

Progress Report 2002 to 2004

ICA Regional Women's Committee
for Asia and the Pacific



**International Co-operative Alliance
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
New Delhi**

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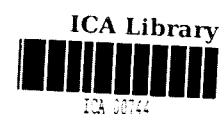
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Progress Report 2002 to 2004

ICA Regional Women's Committee
for Asia and the Pacific



International Co-operative Alliance
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific



**Report on the Activities
of
ICA Regional Women's Committee
2002 to 2004**

Compiled & edited by
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CONTENTS

	Page No.
1. Foreword	5
2. Our Mission	7
3. The years in Report 2002-04	9
4. Planning Strategies	9
5. Sharing-networking	10
6. Advocacy	14
7. Capacity building	16
8. Survey of the status of women	22
9. Visibility	23
10. Reaching out through News Letter	24
11. Projects & partners	24
12. Annexure:	
A. List of Office Bearers, Members and contact persons	25
B. Tagaytay Declaration—1997	28
C. Seoul Declaration—1998	35

Foreword

I am happy and feel privileged to present the progress report of the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia & the Pacific, 2002-2004. We have traveled to a certain distance but have yet to arrive at to be seen as critical mass. The period under report have been full of activities. We have been able to introduce and implement new projects. Completion of 4 Regional Trainers Training Programmes for Leadership Development of Women in Co-operatives and Exposure and Networking Programme for Empowerment of Women have been major activities during last two years. Besides, two Regional Women Forums, election and meeting of Regional Women's Committee, presentations at Regional Consultation and Co-operative Ministers Conference have been other significant achievements. We have also attempted to reach out to all concerned through quarterly RWC News Letter. The report carries detail information about our work and hope that it will give overview of our activities in the region.

Now that we have been able to draw a road map for carrying out our projects for gender integration and leadership development of women in co-operatives, a lot of consistent efforts have been made to cover this distance. As recorded in the activity report of 2000-2002, there have been several significant events which led us to the point from where we can see our goal clearly and are hopeful to attain means to achieve it in the near future.

I would also like to share information about our ambitious project of collection and establishment of sex disaggregated database in the co-operatives for the coming years 2005-06. The ICA Regional Office for Asia & Pacific and Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF) jointly held a conference on "Women in Decision Making in Cooperatives" in Tagaytay, Philippines in May 1997. Some very important decisions were taken in the conference and the conference came out with six strategies for empowerment and leadership development of women in co-operatives. This is placed at annexure: B of this report.

The conference appealed to member co-operatives to implement the strategies.

As we know, since almost eight years have been passed away, it is time to review progress post Tagaytay. Therefore, the Committee has planned to collect sex-disaggregated data from all the co-operative member organizations in the region and establish a data base. This data will be used as base line for reviewing our achievements or lack thereof. The result of this review will be presented at the Post Tagaytay Review Conference—May 2006 in the Tagaytay City, Philippines.

As has been concluded at RWC Meeting in Chiang Mai 2004, the coming years 2005-2006 are going to be busy with implementation of these two major projects: Establishment of sex disaggregated data base and Post Tagaytay Review Conference, besides other regular activities.

We are encouraged with our accomplishments in past years. I wish to convey my sincere thanks to all our partners, committee members, office bearers and staff whose dedication made it possible and who really care about the work we do.

We look forward to co-operation of all our members and the co-operative community in realizing our dreams of gender-balance in Co-operatives.

Rahaiah Baهران
Chair Person

Our Mission

To enhance women's participation in decision making, leadership and management of all levels of co-operatives in the region and to achieve Gender Integration in the co-operatives.

The ICA Regional Women Committee for Asia Pacific

Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

However, the irony is that all these factors against which co-operatives protect their membership, explicitly discriminate against women in many countries and are major impediments in the way of women's willingness to accept the responsibilities of even an ordinary membership of cooperatives, leave aside the responsibility of leadership. As a result participation of women in co-operatives in many countries in the region are below the desired level and almost invisible at leadership level.

Therefore, the ICA Regional Women's Committee was set up in Seoul, Korea in October 1998 with objectives to promote gender integration in cooperatives and increase participation of women at all levels in cooperatives, especially at leadership, in the region. The regional office for Asia & Pacific(ICA-AP) is implementing its Gender integration Programmes in the region through this Committee.

The functions of the Committee are:

1. To establish contacts among women leaders of co-operatives and create a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences in the region.
2. To promote understanding among co-operative leaders on the aspirations, needs and interests of women in all aspects of co-operative activities.
3. To represent women in co-operatives at the ICA Regional Assembly and ICA Regional Executive Council Meeting.
4. To identify areas for training, education, research and technical assistance required for national and regional projects and programmes for women in co-operatives.
5. To advise the ICA ROAP and member organisations to organise and implement activities which promote advancement of women in co-operatives, focusing on women's participation in decision making, leadership and management at all levels.
1. To liaise and collaborate with other regional and international organisations concerned with women and gender issues in co-operatives.

Constitution of the Committee

Each member organisation of the ICA is entitled to nominate one person to the Committee. The Committee may decide to admit non-members of ICA to be a member of the Committee on merit basis. The members shall serve on the committee from one ICA Regional Assembly to the next ICA Regional Assembly. The term of office is two years.

There are 13 members in the present committee. List is placed at annexure-A.

Office bearers of the committee

As per constitution of the committee, the Committee elects a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons. Their term of office is also from one ICA Regional Assembly to the next ICA Regional Assembly. Retiring officers are eligible for re-election.

The following are the office bearers of the present committee:



Chair Person
Ms. Rahaiah Baهران
Vice Chair person,
National Cooperative
Organisation of
Malaysia (ANGKASA)



Vice Chair Person
Ms. Junko Ito
Japanese Consumers'
Cooperative Union
(JCCU) Japan



Vice Chair Person
Ms. Goh Ming Huey
Board Member, SNCF,
Singapore

The Years in Report 2002-2004

The past years have been full of activities and accomplishments as some important projects have been implemented and we have moved further towards achieving the cause of women's leadership and gender integration in co-operatives. During this period we tried to address contemporary issues which are vital for the very existence of women in general and women in co-operatives in particular.

