

E-News on ICA and Co-operatives



Peace is in the minds of all and not least in ICA's recent statements. The [ICA Board message to the United Nations](#) and the ICA message for International Women's Day both reiterated ICA's approach to conflict resolution at the international, national and local levels. The Board message sent by the ICA President to the United Nations Secretary-General of 14 February 2003 reiterated ICA's "strong support for the efforts of the United Nations in pursuit of peace, sustainable human development and security", while the [Message for International Women's Day](#) encouraged "... co-operatives to reflect on how we can build peaceful societies through the promotion of gender equality and removal of all forms of inequalities".

Contents

ICA News

[Director-General shares impressions after six months in office](#)

["Business in a democratic way": ICA presentation to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe](#)

[Co-operative policy & legislation: Key to successful co-operative development](#)

[ICA member statistics reveal surprising market shares](#)

[Co-operative College of Malaysia: ICA's newest member!](#)

ICA in the Regions

[Burkinabe co-operators feel ICA's outreach](#)

[ICA solidarity helps put Co-operative Bank of Kenya on top again](#)

[Asian values and women in co-operatives](#)

Other News

[Co-op people in the news ...](#)

[ILO publication: Legal constraints to women's participation in co-ops](#)

[australia.coop: A new .coop community!](#)

[Government of Québec \(Canada\) adopts a co-operative development policy](#)



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Director-General shares impressions after six months in office



It seems much more than six months when I left the Co-operative Group to become Director-General of the ICA last September. Since then I have travelled to each of our four regions - to Mauritius for the African Regional Assembly; to Paraguay for the Regional Assembly of the Americas; to Portugal for the European Regional Assembly and most recently to the Philippines for the Regional Assembly for Asia and the Pacific. These are of course exotic locations especially if you are used to the rain soaked North West of England! In each place however I was struck by the enthusiasm for and commitment to the co-operative movement.

ICA's potential is enormous, but its resources are minimal. The ICA offices in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Costa Rica and India as well as here in Geneva which doubles as the Head Office globally and the office for Europe are staffed by 27 committed individuals, many of whom are part-time. As with all apex organisations we are constantly re-organising and improving services to our members, but I firmly believe we have a very important role and a bright future.

In today's globalised economy our Movement is extremely well placed to exploit the advantages it presents. Unfettered liberal free market globalisation is one thing; co-operative globalisation is another, and I see movement towards us. I spoke recently at the [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on improving trade links for small and medium enterprises \(SMEs\)](#) and the co-operative model was well received. The UN has produced Guidelines for the development of co-operatives and of course the ILO has adopted its Recommendation 193 on the promotion of co-operatives. People are fed up with the ENRON's of this world and are increasingly looking at the co-operative option.

We must exploit this opportunity. Did you know that co-operative enterprise provides 100 million jobs worldwide - far more than multinational corporations? But even if you know it, who else does? That is our double challenge - to take advantage of all these opportunities and to ensure everybody knows what we are doing. We will soon appoint a [new communications manager](#) to the head office which I hope will go a small way towards this end.

[Iain Macdonald](#)

"Business in a democratic way: Co-operative values, ethics and globalisation" ICA presentation to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Linking values to gain competitive advantage - the co-operative way of doing business - was the central theme of the ICA presentation to the UN expert meeting on how to become a supplier of large enterprises and transnational corporations. ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald, addressing government and industry representatives during a United Nations Economic Commission (UN ECE) panel, noted that in an increasingly competitive economic environment, non-financial considerations such as social responsibility, democracy and the values to which co-operatives aspire, can constitute a real commercial advantage.



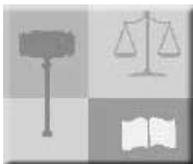
"The co-operative enterprise has an inherent ability to link profits and principles given the adherence of co-operatives to an internationally recognised set of co-operative values and principles", he said. Citing the surveys undertaken in Canada and the United States, the ICA DG showed that consumers and suppliers were seeking to do business with enterprises that were trustworthy, and that were concerned with the social and environmental impact of their activities.

