



ICA-AP NEWSLETTER

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

April Newsletter

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Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit 4.0 – Registrations Open!



The Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit (APCYS 4.0) will be held in Sabah, Malaysia from 27 to 30 July and focus on “Cooperation for Sustainable Lifestyles”. APCYS 4.0 will provide a platform for youth to come together and hear about inspiring youth-led sustainable practices and ventures, experience hands-on cooperative activities, share cooperative business ideas, and enjoy the spirit of different cultures and youth cooperativism. Registrations are now open! [Read more](https://apyouthsummit.coop).

16th ICA-AP Regional Assembly – Save the Date!



ICA-AP will hold its 16th Regional Assembly in the Philippines from 6 to 10 November. The Philippines is hosting the Regional Assembly after two decades under the aegis of the Philippines Cooperative Movement. The Regional Assembly under the theme, “Cooperatives: Our Common Agenda” will comprise of the 11th Asia-Pacific Cooperative Forum, Regional Board Meeting, various events organized by the Regional Sectoral and Thematic Committees, and the statutory meeting of the Regional Assembly. Registrations will open soon, stay tuned!

17th ICA-AP Research Conference – Call for Papers Out!



The 17th ICA Asia-Pacific Research Conference will be held in Manila, Philippines from 4-5 November under the theme, "Cooperatives Advancing Social Responsibility for the 2030 Agenda." It is organized by the ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research (CCR) and the Department of Cooperatives and Social Development at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) to bring together academics and researchers on cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific region. ICA-AP CCR invites young researchers, and postgraduate and doctoral students to submit their abstracts latest by 30 July. [Read more.](#)

International Day of Cooperatives 2023



The International Day of Cooperatives will be celebrated on 1 July under the theme Cooperatives: partners for accelerated sustainable development. United by the slogan *Cooperatives for sustainable development*, the movement will show how the cooperative way of working, inspired by cooperative values and principles, has the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of its DNA. [Read more.](#)

Global Innovation Cooperative Summit – Montreal 2023

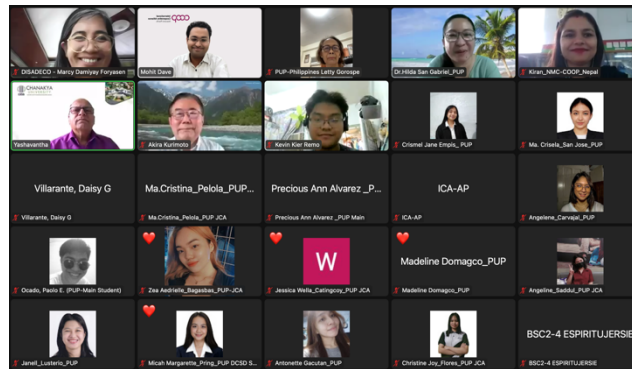


Global Innovation Cooperative Summit 2023 will be held in Montreal from 27 to 29 September. With the theme, *Act Now to lead a circular and digital future the cooperators*

way, the Montreal event will focus on taking the lessons from Paris and turning them into action. The Summit founders call upon cooperatives to be circular, in a digital life to carry out together the necessary transformations for the benefit of their members and their communities. [Read more.](#)

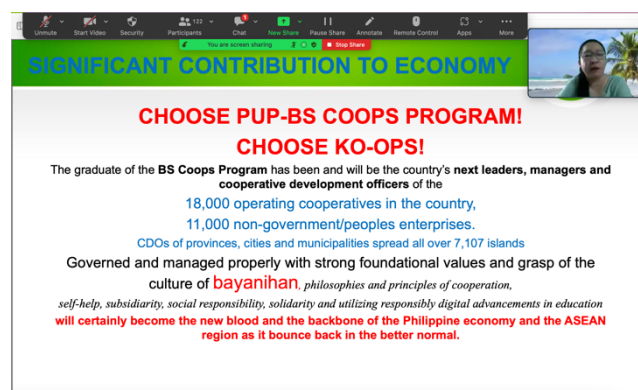
ICA-AP Updates

Coop Colloquium: Promoting Inclusive and Quality Cooperative Education



ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research (CCR) conducted the 5th COOP Colloquium on 21 April to continue its academic dialogue on issues that are relevant to cooperative education and research. 123 participants from 7 countries joined the webinar.

