



ICA Digest

Issue 56

June 2007

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World Day Against Child Labour, 2007



June 12 was World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL). Child labour affects the lives of over 218 million girls and boys under the age of 18.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched the first WDACL in 2002 as a way

of highlighting the plight of these working children who are exposed to hazardous working conditions, earn low wages and are not allowed to attend school, thus compromising their futures.

This important day is intended to serve as a catalyst for the growing worldwide movement against child labour, reflected in the huge number of ratifications of [ILO Convention](#)

[No 182](#) on the worst forms of child labour.

This year, the day focused on the elimination of [child labour in agriculture](#)

Worldwide, the largest percentage of working children – nearly 70% or over 132 million children aged five to 14 – is found in the agricultural sector. They toil from dawn to dusk on farms and plantations planting and harvesting crops, spraying pesticides and tending livestock.

Read how the ICA is working with ILO on this issue, see page seven for details.

Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility - this year's IDC theme

Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility is the theme for this year's ICA's International Day of Co-operative and the United Nations International Day of Co-operatives on 7 July.

The theme highlights the fact that co-operatives are by their very nature enterprises that balance or integrate economic, environmental, and social imperatives while at the same time addressing their members and other stakeholder expectations thus promoting "corporate social responsibility" or CSR.

The message of the ICA for the 85th International Day of Co-operatives and 13th UN International Day of Co-operatives is available from our website - in English, French, Italian Japanese, Portuguese (Brazil), Portuguese (Portugal), Romanian and Spanish. More languages will follow.

You will also find copies of IDC messages or links to a range of other organisations including the United Nations, ILO, FAO and IFAP who have also produced messages on our website.



Visit our website to read all the language versions of the IDC message plus the UN Secretary-General's and FAO messages



Garry Cronan
Editor

From the editor's desk

Welcome to the fifty-sixth edition of the ICA *Digest*.

Firstly, an apology. We are running somewhat late with this, our June issue of the *Digest*. Other work commitments have meant that we are a week or two behind. However, to make up we have included some extra pages for you to read!

We lead this month with two items both related to international days. The first, World Day Against Child Labour was recently celebrated on the 12 June. Our

report highlights the role the ICA along with the ILO is playing in addressing instances of child labour.

Next we preview the forthcoming International Day of Co-operatives. This year's theme, *Co-operatives Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility* acknowledges the leading and long standing role the international movement has played in successfully combining economic and social values.

This theme also ties in with the focus of this year's *Global 300* launch which

will be seeking, for the first time at a global level, to measure co-operatives' CSR contribution.

Our feature interview picks up the ICA - ILO connection. We talk to the recently appointed head of the ILO's Co-operative Branch. Additionally, we carry many other reports of recent regional, sectoral and member activities and events.

As usual we would welcome your comments or contributions.

Garry Cronan

COPAC/ ICA News

"COPAC is the international committee for interagency collaboration on co-operatives and related activities."

COPAC decides on International Day of Co-ops theme

The 13th UN International Day of Co-operatives is 7 July 2007 and the theme is *Co-operative Values and Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility*. The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Co-operatives (COPAC) meets annually to set the theme, exchange information and identify forms of collaboration among its [nine members](#) including the UN, ICA, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP).

Meeting in Geneva on 11-12 April, COPAC's Board agreed on areas of strategic action including information gathering and exchange, promotion and awareness raising, inter-agency technical co-operation

among members, and policy and advocacy.

The work programme for COPAC in 2007 will include providing input into the 2007 *UN Secretary General's Report on Co-operatives*, participating in a UN panel discussion in New York in late 2007 on the role of co-operatives in promoting full and productive employment; and, organising representation at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly to speak in support of the *UN Secretary-General's Report on Co-operatives*.

In the spirit of collaboration, members of COPAC assisted the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in preparing a policy brief on co-operatives and will participate in an upcoming ILO roundtable to mark the 5th anniversary of the adoption of *ILO Recommendation 193: Promotion of Cooperatives*.

COPAC thanked ICA for preparing the draft *Protocol for co-operative response to post-disaster reconstruction* - a recommendation of the 2006 COPAC Open Forum on Tsunami Reconstruction.

This protocol establishes a transparent framework for collaboration among co-operative organisations comprising information sharing, joint planning, monitoring and evaluation. ICA will seek signatories for implementation.

Hagen Henry, leader of the EMP/COOP Team, formally the ILO COOP Branch, was elected COPAC chair, and Iain Macdonald, Director-General ICA, as vice-chair.

Visit [COPAC](#) or email [Maria Elena Chávez Hertig, COPAC Coordinator](#) for more information.



Working towards unification south of the border

Another Board meeting, another country! In this case Mexico. It was my first visit to this beautiful country part of Latin America clearly, but also North America. An interesting contrast in today's cultural debates, but even the sparsest knowledge of Mexican history will tell you that Mexico's involvement and interest in North America is a big issue.

The border between the USA and Mexico is physically real but philosophically arbitrary at least. Our hosts, [Caja Popular Mexicana](#), looked after us in a truly magnificent fashion and are clearly proud of their ICA membership and international links. This is another example of the strength of our global movement.

Unfortunately, work had to be done at the same time! This meeting had long been planned to consider the proposals of the strategic plan and restructuring process. Certainly the strategic plan was approved with a bit of tweaking and will now go to the General Assembly for approval. At the same time, the constituent parts of ICA - regions, sectors and the centre will prepare multi-annual programmes for presentation at the December Board meeting, using the strategic plan as the overall umbrella.

This represents a major step forward and the first time the entire ICA will have a single global strategy, monitored by the Board, as the guideline for all activities and actions. Hand-in-hand, of course, is the important work being done by the restructuring working group chaired by

Alban D'Amours of [Desjardins](#).

Most of the recommendations were approved and will be presented to the General Assembly. However, a number of issues are yet to be resolved and a simulation exercise on an improved membership subscription scheme needs to be completed. And, regions and sectors have to be consulted as to its final shape.

The Board also had a lengthy discussion on how best to promote co-operative enterprise and organise ICA activities in Africa. Following the initial report of our Commission on Africa, much discussion has taken place about how to organise African operations. No clear solution has yet emerged but our Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen, is spending much of his time ensuring that our work in Africa is not only maintained but improved.

It would appear likely however that a different form of regional structure may be proposed which will emphasise activities and working closely with our partners such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC) and Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA). Whatever the outcome, a lot of work needs to be done to rebuild our membership base. As with all other organisations, working in Africa and trying to offset the worst excesses of global capitalism is not easy but essential.

DG's report



Iain Macdonald
Director-General

After lengthy discussion, the Board agreed to support the setting up of a global co-operative trade fair, Expo 08, to take place in Lisbon next year.

This is a very exciting project and one which I hope will be supported by our membership and beyond. This is one way to make a reality of our sixth principle ("co-operation among co-operatives") and where we have much catching up to do if we are to be taken seriously by our competitors. The *Digest* will keep you abreast of developments here.

Last but not least, the Board supported the proposal of the Director of Finance to transfer our main account from UBS to Swiss co-operative giant, MIGROS Bank. Given the strength of the co-operative financial sector as shown by the *Global 300* project – and the Board enthusiastically endorsed its latest plans – it is surely time for ICA to practice what it preaches!

" This represents a major step forward and the first time the entire ICA will have a single, global strategy... "

Iain Macdonald

Busy time for ICA President



Ivano Barberini, has been busy in recent months, apart from the Board meeting in Mexico, he has been to UAE, (see separate report)and will shortly be going to Japan. He also attended meetings in Nepal, see photo above.

Websites

ICA is committed to continually improving its online services for members and others with an interest in co-operatives

Record number of visits to ICA websites in May

The four websites the global ICA maintains all recorded record numbers of visitors in May.

Our main website www.ica.coop recorded an increase of around 27% with almost 470,000 hits for the month. This increase was matched by our news site www.icanews.coop which had an increase of approxi-

mately 30% to over 186,000 hits during the month.

The www.global300.coop site also experience a significant growth as did our jointly hosted and newly re-launched ICA/ILO Cooperating Out Of Poverty site, www.ica.coop/outofpoverty, see news item below.

Visitor Feedback

We have also recently introduced a visitor feedback and survey facility on the www.ica.coop website.

So far all respondents have judged the site as very good or excellent!

Poverty news feeds greatly expanded

To access the latest news on co-operatives and poverty visit the website at www.ica.coop/outofpoverty/news.html

One of the main features of the newly re-launched *Cooperating Out Of Poverty* website is an expanded range of links to the latest news on co-operatives and poverty.