Businesses today are accountable not only to their stockholders but also to a wider group of stakeholders including their communities. Commercial partners and customers increasingly seek out highly efficient, quality suppliers who also are concerned with ethical and social advancement. Those that demonstrate a

balance in business efficiency and values can find that they have an advantage in the marketplace. "Co-operatives are just that type of enterprise", he concluded.

For more information on the meeting, see the [UN ECE press release](#) and links to the agenda and background papers. [Maria Elena Chavez](#)

Co-operative policy and legislation: Key to successful co-operative development



Successful co-operative development requires committed members, skilled leaders and an appropriate legislative and policy environment. More and more co-operatives are finding that co-operative legislation and policy can either facilitate their growth or in fact threaten their very existence. The rapid changes in this areas has led to ICA's decision to share best practice on how to revise co-operative legislation in a Forum to be held during the ICA

General Assembly in Oslo.

The "Legislative Forum" will highlight the renewed interest in co-operatives in many countries as seen by their initiatives to review co-operative law and policy and share experiences on how co-operatives are working with governments to ensure that the co-operative model of enterprise is able to be used by their citizens to serve their economic and social needs.

The basis for much of the recent activity is the result of the work undertaken to provide governments, parliamentarians and co-operative leaders themselves with information on what should and should not be included in co-operative laws is so important. The ICA organised Ministerial Conferences, the United Nations Guidelines aimed at Creating a Supportive Environment for the Development of Co-operatives, the International Labour Organisation's Recommendation 193 on the Promotion of Co-operatives and the soon to be published Guidelines for Co-operative Legislation, provide information on how to create supportive legislative and policy environments. ICA has been contacted by members in the Americas and in Europe asking for assistance to inform their governments on the significance of the co-operative movement worldwide, to explain the Co-operative Principles and how these can best be reflected in law and policy. ICA often works with the ILO to ensure that governments are provided with technical advice for drafting revisions to existing legal texts as well and many of the ICA's interventions have provided for substantial improvements in the policy environment. One of the key elements for co-operative success will be in place.

Both the ILO and UN are tracking progress in the co-operative policy environments. The UN Secretary-General will issue a report later this year on the follow-up to the UN Guidelines, while ILO through workshops and seminars organised in conjunction with ICA will be raising awareness and offering technical support. With work in progress in Benin, Chad, China, Croatia, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, Malawi, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe, co-operatives in these countries may very soon be provided with one of the key elements for co-operative success.

[Maria Elena Chavez](#)

ICA member statistics reveal surprising market shares



What is the economic significance of co-operatives?

Are they really important to national economies?

Questions like these are received by ICA and members every day. We are able to provide information thanks to the input provided by ICA members who answer our requests for statistics. For example did you know that in 2001:

- * Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito "Jesús Nazareno" Ltda. (CJN) handled 25% of the savings in Bolivia
- * The co-operative movement of Cyprus held 30% of the market in banking services, and handled 35% of all marketing of agricultural produce.
- * Co-operative groups within Pellervo in Finland were responsible for 74% of the meat products, 96% of dairy products; 50% of the egg production, 34% of forestry products and handled 34.2% of the total deposits in Finnish banks.
- * The market share of the Korean Federation of Fisheries Co-operatives was 71%.
- * The Kuwaiti Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies handled 80% of the retail trade in Kuwait.
- * The Latvian Central Co-operative Union had 12.3% of the market in the food industry sector.
- * The Central Union of Consumer Co-operatives of the Republic of Moldova was responsible for 6.8% of the consumer market.
- * In Norway, dairy co-operatives are responsible for 99% of the milk production; consumer co-operatives held 25% of the market; fisheries co-operatives were responsible for 8.7% of total Norwegian exports; forestry co-operatives were responsible for 76% of timber and that 1.5 million people of the 4.5 million Norwegians are member of co-operatives.
- * Agricultural co-operatives in Slovenia are responsible for 72% of the milk production, 79% of cattle; 45% of wheat and 77% of potato production.
- * See also [1999 market share figures](#)

