



Weekly Digest

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Editorial

Welcome to issue thirteen of the Weekly Digest. This week we report on recent co-operative research activities. We also cover our usual range of other ICA related activities, including advocacy with the UN system and joint co-operative development efforts with our members. The achievement of two long standing co-operative women leaders, Ann Hoyt, USA and Rahaiah Baهران, Malaysia is also profiled. As usual we would welcome your comments.

ICA meets with FAO to Discuss future of Co-operative Programmes

The ICA voiced its concerns about the diminishing resources allocated by FAO to co-operative development, at a recent meeting with FAO Director-General, Jacques Diouf. The ICA President, Director-General and Deputy Director-General met with Mr. Diouf to urge FAO to reallocate resources to co-operatives, as the budget cuts were seen by many in the movement as a political statement against co-operatives.



Mr. Barberini stressed the important role of co-operatives in agricultural production, marketing and distribution and their contribution to reducing poverty. Mr Diouf assured the ICA delegation of his personal commitment and support to co-operative development. He underlined that co-operatives have a significant role to play in promoting food security and tackling poverty. “We must find new and innovative ways to work together” said Mr. Diouf. He stressed that the ICA and FAO could work together to develop national projects and programmes within the Special Programme for Food Security which is active in over 100 countries. “Resources can be made available for these new programmes”, said Mr. Diouf, In order to ensure that FAO would have sufficient co-operative expertise, the ICA proposed possible co-operative secondments to FAO given that the budget cuts would dramatically impact the number of technical experts working with co-operatives. Mr Diouf welcomed this idea and looked forward to receiving a proposal.

Meetings were also held with the FAO officials of the Sustainable Development Department who are currently working with co-operatives. The top photo shows from left to right Ian Macdonald, Jacques Diouf and Ivano Barberini.

Co-operative Research Conference held in Spain

A major conference on the topic of *The Future of Co-operative in a Growing Europe* was held 7-8 May 2004 in Segorbe, Spain. The conference was jointly organised by the ICA’s European Research Committee with CIRIEC Espana .../2

and IUDESCOOP, Universidad de Valencia.

Over 130 researchers from 20 countries attended with more than 70 papers presented in plenary and concurrent sessions during the 2 day conference. It is intended that the conference proceedings and selected papers will be published in a variety of co-operative and social economy journals. The editors who met during the conference agreed to pursue a more co-ordinated approach to future publishing of co-operative research. The conference also marked the official handing over of the secretarial responsibilities for the ICA Global Research Committee from Patricia Vaucher-Sullivan to Garry Cronan. The photo opposite shows the opening session of the conference.



Scenes from the Research Conference



1. Yohanan Stryjan, Vice Chair, Europe ICA Research Committee. Södertörns Högskola, Sweden and Rafael Chaves, IUDESCOOP, University of Valencia, Spain
2. Gurli Jacobsen, Copenhagen School of Economics, Denmark, Bastien Dion, IRECUS, University of Sherbrooke, Canada, Danielle Demoustier, Institut d'Etudes Politiques de, Grenoble, France
3. Colin Glass, Donal McKillop, Queen's University, Belfast University of Ulster with other conference participants from Northern Ireland, Canada and Portugal
4. Akira Kurimoto, Chair ICA Research Committee, Consumer Co-operative Institute of Japan
5. Jean-Francois Draperi, (left) RECMA, France discussing some points with another participant
6. Patricia Vaucher-Sullivan, ICA and Kamel Esseghairi, Social Economy Institute, Tunisia

Get to Know Your ICA – Meet the Staff and Officials

This week we meet ICA Board member Rahaiah Baheran, photo opposite. Rahaiah has been a Board Member since 1999. She is also a Board Member of the ICA Gender Equality Committee and Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women's Committee for Asia and the Pacific. As the Vice-President of ANGKASA since 1997, she serves as Chairperson of ANGKASA's Education and Women's Development Committee. She is also a director of various primary level co-operatives in Malaysia. Rahaiah has served as a Senator in the Malaysian Parliament and is currently a Director of the Agricultural Bank of Malaysia.



Her three priority areas for co-operatives are; education, women and youth. On women she said "it is our aim for women to be seen and heard. Hence we focus our work on providing gender training. There's a need for co-operatives to carefully analyse their policies to ensure that women have equal access to decision-making positions and that gender policies be adopted. With more women empowered through their co-operatives, automatically they will become an agent of change in their society, thereby a great boost in the process of nation building."