There are two principal sources: firstly, the ICA's own icanews.coop news feed box on poverty and co-operative issues. The second is news feeds from Eldis. At present we have over 12 feeds on topics such as food security, Millennium Development Goals, Africa, children, PRSP and World Bank and IMF items. To access all these up to the minute reports see www.ica.coop/outofpoverty/news.html

The ICA will also be shortly developing a new internet for all ICA staff throughout the world to access, share and exchange information.

Our next priority will then be to establish a **Members Only** section of the website

New ICA Board Members only website launched

A new service for ICA Board members has been introduced and previewed at the recent Board meeting in Mexico.

It is a **Board Members Only** section of the ICA's main website: Its purpose is to collect in one (online) place all the necessary information to enable Board members to carry out their governance responsibilities.

The creation of such a restricted site was one of the

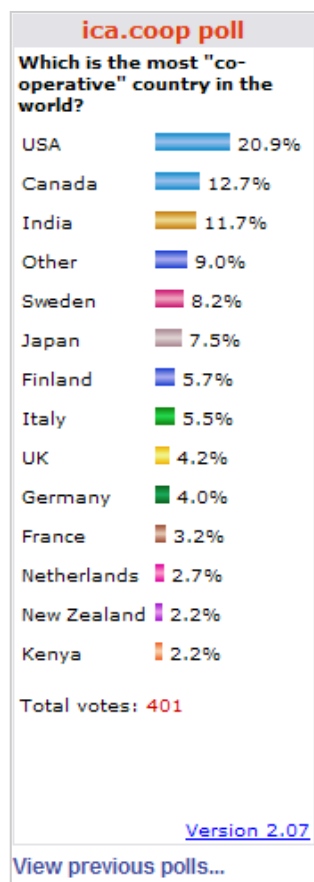
recommendations of the ICA's Governance Working Group.

The site contains copies of all relevant Board papers, background briefings, along with training and induction material for Board members, a calendar, contacts details plus provision for a forum to enable online discussions between Board members. For further details contact Patricia Vaucher vaucher@ica.coop



Patricia Vaucher will be managing the new ICA Board Members section of the ICA's website

Is the USA the most co-operative country in the world?



Yes, according to voters in the ICA's latest online poll on ica.coop. The poll asked the question *Which is the most "co-operative" country in the world?*

The USA has almost twice the number of votes to the next country, Canada and is well ahead of many other countries often thought of as more co-operative.

The full results at the time of writing are displayed on the left. What do you think? Do you agree with the voters so far?

This is the second online poll on www.ica.coop. The first one was on the question of *Which co-operative principle is the most important?* The most popular respond to this question was they are all equally important.

Apart from the www.ica.coop poll we have two other online polls currently running on two of the other ICA sites.

On www.icanews.coop we have the following poll question: *What do you think about the media's coverage of co-operatives in your country?* The present most popular response is *poor* by a factor of three to one.

The Cooperating Out Of Poverty site www.ica.coop/outofpoverty/index.html also has a poll question: *Do you think co-operatives can contribute to reducing poverty?* There is one very clear response here. Over 90% of respondents believe so!

ICA online polls

ICA online polls allow members and others to express their views on a range of co-operative topics

Our next poll will be on "Co-ops and CSR"

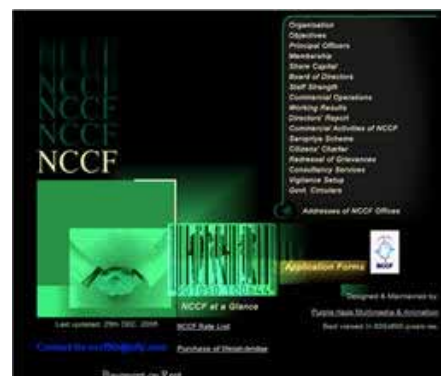
Websites

Member websites featured on ICA site

One of the main benefits of ICA membership is learning from each other.

To help encourage this and to more easily share information we have started to feature more member news and reports of activities in our publications and on our websites. For ex-

ample www.icanews.coop is being expanded to include news reports directly from members. We have also recently introduced a feature on the front page of the www.ica.coop site where we feature a member's website. This month it is the National Co-operative Consumers' Federation of India.



Next website improvement - upgrading of ICA development pages

The co-operative development pages of ICA's website are currently being upgraded.

Under the leadership of ICA Director for Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen, and

ICA webmaster, David Griffiths the pages are being redesigned to include more case study material related to co-operative development throughout the world. The new pages will be launched within the next month or so.

Have you any news or activities you would like featured on any of the ICA's websites?

2007 General Assembly

Hotels rooms are filling up very fast in Singapore - please made sure you book early!

The next issue of the *Digest* will preview the wide range of sectoral and other meetings also taking place at the GA



Maria Elena Chavez Hertig helping to coordinate the ILO and ICA response to child labour

Preparations proceeding for General Assembly in Singapore



18 - 19 October 2007

Raffles City Convention Centre

Theme: "Innovation in Co-operative Business"



It is now only a little over three months to the ICA's General Assembly in Singapore on 18-19 October.

Detailed preparations are underway to ensure this is one of the most successful

ever. It is expected that up to 1000 people will be attending from all over the world.

A special website, containing detailed information on the GA and related events has been established at

www.icasingapore.coop/ by the host organisation Singapore National Co-operative Federation.

You can register online at the site, so please book early.

Exciting range of speakers for business sessions of GA

One of the features of this year's General Assembly will be a series of concurrent business sessions.

Two streams will explore the related themes of *Business and the Environment* and *Co-operative Business Innovation*.

The second of these streams on *Business Innovation* will also feature the launch of the 2007 *Global 300* listing.

The concurrent sessions will included detailed case studies from a range of countries and sectors which highlight successful co-operative responses to the issues of environment and innovation.

The opening session will include keynote addresses from a range of leading global figures on issues as diverse as climate change, a fair globalisation, and international accounting standards.

For further details contact Iain Macdonald macdonald@ica.coop

Co-operating out of child labour

The ICA is jointly working with the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO in order to raise awareness of how co-operatives could contribute to the elimination of the scourge of child labour.

Two specific initiatives have been taken to date. Firstly, a report is being finalised which identifies the challenges to co-operatives as well as some current best practice that ensure that co-operative supply and production chains are child-labour free.

The report emphasises that the co-operative movement is not only guided by co-operative values and principles and its commitment to combating poverty, but also by the market which is increasingly awarding economic success to businesses displaying ethical practices.

The second initiative aims to create greater visibility for co-operatives as socially responsible enterprises. This year for the first time, a fact sheet on child labour and co-operatives will be included in the materials for WDAFL.

Future activities of ICA and

ILO (IPEC and the Co-operative Branch) on the issue of child labour will focus on capacity building for co-operatives and further visibility and promotion of best practice.

Visit [World Day of Action Against Child Labour](#). Email Maria Elena Chavez Hertig at chavez@ica.coop.

How co-ops can combat child labour in agriculture? Read the facts on opposite page..



Harvest for the future: How can co-operatives contribute to the elimination of child labour in agriculture?

ICA-COPAC
News



Co-operatives are guided in their activities by a series of universally recognised co-operative principles and values – these tenets have an important, but under-used, potential to tackle child labour in various sectors including agriculture. Co-operatives make development a reality for millions in today's world where poverty and hunger affect billions of people. They bring together 800 million people worldwide as co-operative members. They employ 100 million people and a further three billion benefit directly or indirectly from co-operatives.

At the global level, the top 300 co-ops are responsible for a turnover of almost one trillion USD annually which is equivalent to the GDP of the 10th largest economy in the world. As much as 50% of global agricultural output is mar-

keted through co-operatives.

The major contribution that co-operatives make to eliminating child labour is improving the livelihoods of their members and the wealth of their communities. Ultimately, the aim of co-operatives is to prevent or combat poverty, one of the root causes of the use and spread of child labour.

In the agricultural sector, co-operatives are a model of enterprise that farmers can use to improve their incomes and better organise the market for sustainable livelihoods. An example of a current initiative to eliminate child labour is the enforcement of codes of conduct that strictly prohibit producers from using child labour and (suppliers from sourcing products produced using child labour). Some major retail co-operatives that have such prohibitions are Coop Italia (Italy), Coop Norden (Sweden, Denmark, and Norway), Migros (Switzerland) and Cooperative Group CWS (UK). Some agri-

cultural co-operatives have made a commitment to abolish child labour. For example, the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative is committed to abolishing child labour within its 37,000 co-operatives and their members. In the cocoa and coffee industries in particular, where over 80% of the fair trade products are produced by co-operatives, members have eliminated child labour from their production chains.