Trade and globalization are burning issues which are affecting the livelihood of women workers. International and Regional trade agreements are not suited for reflecting gender considerations.

The negative effects induced by trade liberalization are strongest in small subsistence farming and on the factory workers. Co-operatives represent women of these sectors who are disproportionately affected.

Over all empowerment of women is our most focused agenda but it has become even more important as the co-operatives are confronting the challenges of open trade and globalization and as usual less privileged are likely to suffer more. Women occupy the bigger part of this less privileged group because they have limited accesses to empowerment tools such as skill training, quality control and knowledge of the market.

The other issue is HIV/AIDS and women. It hit hardest at women. They lose the earning member, burdened with double responsibility of earning and care giving, stigmatization and in most cases, innocent victims of infection through partners.

Thus we have new beginnings as we initiated new projects:

- Training of trainers for leadership development of women in co-ops.
- Exposure and networking programme
- Addressing issues of HIV/AIDs with gender perspective as the pandemic has women face
- Survey of status of women in mix co-ops in the region
- Reaching out to members and partners through news letters

Over the years, ICA Regional Women's Committee worked to build strategies for enhancement of women's participation at all levels of the coops. However, it was felt that there is need to review the achievements or lack thereof. In order to review the progress and identify the gaps, there is need to establish a data base. The committee has decided to collect sex-disaggregated data from cooperatives in the region which will be used as road map to assess the situation and ascertain the needs.

Planning - Strategies (Meetings of RWC/OBM)

The ICA Regional Women's Committee meeting is held by-annually in conjunction with Regional Women Forum. The members share their country report and progress about gender development, review the activities of the women's committee and discuss and decide the work plan for the committee. Election of Office Bearers is also held in the committee meeting and members elect the office bearers.

Women Committee Meeting, Cebu:

The 3rd Meeting of the Women Committee has been held in Cebu, Philippines in February, 2003.

The meeting reviewed the progress of activities and election of office bearers has been held. Mrs. Rahaiah Baheran has been re-elected as Chairperson and Ms. Junko Ito and Ms Preema Shanti Suriyarachchi have been re-elected as Vice Chairpersons.

Women Committee Meeting, Chiang Mai:

The 4th Meeting of the Women Committee has been held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in November, 2004.

The members reviewed progress of the activities and work plan for the coming year has been discussed and decided.

Election of the Office Bearers has been held. Ms. Rahiah Baheran and Ms Junko Ito have been re-elected as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson respectively. Ms. Goh Ming Huay from SNCF, Singapore has been elected as Vice Chairperson in place of Ms. Preemashanti Sooriyarachchi

Meetings of the Office Bearers of the Women Committee—

As per the rules, the Office Bearers of the Committee should meet once or more times in a year as per need, to discuss and decide issues related to functions of the committee.

During the period under report following meetings have been held:

1. July, 2002 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
2. August, 2003 Oslo, Norway
3. February, 2004 New Delhi, India
4. 29th November, 2004 Chiang Mai Thailand
5. 3rd December, 2004 Chiang Mai Thailand

These meetings have been held for:

- A. Periodical review of the activities
- B. Planning of Trainers training programmes
- C. Planning of women's forums and meetings of the Regional Women's Committee
- D. To decide about agendas for the meetings
- E. To decide about strategies for the presentations at regional and international forums
- F. To decide about initiation of new projects and any other matter related to working of the committee.

Sharing-networking

The Regional women's forum is being held regularly in conjunction with ICA AP Regional Assembly. This forum provides platform to women and men co-operators in the region to meet and share experiences with a larger group of co-operators with various socio- cultural

background. This forum is a strong medium to deliberate upon important issues concerning gender integration in co-ops. The Chairperson of the committee presents the Recommendation of this forum at the Regional assembly and impress upon the policy makers to adopt measures to create enabling environment for capacity building of women in coops.

Regional Women Forum, Cebu



Participants of Cebu Forum.

Since 1998, the ICA Regional Women Committee is organizing the Regional Women Forum regularly in conjunction with ICA Regional Forum. Second ICA Regional Women Forum was held in June 2000 in Singapore. The Third Forum was held in Cebu, Philippines on 18th February, 2003. Around 100 women and men from several countries across the world including the ICA President Mr. Ivano Barberini attended the Forum. It was a great success.

Theme: "Asian Values and Women's Participation in Co-operatives" focusing on Asian values vis-à-vis Co-operative values.

Objectives of the Forum:

- to determine whether Asian values enhance the participation of women in cooperatives
- to identify mechanisms to overcome factors that limit women's participation in cooperatives.

The Call for Action:

Based on the findings of the presentation and discussions at the Forum, the Forum called on men and women cooperators and cooperative organizations in Asia and Pacific at all levels for the following actions:

- develop and design more programmes towards leadership development and empowerment of women in cooperatives
- day care for children and elderly

- reproductive health and medical services
- business information and know how for women entrepreneurs
- educate members
- on leadership
- on gender concerns in coop and business and shared household responsibilities
- other issues in the society

Provide support systems and activities that would improve family relationship

- Services that will address needs of children and spouses

Regional Women Forum, Chiang Mai

4th ICA Regional Women's Forum was held on 30 November 2004 in Chiang Mai, Thailand with the participation of 80 men and women from 9 countries.

Theme of the Forum : Women in Re-engineering of Co-operatives in the Globalizing Economy.

We noted that : Women members of co-ops can play an equal role to cope with a globalized environment by

- making co-ops as major tool to reduce poverty and for achieving gender equality
- re-engineering and reshaping cultural norms and paradigms



Rahaiah Baheran and Lucita Lazo at Chiang Mai Forum.