Dr. Yashvantha Dongre, Chairperson, ICA-AP CCR welcomed the participants and said that the experience of cooperative scholarship across the Asia and Pacific region is rich & diverse. The ICA-AP CCR is bringing these together in COOP Colloquium to share, inform and learn. Mr. Mohit Dave, Secretary of ICA-AP CCR said that each iteration of the colloquium focuses on a theme and presents different perspectives on promoting inclusive and quality education for cooperatives.



Dr. Hilda San Gabriel, Chairperson, Department of Cooperatives and Social Development, Polytechnic University of Philippines (PUP) made a presentation on its aim to deepen the understanding and appreciation of cooperative education and to promote the sector's significant contributions to national development particularly in the areas of poverty alleviation, community building, social justice, and economic growth. PUP is a government educational institution; its Department of Cooperatives and Social Development offers a Bachelor of Science in Cooperatives (BSc Coop) Program, a four-year bachelor's degree course aimed to produce cooperative technopreneurs and provide human resources and manpower

to the cooperative sector. As the PUP positions itself to become a National Polytechnic University, the BSc Coop Program envisions producing globally competitive graduates who will be professionally competent, morally discerning, change agents, and social innovators for national development.

Her presentation was followed by a Q&A round with participants asking a few questions, thanking her and hoping the colloquium will inspire the attendees to go back to the core of the cooperative education framework.

ICA-AP CCR was established in 2000 to promote, support, and further research activities within cooperatives and research organizations at regional, national and local levels, to enhance their social and economic effectiveness. It has members working in the field of research and academia and from member organizations of the ICA-AP. During its 23 years of existence, it has organized several regional research conferences and local seminars.

ICA-AP Regional Board Meets in Nepal



The ICA-AP Regional Board met on 6 April in Kathmandu, Nepal in hybrid mode. It was hosted by the National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCFN). Board members and observers from India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and ICA-AP Regional Office staff were present in person, while members from Australia, Malaysia, and Vietnam joined online.

Mr. Min Raj Kadel, Chairperson of NCFN welcomed all the participants and noted that this meeting will be instrumental in discussing the agenda of cooperative development in the Asia and Pacific region. He invited the Board Members to attend the 3rd National Cooperative Congress of Nepal, being organised from 6-8 April with an audience of around 1,000 cooperators. He encouraged them to experience the rich cultural heritage of Kathmandu during their stay.

Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav, President of ICA-AP thanked Mr. Kadel, and NCFN for hosting the Board meeting. He noted that 2023 is a significant year as it marks the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that were launched in 2015. He appreciated the contribution of cooperatives across the Asia-Pacific region to implement the SDGs. He said that India is

holding the G20 presidency this year and cooperatives have been encouraged to actively participate and engage with B20, C20, W20, and Y20 engagement groups.

Ms. Chitose Arai, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Women reported on the key activities – office bearers’ meeting in New Delhi, India; International Women’s Day solidarity message; the release of the committee’s 25th-anniversary special logo, celebratory campaign, and committee newsletter; and upcoming pilot training of trainers on Climate Change in Vietnam. Mr. Alireza Banaeifar, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), presented updates on the committee strategy; webinars for the Go Green Campaign (GGC) 4.0, International Youth Day 2022, and financial literacy for youth; the election of Mr. Ceejay, Vice-Chairperson, ICYC as the member of the ICA Global Youth Committee; and upcoming activities like capacity building workshop, GGC 5.0, and the 4th edition of the Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit (APCYS 4.0).



Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP presented the 2022 ICA-AP Annual Activities Report and financial report. He shared the key activities undertaken by the Regional Office since the last Board meeting, and updates on projects (ICA-EU FPA2, SuPER WE Coffee project in Laos PDR, and EU-CSO proposal). He shared updates on membership & subscription status. Dr. Yadav and Regional Board members acknowledged the activities carried out by the office.