Many co-operatives report that, for the first time, farmers are able to send their children to school because of their association with the co-operative. Some co-operatives also provide educational scholarships for the 'co-operating' children.

Read the full facts sheet – [Harvest for the future](#)

"the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative is committed to abolishing child labour within its 37,000 co-operatives and their members.."



UN/ICA News



Dr Anna Tibaijuka

"It is vital that we help them form co-operatives and other associations so that they make their voices heard."

Dr Anna
Tibaijuka,
UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat: co-ops help women make their voices heard

Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Dr Anna Tibaijuka, addressing the closing session of the 21st Governing Council reminded delegates that, "It is vital that we promote access to finance by poverty-stricken women.

It is vital that we help them form co-operatives and other associations so that they make their voices heard. By helping them with finance, believe me, we make a big impact on urban poverty reduction."

On 26 April 2006, UN-Habitat passed a resolution providing new guidelines aimed at improving women's land and property rights, and access to finance. UN-Habitat requested Dr Tibaijuka to promote access to finance by low-income women – as individuals, in co-operatives or in other forms – as a major

contribution to the overall implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to urban poverty reduction. The Habitat Agenda was adopted in 1996 and sets out approaches and strategies aimed at the achievement of sustainable human settlement development.

It includes numerous references to the 'co-operative sector' and the need to promote and support not only the development of housing co-operatives to address human settlement issues, but also financial, farmer-owned and consumer co-operatives.

The present resolution urges governments and their development partners to support women's land access trusts, housing co-operatives and other women's organisations (including grassroots organisations), working on the land, housing and housing finance to realise women's access to land, and security of tenure; and finally requests the Ex-

ecutive Director to report on the implementation of the present resolution in her progress report to the Governing Council at its 22nd session.

In particular, ICA and UN-Habitat have worked together to promote and support housing co-operatives through a series of Memoranda of Understanding, publications, seminars and development projects.

See [Habitat Agenda](#).



Obituaries

Former ICA staff member



Lotte Kent, a long-term ICA employee, died at age 89 on 15 November 2006. Lotte began her career with the ICA as personal assistant to Gemmel Alexander, former director of the ICA. She served as an information officer until 1977 when she retired at 60. However, she decided to return to the ICA and was employed on contract until 1982 as an administrative officer of the CEMAS programme with special responsibility for publications. Donations in her memory can be sent to an aid project in Zimbabwe c/o Stevenage/Kodomo Trust, The Secretary, Mrs J Addison, 11, Friday Furlong, Hitchin, Herts. UK SG5 2ND. (Photo courtesy of the UK Co-operative College)



Klaus Fischer - untimely passing

Klaus Fischer, Professor of Finance at Laval University, Canada sadly passed away last year at the age of 59. Many co-operative researchers will remember Klaus for his work in the areas of credit unions, micro-finance and insurance organisations. He spent part of his sabbatical in 2005 working and researching at the British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies.

Co-operative employment concerns on UN agenda



It is estimated that 100 million jobs have been created by co-operatives. This makes the co-operative form of enterprise one of the largest employers in the world. Indeed, co-operative enterprises currently employ more people than multinational enterprises. The United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are interested in knowing more about the co-operative capacity to create and maintain jobs.

Thus the UN sent a questionnaire to its members asking them to provide information on their policies on co-operative promotion, development and support especially in regard to job creation, the implementation of the *UN Guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of co-operatives* and the *ILO Recommendation 193: Promotion of Co-operatives*, and the number of people both directly and indirectly employed by co-operatives. The responses to the questionnaire will enable the UN Secretariat to prepare this year's United Nations

Secretary-General's Report on Co-operatives which focuses on employment. This report will be released in the third quarter of 2007.

The co-operative movement, especially ICA members, is urged to ensure that governments in each country provide responses and useful information so that appropriate policy guidance is formulated on how co-operatives can continue and contribute significantly to providing decent livelihoods. More information on the survey and a copy of the questionnaire can be found at www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/subpages/survey.htm

ILO's 2008 International Labour Conference will focus on the issue of rural employment. It is drafting a background paper on the current state of employment in rural areas and outlines trends and various policy initiatives aimed at addressing rural unemployment and underemployment. Working in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the ILO has also developed questionnaires aimed at three areas of government (ministries of labour; minist-

tries of agriculture; ministries in charge of co-operatives) to provide input into a report on how to promote rural employment for poverty reduction.

The questionnaire addressed to ministries in charge of co-operatives seeks not only to collect information on co-operatives' participation in rural employment with questions on rural employment policies, but also data on the number of co-operatives in rural areas, their economic significance (e.g. percentage of GDP; turnover), membership, total number of persons employed, and training capacity. Questions about barriers to co-operative development and growth are included. The deadline for the return of the questionnaire is June 2007. National co-operative movements should ensure that their respective governments provide input to the report.

If you would like copies of the three questionnaires, please email Maria Elena Chavez Hertig at either chavez@ica.coop or chavez@ilo.org

The value of these official reports must not be underestimated since they contribute to building visibility for co-operatives and ensuring that co-operatives 'feature on the international agenda'. The reports are tools and resources for policy-makers, researchers and co-operatives themselves and are used to reinforce the important message that 'co-operatives are successful and sustainable enterprises that make significant contributions to economic and social development'.

UN/ICA
News
cont.



"Co-operative enterprises currently employ more people than multinational enterprises."

"The value of these reports must not be underestimated, they contribute to building visibility for co-operatives at the international level.."



ICA Board



*Ramon Imperial Zúñiga
ICA Board member
from Mexico*

Mexican co-operatives hosts ICA board meeting

For the first time, an ICA Board meeting was held in Mexico. Lead Mexican savings and credit co-operative, [Caja Popular Mexicana](#) hosted the meeting from 4–5 May 2007 in Leon, Mexico.

Caja Popular Mexicana boasts membership growth at more than 15,000 per month.

Listed on the *Global 300*, it has over one million individual members, 300 branch offices and 12,000

employees.

ICA Board member Ramon Imperial Zúñiga invited the ICA Board to meet in Mexico and see firsthand the vibrancy of the Mexican savings and credit co-operative movement.

The Mexican co-operative movement unites an estimated 10 million people or 10% of the population. Co-operative activity encompasses agricultural

production, transport, fisheries, consumer and savings and credit unions.

Consumer savings and credit unions is considered the best organised sector of the co-operative movement in Mexico.



CICOPA

“..there is an explosion in stories about employee ownership in the world’s press....”

Global explosion in employee share ownership

Last *Digest* we reported on media coverage in France for workers co-operatives formed from successful buy-outs of failing enterprises (see page 7, *Digest* 55). As evidence of the growing support for this form of enterprise transmission, the European Federation of Employee

ShareOwnership ([EFES](#)) reports that there is an explosion in stories about employee ownership in the world’s press.

“When we launched our press review for the first time in October 2005, we got 597 articles. In March 2006, it was 1090. In March 2007, it was 2090. Excluding duplicates, we received 1952 articles in this press review in April.

We [have] made a selection of 52 remarkable arti-

cles in 12 countries: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, India, Italy, Jamaica, Sweden, UK, USA, South Africa.”

[Read the press review](#)

EFES acts as the umbrella organisation of employee owners, companies and all persons, trade unions, experts, researchers, institutions looking to promote employee ownership and participation in Europe.



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF EMPLOYEE SHAREOWNERSHIP

Sectors



Bruno Roelants

Encouraging greater sector collaboration

A meeting of the sectoral organisations’ liaison group (SOLG) was held on 2 April to bring together sectoral organisations’ views on the draft ICA strategic plan. In attendance were Dr Jose Guisado, president of IHCO, Xavier Salaberria, president of CICOPA, Ralph Norberg, vice president of ICA Housing on behalf of president,

Mike Doyle, Imad Tabet for Jean-Louis Bancel, president of ICBA, Han Ho Choi on behalf of Dae-Keun Chung, president of ICAO, Bruno Roelants, co-ordinator of sectoral organisations, Maria Elena Chavez, deputy director-general ICA, and Dr Jin Kook Kim, sectoral information manager ICA. Bob Burlton, president of CCW, Maurizio Davolio,

Chair of TICA, and Sato Massaki, Secretary of ICFO could not attend.

This was the first meeting dedicated to the ICA strategic plan and provided a platform for various views and comments to be communicated when the draft strategic plan was reported to the Board at the May meeting in Leon, Mexico.

European Forum on Social Tourism

Preparations have begun for the European Forum on Social Tourism to be held in Riva del Garda, Italy in the first week of October.