We saw best practices from:

1. **Japan :** Co-ops develop economic independence of women leading to their participation in society. Co-ops can sustain agriculture as source for rich food culture, preserve local culture and local products.
2. **Malaysia :** Globalization - diverse roles of women, increase of women in workforce, concerns in raising/taking care of children. Co-ops should provide new services like childcare/daycare. To promote values and fulfill social obligations of the co-ops and to generate income for the co-op as well

3. **India** : Non-traditional services of co-ops empower women in the informal sector by giving them employment opportunities, dignity, financial services etc. while making them aware of social issues in order to address the issues affecting them.

4. **Thailand** : Community focus - provide marketing network, product development and entrepreneurial services to women for self-empowerment and poverty reduction.

In micro, small and medium enterprises (Mimes) women learn to be self-confident, to speak up and become leaders. MSME is a "kingdom of women" which will transform families, communities and strengthen the co-ops.

The participants agreed and concluded on these recommendations :

Considering the competitive environment that puts more pressure on co-ops to cope with changes and social issues brought by globalization, TO, trade liberalization, global terrorism, food scarcity...

there is need to re-engineer (change/transform) co-ops to cope with these pressures and to prepare women in co-ops to face globalization :

TO ICA MEMBERS :

- Increase knowledge base of women by capacity building
- Provide budget support for training and education and other support services
- To provide opportunities to share experiences and expand the networks of women entrepreneurs
- Education should be focused on women and men including business management and marketing

TO ICA ROAP :

- Increase knowledge base of women by capacity building
- Provide budget support for training and education and other support services
- To provide opportunities to share experiences and expand the networks of women entrepreneurs at the regional level

TO ICA :

- To provide exchanges among women from countries of similar cultures, e.g., Malaysia and Iran
- To facilitate inter-coop trade among women producers and marketeers
- To look into the social dimensions of feminized poverty such as gender and HIV/AIDS, violence against women in collaboration with partner organizations and other stakeholders

TO STAKEHOLDERS :

- To avail of the opportunities of organizations such as UNIFEM and other international organizations in addressing gender issues within the context of co-operatives

Advocacy

The women's committee has been proactive in influencing upon the policy makers and stakeholders for creation of enabling legislation and policies for capacity building of women and gender integration in co-operatives. The following platforms have heard and felt the presence of women's committee and acknowledged it's concerns by resolving to

Adopt several enabling provisions:

1. Presentation at 6th co-operative Ministers Conference-Nepal 2002
2. Presentation at the ICA Regional Consultation on Co-operative Legislations and Policies in Kuwait, December-2003
3. Presentation at 7th Ministers Conference in India, February-2004
4. Presentations at ICA Regional Forums and General assembly
5. Presentation at the Joint Seminar of IHCO-ICA Gender Equality Committee, Oslo-'03 and COPAC Open Forum, Washington-'04 on HIV/AIDS-Co-operatives and Gender concerns

Presentation at 6th co-operative Ministers Conference : Nepal 2002 :

Ms. Akiko Yamauchi, Manager JCCU represented the Women's Committee and spoke about the importance of women empowerment and gender integration in co-operatives. She informed about the activities of the committee and emphasized upon women's contribution to the economy of a nation. She appealed to the Ministers conference to take into account gender perspectives and integrate gender equality measures into the reform process of co-operative legislation and policy.

Presentation at the ICA Regional Consultation on Co-operative Legislations and Policies : Kuwait 2003 :



Savitri Singh at Kuwait Regional Consultation.

Mrs. Savitri Singh, Secretary to the ICA Regional Women's Committee made a presentation before the ICA Regional Consultation prior to the 7th Asia Pacific Co-operative Ministers Conference addressing the issue of "Legal Constraints to Women's Participation in Co-operatives" based on the study conducted by the ILO. The issues addressed in the presentation were discussed and the consultation resolved to adopt;

"the creation of appropriate provisions in Co-operative Legislation that will enhance the role and participation of women in co-operative management and leadership."



Rahaiah Baheran at Delhi-Coop Minister's Conference

Presentation at 7th Co-operative Ministers Conference-India-2004:

Towards the next step, Mrs. Rahaiah Baheran, Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women's Committee made a presentation at the 7th Asia Pacific Co-operative ministers conference in February, 2004 on "Empowering Women through Co-operatives". Based on the presentation, the Conference, in its joint declaration called upon the Governments and Co-operatives in the Asia-Pacific Region, as well as the ICA-ROAP to:

"give special consideration to increasing women's participation in the Co-operative movement at all levels; the Government together with the co-operative movement in each country, must provide the necessary FUNDS for gender disaggregated data base, training and education of women, networking and exposure to success stories, and particularly to those co-operatives where young co-operators can play an active role in co-operative activities based on their understanding of the co-operative identity".

Presentations at ICA Regional Forums and General Assembly :

The Chairperson of the Committee addresses the ICA Regional Assembly and Forums and informs about the progress of the Committee's various programmes. She made them aware about the recommendations of the Women Forum and impress upon the assembly to take action through the members.



Savitri Singh at IHCO-ICA Seminar in Oslo.

Presentation at the Joint Seminar of IHCO-ICA Gender Equality Committee :

The ICA Gender Equality Committee and IHCO had organized a Seminar on "Health, Gender and HIV/AIDS: Co-operative Care" in Oslo in September 2003. Mrs. Savitri Singh, secretary to the committee had been invited to make a presentation at the seminar in order to share information about the impact of HIV/AIDS on co-operatives in general and effect on women in particular and efforts being made by the co-operatives in Asia for fighting against HIV/AIDS.

She also made a presentation before the COPAC Open Forum and emphasized upon the need for awareness and prevention programmes for co-operative members especially for women as the women have to bear the socio economic burden of the pandemic as care givers as well as the earners.

