



Weekly Digest

Issue 38

7 March 2005

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Editor: Garry Cronan
cronan@ica.coop

www.ica.coop

On-line co-operative service unveiled

An exciting new co-operative service is about to commence.

The Co-operative Learning Centre (CLC) is a collaborative online resource for co-operatives and co-operative researchers worldwide.

It grew out of discussions within the International Co-operative Alliance, particularly our Human Resource Committee, chaired by Dr. Yehudah Paz. It has been developed collaboratively by the ICA, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies (BCICS), the project manager designated by the ICA.

It has benefited from the

advice of numerous individuals and organisations, notably the Co-operative College of the United Kingdom.

BCICS is an institute at the University of Victoria, Canada

dedicated to research, learning and teaching about co-operative thought and practice.

See page 7 for details about the CLC.



Visit the prototype at www.learningcentre.coop

ICA Director-General elected UK Congress President

Iain Macdonald, ICA Director-General, has been elected to serve as President of the UK Co-operative Congress 2005 in Glasgow.

Mr. Macdonald said, "being elected president of Congress is clearly a great honour, not only for me but for the ICA as well. I'm sure it is that link which helped me to be elected."

Mr. Macdonald said "my presidential address will undoubtedly have an international flavour but I hope one which is relevant to the British co-operative movement.

"My speech will also have some reflective moments

but will concentrate on the future and co-ops unique role as businesses with a social purpose."

He added that he's looking forward to going back to his native country. "I am very pleased that Congress this year will be held in Glasgow, which for nearly 20 years was my co-operative base. I could not have imagined when I was appointed as Scottish Sectional Education Officer in 1979 that I would have ended up in this position!

"My experiences as Director General of the International Co-operative Alliance over the last 2 years have convinced me that co-operation

is key to progressive change in the world today – not least in the work towards the elimination of poverty," he added.



Iain Macdonald, delighted at his election as UK Co-op Congress, President

From the editor's desk



Welcome to the thirty eighth issue of the Digest.

Firstly, I would like to thank the many readers who have indicated they like our new format.

Continuing our policy of gradual improvements, we have introduced a new *weekly features* section on pages 8 & 9. This week, in celebration of International Women's Day we look at women in co-operatives.

Our lead story is on the development of a new online co-operative resource. This is an important

and timely development.

In a similar vein, we also report on a co-operative distance-learning course and on ICA Asia Pacific's new website. We have much to learn from each other about the co-operative world, and these initiatives help us do so more effectively.

We also welcome the ongoing progress being made within the ICA on the implementation of new financial control procedures, and celebrate International Women's Day.

We have news from

Europe and Asia on forthcoming and recent events.

To help keep you informed about such events we have expanded our *back page* calendar of events.

Finally, this week we have reports from Robby Tulus on his recent visits to Aceh and Sri Lanka and congratulate Iain Macdonald on his election as UK Co-op Congress President.

Garry Cronan

cronan@ica.coop

Elections Committee seeks nominations

"all full members have the right to nominate for election to the ICA board..."

The ICA's election committee met on 4 March 2005.

The committee comprises, three retiring ICA Board members, the chair of the Gender Equality Committee plus ex-officio members of the ICA President's Committee.

Yehudah Paz, retiring ICA board member is the chair

of the elections committee.

With the exception of the four ICA vice presidents, elected at regional level, all ICA board positions are up for election at the ICA General Assembly in Colombia in September this year. The vice presidents positions are ratified by the General Assembly.

The ICA Board is the supreme policy making body of the ICA. It normally meets three times a year.

All nominations are required to be sent to the ICA Director-General by 13 June 2005. .

Contact:

Iain.Macdonald@ica.coop

ICA statement on International Women's Day



Vanda Giuliano, chair of the ICA Gender Equality Committee

To mark the occasion of International Women's Day on Tuesday 8 March, the ICA issued a joint statement, by the ICA President and the chair of its Gender Equality Committee. An ex

"International Women's Day has become a day to reflect on the situation of our world from a gender perspective. This year we celebrate the theme, *Gender Equality Beyond 2005: Build-*

ing a More Secure Future.

The theme recognises the close relationship between gender equality, security and development. It stresses reducing poverty, protecting human rights and investing in sustainable development as keys to empowering women.