Four major topics will be discussed: tourism and re-

gional development policy, European support systems for tourism, the role of trade-union organisations in the exercise of the right to holidays, and the position of solidarity tourism in European co-operation policy. A trade fair for tourist organi-

sations and operators to present their products and services will also be organised during this forum. Watch this space for further information. [Email: info@bits-int.org](mailto:info@bits-int.org)

Tourism



*Maurizio Davolio
Chair of TICA*

New network of Social and Fair Tourism



The International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) Local and Regional Authorities Network of Social and Fair Tourism meet on 31 May - 1 June in Heraklion,

Crete. The first co-operation projects between the different local and regional authorities will be presented.

The European Commission will also discuss the agenda for sustainable development of tourism in Europe.

The mission of the Network, officially founded in Brussels on 1 December 2006, is to sup-

port a partnership and the exchange of good practices between local and regional stakeholders working in the social and solidarity tourism sector.

For more information contact: ericsvoboda@agglo-paysdaubagne.fr and staher.bits@accg.be

Copies of recent presentations on tourism co-ops by Maurizio Davolio are available [here](#)

UN asserts rights for tourists with a disability

On 13 December 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This Convention, which is the first instrument on Human Rights in the 21st century, prohibits discrimina-

tions towards persons with disabilities in any areas of everyday life.

Article 30, which deals with participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport, asserts that states should guarantee people with disabilities access to places where

the sporting, recreational and tourism activities are taking place.



European Youth in Action

The new EU Programme in the field of youth for the period 2007-2013, with a total budget of 885 million euros, came into force on 1 January 2007.

The general objectives of this programme are: to promote young people's active citizenship, develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, foster mutual

understanding between young people in different countries, contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field and promote European co-operation in the youth field. [More:](#)

TICA is the ICA global sectoral organisations which represent tourism co-ops. It works closely with BITS.

For more member news subscribe to BITS electronic newsletter: info@bits-int.org.

Info: www.gitesdetape.be

Europe

Cooperatives Europe have a newly redesigned and improved website www.coopseurope.coop/

Cooperatives Europe holds 3rd Co-operative Convention

Cooperatives Europe 3rd Co-operative Convention was held in Prague, in the Czech Republic on 18-19 June.

The topic of the Convention was European, national and sectoral dialogue. Social dialogue is a key element of the development process of the European Union policies. As a new intersectoral

co-operative organisation (founded in Cooperatives Europe) wants a more significant role in the European social dialogue.

A wide range of speakers attended the Convention which was preceded by a

meeting of Cooperatives Europe.

A complete set of the presentations can be downloaded at www.coopseurope.coop/spip.php?rubrique232



Co-operative dreams made celluloid

"...the festival is a fantastic opportunity for any young filmmaker..."

Edgar Wright.

Each year, [Co-operative Young Film Makers](#) holds a festival at the National Media Museum in Bradford, UK. Over 100 short films made by children and young people are premiered on the big screen. The closing date for entries is 29 June 2007 and the festival takes place on 12-13 October.

The festival is funded and managed by the Co-operative Group (UK) and is non-competitive and non-profit. Participants can attend a wide range of events

designed to encourage their film making aspirations.

Edgar Wright, director of hit films *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz*, says the festival is a fantastic opportunity for any young film maker.

"First and foremost, you get to see your work on the big screen. I saw all of my early shorts in front of packed houses... it was great and inspired me ever onward."

Some of this year's young co-operative filmmakers



Youth camp celebrates 40 years

Youth

The [Co-operative Young Leaders \(CYL\)](#) program celebrated 40 years of the annual youth camp on 5 May with a reunion at the University of Guelph. Everyone connected with the program was invited to revisit their camp experiences, swap stories and catch up on 40 years of history.

CYL began in 1967 as the United Co-operatives of Ontario Youth Camp. Over

time, local food co-operatives and credit unions became involved and it evolved into the Co-operative Young Leaders program.

More than 2000 young people aged 14 to 18 have experienced the program. This summer, CYL will run sessions every week between 30 June and 18 August 2007. "CYL has always been much more than just a summer camp," said Cynthia Lush-

man, education officer at the Ontario Co-operative Association which runs the program. "It's an opportunity for young people to develop self-confidence, grow as individuals, learn about the co-operative business model and especially have fun in a safe and supportive environment."

For more information on the CYL summer 2007 camp, [email Cynthia Lushman](mailto:Cynthia.Lushman@oca.on.ca).

Canada funds agriculture co-ops as way forward



Canadian co-operators and rural Canadians have welcomed the recent announcement by the federal government to renew and extend the Agricultural Co-operative Development Initiative (Ag-CDI). The government has pledged \$3.25 million over two years to assist in the development of co-operatives as a way for agriculture producers and communities to take advantage of opportunities associated with biofuels and other value-added activities.

"This [the funding]...is just what the co-op movement needs to continue helping farmers and rural communities form or expand value-added agricultural co-ops..." says Dave Sitaran, President of Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA).

ICA member organisations, **CCA** and the **Con-**

seil Canadien de la Coopération (CCC), Canada's national co-operative organisations, ran a highly successful pilot from September 2006 to March 2007. Twenty-seven projects received around \$500,000 in funding for advisory services and learning exchanges. Groups were at all phases of development from start-up to undertaking equity drives.

The pilot included a conference that brought delegates together to exchange information, learn from existing co-ops and network with others in the start-up phase; and the development of education resources for distribution through the [Ag-CDI section of CoopZone](#). [Coop Zone](#) is the national Canadian support system for co-operative organisations and developers.

"[The] announcement is a clear indication of the government's confidence in the co-operative sector to facilitate the development of farmer-led agricultural biofuel and other value-added agricultural co-

operatives through the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building activities," said CCC president, Michel Rouleau. Groups interested in receiving more information about Ag-CDI should [e-mail](#) their details.

The [Canadian Co-operative Association](#)

represents over seven million co-operative and credit union members from more than 3000 organisations. CCA provides leadership to promote, develop, and unite co-operatives and credit unions for the benefit of people in Canada and around the world.

CCA and CCC also welcomed the news of the transfer of responsibility for rural and co-operative initiatives from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister, Chuck Strahl, to the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Christian Paradis.

Member News

"The Agricultural CDI program aims to create sustainable livelihoods for Canadian farmers by helping develop biofuel and value-added agricultural co-operatives."



ICA member, Central Co-operative Society Ltd in Myanmar, now has a website:

www.ccsmyanmar.com



Co-op People



John Dunn

Veteran co-op specialist appointed to NCBA

National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA), has appointed [John Dunn](#) as vice-president for international development. He replaces James Cawley who recently retired. Dunn, a 29-year veteran of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and a co-operative business specialist, will oversee NCBA's \$20 million CLUSA International Program, which operates co-operative development projects in 13 countries in South-east Asia and Africa. In a typical year, NCBA's international program assists co-operatives, member-

owned businesses and community-managed services that benefit 3.5 million people. Dunn's international experience includes projects in Ghana, Senegal and South Africa. He also advised the Chinese government on its co-operative business law and assisted the ICA with its 2006 *Global 300* project.

Dunn said he is excited to join NCBA, a 91-year association that represents co-operatives across all sectors. 'It's a wonderful opportunity to extend my lifelong career with co-operatives,' he said.

NCBA president Paul Hazen praised Dunn as uniquely qualified to oversee the or-

ganisation's international work. 'John has worked with co-operatives his entire career and has considerable international experience,' Hazen said. 'He will be a tremendous asset since NCBA promotes co-ops as a key economic development tool. Headquartered in Washington, [the NCBA](#) has been an ICA member since 1916.

[Download papers](#) on marketing and accessing capital for co-operatives presented at the recent NCBA conference on 23 May 2007. The theme was 'Building Resources for Co-operatives'.



Tan Suee Chieh

New CEO of NTUC Income

Tan Suee Chieh has taken over operational responsibility as the chief executive officer of NTUC Income in Singapore. [NTUC Income](#) is a sectoral member of ICA (as a member of the International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF), and the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF)). NTUC Income has assets exceeding S G D 1 7 billion

(USD11billion) and an annual revenue of SGD2.0 billion (USD1.3billion). The co-operative serves more than 1.8 million customers in providing life, general, health insurance and investment products. It has a Standard & Poor's rating of AA, which is the highest awarded to a domestic insurer in Singapore. It has 1,500 employees and 1,800 insurance advisers. A qualified actuary, Tan Suee Chieh was previously the president of Asia Pacific re-

gion for SHL Group plc, a British human resource consultancy firm, from 2003 to 2007. He has held the positions of managing director (established markets) for Prudential Corporation Asia from 1999 to 2001, and chief executive of Prudential Assurance Company Singapore from 1994 to 1999. Tan Suee Chieh joined the NTUC Income Board in 2003. He succeeds Tan Kin Lian, who retired from the co-operative after serving it for 30 years.