She also believes training and education are vital to cater to the development of our members and that education is the key towards empowering women. Finally, on the future she said, "we have invested a lot of time, money and activities to get school co-operators to become aware of co-operative principles and values. Co-operative activities in the school can shape students to be a contributing member of society in the future". Rahaiah can be contacted at rahaiah1@angkasa.coop

Angkasa – Malaysia's Apex Co-operative Organisation



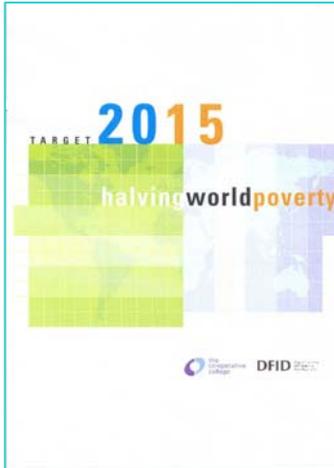
The National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia Ltd ([ANGKASA](#)) is the apex body of the Malaysian co-operative movement. It was established and registered officially on 12 May 1971. ANGKASA is recognised by the Government as representative of the Malaysian Co-operative Movement at the national and international level. Its membership comprises 2,975 co-operatives and is open to all types of primary, secondary and tertiary co-operatives.

ANGKASA is not involved in business activities. Rather, it serves to champion the aspirations and

the rights of the co-operative movement in Malaysia. Its other objectives include providing training and education programmes as well as managing service-based facilities to assist administration and development of member co-operatives. The above photo shows the members of ANGKASA's National Working Committee.

Quick Start for "Co-operatives in Europe"

Co-operatives in Europe is the recently established common platform of ICA Europe and the Co-ordinating Committee of European Co-operative Associations (CCACE), see [Weekly Digest 10](#) for details. Its objective is to promote solutions to develop, support and evolve co-operative enterprises in Europe. Among its first actions has been the preparation of a response to the EU Consultation document for a community support programme for Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Competitiveness (2006-2010). The response is based on the results of a questionnaire sent out to the joint membership of ICA Europe and CCACE. The top two actions proposed by co-operatives to the issues raised in the consultation paper are the promotion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the fostering of enterprise competitiveness. For more information please contact ICA European Officer Barbara Coghlan icaeurope@ica.coop



UK Parliamentary Launch for SGA

Gareth Thomas, MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for International Development, launched the UK Strategic Grant Agreement project (SGA) and the new 2015 pamphlet on Tuesday, 4 May. The ICA is represented on the SGA steering group by Jan-Eirik Imbsen.

At the launch, which took place at Westminster in the House of Commons, speakers emphasized the importance of this initiative. Professor Stephen Yeo, Chair of the Co-operative College gave an introduction to the SGA between the Co-operative Movement and DFID. Mervyn Wilson, Chief Executive of the UK Co-operative College, talked about opportunities it presents for the co-operative movement. Jan Eirik Imbsen, ICA Director of Development spoke about the global co-operative family and its contribution to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals. Martin Beaumont, Chief Executive, the Co-operative Group, spoke about fair and ethical trade, the co-operative contribution, and Alana Albee, NPG Policy Integration at the ILO underlined the importance of Recommendation 193 and the MoU with the ICA with emphasis on poverty reduction. Gareth Thomas, in his speech lauded the initiative and pledged his support.

The 2015 pamphlet, seen above, will now be widely distributed. The next publication under the SGA, *A Co-operators Guide to how to Make Your Town a Fair Trade Town*, being printed by the Co-operative Group is now at print and will be launched at the UK Congress in May. It will be followed shortly after by the pack that the UK College is drafting on ILO Recommendation 193.

Forthcoming Co-operative Social Economy Conferences

- The 25th International Congress of CIRIEC International will be held in Lyon, France on 27-28 September 2004. The theme for the conference is *The response of the social and co-operative economy to the expectations of society*. A detailed programme has recently been printed, see opposite. See <http://www.ulg.ac.be/ciriec/> for more information.
- The 2nd European Social Economy Conference in Central and Eastern Europe will be held in Krakow, Poland 28-29 October 2004. This conference on the theme *Enlarging the Social Economy from Prague 2002 to Krakow 2004* is being organised by CEP-CMAF with support from the Polish Government and the European Commission. For more details <http://www.Krakow2004.coop>



NCBA Elects Ann Hoyt as new Chair



Ann Hoyt, one of the USA's most respected and widely published experts on co-operatives, was elected as board chair of the National Co-operative Business Association on April 29. Hoyt is Professor of Consumer Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a senior faculty associate at the University's Centre for Co-operatives. She teaches, does research and develops training materials for all types of co-operatives. Over two decades, she has trained hundreds of co-operative and non-profit directors and managers. NCBA's CEO Paul Hazen called Hoyt's election as board chair a big plus for the 88-year-old association. "Ann is extremely knowledgeable and has led numerous other co-op boards over the years," he said. "The depth of experience she brings to NCBA will be a tremendous benefit for us". NCBA is a long standing member of the ICA.

Copies of the Weekly Digest are archived on the ICA's website www.ica.coop.