We call on ICA members and co-operators around the world to continue to

work towards giving women opportunities to make a difference in our co-operatives and communities. ICA appeals to all its members to act according to the spirit of promoting gender equality to build a more secure future for all."

The full message and links can be found at www.ica.coop/gender/womenday-2005. See also related items on pages 8 & 9.

The trauma that is Aceh by Robby Tulus

To understand how much grief there is in Aceh, you only need to absorb the real life story of my good co-operative friend H.M. Hanafiah on the day the tsunami struck. Mr. Hanafiah is the Chairman of the Regional Co-operative Council of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province.



H.M. Hanafiah

On that Sunday morning a sudden massive earthquake jolted his house, just as he finished his morning prayers. He told his two sons to continue praying, but 20 minutes later he heard people shouting that walls of water were inundating the city.

His wife, a geologist by profession who understood the nature of seismic movements, did not waste a second to grab her two children and run as fast as she could outside.

Hanafiah, left alone, grabbed the keys of his small Carrie minivan and drove past his yet unopened fence to find his

family. He saw them running some 60 metres away from home, and managed to haul them quickly into the car.

He drove as fast as he could towards the higher elevation of Banda Aceh, pulling as many children and women with outstretched arms along the way into his car, until a point at a junction when he saw a huge wall of water facing him just a few metres away. It was a split second decision he had to make, to either turn sharply to the left or to the right to escape the mountains of water looming right in front of him. He took the left turn....

It was a decision he thanked God deeply for, but also a decision that left a lingering trauma in his life. I could see Hanafiah trembling wildly when he told us how those masses of people who took the right turn were all tossed away in seconds by the indiscriminating high waves. It was a twist of fate. Yet there is heroism amidst the incredible tragedy.

He lost his precious house, all his belongings save for his laptop. His family was evacuated to a nearby camp, and he

and his wife have had sleepless nights for fear the waves will advance once again. Thanks to the contribution from JCCU, DEKOPIN in Jakarta bought a new “Kijang” minivan and donated it to the DEKOPIN Office in Banda Aceh to replace Hanafiah’s broken one. Since the arrival of this van, Hanafiah and his family felt safer just sleeping in this car every night.

The trauma is still quite visible in his face. When he drove us around the devastated sites of the tsunami, he would suddenly jerk the accelerator, a sign we were passing through the shocking scenes he encountered that day.

The head of the Co-op Department in Banda Aceh, Mr. Kamarrudin, also has similar horrifying stories to tell us when his office and



residence were inundated by waves.

But as true co-operators they showed their great resilience, and as mentioned in our digest last week, they believe that co-operative sustainability will depend on good long-term partnerships, not hand-outs, after the astonishing outpouring of aid and tireless relief workers from all over the world begin to leave the devastated sites, leaving us with recovery and reconstruction challenges.



Robby Tulus

“It was a split second decision to either turn sharply to the left or to the right to escape the mountains of water ...”

A large boat, swept 6 kilometres into the city of Banda Aceh by the huge waves



The KUD Office, totally destroyed by the wave 30 metres high - only the red-tile floor remains intact

Implementation of ICA Financial Controls



Guy Malacrida committed to implementing the new ICA Financial Control Handbook

As regular readers of the Weekly Digest will know, the last ICA Board meeting approved a new Financial Control Handbook for use throughout the ICA.

The new handbook is part of the ICA's commitment to improving its corporate governance and financial procedures.

A meeting, to discuss the

implementation of the handbook, has been arranged for senior ICA staff, including regional directors and accountants. It will be held on 22-24 March in ICA's head office in Geneva.

Guy Malacrida, ICA Director of Finance, and one of the authors of the handbook is committed to putting in place the new financial controls procedures.

"We need to ensure that we are all working in a consistent and appropriate manner. We are very serious in our commitment to do this correctly," he said.

For further information on the meeting or the new financial handbook contact, Guy Malacrida at malacrida@ica.coop

New website for ICA - Asia & Pacific

new website
address is
www.icaroop.coop

ICA-Asia & Pacific has a new website. It incorporates their earlier general as well as the previous trade directory websites.