Linda Burney

First indigenous minister for fair trading and co-operatives in Australia

High profile indigenous leader and former director general of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, [Linda Burney](#), has been appointed as the first Aboriginal minister for fair trading in Australia, with responsibility for co-operatives and asso-

ciations in Australia's largest state, NSW. Burney was the first indigenous woman to be elected into the NSW Parliament in 2003. She is active in education and training as well as in Aboriginal affairs and sits on many boards. She is Patron of Boomalli Aboriginal Artist Co-operative.

Burney has represented Australia in meetings of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations, held in Geneva.

New appointment strengthens co-operative development

ICA-Americas has appointed sociologist Yesenia Morales Sibaja to head the development area in the regional office.

Sibaja has extensive experience in research and information management. She will support project devel-

opment, membership services and communication strategies and will support the sectoral organisations of ICA-Americas.

Sibaja is also in charge of monitoring and evaluating current and past programmes of ICA-Americas.

ICA-Americas has made this appointment in part to meet the objectives of the *ICA-Americas Strategic Plan 2005-2008*.

ICA-Americas aims to improve and expand services and projects in the region.

ICA-Americas



ICA-Americas new head of development, Yesenia Morales Sibaja

Latin American meeting of social economy

The Latin American Meeting of Social Economy was held from 18-20 April in Gijón, Spain.

The meeting was organised by the Latin American Social Economy Foundation (FUNDIBES) and the Foundation for the Promotion of Social Economy in collaboration with Gijón City Hall, the Principality of Asturias and the Spanish Ministry for Work and Social Matters.

The primary objective of

the meeting was to bring delegates together to examine the potential for Latin American countries, including Portugal and Spain, to promote and expand the role of the social economy in local and national government policies.

More than 50 participants debated the possibility of regional agreement and confluence in favour of equitable and sustainable economic and social development in the region. As well, the meeting continued towards

the construction of a common Latin American space for the social economy. Manuel Mariño used the visit to Gijón to strengthen contacts with other organisations including the Spanish agency of international co-operation. There is a possibility of collaborating in the Observatory Project with CIERIC and other organisations such as the University of Valencia.



Manuel Mariño, ICA-Americas Regional Director

Visit to ICA-Americas by head office

ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald and Director of Communications, Garry Cronan visited ICA-Americas regional office in San Jose, Costa Rica on 2 May as part of a commitment to strengthen relationships with ICA's regional offices around the globe. The visit gave ICA-Americas's staff the opportunity to talk about the current activities and projects administered by the regional office and to outline aims and objectives for the year. as part of the *ICA-Americas Strategic Plan 2005-2008*.



Iain Macdonald and Garry Cronan visit ICA-Americas regional office

ICA Africa Regional Director to retire



Ada Suleymane Kibora

The ICA's current Regional Director, Ada Kibora, will retire when his current contract expires at the end of August 2007. Iain Macdonald, the ICA DG has said "Ada has given 23 years of loyal and committed service to ICA and I have expressed my sincere gratitude for that. He will return to Burkina Faso for a well-deserved retirement but will also be available to provide consultancy services to co-operative projects".

Jan Eirik Imbsen will, in a temporary capacity, co-ordinate African affairs until a new structure is agreed.

Africa

ICA- Americas

EXCOOP 2007 in Buenos Aires

ICA-Americas was the proud sponsor of the international co-operative fair EXCOOP 2007 which was held from 24-26 June in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

This event allowed co-operative businesses to exchange ideas, form partnerships and develop strategic alliances.

The co-operative fair was organised by Confed-

eración Intercooperativa Agropecuaria Cooperativa Limitada (CONINAGRO) and Confederación Cooperativa de la República Argentina Limitada (COOPERAR).



Visit [EXCOOP 2007](#)
Email aciproductos@aciamericas.coop
or exposiciones@mccongresos.com.ar
for further information.

Free advice for co-ops in Argentina

"..ICA Americas has created a virtual library, in Spanish for its members to access for free..."

The Graduate School of Cooperatives and Mutual Associations (CGCyM) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, held the following meetings in May: "Work co-operatives" on 17 May; and "Similarities and differences between credit co-operatives and mutual finance associations" on 31 May.

Two more meetings were held in June:

"Mutual associations with a social purpose (e.g. tourism, health, pharmacy)" on 15 June; and "Housing co-operatives and other co-ops with a public purpose (e.g. water, electricity, gas, telephones, broadcasting)" on 29 June.

The meetings were free and aimed at professionals and non-professionals already

involved with co-operatives and mutual associations, and those who are new to this area of social economy.

Information was provided on legal aspects of co-operatives and taxation, and the challenges faced by co-operatives and mutual associations.

Please see the following website for information www.mutualcoop.org.ar/

Virtual library for ACI members

ACI América has created a [virtual library](#) for the Latin American co-operative movement. You can access this new, free service by clicking *Documentos en línea* and search the virtual library by using keywords. The website is in Spanish.

Meeting on co-operative law

A meeting on new co-operative law was held on 7-8 June, at Coopseguros Headquarters, Ecuador. The meeting is organised by Coopseguros and ICA-

Americas. More information: proyectos@aciamericas.coop



The 15th Regional and Social Inclusion Conference will be held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on 1-5 October. The theme is the "Contribution of co-operatives towards a world in equilibrium" The conference is organised by ICA-Americas. More information: conference@aciamericas.coop

HIV/AIDS awareness in India

A meeting was held on 8 May in Delhi to discuss the outcomes of the successful HIV/AIDS Awareness Project for Co-operatives in India.

In collaboration with the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) and the Resource Centre for Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS in India (RCSHA), ICA-AP has successfully implemented a project on HIV/AIDS prevention for co-operatives in four Indian states.

The primary objective of the meeting was to disseminate information about the programme among various agencies involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and cure

and to meet with prospective partners who might collaborate in an extension of the project.

Participants reflected on the efforts of co-operatives in the fight against HIV/AIDS and observed that co-operatives are now seen as a potential vehicle for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS interventions.

NCUI president Mr. Amin opened the meeting and representatives from UNAIDS, ILO, DFID, the

Dr Silke, health advisor from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), observed that, besides creating awareness and training, co-operatives should provide support to infected women and HIV/AIDS widows and orphans.

ICA
Asia-
Pacific

Delegates at HIV/AIDS awareness project meeting, Delhi, 8 May



Japan's consumer co-ops scoop environment awards

Three of Japan's leading consumer co-operatives received the top awards for "3R" promotion activities given out by the Minister of Environment.

The scheme was begun in 2006 by Japan's Ministry of the Environment. It rewards retail store programmes aimed at reducing, reusing and recycling packaging waste.

The grand prix was awarded to Kyoto Co-op at a ceremony held on 11 April 2007. Co-op Kobe and Toyama University Co-operative were also recognised.

Kyoto Co-op (Shimogamo branch) was awarded the top prize for the high per-

centage of customers (91%) who bring their own shopping bags to the store and for the co-op's success since 1983 in implementing 'bags for sale' at the cashier.

Co-op Kobe (Konan branch) was highly commended for a program to reduce the number of new, plastic shopping bags by implementing a 'bag and basket rental system' for customers who forget to bring their own bags.

Toyama University Co-op was commended for the early introduction of automated collection



machines and 'my cup vending machine' which uses customers' own cups. In conclusion, the judges praised co-ops for leading the way in retail recycling.

Japan's Minister of Environment and winners of this year's "3R Awards"

Events

International Trade Fair in Bali



Tropical setting for co-operative trade fair

In collaboration with ICA-AP, the Indonesian Co-operative Movement (DEKOPIN) has organised a series of seminars and an international trade fair which will be held in Denpasar, Bali, from 10-15 July 2007.

The programme includes a seminar on capacity building for co-operatives through HRD networking and the 20th meeting of the ICA Committee on HRD for Asia-Pacific will be held from 10-11 July.

The opening of the trade fair on 12 July coincides with celebrations to mark the 60th Indonesian National Co-operative Day.

A conference on poverty reduction and how co-operatives can protect small farmers and rural entrepreneurs will be held on 13 July and a symposium on trade networking for co-operatives will be held on 14 July.

Co-operative leaders from China, India, Iran, Japan, Singapore and Indonesia will speak at these events. All events are open to ICA member organisations and the ICA Committee on HRD.

In particular, host organisation DEKOPIN urges the participation of women to address global gender integration concerns.

Visit [ICA-Asia Pacific events](#) for more information.



Members

NZ pursuing international accounting issue

ICA's New Zealand member the New Zealand Cooperatives Association has a new look newsletter.

