlight of APCYS is the Coop Pitch Competition, designed to find new and sustainable enterprise ideas on cooperatives led by youth. Coop Pitch 2021 received 56 entries from nine countries – Afghan, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, and Vietnam.

The three winners of Coop Pitch 2021 are 1) **Eco-Clean (Indonesia)**, a platform cooperative for cleaning-service providers; 2) **Himalayan Hemp Cooperative (India)**, a community of artisans and farmers creating eco-conscious products; and 3) **Udara Cooperative (Malaysia)**, food production through aquaponics systems.



### **First prize - Eco-Clean (Indonesia)**

**Team members: Latifa and Nabila**

Establish a digital platform cooperative, Eco-Clean, for cleaning-services workers. The platform will be self-governed by the workers democratically. By relying on cooperative partners and communities of equal value, Eco-Clean aims to establish a sustainable and inclusive business environment. In addition, the members envision eco-friendly training to shape the workers' understanding of waste management and environmental issues they would be causing during their business operation. Would like to create a better place and better culture (perceptions, behavior, working conditions and treatments) toward the workers who mostly are housewives or workers who do not complete higher education. Target big cities where the demand for cleaning services is increasing.

*“Our Coop idea, Eco-Clean, has some distinctive traits to offer to our target customers, it helps to improve the workers’ welfare and contributes to minimizing the environmental damage caused by poor waste management and cleaning products.”*

### **Second Prize - Himalayan Hemp Cooperative (India)**

**Team members: Haneesh Katnawer (Lead), Sonam Sodha, Dilip Kanakanala, Advait Pillai, Rekha Das, the first farmer member**

Himalayan Hemp Cooperative is a socio-ecological community of artisans, farmers and innovators. It is a foundational part of the Himalayan Hemp Cooperative Model working on preserving the indigenous variety of cannabis and hemp plants and community practices associated with the plant in the Himalayas. The work from home model for women artisans from marginalized societies aims to empower village eco-industries by creating eco-conscious products.



World's first cannabis hemp fibre-based reusable sanitary pads and India's only N95 hemp mask. "We conduct seminars in schools inviting both daughters and mothers with former being the customer and latter being the maker. Therefore, school seminars not only create awareness about menstruation, sanitary pads, etc. but also, offer work from home based opportunity for the mother."

### **Third prize - Udara Cooperative (Malaysia)**

**Team members: Danish Huzayl (Lead), Nafisuddin, Nur Azra Shahira, and Farha Zulfa Umeiyra**

Udara Cooperative from Kuala Kubu Bharu, located on the outskirts of the state of Selangor in Malaysia is run by school students. They plan to produce food sustainably through the implementation of aquaponics. The aquaponic system will be put in place within their school vicinity and the food produced supplied to local business partners around the district. Aquaponics couples aquaculture with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water) whereby the nutrient-rich aquaculture water is fed to hydroponically grown plants, involving nitrifying bacteria for converting ammonia into nitrates. The food produced (chilies, roselle flowers, climbing perch fish and tilapia) will be supplied to local businesses that are unable to contact their usual suppliers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Udara Cooperative aim to give aid to struggling businesses while it puts in place sustainable method to produce food.

Produce of the future! "We believe that developing the structures and equipment would involve less carbon dioxide emissions through aquaponics, reducing our carbon footprint on the atmosphere."

The winners will receive cash prizes worth USD 3,000 (first prize, USD 1,500; second prize, USD 1,000; and third prize, USD 500), guidance and mentorship support to further develop, validate and implement their cooperative ideas. This year AMUL or the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), the largest dairy cooperative in the world, sponsored the first and second prizes and the third prize was sponsored by the ICA Domus Trust.

The judging panel for Coop Pitch 2021 included Salonie Muralidhara Hiriyyur, Senior Coordinator, SEWA Cooperative Federation, India; Rohan Clarke, Co-Founder, Incubator.coop & Director, Wayfairer.coop, Australia; H.P. Rathod, Cooperative Services & Administration, AMUL, India; and Teresa Paula "Teepee" E. Gile, Co-founder, General Manager, and Creative Director of RedRoot Artists Cooperative and Co-founder, Youth Connect Cooperative, Philippines.

The Coop Pitch participants were mentored by Heira Hardiyanti, Indonesia; Justine Limocon, Philippines, Samantha Subaida, Philippines; Dhanaj K M, India; Moosa Mehar, India; and Pendi Yusup, Indonesia.

\*With inputs from Balasubramanian Iyer's original article '[COOP Pitch Winners at APCYS 3.0](#)'.

## Research Watch

**Legal Framework Analysis:** 22 national reports – Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Palestine, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu, and Vietnam are now available on the [#coops4dev](#) website.

**Environment research:** ICA-AP is currently working with research colleagues from all ICA regional offices to finalize the global thematic research on environment. From Asia and Pacific region, case studies on cooperatives from Australia and Thailand have been developed whose work is aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) vis-a-vis the environment. The report will be published on the [#coops4dev](#) website.