The new site has been designed to have a fresh, modern look. The directory is interactive and members can post information on their organisations, products and services. It also includes an up-to-date news section, extensive links, and a calendar of activities among other features.



ICA Assessment Team Visits Sri Lanka

The ICA is working with local and international co-op partners to ensure a coordinated approach to the reconstruction



P Nair, second on right, part of the ICA's assessment team on the recent visit to Sri Lanka

Robby Tulus, the ICA's regional tsunami coordinator and P Nair, from its Asia & Pacific office in India have just completed a visit to tsunami affected regions of Sri Lanka.

They met with all the key local and international co-operative and government representatives working on recovery and reconstruction plans. Next week's digest will carry a report.

ICA development projects in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam

ICA Asia & Pacific in collaboration with AGRITERRA, Netherlands, is organising agricultural co-operative development projects in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

The ICA has initiated discussions with the governments of Laos and Cambodia and with the Vietnam Co-operative Alliance in this regard.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Asia Pacific, Regional Director of ICA, recently visited Vientiane and meet with

Dr. Ty Phommasock, Vice Minister for Agriculture and Forestry in the Government of Laos to explore possible co-operative development projects.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed soon to initiate project activities in Laos.

MOU's have already been signed with Cambodia and Vietnam.



Shil Kwan Lee, left, meeting with the Vice Minister in Vientiane

Input into United Nations Secretary-General's report

The United Nations is preparing a report on co-operatives that will be circulated to government leaders and policy makers in international institutions.

The Secretary-General's report will highlight the contribution of co-operatives to the eradication of poverty. The ICA is asking its members to help provide information to the United Nations to ensure that the activities undertaken by co-operatives to

reduce poverty are well documented in the report.

Based on the information contained in the report, a series of recommendations will be made for future UN programmes on co-operatives as well as a policy directives aimed at national governments.

A questionnaire has been developed by the UN to collect relevant information. This has been circulated to ICA members, who have been asked to

fill it in and return it to the United Nations Secretariat in New York before 25 March 2005. The UN is also sending the survey to national governments. UN contact: Felice Llamas, llamas@un.org An electronic version of the questionnaire is available at www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/survey

You can also contact CO-PAC: Maria Elena Chavez Hertig, chavez@ica.coop

"..the ICA is a good and long standing partner of the UN..."

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary General

New publication on co-op capital from FAO

The United Nations, Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) regularly produces material on co-operatives.

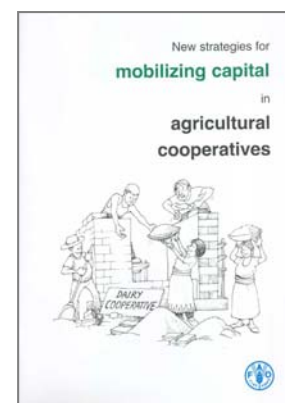
Its latest title is *New Strategies for mobilizing capital in agricultural co-operatives* by J.D. Von Pischke and John Rouse. The book is a revision of an earlier, popular publication on capital formation in agricultural co-

operatives for developing and transitional countries. The publication draws on the latest developments in capital formation in co-ops, including hybrid equity models. It is presented in a simple, easy to understand style.

Another recent FAO title, also by John Rouse is *Computerizing agricultural co-operatives: a practical guide*.

The FAO produce other material including a recent CD-ROM version, in several languages of its popular *Empowering small producers* manual.

To order these and other publications please contact: FAO, Jennie Dey De Pryck, Jennie.DeyDePryck@fao.org



A co-operative review of Lisbon strategy needed

There are 300,000 co-operative enterprises employing 4.8 million people with 140 million members across Europe."

'Co-operatives in Europe' calls for a constructive dialogue and partnership with the EU Commission to contribute to achieving the Lisbon strategy objectives.

Pauline Green, Co-President of 'Co-operatives in Europe' and ICA board vice president, led roundtable discussions with EU Commissioner, Vladimir Spidla, on Monday 28 February 2005. She outlined why co-operative economic enterprises are well placed to demonstrate the synergies between the economic, social and environmental pillars of the Lisbon Process; noting that co-operatives are member based, locally rooted, community enterprises. They combine economic per-

formance and competitiveness with a strong social agenda.