It's latest June/July issue features a detailed report on the steps they are taking to ameliorate the effects of International Accounting Standard 32. The reports notes that some progress is being made and the they are also working with the ICA's special IASB Committee. For more details see www.nz.coop/



People

Long serving Board member retires



Rahiah Baهران, recently retired from the ICA Board after many years service. Rahiah has been particularly active on gender issues as well as being a past Chair of ICA's Asia-Pacific Women's committee. She has also been active in the Malaysian co-operative movement for over 40 years. The ICA would like to thank her for her service and wish her well in her future activities.

As a result of Rahiah Baهران's retirement there will now be an election for the vacant Board position at the General Assembly

Research - new directions fro co-operative development

The ICA Research Committee (ICACCR) European Research Conference will be held in Prague from 14–15 September 2007. The theme is *New directions for*

co-operative development.

The conference is hosted by the Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague, with the support of the Co-operative Federation of the Czech Republic.

Email [Professor Yohanan Stryjan](mailto:Professor_Yohanan_Stryjan) for further information or go to the front page of the ICA's website www.ica.coop

Research



Professor Yohanan Stryjan

Co-operative self-help

The 16th International Conference on Co-operative Studies (IGT-Conference) will be held at the University of Cologne from 7-9 October 2008.

The theme is *Contributions of cooperative self-help to economic and social development.* The IGT-Conference is organised on behalf of the Association of Cooperative Studies Institutes (AGI)

which is a network of academic research institutes at German-speaking universities focused on co-operative studies.

In the AGI business and political economists, sociologists and jurists work together to advance the development of co-operative theory and to obtain ideas that can be

implemented in practice. Conference organisers have made a [call for papers](#).

A prize of 2000 € will be awarded to the contributor of the best paper. Contributions can also be submitted as non-competitive papers.

New Chair of ICA Global Research Committee

Lou Hammond Ketilson was elected as the new chair of ICA's Global Research Committee at the committee's general meeting which was held in Saskatoon on May 30, 2007. Ms Ketilson is Director, of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, at the University of Saskatoon. She will serve for four years as chair. Mr. Ian MacPherson, outgoing chair will be still remained and contribute as member of ICACCR executive committee.



Lou Hammond Ketilson

ICA global research conference held in Canada

The 23rd ICA Committee on Co-operative Research conference was held at Saskatoon in Canada. The theme of this year's conference was *Co-operatives and Innovation: Influencing the Social Economy.* www.usaskstudies.coop/socialconomy/Congress2007.

More than 100 case studies and papers that contribute to theory and to the dissemination of practical ex-

perience were presented.

The conference was jointly organised by ICA research Committee, the Canadian Association for Studies in Cooperation (CASC) and the Association of Cooperative Educators (ACE) in conjunction with 2007 Congress of humanities and social sciences.

The host organization was the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan.



Some of the co-operative researchers at the recent ICA Co-operative Research Conference in Canada

Tsunami, Part 3

"I had now come back to witness the results of our planning and, in a small way, the manifestation of co-operative solidarity."

Jan-Eirik Imbsen

Robby Tulus, Rajiv Mehta and Jan-Eirik Imbsen blessing the plant



Fishery Co-operatives celebrate reconstruction

In the last two issues of the *Digest* we have carried a report on the reconstruction of co-operatives in Banda Aceh, made possible with the financial assistance of the global co-operative movement. Reporting on his latest trip to Aceh ICA director of development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen, provides a personal account of these reconstructive efforts.

"When I first went to Banda Aceh in January 2006, I was able to visit several communities that had been ravaged by the tsunami. As mentioned in my article from this visit, I was struck by the courage and resilience of the people I met who clearly articulated their visions of the future.

I had now come back to witness the results of our planning and, in a small way, the manifestation of co-operative solidarity.

Revisiting some of these communities well over a year after my first visit, I could see that progress had been made, although



Jan-Eirik Imbsen cutting the ribbon

things were still a good way off being completely normal again. However, I did see some concrete results when my colleagues Rajiv Mehta (ICA's regional office) and Robby Tulus and I attended the official launch of the new palung (houseboat) belonging to *Lembah Lhok Seudu Fishery Co-operative*.

This palung is already in operation, fishing off the coast of Aceh Besar and brings much-needed revenue to the small fishing community. Both the boat and a pick-up van were officially handed over after having been donated by the UK co-operative movement.

It was a festive occasion with members and their families attending. They listened to co-operative leaders and representatives of local government talking about the rebuilding of their communities and the continued need for assistance in this long process.

As representatives of the global co-operative movement, we were honoured to officially launch the palung in the traditional way by break-

ing a clay pot containing Aceh soil, water and flower petals on the deck. Afterwards we handed over the keys to the pick-up van. Local television covered the event and gave us an opportunity to demonstrate and talk about solidarity in a co-operative context.

The following day was equally important for members of the *Bahari Karya Fishery Co-operative* in Pidie.

The local fishing community lost almost everything in the tsunami but its co-operative has already been able to re-open its consumer store. We were invited to witness yet another stage in the reconstruction of the co-operative—the official opening of an icemaking facility built with funds donated by the UK co-operative movement. It was another festive occasion with many speakers not only reiterating their belief in their future but also the continued need for international solidarity.

Fishery Co-operatives Celebrate Reconstruction ...cont'd.

After the cutting of the ribbon, members of the co-operative proudly demonstrated the capacity of the plant. During a visit to the beach where the catch is landed, we learnt how ice was crushed and used to keep the fish fresh until sold.

While attending a member education class after the event, we could clearly see that rebuilding co-operatives is more than just building physical infrastructure—it's about everyone participating especially women co-operators.



Robby Tulus, Rajiv Mehta and Jan-Eirik Imbsen testing the ice. Hanafiah, DE-KOPINWIL chief executive (right)

Tsunami Part 3

First Co-operative Forum held in Dubai

The first *Co-operative Forum for Enhancing the Co-operative Work* was held at Dubai, UAE, on 12-13 June 2007. More than 100 delegates from GCC countries (Gulf Co-operation Council) – United Arab Emirates, State of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar and State of Kuwait, attended the Forum. Ministry of Social Affairs, Govt. of UAE in collaboration with International Co-operative Alliance, hosted the Forum.

H.E. Mariam Mohammed Khalfan Al Roomi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Govt. of UAE, inaugurated the Forum and Ivano Barberini, President of ICA presided over the inaugural function.

On the basis of the interaction between co-operative leaders and government officials, the following action plan was proposed :

- There is a need of a

more comprehensive dialogue between the co-operative movements and the Governments in GCC region.

- The general development policy environment in the Gulf region reflects inequalities between the corporate and co-operative sectors. Co-operatives are the most legitimate value driven peoples/ community based organisations/enterprises and thus require a fair and preferential treatment over other forms of business organisations. This aspect needs to be incorporated in the national development policy and be reflected clearly for visible impact domestically & internationally.
- There is a dire need to build the capacity of the co-operatives at primary and secondary levels by the dissemination of right knowledge on coopera-

Gulf Co-operation



tives and the businesses they are in along with the development of managerial and operational skills.

- Dialogue must occur between government and co-operatives at different levels of co-operatives for the development of successful sustainable co-operative economy. ICA Asia Pacific will be happy to facilitate the visit of co-operative fraternity from the Gulf region to other parts of Asia.



The more we understand the nature of co-op enterprise the better we can defend and promote it

Measuring co-operative performance and difference at the centre of this year's Global 300 programme

The ICA launched the first ever listing of the largest co-operative and mutual businesses in France in October last year.

We will be unveiling the 2007 list at the ICA's General Assembly in Singapore this October. Following the success of the first launch we have expanded the range of data we are collecting and depth of analysis we are undertaking. This is in addition to the introduction of the *National 100* and *Developing 300* parts of the project, see separate reports.

We are collecting the following data this year:

- Financial - balance sheet and P&L data for 2005 and where possible 2006, cash flow, year end, accounting standard, detailed ratios, plus capital adequacy ratios, credit rating etc,
- Information on corporate structure, any listings, subsidiaries, countries of operation, market segments of operation, mergers/acquisitions plus joint ventures with other co-ops/companies etc,
- Market share/leadership positions, countries of operation, brands, etc
- In addition we have started collecting detailed CSR data, including membership, employment etc, see item below.

The collection of this data is enabling us to undertake, for the first time a detailed analysis of the performance of the largest co-operative and mutual businesses in the world.

We are also comparing, where possible this performance with their investor oriented competitors. This analysis is already showing some interesting and surprising results. If you would like more information contact *Global 300* Director, Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop

Valuing co-operatives - measuring the difference

At the heart of this year's *Global 300* programme is the development of a draft measure of Corporate

(or rather Co-operative) Social Responsibility, (CSR).