Capacity Building

Capacity building of women to take up leadership in co-operatives is top most priority of all our programmes. Trainers of training programme and exposure to best practices have been held to provide networking opportunities to women co-operators and their male counterparts who are responsible for gender integration programmes in their co-operatives.

Regional Training of Trainers Program for Leadership Development of Women in Cooperatives :

The ICA ROAP in collaboration with ILO Coop Net developed a training manual for training of trainers for leadership development of women in cooperatives.

4 sub regional TOT program have been held during the year 2002-04. The first one was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2002. The National co-operative Organisation of Malaysia (ANGKASA) hosted the TOT and provided for financial and organisational support.



Participants of TOT in Malaysia.

Second sub regional TOT has been held in Pune, India in June 2003. Twenty five trainers from 4 countries have been trained during the programme. The National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) extended all the financial and administrative support.

Third TOT was held in March-2004 in Bandung, Indonesia and had been hosted by the DEKOPIN. 25 Trainers from 4 countries attended the programme.

Fourth TOT was held in Iran in June-2004 covering 25 trainers from 4 countries. It had been hosted by the CURACI.



Participants of TOT in Iran.

Impact of the Programme :

The programme has been appreciated by the trainers. Some trainers have reported that the programme has made them more confident in addressing the issue. The host member

organizations have shown positive response in order to organize such programmes locally for their trainers.

The members have been requested to get the manual translated into their own language for the benefit of the local trainers and the trainees as well. The Central Union of Rural Agricultural Co-operatives of Iran (CURACI) has got the manual translated into local language.

The Shabahang Rural Co-operative Company is a member of CURACI. The co-operative reported that they have held training classes for their members soon after attending the TOT. And 364 women and 116 men have been registered to attend the training in near future.

It has been reported that Cooperative College of Malaysia has conducted several TOT based on the Training Manual for their teaching staff. ANGKASA is also organizing TOT for their cooperative members. In Thailand, CLT has got the manual translated into local language and TOT has been held for local trainers/leaders.

The Women Committee is considering to organize more such programmes at national level in member countries through the member organization.

However, during the first TOT participants from Singapore pointed out about the need for more specialized training. Later in Indonesia and Iran, where participants were trainers cum managers and managing directors of the co-operatives, they expressed the need for advanced



Participants of TOT in Indonesia.

and elaborate training on topics such as Financial Management of the co-operatives, inputs on business management such as establishing small business etc. Women expressed their opinion that they must possess skills of managing finance and business of the co-op in order to become competent leaders.

Experience from the trainees :

Ms. Goh Ming Huay of SNCF, Singapore thinks that the training is not very much relevant to situation in Singapore as she feels that co-ops in her country are providing enough opportunity for women.

Ms. Nasarin Kosary of CURACI, Iran felt that this training is very important for empowerment of women. She said that during one week of the training she got tremendous exposure and is

feeling confident enough to express her views. She said that she had never before addressed a gathering of 25-30 people but now can speak without hesitation.

Several men participants said that this programme gives insight to gender relations and now they have better understanding of issues related with women as wife or colleague.

During the Training in Malaysia, some men opined that empowered women are threat to stable family life. The women are better placed at subordinate levels.

ICA Regional Women Seminar and Networking Programme-2004, Bangalore-India :

The challenges of globalization and free trade are affecting lives of people unevenly across the world. The co-operatives worldwide are feeling the heat of unequal opportunities and threats created by the free market. As usual, this has intensified the existing inequalities and insecurities for many poor women. The high tech means of trade and business are tend to benefit rich than the poor. Women are most likely to suffer more from the rapid changes societies are undergoing due to globalization and free trade.

In the context of the above challenges and the resolution of the Minister's Conference for networking and exposure to success stories, the ICA Regional Women's Committee has been making attempts to share information with women cooperative leaders in the region and expected to find ways and means to promote women's economic security and empowerment through the cooperatives. The Committee has organized it's first 3 days Seminar and Networking Programme for women cooperators of Asia Region in Bangalore, India. The programme was supported by ICA Domus Trust, ICA-Asia & Pacific and National Co-operative Union of India.

Objective of the programme

The objective of this programme is to provide a common meeting ground to Asian cooperative women leaders/persons responsible for gender and women development in co-operatives for sharing information and experience about success stories and best practices of their co-operatives and most importantly help women to establish a network for mutual co-operation and business interest across the Asia & Pacific Region.

Expected outcome

- Establish contacts among women leaders/co-operative members and create network
- Collection of information and dissemination of best practices
- Identify mechanism to overcome factors that limit women's participation as organizer and decision maker
- Business information about products and services as well as know-how for women entrepreneurs
- Identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration.
- Based on the success of the programme, more such programmes will be organized in future.

Proceedings

30 men and women co-operators from India, Malaysia, Iran, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Nepal attended the 3 days Programme.



Inauguration of the Programme.

Seminar was inaugurated by Smt. Kanti Singh the Hon'ble Minister of State for HRD, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India. She appreciated the initiatives of ICA-Asia & Pacific and emphasized on role of co-operatives for empowerment of women as well as the society.

The inaugural session has been attended by 150 people including co-operators, trainers, leaders and a significant number of print and electronic media. The news of the programme has been telecasted on local networks and several news papers carried the news along with photographs.

Activities

During the technical session the representatives of the participants presented country report consisting of information about overall co-operative efforts for gender mainstreaming and success story of their co-operatives. The group discussions were held in the next session. Countrywise groups have been formed. Mr. Jiro Ito, the Director Special Programmes of ICA-Asia & Pacific facilitated the Group Discussion. After intensive group discussion, the group leaders presented their reports.

Outcome/Recommendations

Based on the findings of the group reports the participants resolved to recommend that—

- More such networking and exposure programmes should be held in different countries in the region.
- At least 30% seats should be reserved for women at the board of co-operatives in all the ICA-Asia Pacific member co-operatives.