Rainer Schlüter, Coordinator of 'Co-operatives in Europe' described the building of the voice of co-operatives in Europe explaining that the 2nd Co-operative Convention, on 28 June 2005 will be addressing the key issues of the Lisbon Strategy and will be promoting the 'co-operative' path to achieving the twin goals of "more and better jobs" and "greater social cohesion" within a "sustainable development strategy".

Commenting on the fruitful discussions with Commissioner Spidla, Rainer Schlüter said, "This is the

first of the current series of discussions with Commissioners and their officials. It is important that they hear the voice of co-operatives and see that there is a 'co-operative difference'. A constructive dialogue with the EU institutions and being a partner for change is our goal.

For further information contact Rainer Schlüter, Tel: + 322 543 10 33

'Co-operatives in Europe' is the new common platform for all European co-operatives, it unites the actions of the ICA for the European Region (ICA Europe) and of the Co-ordinating Committee for the European Co-operative Associations (CCACE).

Masters of Management - Co-ops and Credit Unions



Students attending the August 2003 orientation programme at Saint Mary's. The students meet face to face twice during the programme – once in Halifax and the second time during a study visit to either Mondragon, Spain or Bologna, Italy

"Many never have the opportunity to learn what it means to properly manage a co-operative undertaking, often with disastrous consequences."

Edgar Parnell, 2000 ICA Report

Co-operative distance learning courses have become increasingly popular in recent years. One such course is the Master of Management – Co-operatives and Credit Unions (MMCCU) Programme, a collaborative project of St. Mary's University from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada and an international co-operative

with members, from six countries, including forty co-op businesses and eight co-op education providers.

The programme includes a strong focus on economic and social globalisation; financial accounting and controls, management skills; marketing and technology. It currently has 25 students enrolled. They come from three countries and have a wide range of co-operative work experiences.

Masters candidates are currently being accepted to begin the programme in the second part of 2005, the deadline for applications is 31 May 2005. Contact Tom Webb, tom.webb@smu.ca See www.saintmarys.ca/academic/fgsr

ICA's next General Assembly

Planning is now well advanced for the ICA's next major global event, the 2005 General Assembly.

This year's General Assembly in September will be hosted by ICA member, SALUDCOOP and CONFECOOP from Colombia.

The venue for the Gen-

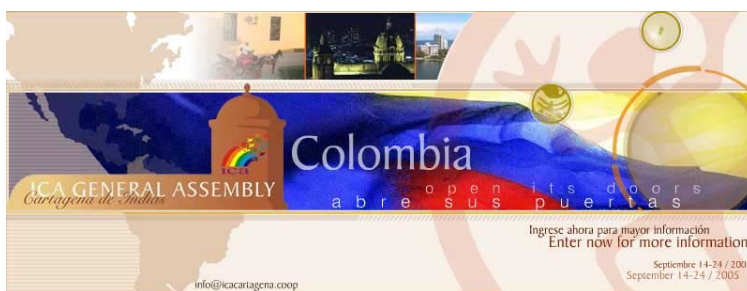
eral Assembly and related sectoral and thematic committee meetings will be the Hilton Hotel in Cartagena, Colombia.

General Assemblies always attract a large number of co-operators from throughout the world. Over 1500 people are expected to attend this year.



The first mailing to ICA members of the details relating to the Assembly, the programme outline, hotel and other information will be occurring within the next two weeks. A forthcoming issue of the digest will also provide comprehensive details about this major global event.

Photo shows ICA Vice-President (Americas) Carlos Palacino and ICA Deputy Director-General, Maria Elena Chávez Hertig signing the agreement in Colombia on 16 February 2004 to host the next General Assembly.



Details of New Co-operative Learning Centre

What will the CLC offer?

A rich inventory of practical and theoretical information on co-op development. The CLC will also have HRD training modules and on-line courses for those working and actively participating in co-operatives.

It will also have a research database exploring many aspects of the co-operative sector and documenting knowledge gained from a long and varied tradition of social development.

Additionally, it will include an interactive registry for community and researchers as well as one for managers and leaders of co-operatives allowing them to submit information and dialogue.

A special section for youth in the co-operative movement has been included. Plus numerous other tools such as links to related resources and

organisations, an on-line library, bookstore, and sections on marketing and government relations will be available.