Co-op principles, in particular

the ICA's [Statement of Co-operative Identity](#) is the basis for most co-operative operation throughout the world. The Statement of Co-operative Identity contains many aspects which are the basis of the modern concept of CSR.

As the ICA's 2007 International Day of Co-operatives statement notes co-

operatives have in many ways been pioneers of CSR. However, the co-operative movement has not done as much as it should have in measuring this co-operative difference. It has allowed others to claim credit for the concept. It is time we developed a consistent and rigorous framework to better measure the way we operate - to demonstrate the combined economic and social benefits.

Some of the best examples of CSR performance ARE to be found among *Global 300* co-operatives and mutuals. However, what is very obvious is that co-operatives are not reporting their activities in a consistent way. If anything many are simply following the normal reporting approach of their investor

oriented competitors. To help supplement this still as yet incomplete and inconsistent CSR approach we have developed a draft *Global 300* CSR methodology drawing on the best of existing CSR performance by co-operatives and other leading standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative.

To draw attention to this co-operative approach we have used the ICA rainbow colours to highlight seven different draft CSR areas or streams of activity we have identified. We will highlight best practice examples from each of these streams at the 2007 *Global 300* launch. For more information contact cronan@ica.coop

	PEOPLE
	PRODUCTS
	PRINCIPLES
	ENVIRONMENT
	COMMUNITY
	DEMOCRACY
	DEVELOPMENT

We are attempting to develop a measure which incorporates the best aspects of mainstream CSR reporting while taking account of the co-op difference

Global 300 expanded to include developing economies

The ICA is initiating a survey that will contribute a development perspective to our *Global 300* project; a ranking of the importance of co-operatives in developing economies.

The launch of the *Global 300* project has brought forward requests for a similar approach to be applied to developing countries. The *Developing 300* will therefore look at the role of large co-operative and mutual businesses in these economies. It will contribute to our knowledge about co-ops in the developing world where so many of our members operate.

The list will be a ranking of co-operatives in terms of their relative importance in national economies. It is proposed to examine 30 developing economies. The methodology will be the same as for the *Global 300*, i.e. ranking on turnover (highest level of audited consolidation). Using the same methodology will ensure that we have a consistent approach to our inclusion of the various data, level of audited aggregation etc. We aim to collect data on the 10-20 biggest co-operatives in each country in terms of turnover. This will be based on audited accounts, wherever possible.

We aim to include the following information in the *Developing 300* listing:

- Rank (by turnover)
- Name of organisation
- Co-op/mutual structure

- Country of origin
- GCIS (industry classification system)
- Year of establishment
- Turnover FY 2005 in USD
- Assets FY 2005
- Website address

The *Developing 300* will not only show the importance in terms of size, it will also show that co-operatives are different. We will furthermore show that it is this difference that often makes them successful as businesses. Other variables would include percentage of GDP and market share. We are also interested in figures on employment, membership, direct members' benefits (share of profit, degree of market security, etc.).

There could also be other indicators. This data will help us commence a more detailed economic analysis on the role co-operatives play in their respective economies and sectors.

We would furthermore like to highlight not only the economic size of the co-operative and mutual businesses but also their wider societal contributions.

For the purpose of our *Developing 300* list, we have chosen countries from the World Bank's set of low and middle income economies, i.e. Low-income countries, Lower-middle-income countries, and Upper-middle-income countries. We have chosen 15 countries from the first category, 10 from the second, and 5 from the third, altogether 30 countries. We propose the spread in num-

ber of countries from each category in order to ensure sufficient variety (from the very poor to the more developed) in terms of income yet staying within the "developing economy" bracket. There are altogether 8 countries from the Americas region, 10 countries from Asia, and 12 from Africa. We propose the following countries from each category:

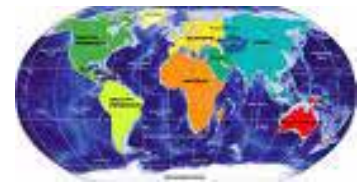
Low income:
Asia – Cambodia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam
Africa – Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda
Americas – Haiti

Lower-middle-income.
Asia – Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka,
Africa – Egypt, Cape Verde
Americas – Bolivia, Paraguay, Colombia, Honduras

Upper-middle income
Asia – Malaysia
Africa – South Africa
Americas – Argentina, Costa Rica, Mexico

Contact ICA's Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen imbsen@ica.coop who is co-ordinating this part of the *Global 300* project.

Developing 300



The expansion of the *Global 300* project to include the *Developing 300* and *National 100* lists gives us the first ever chance to build a truly global database of co-operative and mutual businesses throughout the world.

Global 300 - National 100 lists!

The ICA has been approached by a number of its members to help them develop *National 100* lists of their top co-operatives based on the *Global 300* methodology. If you would like to know how you can participate contact Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop

Internships **Global 300 opportunities now available**



Greg Lucas enjoying the opportunity to learn more about how co-operatives practice CSR throughout the world

The **Global 300** project is providing a great opportunity for young co-operators to learn more about the international co-operative movement.

Greg Lucas, is the second **Global 300** secondee from the UK's Co-operative Group to be involved in the project. Greg who is part of The Co-operative Group's Graduate Development Scheme is on a 3 month placement to the ICA's offices in Geneva. He is currently heading the CSR work stream of the **Global 300** 2007 programme.

"This is very exciting and innovative work. I have learnt so much

about how co-operatives throughout the world are combining their principles and business model.

"I am looking forward to sharing these ideas and putting them into practice when I get back to Manchester" he said.

The ICA is currently offering an opportunity to other members to participate in its new internship programme. Are you interested? If so, contact Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop

ICA's Global 300 project benefits from financial expertise

Sharing knowledge and expertise is one of the benefits of membership

The ICA's **Global 300** project has benefited greatly from the expertise of Geneva based financial experts.

The ICA is participating in a Canton of Geneva funded programme for currently unemployed pro-

fessionals. A number of highly qualified financial experts have been placed in the ICA's office for a period of time while also looking for more permanent work.

Garry Cronan, ICA **Global 300** Director said "this has been a great programme for the ICA. It has meant we are able to push ahead with our data gathering and analysis while offering the employees the opportunity to work on a new and innovative project".

At present we have two experts, Vincent Devel and Marc Sormani solely focused on gathering and analysing financial information. Both Marc and Vincent have already made a significant contribution to the project.

Hassan Kashef who started last year on this programme has since been offered part time employment with the ICA. He is responsible for bringing together all the data we are currently collecting into a large and manageable database.



From left, Hassan Kashef, Vincent Devel and Marc Sormani all working on gathering, and analysing Global 300 data

New ICMIF development publication launched

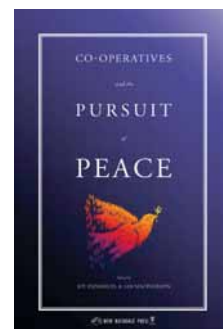
A new ICMIF member publication *Prosper* focused on development has just been published. This issue highlights member achievements in improving access to insurance for excluded sectors of society such as the DID project in West Africa, Columna in Guatemala and La Equidad of Colombia as well as microtakaful schemes recently established by ICMIF members from Malaysia and Sri Lanka. Also included are updates on ICMIF projects including the Latin American Reinsurance Group (LARG) and the ICMIF capital support facility Allnations Inc.

Publications



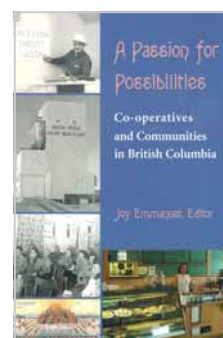
Co-operatives and the Pursuit of Peace

The Co-operatives and the Pursuit of Peace conference, was held in Canada in June 2006. The conference and this volume of essays represent one of the first sustained and in-depth examinations on this topic by the co-operative movement. Contributors, including several from the ICA share their experience, knowledge and insights on the challenges co-operatives must meet in areas deeply divided by political, economic, and social injustices and how co-ops and regional co-operative movements are responding and contributing to peace making and sustainable development. *Co-operatives and the Pursuit of Peace* will be available in August of 2007. To order a copy contact the BC Institute for Co-operative Studies at: rochdale@uvic.ca



Co-operatives - a passion for possibilities in communities

Another recent title also from the British Columbia Institute for Co-operatives Studies is *A Passion for Possibilities - Co-operatives and Communities in British Columbia*. This publication highlights co-op case studies in eight communities throughout British Columbia.