The Board approved the updated registration fees for the upcoming ICA-AP Regional Assembly. It will be held in Manila, Philippines with the theme – *Cooperatives: Our Common Agenda* from 6 to 10 November 2023. Mr. Mohit Dave, Head of Resource Mobilization and Partnerships at ICA-AP presented the proposal for the Asia Pacific Cooperative Excellence Awards being planned in conjunction with the Regional Assembly. The Awards aim to recognise and acknowledge inspiring cooperative leaders, enterprising cooperatives and enabling governments in the Asia-Pacific region. The Board approved the proposal to organise the awards. Mr. Dave also shared updates on APCYS 4.0 and requested the Board members to nominate youth participants from their respective countries.

Mr. Iyer shared that the Regional Office is in touch with the Jordan Cooperative Corporation to discuss the possibility of holding the next Asia-Pacific Ministers’ Conference in Jordan in 2024.

The Board approved the date and venue of the next Regional Board Meeting, to be held in Malaysia in August 2023. Dr. Yadav thanked the members for their active participation in the meeting.

Member Updates

NACCFL wins FAO Award for Partnership 2023



FAO and the Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Limited (NACCFL) have been working together in Nepal for more than a decade to strengthen agricultural systems management in the country. With more than 1,139 agricultural cooperatives, the federation has provided smallholder farmers with access to markets, financial services, and training, enabling them to increase production, improve livelihoods, and contribute to the sustainability of agrifood systems in Nepal.

The award recognizes NACCFL's ability in communicating, through policy dialogues and participation in various forums, the complex agricultural and economic issues of smallholder farmers to policymakers, and promoting solutions to address hunger and malnutrition in the country.

3rd Nepal Cooperative Congress



The third Nepal Cooperative Congress was held from 6 to 8 April in Kathmandu with the theme “***Self-Regulation and Governance for Cooperatives Sustainability.***” It was jointly organized by the National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoLCPA). The Congress is a common platform for all levels of cooperatives, stakeholders, and well-wishers to discuss and commit to the sustainable development of the cooperative movement in Nepal.

Cooperatives play an important part in improving the social, economic, cultural, environmental, and political advancement of Nepal. The Cooperative Act of 1992 provided the basis for the growth of cooperatives and was further accelerated by the progressive Cooperative Act 2017. Currently, there are over 30,000 cooperatives in Nepal, comprising 7.3 million individual members, with 56% women participation. These cooperatives have accumulated over Rs. 94.22 billion as share capital and Rs. 478 billion as savings and have disbursed over Rs. 427 billion as loans to their members.

Cooperatives in Nepal have contributed to social-economic integration, capital formation, and leadership development, irrespective of caste and gender. They promote gender equality, social inclusion, and entrepreneurship development at the community level, contribute to poverty reduction, and take forward the 2030 global agenda for sustainable development (SDGs). The Government of Nepal Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on SDGs in 2017 and 2020, highlighted the contribution of cooperatives in achieving SDGs.

Despite their significant contributions, cooperatives in Nepal are still lagging behind from an institutional development viewpoint, and their contributions are not measured in the national accounts. There are several bottlenecks that need to be addressed, such as dormant members, inadequately trained human resources, lack of strategic direction, and weak risk management. The 2022 liquidity crunch in the financial system has hampered the service delivery mechanism of cooperatives. The monitoring and supervision by regulatory bodies are not very effective.

The Congress discussed important issues relating to the democratic governance of cooperatives, deepening the cooperative identity, strengthening self-regulation, enhancing digital adoption, and developing partnerships. The Nepal Cooperative Movement Vision 2030 was presented at the Congress. The Congress was inaugurated by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal and attended by Former Prime Minister Honourable K.P. Oli, Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank, Mr. Maha Prasad Adhikari, and current and former ministers. The ICA-AP Regional Board led by President Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav also attended the Congress.



The Congress called for tangible strategic direction and commitment, massive awareness, interaction, and critical discussion with different levels of government to push for a self-

regulation system and enforce governance models. It reiterated the need to create an enabling environment for cooperatives by revisiting the ethos of the cooperative sector, eliminating malpractices, realizing cooperative philosophy, values, principles, and identity, and implementing external and internal policies, rules, and standards. It stressed on the contribution of cooperatives to GDP and the financial sector to be increased, and their contributions to be mapped through disaggregated data adjoining national accounts. The Congress ended with the adoption of the Kathmandu Declaration – 2023.