**Mapping research:** ICA-AP has completed the mapping research for 25 countries in the region - Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, PNG, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

Responding to challenges and existing knowledge gaps facing the cooperative movement, the mapping research seeks to collect exhaustive, consistent and reliable data on the cooperative situation in every region and across sectors, to provide an accurate picture of the movement to both cooperators and external stakeholders, and to reinforce other policy, capacity building, visibility and networking activities undertaken in the partnership.

**Country Snapshots:** ICA-AP has prepared country snapshots to present the national cooperative movement. The key parameters in the snapshots include cooperative statistics (number, membership, employees, etc.), genesis and evolution of the cooperative movement, historical and current laws on cooperatives, and association of national cooperatives with the international cooperative movement and ICA, amongst others. Snapshots of 19 countries - Australia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kiribati, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, PNG, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu, Vietnam are available on the [ICA-AP website](#).

**Global youth research:** On 3 March 2021, the #coops4dev team launched the global thematic research report on 'Young People and Cooperatives: A Perfect Match?'. The report presents the results of a research study on cooperatives and youth, undertaken by the ICA and its four regional offices under the ICA-EU Partnership on Cooperatives in Development. The report is structured into five main chapters, referred to as the five 'E's: employment, education, (in) equalities, engagement and entrepreneurship. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

## Announcements

### ICA 33<sup>rd</sup> World Cooperative Congress

The ICA 33<sup>rd</sup> World Cooperative Congress will be held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. The Congress is scheduled to take place in person and virtually for those who are unable to travel. Details and logistics for this hybrid event are still being finalized. However, to help you plan how to attend Congress, here are the **top five things** to know: <https://icaworldcoopcongress.coop/world-cooperative-congress-a-hybrid-event/>.

The theme for the Congress is, “**Deepening our Cooperative Identity**” to strengthen the cooperative movement’s role in addressing global challenges and explore avenues to improve lives at the local and global levels. Within this, four themes will explore how cooperatives examine, strengthen, commit to, and live the cooperative identity. [Read more on these themes in future ‘Destination Congress’ newsletters!](#)

The Congress will be an opportunity to look back and validate the cooperative movement’s resilience, leadership, and solidarity during times of crisis. This event will serve as an important forum to:

- Discuss why the cooperative identity, including definition, principles and values, is needed now more than ever
- Show cooperative resilience by sharing experiences and testimonies
- Discuss how cooperatives can significantly contribute to the global economic, social, and environmental reconstruction.

The Congress will consist of pre-events from 28th to 30th November, followed by the conference itself from 1st to 3rd December. Details of the Congress are being updated at <https://ICAWorldCoopCongress.coop>.

The dates for the Congress are subject to be further rescheduled should the pandemic make it necessary for force majeure.

### 25 Voices Campaign: Meet Juwon Seo



While studying International Business and Trade at the university, Juwon was looking for another path for his future. After undergoing major surgeries, he was looking for an organization where collaboration among colleagues, not competition, was encouraged. That is when he found Cooperative Value Sharing Center (CVSC), a workers' cooperative formed by young people in their twenties to encourage their peers to understand that cooperatives can give them the independence to reach their future goals. Six years after the boom of cooperatives in Korea, he became a cooperators with CVSC.

Read his story [here](#).

This year, the ICA is featuring 25 members of the cooperative movement who are under the age of 25, to tell the world what the cooperative identity means to them – in the form of a short video story, photos and other digital media. The stories will use real-life examples to inspire and vividly show the cooperative difference. Read more about the campaign [here](#).

If you are under 25 and passionate about cooperatives, we are looking for you to share your story with the cooperative world as part of the 25 Voices campaign in a run-up to the World Cooperative Congress.

If you would like to share your story, please reach out to Shivali Sarna ([shivali.sarna@icaap.coop](mailto:shivali.sarna@icaap.coop)), Communication and Membership Development Officer, ICA-AP.



## Upcoming Events

- ICA-MAFF (Japan) Online Training Course on “Empowerment of Rural Women for Improvement of their Leadership and Business Management in Asia and Africa-2021 Part I & II – 9 August to 13 September 2021
- Social and Solidarity Economy webinar – 19 August 2021
- Consultation on Cooperative Identity with ICA members in India – 20 August 2021
- Regional webinar on Opportunities for Women in Cooperatives in Asia-Pacific Post COVID-19 – 24 August 2021. Registrations are open for ICA-AP members, [click here](#).
- ICA-AP Online Regional Board Meeting – 26 August 2021
- Consultation on Autonomy and Independence of Cooperatives in India – 3 September 2021 (TBC)
- Consumer Committee Webinar – 16 September 2021 (TBC)
- ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting, Seoul, Korea – 29 November 2021 (TBC)
- ICA-AP Regional Assembly and Board Elections, Seoul, Korea – 30 November 2021 (TBC)
- ICA 33<sup>rd</sup> World Cooperative Congress, Seoul, Korea – 1 to 3 December 2021