These recommendations will be presented before the forthcoming ICA Regional Women Forum to be held in Chiang Mai on 30th Nov, 2004.

Study Visits, Exposure and Networking Programme :

One and half day of the programme has been fully devoted to exposure to success stories and networking. The Karnataka State Women Co-operative Federation Ltd. has organized the networking programme and visits to success stories. The Federation has been formed in 1992 as the mother institution to all women societies and Co-op Banks in the state. The Federation serves and facilitates the members by organizing training programmes, marketing support for their products through organizing of exhibitions and awareness programmes. The Federation has also started a marketing center and women's hostel.

The group visited to following successful co-operatives:

A. Sumangali Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd.

The co-operative has 1080 shareholders and the work area is spread over 4 villages. The society provides for training of necessary skills to women to start small business such as embroidery, toy making and other handicrafts etc. They have a shop to display and sell the goods. The society runs an orphanage and school for children and destitute women. The society has following regular programmes for it's members and the community:

- Education
- Health
- Community Organisation

The society has won many awards from Central and State Government for it's outstanding achievements in the field of Women Empowerment.

B. Abhyudaya Mahila Urban Co-operative Bank, Chennapatna & Chetana Womens Voluntary Organisation, Bangalore

Both these organizations are promoting and supporting the women in sustaining their livelihood by generating income and asset creation. The members are engaged in following business:

- Coir rope and coir mat making
- Wooden toys making
- Cocoon rearing
- Beedi (local cigarette)making
- Dairy
- Vegetable growing and vending

The bank lends funds to women for investment in their business. The bank has a membership of 2100 women with a share capital of nearly Rs. 12 lakh and a deposit base of Rs.50 lakh.

Besides visiting to the above successful co-operatives, the participants met with Chairpersons and members of following successful co-operative organizations and had useful discussions:

- The Karnatka State Co-operative Federation Ltd.
- Mahila Co-operative Bank Ltd.
- Sree Bansankari Mahila Co-operative Bank Ltd.

- Women Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd.
- Srimatha Mahila Sahkari Bank Niyamitha
- Bangalore District Women Entrepreneurs' Co-operative Society
- Pooja Mahila Credit Co-operative Society Ltd.
- Shree Shakthi Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd.
- Kautilya Mahila Vividhodesha Sahkara Sangha Niyamitha

The leaders of these co-ops have also attended the Programme as participants and shared information with their foreigner counter parts.

Survey of the Status of Women

The Committee conducted a survey to collect data about status of women's participation at various levels in co-ops, particularly as decision makers in Mixed Co-operatives in the region. A report for the Year 2002-2004 is placed for information:

The information has been collected from the member organizations in the regional countries through circulation of format. Following have responded:

Country	Co-operative
1. India	1. National Federation of co-operative sugar factories 2. Goa Rajya Sahakari Sangh Maryadit(State co-op union). 3. National Co-op Union of India 4. The Haryana State Co-operative Development Federation Ltd.
2. Iran	1. Shabahang Rural Co-operative company
3. Malaysia	1. ANGKASA
4. Japan	1. JAZENCHU 2. JCCU
5. Thailand	1. CULT
6. Singapore	1. SNCF
7. Sri Lanka	1. NCC

The information has been collected from 3 levels of co-operative set-up i.e. Apex, State and Primary level.

Out of the total number of participation, percentage of women's participation has been calculated and placed below.

	<i>National Apex</i>	<i>State Apex</i>	<i>Primary co-op</i>
Leader	11.49%	4.0%	14.46%
Manager	23 %	50 %	7 %
Staff	37%	51.62 %	46.53%

Highlights of the findings:

The figures are not very encouraging and a lot has to be done to reach to a target of even 20-30% of women participation. The presence of women at various levels of cooperatives is yet to be seen.

Leadership position is better at grassroots level but as far as skilled/specialised work as managers or employees are concerned, women lag behind at secondary and primary levels.

Among all the Apex co-ops which has sent data, 3 members have lowest participation of women namely NCUI, India 9%, ANGKASA, Malaysia has only 4.5% and JA ZENCHU, Japan 0% i.e. none at all.

Statistics from SNCF, Singapore could not be included due to different set up of co-operatives in the country. However, data received has been analysed and placed below:

		% of women participation
Total number of employees	9192	32.59%
Total number of managers	546	28.38%

As we are aware, the Women committee has also conducted the similar survey in 1992 and in 2001 and findings have been published in the activity report of 2002.

A comparison of the statistics of women's participation is given below:

	National Apex	State Apex + Primary co-op
<i>Leaders</i>		
1992	2%	30%
2002	7%	32%
2004	11.49%	14.35%*
<i>Managers</i>		
1992	2%	2%
2000	2%	11%
2004	23%	7%*
<i>Staff</i>		
1992	23%	20%
2000	25%	26%
2004	37%	46.55%

* Showing down trend in growth. Percentage of women participation at State level is higher but the figures shown in the table are combined with Primary level.

Visibility

In order to encourage and support the members in carrying out activities for promotion of gender integration and women development in the co-operatives, the office bearers and secretary of the women committee participate in their programmes. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Secretary of the Committee had been deputed to represent the committee in a seminar organized by AWCF and at a National Women Forum in Sri Lanka in the year 2003. The AWCF has organized a

seminar in November 2003 on Transformative Leadership in co-operative. The secretary addressed the seminar on behalf of ICA RWC and attended the deliberations. The Indian co-operative movement is celebrating its centenary year this year. The Gujarat State Co-operative Union has organized a grand Women Forum where more than one thousand women were present. The Union requested for advise in organizing and theme etc. and also representation from ICA being the international organization. Ms. Savitri Singh, the secretary helped them in organizing the forum and shared experience and information as keynote speaker.