Some other interesting figures:

- * 4 of 10 Canadians were members of at least one co-operative in 2001 and co-operatives handle 40% of farm cash receipts in Canada.
- * ICA member, Saludcoop (health co-operative) was the 23rd largest enterprise in Colombia in 2002 and the 2nd largest employer. Today it is responsible for providing health care services for 25% of the population.
- * 1 in 5 Kenyans is a member of a co-operative and 20 million Kenyans directly or indirectly derive their livelihood from the Co-operative Movement.
- * Total revenue for the top 100 co-operatives in the United States jumped from USD 2.7 billion to USD 74.2 billion in 2001.

We encourage ICA members to send their statistical information to the ICA to enable the Secretariat to increase the visibility of the Co-operative Movement worldwide.

[Marie-Claude Baan](#)

ICA welcomes the Co-operative College of Malaysia as a new member!



The Co-operative College of Malaysia officially joined the ICA as an associate member in February 2003 following the decision of the ICA Board. Founded in 1956, the College provides training and management advisory services to the co-operative movement in Malaysia with specific programmes in provision in the field of business administration, accounting, information technology and co-operative law. It offers degree courses including a Diploma and Certificate programme in Co-operative Management and a Masters programme through distance learning.

Learn more about the College by visiting its website: www.mkm.edu.my

[Gabiella Sozanski](#)

Burkinabe co-operators feel ICA's outreach: The impact of the ICA Development Programme

The ICA development programme is changing the lives of the women in Kongoussi in the arid and marginal northern part of Burkina Faso. With support from ICA and its development partners, poverty reduction programmes implemented by the Union Régionale des Coopératives d'Épargne et de Crédit du Bam (URCBAM), a regional union of small savings and credit co-operatives, not only provide savings and credit facilities for women, but also assist in promoting local trade, and run functional literacy programmes.



With health issues high on the list of concerns of women in region, a new micro-health insurance for women and children has been introduced to enable women to get access to medical services including treatments, vaccinations, medicines and transportation to the nearest hospital. However, women members of a local horticultural co-operative society also know that prevention of disease is also important. With the high proportion of women and men suffering from HIV/AIDS, these women have initiated sensitisation lessons on HIV/AIDS in the local community; their contribution to building a healthy and sustainable community.

[Jan-Eirik Imbsen](#) - [Guy Malacrida](#) - [A.S. Kibora](#)

ICA solidarity helps put Co-operative Bank of Kenya on top again

The Co-operative Bank of Kenya has made a remarkable turn-around and today is back to profitability. Established in 1968 to serve farmers and co-operators, the Bank has over its 30+ year history experienced tremendous growth and success with a nation-wide network of 30 branches, modernised IT based operations, a diversified business portfolio, a solid share capital base and greater profitability.

However, the Bank has seen a number of crises, including the August 1998 terrorist bomb which hit the Bank's headquarters causing serious damage to the buildings and victims among its employees. Business and operations were seriously affected. There was loss of income from rent as well as additional expenses in rental premises. The effects were more pronounced because the Bank is a crucial pillar of Kenya's co-operative movement and the only surviving co-operative bank in Africa. The prospects for the future then looked bleak indeed.

The Bank made an appeal to the ICA and the response from members was overwhelming. There was enormous goodwill and practical support from the Co-operative Movement worldwide both from co-operatives and their members. Messages of solidarity, outpouring of support and financial contributions were received from co-operative organisations. This expression of support included the personal visit by the then ICA President, Mr. Roberto Rodrigues to the site in October 1998.