Kathmandu Declaration-2023

We, cooperators and stakeholder representatives assembled at the "Third National Cooperative Congress" in Kathmandu from 6-8 April 2023, with the theme "Self-Regulation and Governance for Coops Sustainability" jointly organized by the National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoLCPA) to promote sustainable and decent cooperative movement through Coop Vision 2030 "*Prosperous Cooperatives: Satisfied Members*", declare the following:

1. We undertake to promote qualitative cooperative movement through member centric business by screening cooperative identity and maintaining self-regulation and governance derived from cooperative values, principles and beliefs;
2. We commence to accomplish a nationwide awareness campaign to protect members' deposits and leverage cooperative trust;
3. We commit ourselves to take necessary initiatives for the implementation of promotional provisions envisioned by laws for coops sustainability;
4. We ensure to do collective lobbying and advocacy with all three level governments to rule out the problem of liquidity shortage in cooperatives existed from nationwide economic strain;
5. We recommit to gearing up cooperative "Amalgamation as a Movement" for qualitative service delivery by apprehending innovative technologies and increasing the health and competitive capacity of cooperatives;
6. We strongly reaffirm to take collective initiatives for the necessary amendment and full-fledged implementation of cooperatives and interrelated acts as required; investing cooperatives' capital on value chain development adopting high-technology, and channelizing funds of governments through National Cooperative Bank Ltd;
7. We recommit to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals by developing and implementing internal procedures in cooperatives for inclusion referencing women and youth for their active participation and capacity enhancement, access to finance, and involvement in the decision-making level;
8. We commit to producing and retaining competent human resources through formal cooperative education and increasing organizational work efficiency in the changed context of the working environment;
9. We ensure to increase investment in agriculture, tourism, hydropower, health, education and transport industry and promote environment-friendly agro production, substituting imports and promoting exports, and generate employment opportunities through the Public, Private and Cooperative Partnership (PPCP) model;

10. We endeavour to promote a cooperative brand with large and specialized productions; advancing the agriculture and livestock sector, establishing large farms, and developing the product's value chain and supply chain via "Specialized Cooperative Federations";
11. We commit to developing a strong mechanism for measuring cooperative sectors' contribution to National Economy via cooperative disaggregated data and increasing investment in cooperatives' study and research.

Central Cooperative Society of Myanmar Elects its New Chairman



The Central Cooperative Society (CCS) of Myanmar has elected Mr. Kyaw Mya Khaing as the new Chairman. Mr. Kyaw Mya Khaing has served the cooperative movement of Myanmar in various capacities. He has been promoted from the position of Vice Chairman to Chairman of CCS. He has also held the position of the Chairman of the Union of Cooperative Federations (Shan State- Northern & East).

The former Chairman, Mr. Khin Maung Aye will act as a patron of CCS and support cooperative development wherever necessary.

FPSDC in the Philippines Celebrates its 25th Anniversary



The Federation of Peoples' Sustainable Development Cooperative (FPSDC) celebrated its 25th anniversary on 26 April 2023 with the theme, **"25 years of innovating ways: Translating aspirations into tangible results on the ground"**.

FPSDC is a federation of organizations that provide financial and non-financial services to empower marginalized sectors, ensuring the development of stakeholders (people) and the preservation of the environment (planet), while ensuring economic viability and equitable growth (prosperity), in the hope of promoting harmonious coexistence within and among communities (peace). It also encourages its member organizations to support advocacies on

sustainable agriculture and to engage in activities that take into consideration the 4Ps of sustainable development namely, People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace.

It has been an ICA member since 2015. Mr. Balu Iyer, ICA-AP Regional Director congratulates FPSDC on achieving this milestone. Watch the message [here](#).

JCCU Reports on the 'Nationwide Living Support Campaign' and Ethical Consumption Products



The sharp depreciation of the Japanese Yen and rising prices, as well as raw material shortages coupled with significant price increases for commodities, are affecting the household budgets in Japan.