Reaching out through News Letter

Our region covers a vast geographical area with 55 co-operative in 22 countries as members. Regular communication and interaction with our members and stake holders is necessary to maintain the presence of gender issues in routine of the co-operatives. Secondly, all those people and organizations who are supporting our cause need to know about our activities and should be kept informed.

Therefore, in order to reach out to all concerns the committee is publishing quarterly News Letters which covers current issues related to gender integration, reports of on going activities and activities of members as well. We also publish information about new studies in the field of women empowerment, upcoming events and ICA programmers to keep our readers abreast with the latest happenings.

All the issues of the news letter have been published regularly and distributed through e-mail and by post. The news letters are archived at our web-site as well.

Projects and Partners

Projects

Overall support:

TOT in India :

TOT in Malaysia:

TOT in Iran:

TOT in Indonesia:

Regional Women Seminar and networking programmed: ICA Damus Trust, IFFCO Foundation and NCUI, India

Besides the above projects, the member co-operative organizations of many countries support by sending there participants to attend the programmers and bear their cost.

Partners

Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union(JCCU), Japan

National Co-operative Union of India(NCUI)

National Co-operative Organization of Malaysia (ANGKASA)

Central Organization of Rural Agricultural Co-ops OF Iran(CURACI)

Dewan Coperasi Indonesia (DEKOPIN)

Annexures : A

List of Office Bearers, Members and Contact Persons of ICA Regional Women's Committee

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- | | |
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Annexure: B

Tagaytay Declaration-1997

Regional Conference on Women in Decision-Making in Co-operatives

Declaration and Platform of Action

Preamble

1. We, women and men leaders, staff and members of co-operative organizations and non-government organizations promoting co-operatives from Asia and Pacific (specifically, Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam), Europe (specifically, Denmark, Finland and Sweden) and North America (specifically, Canada) participating in and contributing to the successful reflection and deliberation in the regional conference on Women in Decision-Making in Co-operatives organized by the Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum and the International Co-operative Alliance Regional Office for Asia and Pacific held in Tagaytay City, Philippines, on May 7-9, 1997,

2. Aware of the gross marginalization of women in the leadership and decision-making structures and processes in co-operatives at all levels: primary, national, regional and global,
3. Determined to increase the number and level of participation of women in the leadership and decision-making structures and processes in co-operatives at all levels,
4. Acknowledging the voices and concerns of our other sisters and brothers in the co-operative movement in the Asia and Pacific and other regions in the world, who share our concern and commitment for increased participation by women in the leadership and decision-making structures and processes in co-operatives,
5. Dedicate ourselves unreservedly to promote and advocate the increased participation of women in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives, agreeing that such goal requires the cooperation and solidarity of all cooperators: leaders, staff, women and men, as we strive to create a more caring and effective leadership in co-operatives into the 21st century.

We reaffirm our beliefs:

6. In the co-operative principles of democratic member control, voluntary and open membership, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, co-operation among co-operatives, and concern for community,
7. In the co-operative values of democracy, equality, equity, solidarity, self-help, and self-responsibility,
8. In the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others, on which co-operatives all over the world were and are organized on these bases.

We are convinced that:

9. Women and men have different needs, interests, priorities and styles of leadership and decision-making arising from their specific roles and situations, and that both women's and men's needs can only be adequately and appropriately addressed if women and men are equally represented in the decision-making processes in all structures, including in co-operatives; and that, addressing these needs will result in the progress of these structures;
10. The exclusion of women and the failure to incorporate women's concerns in decision-making and leadership levels and processes in all structures, represents a major loss to society as a whole; and to co-operatives in particular, translates into a loss of half the potential, talent and experience pool that can contribute to the growth and progress of co-operatives;
11. All co-operative members and leaders, women and men, are bound and at the same time, have a role to play in increasing the number and participation of women in decision-making and leadership in co-operatives in all levels: primary, national, regional, and global.

We are aware and recognize that:

12. The gross marginalization of women in decision-making and leadership levels and processes in structures in society, including in co-operatives are due to: cultural beliefs and socialization processes that result in women's subordinate position compared to men and restrict women from being more involved in public life,

discrimination (explicit and covert) against women in access to education and training, institutional settings that are governed by male norms, and thus, reflect men's needs and situation more than women's different needs and experience, and, the limited number of women in co-op membership;

13. Women's number and participation in decision-making and leadership structures and processes in co-operatives must be increased for the following reasons:

women are more critical of the traditional definition of politics and of the use of power: too centralized, too hierarchical and too autocratic; women leaders will bring in a different kind of leadership in co-ops;

if there are more women decision-makers in co-operatives, co-operatives focus can be enlarged in such a way that women-specific needs will be included; women can influence co-ops to use resources that will help correct gender inequality and inequity not only in co-ops but also in society at large;

14. Efforts have been made to increase the number and participation of women in decision-making and leadership in co-operatives, but these efforts are inadequate, and in some cases, ineffective in achieving this goal as evidenced in the:

still marginal number of women in decision-making and leadership positions in co-ops especially in the national, regional, and global levels, in the barriers that continue to keep women from these positions such as co-op practices, standards, and processes in selecting leaders, in the exercise of leadership duties and in the recognition of contributions as leaders;

We are determined to:

15. Amend laws, revise, and where necessary, create structures to increase the membership of women in all types of co-operatives;
16. Create an environment that is conducive partnership between women and men and supportive of increased participation by women in leadership and decision-making in co-operatives at all levels, primary, national, regional and global and other structures in society: family, community and law;
17. Continue our advocacy on gender equality, gender equity, and the empowerment of women in co-operatives by transforming our co-operatives to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of both women and men members;
18. Set up systems and take the immediate steps to provide women with the necessary education, training and experience in order to be effective as leaders;

We commit ourselves to:

19. Bring co-operative practice in line with co-operative theory and values by pursuing and creating a kind of leadership in co-operatives that is:
consistent with co-operative principles;
democratic, participatory, collaborative, consultative and accountable to members;
gender responsive where women and men work together for the betterment of family, workplace and society; and
responsive to the needs and situation of the disadvantaged.
20. We hereby adopt and commit ourselves as leaders, members, staff, volunteer promoters and organizers of co-operatives to implement the following Platform of Action. We call

on the International Co-operative Alliance and its members, other co-operative movements, the Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum and other networks of gender and co-operatives, non-government organizations and women's organizations promoting co-operatives, to fully commit themselves and contribute to the implementation of this Platform of Action.