ICA and other international support enabled the Bank to continue its operations. However today's success can also be attributed to new management and enhanced financial products. Banking services to small business - those that were considered "unbankable", the introduction of the "Coop Cash Visa Electronic Card" popularly known as "Coop Card", alongside a multitude of other services have increased business and the satisfaction of members and customers. A key innovation has been the "We Are You" re-branding programme launched in December 2001. This brand strategy is aimed at bringing out the ongoing corporate reorganisation and modernisation of the Bank towards greater alignment of its processes to customer needs.

Over the years, the Co-operative Bank has flourished to become one of the leading commercial banks in Kenya offering a range of over 56 products and services through 30 electronically interconnected and centralised branches spread throughout the country and staffed by a total of over 800 professionals. With a

capital base of Kshs 1.6 billion, customer deposits of Kshs 18 billion and total assets of over Kshs 23 billion, the Bank has a robust asset base upon which to continue innovating best-of-breed financing solutions to customers.

[Bernard Kadasia](#)

Asian values and women in co-operatives

Seventy-five Asian women and men came together in Cebu at the 3rd Regional Women's Forum to determine whether Asian values enhance the participation of women in co-operatives. Although they agreed that there were a number of Asian values that - if truly put in practice within co-operatives - could effectively act as a catalyst for improving women's participation, others regrettably limited women's involvement.



Asian Values: Facilitators to Participation

- Solidarity, close family ties
- Education, freedom, patience and compassion, honesty and responsibility
- Co-existence with nature, culture and religion
- Government policies and regulations

Asian Values & Practice: Limitations

- Mindset of men and women e.g. patriarchal and stereotypes
- Work commitments and household responsibilities

The Forum broke out in small working groups and identified mechanisms that co-operatives could incorporate into their activities to overcome factors that limit women's participation in co-operatives. Specific recommendations included the need for leadership development programmes and a concerted effort to empower women, the education of members, and the provision of support systems and activities that promote family and co-operative values. Recommendations also targeted governments who play an important role in ensuring that national policy does not hinder women's participation in co-operatives. They were called on to review legislation and provide support services to women.

Active monitoring of the implementation of the global ICA Gender Strategy alongside regionally specific agreements and commitments towards more gender-sensitive and responsive co-operative organisations in Asia and the Pacific region will be monitored and evaluated by the ICA ROAP Women's Committee.

The Women's Forum was opened by a series of keynote speakers including the Honorable Dinky Soliman, Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines and the [ICA President](#). It was held in conjunction with the [2nd ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Forum](#) and 5th Meeting of the ICA Regional Assembly in Cebu, Philippines.

[Savitri Singh](#)

Co-op people in the news ...



Roberto Rodrigues, former ICA President was appointed Minister of Agriculture of Brazil. He took office on 1 January 2003. ([Press release in Portuguese](#))



Pauline Green, ICA Vice-President and Chief Executive of Co-operatives UK has become a Dame Commander of the British Empire. The award - in recognition of 'service to the Co-operative Movement and to the development of the European Union' - means that two senior co-operative figures have been honoured in successive years as former Co-operative Group Chief Executive Sir Graham Melmoth received his knighthood 12 months ago.



Giuliano Poletti, was elected as President of Legacoop (Italy) to succeeding Ivano Barberini. Mr. Poletti was President of Legacoop Emilia-Romagna regional branch. Legacoop also elected a new Vice President, Mr. **Giorgio Bertinelli**, former President of Legacoop Tuscany regional branch. Both are committed co-operators who have worked with the co-operative movement for the last 15 years.



Dr. KiSeok Lim was been elected President of the National Credit Union Federation of Korea (NACUFOK). Dr. Lim has extensive experience with the credit union movement having been involved at leadership level since 1980.

[ICA](#)

ILO publication: Legal constraints to women's participation in co-ops

National co-operative laws can generally be considered "gender neutral", but other laws such as those on property, inheritance, customary law as well as co-operative byelaws continue to act as barriers for women participation in co-operatives.