Consumer coops nationwide are conducting the "Nationwide Living Support Campaign" to support the lives of coop members together. They inform members of affordable prices and quality coop products to support each other's lives as much as possible. Nationwide, coop stores are using the common logo of this campaign on POPs and banners at their stores. JCCU is also working to develop and raise awareness of ethical products to promote sustainable production and consumption. Coops are promoting an understanding of ethical consumption and sustainable society through campaigns related to ethical products, as well as learning activities and events for coop members.

JCCU has reported its progress on these initiatives. Read the full report [here](#).

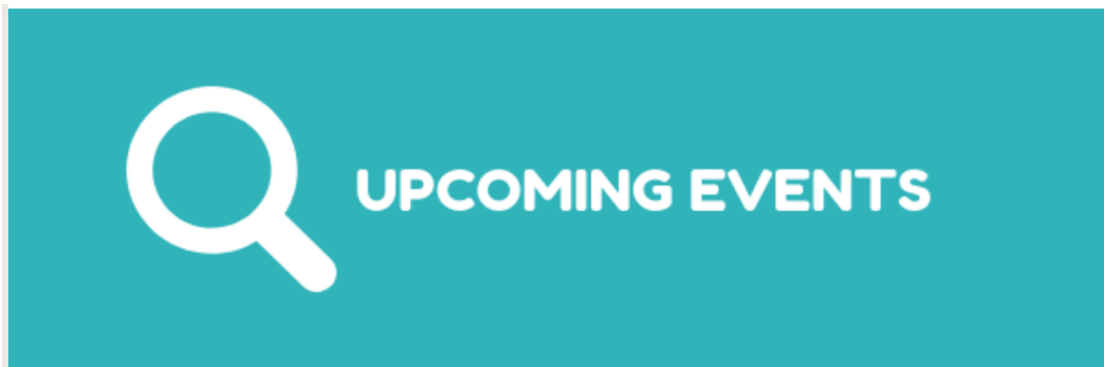
Policy and Legal Watch



Picture Credit: [UNSSSE.ORG](https://unsse.org)

In a historic moment, on 18 April 2023, the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/77/L.60 on Promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) for Sustainable Development.

The Resolution recognises cooperatives as an important part of the SSE (together with associations, mutual societies, foundations, social enterprises, self-help groups and “other entities operating in accordance with the values and principles of the social and solidarity economy”) and will help strengthen and mainstream the larger SSE agenda globally. It will coexist with existing UN resolutions on cooperatives in social development, adopted since the 1950s. It encourages the UN Member States to promote and implement national, local and regional strategies, policies and programmes for supporting and enhancing the SSE through dedicated legal frameworks, national statistics, fiscal and public procurement incentives, education curricula and capacity-building and research initiatives and reinforcing entrepreneurship and business support. [Read More](#).



- ❑ Pilot Training of Trainers on Climate Change and Action in Hanoi, Vietnam by ICA-AP Committee on Women (only for committee members) – 18–19 May 2023
- ❑ Training Program on Consumer Cooperatives Business Models by ICA-AP Committee on Consumer Cooperation in Japan (only for committee members) – May 2023 (TBC)
- ❑ 6th Coop Colloquium on ‘*Mutual Value Measurement Framework*’ by ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research – 21 June 2023. [Register here](#).
- ❑ ICA General Assembly in Belgium Brussels (participation by invitation only) – 28 June 2023. [More details](#).
- ❑ International Day of Cooperatives – 1 July 2023
- ❑ Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit (APCYS) 4.0 in Sabah, Malaysia – 27 to 30 July 2023. [Register here](#).
- ❑ ICA-AP Committee on Women 25th-anniversary celebration in Tokyo, Japan (Hybrid; Only for committee members) – 19-20 September 2023
- ❑ ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting in Malaysia – August 2023
- ❑ 17th ICA Asia-Pacific Research Conference – 4-5 November 2023
- ❑ 16th ICA-AP Regional Assembly in the Philippines – 6 to 10 November 2023