PLATFORM OF ACTION TO ENHANCE THE NUMBER AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING IN CO-OPERATIVES IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

41. In order to enhance the number and participation of women in the leadership and decision-making structures and processes in co-operatives, we propose the following strategies and action to be implemented within a period of eight years, from Year 1997 up to Year 2005.

Strategy I : Instituting gender-sensitive co-op laws, bylaws and policies that promote increased women membership in co-ops and participation in leadership and decision-making therein

Actions to be taken :

42. By Governments :
 - a) Review co-op laws, implementing rules and guidelines from a gender perspective, and amend, if they cause disadvantage to women in becoming members of co-ops;
 - b) Review Co-op Laws, implementing rules and guidelines from a gender perspective, and amend or correct, if they cause disadvantage to women in becoming leaders and/or becoming effective in the performance of their duties as co-op leaders;
43. By all types of co-operatives at all levels : primary, national, regional, and global :
 - a) Review their (co-op) bylaws and other policies from a gender perspective, and amend, if they cause disadvantage to women in becoming members of co-ops; promote joint membership in primary level co-operatives of couples in a household;
 - b) Undertake pro-active efforts to increase the number of women members in their co-ops;
 - c) Review their (co-op) bylaws, other policies and practices from a gender perspective, and amend or correct, if they cause disadvantage to women in becoming leaders and/or in becoming effective in the performance of their duties as co-op leaders;
 - d) Undertake pro-active efforts to increase the number and participation of women in the leadership and decision-making structures and processes in co-operatives;
44. By all co-operatives, governments, non-government organizations:
 - a) Support ICAROAP in its efforts to pursue legislation and government policies that are more gender-responsive, with particular emphasis on the resolutions adopted by the Fourth Asia Pacific Conference of Co-operative Ministers held in Chiangmai, Thailand, from March 19 to 22, 1997;
 - b) Support the role of the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific in its efforts to promote gender-responsive policies in co-operatives;
 - c) Support the Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF) in its efforts to advocate gender-responsive policies in co-operatives and provide services in helping co-operatives become gender-responsive.

Strategy II : Building capability of co-ops on women leadership development

Actions to be taken :

45. By primary level co-operatives :
 - a) Conduct Gender Sensitivity Training (GST)* for women and men co-op members, leaders, and staff;
 - b) Allocate technical, material, human, and financial resources for the training of the Education Committee on women leadership development in co-ops;
 - c) Ensure and monitor the equal access by women and men members and staff to all types of training opportunities and resources for their personal and professional advancement;
46. By national level co-operative organizations :
 - a) Initiate, promote and conduct GST for women and men co-op members, leaders and staff;
 - b) Develop and allocate technical, material, human, and financial resources for the training of national trainers on women leaders at all levels;
 - c) Ensure and monitor the equal access by women and men members and staff of affiliates/members to all types of training opportunities and resources for their personal and professional advancement;
47. By all co-operative organizations at all levels: primary, national, regional (ICAROAP), global, and gender & co-operative networks such as the AWCF :
 - a) Promote awareness among members as voters on the need and importance for women to be in the leadership and decision-making structures at all levels in co-operatives;
 - b) Support the quota system as a means to ensure and facilitate the increase in the number and level of women's participation in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;

Strategy III : Building capability of women for leadership and decision-making in co-ops

Actions to be taken :

48. By primary level co-operatives :
 - a) Conduct Gender Sensitivity Training for women members and leaders;
 - b) Allocate resources for and provide training opportunities to women members to enable them to get into leadership position in co-ops; likewise, to be effective and efficient in the performance of their duties as co-op leaders;
 - c) Provide equal opportunities for women and men staff of co-ops in promotion and other opportunities for career advancement in a co-op organization/employer;
 - d) Educate young cooperators about gender issues and promote awareness of the need and importance for women to be in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;

* Also referred to as Gender Awareness seminar/Training, it serves as an introduction and provides a basic orientation to the participants on gender, gender issues, and how they affect social and economic development and political life, in general. When conducted in the co-operative development, in particular.

- e) Establish a network of women leaders in the primary level that bring the women's agenda (empowerment of women, support in carrying out multiple roles, equitable sharing of power in co-operatives) to the co-operative movement, build solidarity at all level, build consensus on common issues and exercise influence on decision-making processes in co-operatives at all levels;
49. By national level co-operative organizations :
- a) Develop and allocate technical material, human, and financial resources for leadership skills training of women members at all levels;
 - b) Develop and allocate technical, material, human and financial resources for management skills training of women co-op managers, other women co-op staff, and women elected leaders;
 - c) Develop a management and leadership development program for women and men members and leaders that emphasize the new model of leadership and management that is consistent with co-op values and principles and is characterized by caring and compassion, consultation, democratic style, high regard for ethics, cooperation and collectivism;
 - d) Develop and promote a gender-sensitive human resource development for co-operatives among affiliates/members;
 - e) Develop and promote a gender-sensitive youth development program for co-operatives among affiliates/members;
 - f) Document and publish stories about the efforts of co-operatives in enhancing women's participation in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives and disseminate to the media, governments and general public;
 - g) Establish a network of women leaders at the national level that brings the women's agenda (empowerment of women, support in carrying out multiple roles, equitable sharing of power in co-operatives) to the co-operative movement, builds solidarity at all levels, builds consensus on common issues and exercises influence on decision-making in co-operatives at all levels;
50. By the ICAROAP and AWCF :
- a) Develop, publish and disseminate curriculum and materials for a Leadership Development Program for Women in Co-operatives;
 - b) Organize and conduct regional fora at least once a year on issues related to equitable sharing of power and decision-making between women and men in co-operatives;
 - c) Organize and conduct regional exchange programs and exposure visits for women leaders of co-operatives on co-operative operations and other programs relevant to the enhancement of women's participation in leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;
 - d) Assist members in their respective leadership development programs for women in co-operatives;
 - e) Advocate at the international level issues concerning women in leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;
 - f) Document and publish stories of women leaders in co-ops who could be good role models for other women as well as men leaders in co-operatives highlighting women leaders unique contributions to the progress of co-operatives;