The CLC will initially accommodate information in seven languages, other languages can be easily added later.

It will use the latest *Open Source* web technology to aid partner organisations in making their projects and special expertise areas better known. Its interactive HRD and Research registries will facilitate the exchange of ideas.

BCICS believe that it will be a vibrant, evolving meeting place for exchanging and gathering information on co-operative activities from around the globe.

Finally, an important element in the CLC will be an interactive registry of co-operative training and educational institutions, of universities and colleges offering training in co-operative-related fields and of other co-operative education and HRD frameworks.

This section will facilitate interaction and will offer information on the institutions, on available courses and training programmes, on course contents, on faculty members and on publications.

This section will be coordinated by the National Co-operative Union of India and its executive director, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad.

Visit the prototype at www.learningcentre.coop



Dr. Yehudah Paz.

"The CLC has long been a dream of mine. I want to congratulate Dr Ian MacPherson and his team at BCICS for being able to so wonderfully realise it. We owe them a huge vote of thanks..."

Weekly Feature: Women and Co-operatives

A review the ICA is undertaking of the top 300 global co-operative and mutual organisations reveals that only 4 of the top 300 CEO's are women!

Each week we hope to use these new features pages to examine in a little more detail a particular aspect of co-operative activity. In future weeks we will be looking at recent development in co-operative legislation, micro-finance, co-operative development models,

fair trade, corporate governance in co-operatives, strategies of commercially successful co-operatives and a wide range of other relevant issues.

This week, given the fact that Tuesday 8 March is International Women's Day we feature example

of the role of women in co-operatives from several of our members.

We would welcome contributions on co-operative topics for these pages. If you would like to contribute, please contact the editor Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop

Women's participation: tracking progress

How many women currently hold decision-making positions in co-operatives? How many women are members or employees of co-operatives?

formance had not been maximised. They reiterated too, the need to have reliable statistics to review their achievements and/or lack of progress. Working with the United-

making in co-ops. These statistics will complement the statistics that the ICA and the ICA Gender Equality collects.

Since the late 1990, ICA members have been asked to provide the Head Office with sex disaggregated statistics on members and employees. At the same the ICA Gender Equality Committee has asked its members to share information on women in decision-making positions. The information that exists is on the ICA GEC website: www.ica.coop/gender/stats.htm



Participants at the recent ICA Asia & Pacific Regional Women's Committee meeting

The answers to these questions allow us to track progress in increasing women's participation in co-operatives, and yet, little information currently exists.

A recent meeting in of the ICA Asia Pacific Regional Women's Committee reviewed their regional strategy, Tagaytay Declaration of 1997. The participants presented reports from their organisations about the progress achieved or lack there of. Members' reports showed that the strategies outline in the Tagaytay Declaration has been addressed, but per-

Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the ICA Regional Women's Committee will begin collecting information from members in the region. The data will cover number of women and men at all levels of co-operatives such as general membership, managers and board of directors, breakdown by age group and also number and kind of educational/training activities have been implemented and policies put in place for capacity building of co-ops on women leadership development and building capability of women for leadership and decision

The women committees of Africa and the Americas are also relaunching initiatives to collect statistics as all are keen on being able to measure the impact of the various ICA strategies and platforms adopted over the years that call on co-operatives to enhance the participation of women. The Regional Directors meeting planned on 21-24 March will include discussions on how best to coordinate the collection process.

*Maria Elena Chávez Hertig
ICA Deputy Director-General,
Secretary, ICA Gender Equality
Committee*

Iranian co-operatives empower rural women

The Central Organisation for Rural Co-operatives of Iran (CORC) has taken important steps to empower the rural women of Iran and to increase their involvement in decision-making at different levels of management and in socio-economic activities.

Mr. A. Cheraghali, Deputy Minister, Managing Director and Chairperson of the Board CORC reports that CORC has established a taxi service for rural women. It set up rural nurseries (kindergarten) and collection facilities for cow/sheep milk produced by

rural women. It supported agro-tourism and agricultural projects involving women in rural areas and has held several workshops to elevate women's ability in managing their businesses and co-operatives.