Copies of the book can be obtained through BCICS for \$21.95 CDN plus postage etc rochdale@uvic.ca

New ILO newsletter on co-operatives

The ILO has recently launched a new co-operative newsletter. The first issue of a newsletter through which the unit responsible for co-operatives, EMP/COOP, intends to revive the tradition of the "Cooperative Information" and regularly provide updates on the activities undertaken by ILO to promote co-operatives. This issue covers a range of topics including, ILO Recommendation 193, UN Day of Co-operatives, Co-op Service - the ILO 's longest running unit and conflict resolution and co-ops.



Co-operation - responsible Finnish Ownership

Ownership of enterprise is an important topic all over the world. With this new publication *Co-operation - Responsible Finnish Ownership* the Finnish co-operative movement hopes to take part in the discussion on ownership both on the national and international level. The authors note that "Finland is probably the strongest co-operative country in the world (see also our other item on the online poll on this topic). Finnish consumer co-ops have a market share of 50%, co-op banks 35% and agricultural is also very strong. You can obtain a copy at www.pellervo.fi/finncoop/products.html



Feature Interview

ILO Coop Branch Chief, Hagen Henry, speaks out in favour of collaboration

In *Digest* 54 we reported on the appointment of Hagen Henry to head up the ILO's Co-operative Branch. Since the early 90s, Hagen has been consulting at a national, regional and international level with governmental and non governmental organisations, including the ILO and ICA, in Africa, Asia, Central and South America and Europe on co-operative legislation and also on co-operative policy. Hagen speaks to the *Digest* about how he came to work in the co-operative movement and how collaboration between international organisations, such as ILO and ICA, can strengthen and renew the sector.



Hagen Henry delivering a keynote address at the recent ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Minister's Conference

"Co-operatives are a specific form of collaboration... Ultimately, this has improved people's lives and livelihoods through collective self-help."

Hagen Henry

Digest: How did you become involved in the co-operative movement?

HH: My involvement in the co-operative movement occurred really through my teaching and research work. You could also say it was as 'a result of osmosis' since both my father and my father-in-law worked for co-operative organisations and both influenced me indirectly.

During my formal education as a magistrate, my postgraduate studies in development issues and development law, and during my work for the

German Federal Ministry of Economy for eight years, the term 'co-operative' was never used. However, in 1992 Professor Münkner, renowned co-operative expert, suggested that I study co-operative policy and legislation – I instantly accepted.

Another influential personality was the late Professor Paul Trappe, University of Basel, who wrote *Die Entwicklungsfunktion der Genossenschaften*, his well-known work on the development function of co-operatives. From 1993 until 2006, I worked as a freelance consultant on these issues in many countries and for many government and non-government organisations such as ICA and ILO.

Since 1974, I have been involved with developing countries and this has led me to think about the potential for the co-operative model of enterprise to facilitate rapid socioeconomic change. I am a member of three co-operatives – Germany's Volksbank & Raiffeisenbank, Varuboden in Finland, and Switzerland's Migros.

Digest: What does your position at the ILO involve?

HH: I became the Leader, EMP/COOP Team, ILO, in January 2007. EMP/COOP

has three staff and collaborates with a number of field specialists. In addition, it benefits from ICA and ILO sharing the one position, that of ICA Deputy Director-General Maria Elena Chavez.

I perceive co-operatives as part of the overall ILO concern, namely the Decent Work Agenda with its quantitative and qualitative aspects. Our work involves promoting all types of co-operatives as defined by *ILO Recommendation 193: Promotion of Co-operatives* (2002).

This Recommendation is a universal instrument. It addresses the governments of all Member States, their employers' and workers' as well as the co-operative organisations. Co-operatives are now re-positioned from being government-type instruments for the development of national economies (according to superseded *Recommendation 127*) to being a means in the hands of their members to further common interests in a self-help and independent manner (according to *Recommendation 193*). Emphasis shifts respectively from 'curing' or 'fighting fires' to preventing economic and social problems through co-operatives.

Feature Interview Cont.

I see the main task of the unit therefore in contributing to creating and maintaining those conditions which allow co-operatives to compete in their own right as one among many business enterprise types in the global economy and which recognise the social and political benefits that are being derived from the co-operative way of doing business in addition to the economic ones. EMP/COOP's aim is to position and strengthen co-operatives as a major type of business enterprise in the burgeoning 'social economy movement'.

The specific activities of the unit are based on solid research.

Digest: *How can the ICA and ILO help each other to improve the working lives of people around the world?*

HH: While *Recommendation 193* integrates the definition of co-operatives and the co-operative values and principles developed over the years by the ICA, it directs the ICA and ILO towards even closer collaboration than in the past.

Co-operatives are a specific form of collaboration based on a universally recognised set of co-operative values and principles. Ultimately, this has improved people's lives and livelihoods through collective self-help. Since both ICA and ILO share these principles, in 2004 they signed a Memorandum of Understanding and a Common Co-operative Agenda agreeing to collaborate in four important areas (below):

1. Policy dialogues with all stakeholders on the rationale for maintaining the co-operative enterprise model.
2. Decent work by and through co-operatives.
3. Co-operative policy and law.
4. Co-operative training and education.

Co-operatives face disadvantages in a global economy driven more and more by the requirement of large quantities of capital for the production of knowledge. There exist two major challenges.

The first consists in striking a balance between maintaining the conditions under which the advantages of people-centred enterprises, such as co-operatives, can be used in this very production vs. the harmonisation of business legislations entailing from this production pattern. The second challenge is to effectively allow for locally rooted diversity in a business world which tends to favour concentration and delocalisation.

As for my formal education, I would like to emphasise the fourth point (above). Besides providing solid co-operative specific education and training, especially in the fields of management and audit, it is of utmost importance to introduce the subject of co-operatives into the general education curricula, as required by *Recommendation No.193*.

Digest: *How might Global 300 improve the potential of co-operatives to better the working lives of men and women?*

HH: *Recommendation 193* is innovative and recognises co-operatives as a specific enterprise model to be promoted everywhere. In a global economy, economic and legal policies impact differently on developed and developing countries at the same time.

ICA and EMP/COOP will work together mainly on three points (below) so that *Global 300*, including the *Developing 300*, will serve the aim of improving livelihoods:

1. By demonstrating that co-operatives are not all small businesses active mainly in agriculture. Indeed, the co-operative form of doing business is not related to the size of the enterprise. *Global 300* will thus contribute to improving the visibility and 'brand' of co-operatives. Thus, policy dialogue—one of EMP/COOP's main areas—will be greatly furthered.
2. By demonstrating that big co-operatives, too, can be structured and can operate according to co-operative values and principles.
3. By demonstrating that co-operatives are induced, through their structural and operational features, to provide decent work (both quantitatively and qualitatively).

This will have an influence on policymakers and, thus, on the lives of many.



Hagen Henry committed to making a difference for co-operatives at the ILO

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2007 Calendar of ICA events and related co-operative activities

7 July	International Day of Co-operatives
12-15 July	International Co-operative Trade Fair organised by the Indonesian Co-operative Movement in collaboration with the ICA-AP. Bali, Indonesia. For further information contact: Sethumadhavan sethu@icaroop.coop and Rajiv Mehta rajivmehta@icaroop.coop
29 July - 1 Aug	World Credit Union Conference, Calgary (Canada). More information : www.woccu.org/calgary07
24-29 Sept	ICMIF World Congress, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Shaun Tarbuck, shaun@ICMIF.org
25 Sep	ICMIF Board Meeting, Brussels, Belgium. Hosted by P&V Contact: Shaun Tarbuck, shaun@ICMIF.org
9 Oct	Simposio Internacional: Cooperativismo en Alemania y Venezuela. Reflexiones en Ahorro y Crédito, Vivienda y Agricultura. Auditorio Naranja de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales – FaCES de la UCV. See program (only in Spanish)
13-14 Oct	Series of pre General Assembly ICA meetings, Singapore.
15 Oct	Meeting of ICA Sectoral Organisations Chair, Singapore Contact Dr Kim kim@ica.coop
16-17 Oct	Meeting of sectoral organisations and thematic committees. ICA General Assembly, Singapore.
18-19 Oct	ICA General Assembly, Singapore. See www.icasingapore.coop/
22-24 Oct	1st World CIRIEC research conference on the Social Economy, Victoria, British Columbia.
8 Nov	Meeting for co-operative development agencies, UK Co-operative College. Contact: Mervyn Wilson, Mervyn@co-op.ac.uk



The ICA's 2007 General Assembly in Singapore is only a little over 3 months away.

Have you registered yet?

Hotel rooms are fast filling up. Don't miss out. You can register online at www.icasingapore.coop/

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