These are the findings from the new International Labour Office (ILO) report on **Legal constraints to women's participation in co-operatives** based on case studies from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ecuador, India, Lesotho, Morocco, the Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand and Uruguay. The case studies highlight that gender biased language, but also laws that regulate women's ownership rights as stated in matrimonial, succession, land and civil and commercial legislation can limit women's legal autonomy and impact their ability to join or participate fully in co-operatives.

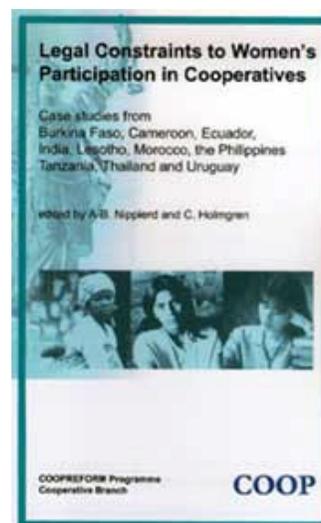
What is clear from the report is that ensuring that women and men can form co-operatives, access their services and participate in decision-making requires serious review and reflection not only of internal bye-laws, but national and customary laws. It underlines yet once again that achieving gender equality is a difficult task, but one that must be addressed at all levels. Co-operatives must look inward at their organisations and identify ways to stimulate change, but they must equally identify ways in which they can contribute to progress in promoting gender equality in society at large. For as stated in [ICA's Gender Strategy](#), "gender equality is good for business" and thus brings added value to its membership and community - valuing differences for social and economic benefits."

The ILO concludes noting that:

The ILO together with the ICA and all those concerned with the promotion of social justice and equal rights should therefore work together to ensure that both women and men face no legal constraints in joining, forming or actively participating at all levels in co-operative enterprises across the globe.

The case studies were commissioned by the [ILO COOPREFORM Programme](#) in an attempt to document existing obstacles and to provide recommendations to policy and lawmakers and all those concerned with co-operative development, to enable them to address the specific problems faced by women.

[ICA](#)



[Download the report \(pdf\)](#)

australia.coop: A new .coop community!

www.australia.coop became the first ".Coop Community Name" to be activated in January 2003. Taking advantage of the ".Coop Community Name" programme which enables co-operatives to set up on-line communities with country, provincial, city, sectoral or other names, the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd launched www.australia.coop to provide co-operatives a portal to promote Co-operation in Australia



The Co-operative Federation of Victoria was already planning a site that would promote the co-operative difference when it noticed the availability of the ".Coop Community Name" programme in August 2002. They moved quickly to submit their proposal and were awarded the name because their site design provides an open environment for Australian co-operative information. With www.australia.coop they can now easily meet their goals on education and related areas by supporting the web site. Members of the Australian co-operative community are encouraged to submit information in areas such as publications, education and workshops so that co-operatives throughout their diverse country have immediate and continuing access to important material.

Valuable community names are still available. Names are awarded to eligible co-operative organisations based on proposals on how the web site for the name will support the programme goals. These on-line "communities" allow co-operatives to be identified through location as well as by industry and interest sectors.

Co-operative organisations as well as individual co-operatives can serve as "stewards" for a .coop Community. These sites will typically provide information about co-operatives associated with that "Community Name" and provide links to individual co-operative sites. Stewards of Community sites will develop the content and services for their site.

These special names cost no more than a regular .coop domain name. Get started on securing your community name by looking at the list of Community Names and send your proposal today to support@communicate.coop. An entire community is waiting for you!

[ICA](#)

Government of Québec (Canada) adopts a co-operative development policy

The Government of Québec (Canada) will invest C\$20 million over 3 years to promote and develop co-operatives, and support their businesses. The support will assist co-operatives to provide an additional 20,000 jobs over ten years, and assist them in improving their business efficiency, increase membership and improve their market penetration. It will also help new co-operatives develop in emerging sectors of activity.