Presently, the contribution of rural women is not only limited to traditional activities (farming, handcraft, housework and childcare), but also includes significant contributions to education, management, economic and financial activities. On International



ICA board member, Rahaiah Baهران at a recent training session for women in Iran

Women Day, CORC reiterates its belief, "Together we can make a difference!"

"The gender equality strategies the ICA is pursuing are making a difference, but we need to do more..."

Iain Macdonald

High women's participation in Colombia's successful co-ops

In Colombia, co-operatives are providing 57,000 jobs, making them the 2nd largest employer in the country.

They contribute to 10% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). On International Women's Day, the Movement reminded that success was linked to the

increased participation of women co-operators and provided the following information:

The Asociación Colombiana de Cooperativas ASCOOP reported that women make up the majority of members in the 200 largest and most successful co-operatives

in Colombia (641,668 women, 620,772 men).

The Confederación de Cooperativas of Colombia CONFECOOP reported that 47% of its member societies has women in executive positions.

Women's representation on the ICA board



Pauline Green, (UK)



Stefania Marcone (Italy)



Hon. Senator Rahaiah Binti Baهران (Malaysia)



Gun-Britt Mårtensson (Sweden)

There are 16 elected positions on the ICA board plus the four elected vice presidents from the regions. Out of this total of 20 there are currently 4 women board members.

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ALLIANCE

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*Remember the
Weekly Digest
Index is now
available at
www.ica.coop*

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

Back Page - Calendar of ICA Events and Activities

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 22 March | Meeting of ICA Regional Directors, ICA Head Office, Geneva.
Contact: Jan-Erik Imbsen, development@ica.coop |
| 22-24 March | ICA Financial Control Seminar, ICA Head Office, Geneva. Contact:
Guy Malacrida, malacrida@ica.coop |
| 1 April | ICA Youth Network Strategy Meeting, ICA Head Office, Geneva.
Contact: Jan-Erik Imbsen, development@ica.coop or Jo Bibby Scullion s0347030@sms.ed.ac.uk |
| 20-22 April | International Seminar on Health, organised by International Health
Co-operative Organisation, Barcelona, Spain. Contact: Estanislau
Simon direccion@fundacionespun.coop |
| 21-29 April | Visit by ICA President and Director-General to Indonesia and Sri
Lanka to inspect tsunami reconstruction. Contact:
lain.Macdonald@ica.coop |
| 17 May | ICA Housing Executive Meeting, London, UK. Contact Mike Doyle,
mdoyle@chfhq.org |
| 18-19 May | ICA Board meeting New Lanark, Scotland. Contact:
lain.Macdonald@ica.coop |
| 19 May | ICA Asia Pacific Standing Committee, New Lanark, Scotland. Con-
tact: Shil Kwan Lee, icaroap@vsnl.com |
| 19 May | ICA Communications Committee meeting, Glasgow, Scotland. Con-
tact: Garry Cronan, cronan@ica.coop |
| 20 May | ICA Governance Group meeting, Glasgow, Scotland. Contact:
Garry Cronan, cronan@ica.coop |
| 28 June | <i>Co-operatives in Europe</i> Convention in Brussels. Contact: Rainer
Schlüter, rsc@cecop.coop |
| 2 July | 2005 International Day of Co-operatives. Contact: Maria Elena
Chávez Hertig chavez@ica.coop see www.copacgva.coop |
| 24-27 July | WOCCU, 2005 World Credit Union Conference, Rome, Italy. See
www.woccu.org/ |
| 11-12 August | ICA Global Research Conference, Cork, Ireland Contact: Olive
McCarthy, o.mccarthy@ucc.ie see www.ucc.ie/acad/foodecon/
CCS/ICA/index.htm |
| 8-9 Sept | ICA African Ministerial Conference , Lesotho. Contact: A.S. Kibora,
Regional Director, ICA Africa, skibora@icaroecsa.coop |
| 18-21 | ICA board, sectoral, thematic, youth and other related meetings. |
| 22-23 Sept | ICA General Assembly, plus related sectoral and thematic commit-
tee meetings. Cartagena, Colombia. Contact: Gabriella Sozanski,
sozanski@ica.coop see www.icacartagena.coop |
| 15-18 Nov | ICMIF Conference, Singapore. See www.icmif.org/ |