- g) Document and publish cases of co-operatives that are successful in enhancing the participation of women in leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;
- h) document and publish stories about the efforts of co-operative organizations in enhancing women's participation in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives at the regional and international levels to the media, governments and the general public;
- i) Establish a network of women leaders in the primary, national, regional and global levels that bring the women's agenda (empowerment of women, support in carrying out multiple roles, equitable sharing of power in co-operatives) to the co-operative movement, build solidarity at all levels, build consensus on common issues and exercise influence on decision-making processes in co-operatives at all levels;
- j) Build solidarity with allies in the women's movement, people's organization, non-government organizations, trade union movement and other movements and organizations in all parts of the world who are supportive to the cause of enhancing women's participation in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;

Strategy IV : Developing, promoting and implementing a gender-disaggregated data collection and utilization system for co-operatives

To measure the actual participation and contribution of women and men in the co-operatives for the purpose of :

- making women's contribution to co-operative development visible;
- showing the degree of inequity and inequality in women's and men's involvement in co-operatives;
- facilitating the recognition of gender issues in co-operatives; and
- providing concrete basis for the co-operative's formulation of policies, design of programs, and provision of services that are gender-responsive.

Action to be taken :

- 51. By the ICAROAP and AWCF :
 - a) Develop a model or system for generating, analyzing and utilizing gender-disaggregated data in all aspects of operations of primary level co-operatives, including on leadership representation and participation;
 - b) Promote and assist primary level co-operatives in using this model or system so as to collect gender-disaggregated data on a regular basis to establish benchmarks and monitor the progress towards a more gender-responsive co-operative movement;
 - c) Collect and publish gender-disaggregated data on co-op members, to relevant government bodies, and to the general public;
- 52. By co-operative organizations at the primary and national levels :
 - a) Collect gender-disaggregated data on membership and leadership vis-a-vis co-operations on a regular basis, and utilize these data to make co-op services truly responsive to the needs and conditions of women and men members;

Strategy V : Creating a supportive environment for the enhancement of women's participation in the leadership and decision-making in co-operatives

Action to be taken :

53. By co-operative organizations at all levels :
- a) Undertake pro-active efforts to address and correct gender stereotypes that portray women as less capable than men to be leaders in all structures, including in co-operatives as shown in media, in books and other educational materials, and as practiced in the family; but rather, to portray women as equal to men and that the difference in roles, capacities, and physical make-up between women and men is an advantage and not a limitation;
 - b) Provide material and financial resources to support women and men members of co-operatives in their reproductive roles in the form of child care subsidy, parental leave, transport services, good and safe daycare facilities;
 - c) Ensure Women's equal access to advances technology as it enhances women's participation in leadership and decision-making in co-operatives;

Strategy VI : Establish a Leadership Development Fund for Women in Co-operatives generated from within the co-operative movement as well as from other institutions to be used in carrying out the actions contained in this Platform of action

Action to be taken :

54. By co-operatives at all levels :
- a) Allocate at least 2.5% of the annual net surplus for contribution to the Leadership Development Fund for Women in Co-operatives of the (co-op) organization;
 - b) Allocate a percentage of the education and Training Fund proportionate to the percentage of women members in the (co-op) organization for contribution to the Leadership Development Fund for Women in Co-operatives;
 - c) Undertake fund-raising activities to contribute to the Leadership Development Fund for Women in Co-operatives.

Annexure: C

Seoul Declaration–1998
Declaration at First Regional Women's Forum

Seoul, Korea 1998

For the enhancement of Women's Participation in Leadership and decision making in cooperatives

Preamble

We, the participants of the First ICA Regional Women's Forum in Asia and the Pacific, representing 19 cooperative organizations and an international development agency from 12

countries (India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Finland)

- Express our concern over the under-representation of women in leadership and decision making;
- Aware of the benefits that cooperatives derive from increased participation of women in leadership and decision making;

Hereby recommend to the Regional Assembly, the following actions at national and regional levels to achieve a balanced representation of women and men in leadership and decision making in cooperative organizations at all levels:

Proposed actions to be taken at ICA ROAP level:

1. to ensure the participation of women in all specialized bodies of ICA ROAP
2. to organize Regional Women Forum in conjunction with ICA Regional Assembly

Proposed Actions to be taken at ICA ROAP

Member organizations level:

Legislation

1. To review and propose amendments to cooperative laws, rules, regulations and by laws to promote equality between women and men;

Staff

2. To appoint a contact person responsible for coordinating and disseminating information concerning matters and activities related to women in cooperatives.

Programs

3. To promote gender awareness among women and men coop members, leaders and staff
4. To increase women's opportunities in education and training on;
 - a) Leadership
 - b) Cooperative principles, cooperative management and other technical areas, through seminars, workshops, distance education, exposure programs etc;
5. To organize national women's forum once a year;

Funds

6. To allocate funds for programs and activities supportive of women's increased participation in and benefits from coops.

STATEMENT ON THE CO-OPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their service and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including government, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives 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 general public-particularly young people and opinion leaders-about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

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