See full press release in [English](#) and [French](#).

[ICA](#)

E-News on ICA and Co-operatives

ICA

- [ICA Home](#)
- [ICA Calendar](#)
- [ICA Members](#)
- [ICA Europe](#)
- [ICA Americas](#)
- [ICA Asia-Pacific](#)

ICA Releases

- [E-news issues 2002](#)
- [E-news issues 2001](#)
- [E-news issues 2000](#)
- [Alliance](#)
- [Review](#)
- [Press releases](#)
- [Other Publications](#)

"Business in a democratic way: Co-operative values, ethics and globalisation" ICA presentation to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe



Linking values to gain competitive advantage - the co-operative way of doing business - was the central theme of the ICA presentation to the UN expert meeting on how to become a supplier of large enterprises and transnational corporations. ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald, addressing government and industry representatives during a United Nations Economic Commission (UN ECE) panel, noted that in an increasingly competitive economic environment, non-financial considerations such as social responsibility, democracy and the values to which co-operatives aspire can constitute a real commercial advantage.

"The co-operative enterprise has an inherent ability to link profits and principles given the adherence of co-operatives to an internationally recognised set of co-operative values and principles", he said. Citing the surveys undertaken in Canada and the United States, the ICA DG showed that consumers and suppliers were seeking to do business with enterprises that were trustworthy, and that were concerned with the social and environmental impact of their activities. Businesses today are accountable not only to their stockholders but also to a wider group of stakeholders including their communities. Commercial partners and customers increasingly seek out highly efficient, quality suppliers who also are concerned with ethical and social advancement. Those that demonstrate a balance in business efficiency and values can find that they have an advantage in the marketplace. "Co-operatives are just that type of enterprise", he concluded.

For more information on the meeting, see the [UN ECE press release](#) and links to the agenda and background papers.

[Maria Elena Chavez](#)

[Contents](#)

Next e-news article



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Welcome to the International Co-operative Alliance ICA



International Co-operative Alliance

Welcome to the official site of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), the apex organisation of the international co-operative movement. The [ICA web site](#) provides information on the ICA mission, structure, members, our various activities and latest reports on our meetings.

ICA President

ICA President's [web site](#) publishes his speeches during both ICA events and major international ones, reports on activities, interviews and research papers on the co-operative movement.

ICA Regional Offices

ICA has regional and project offices in the Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. At present the following regional office sites are available: [ICA Americas \(ROAM\)](#), [Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific](#) and [Regional Office for Europe \(ROEP\)](#),

ICA Specialised Organisations

ICA specialised organisations have been set up as the centre of expertise for specific sectors. They exchange experiences, promote and also develop co-operatives worldwide. The following sectors are represented by active ICA Specialised Organisations: [agriculture](#), [fisheries](#), [banking](#), [consumers](#), [health housing](#), [insurance](#), [tourism](#), and [workers](#)

ICA General Assembly

[ICA General Assembly 2003, Oslo \(Norway\)](#)



Internet Domain for Co-ops



[» ICA members with active .coop addresses](#)

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What's new

[ICA E-News - Issue 1-2003](#)

[ICA seeks Communications Manager for Immediate Appointment](#)

[ICA-ICA GEC Joint Message for International Women's Day, 8](#)

ICA Specialised Committees

ICA specialised committees are groups of experts working together in order to exchange their experiences on various issues and implement projects jointly. The following specialised committees are active: [communications](#), [gender](#), [human resources development](#), and [research](#)

Co-operative Info-center

This is a joint project of ICA and the University of Wisconsin. This site contains archives of ICA activities and publications, and a link to the University of Wisconsin which is an excellent resource on co-operatives. Please [Click here](#)

Co-operatives by region

Search for co-operatives in: [Africa](#), [the Americas](#) and, [Europe](#).

Co-operatives by sector

Search for co-operatives by sector: [agriculture](#), [banking](#), [fisheries](#), [food and consumer](#), [housing](#), [health](#), [insurance](#), [tourism](#), [workers](#), [energy](#), [communications](#), [co-operative centres, institutes and universities](#)

Co-operatives and Youth

The co-operative movement is concerned with youth issues. Young people have built strong networks of youth co-operators through student co-ops and other activities. Information on youth issues and links to youth co-operative web sites can be found on [youth co-operator pages](#)

Co-ops for Kids

Under 16? Would you like to help make a better world? [Co-ops for kids](#) is for you. It teaches you co-operative ideals. You have a space for your work of art and it allows you to grow together hand to hand.

[March 2003](#)

[ICA Board Message to United Nations' Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, 14 February 2003 \(pdf\)](#)

[ICA Calendar 2003-2004](#) (updated 10 March 2003)



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PLEASE CLICK ON THE ABOVE SECTIONS TO ACCESS INFORMATION IN THE ICA WEB SITE

ICA seeks Communications Manager

The International Co-operative Alliance (Geneva) seeks a Communications Manager for immediate appointment to direct and manage the Communications Policy of ICA through the development of an agreed strategy with special emphasis on printed publications and the web site.

Responsibilities

- Develop an ICA Communications Strategy and implementation programme
- Establish and manage the communications budget
- Liaise and co-ordinate communication activities with member organisations, sectoral organisations, specialised committees, Head Office and Regional staff
- Represent ICA at meetings on Communication issues
- Design and develop the ICA web site and liaise with Head Office and regional staff in this connection
- Define and co-ordinate an overall ICA web strategy for Head Office, Regional Offices and Specialised Bodies
- Co-ordinate the design, publication and translation of all ICA promotional and informational materials
- Edit and produce the ICA Annual Report and other publications
- Act as media relations and prepare press releases, editorials, press and information packs.
- Act as Secretary to the [ICA Communications Committee](#)
- Develop and maintain contacts with international and co-operative media keeping abreast of latest developments.

Knowledge, skills and abilities

- University education or equivalent
- Journalistic, editorial skills and experience with printing companies
- Excellent computer skills
- Excellent understanding of internet and web site development
- Excellent English, good command of French and possibly Spanish
- Good interpersonal skills, ability to work independently, as part of a team and under pressure
- Ability to plan ahead, make decisions, establish priorities
- Experience and knowledge of co-operative and international affairs

Please send by **30 April 2003**, CV, covering letter and references to:

Director-General, International Co-operative Alliance, 15 Route des Morillons, 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland

or apply by e-mail: iain.macdonald@coop.org

[More information on ICA](#)

Posted: 27 March 2003



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[\[Index\]](#)

PRESS RELEASE

Geneva, 17 March 2003

Expert Meeting on how to Become a Supplier of Large Enterprises and Transnational Corporations

**20-21 March 2003
(Palais des Nations, Geneva)**

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are deeply affected by the rapid progress of globalization; it is essential they are prepared to meet both the challenges posed by the new emerging market economies and the associated risks.

Promoting linkages, subcontracting relations among large enterprises, transnational corporations (TNCs) and SMEs, in particular, are effective ways of diffusing skills, knowledge and technology. Linkages offer great benefits to both TNCs and SMEs, as well as to the economy, in which they are forged. The local procurement of TNCs potentially offers a range of benefits: lower production costs in host economies; greater specialization and flexibility; and better adaptation of technologies and products to local conditions.

The main goal of the UNECE Expert Meeting “How to Become A Supplier of Large Enterprises and Transnational Corporations” to be held on 20-21 March 2003 is to help SMEs to acquire a better understanding of the global markets and the process of internationalization in both transition countries and advanced market economies. To achieve this the meeting will review best practices in the UNECE region in becoming suppliers of large enterprises and TNCs.

In addition, the meeting will:

- discuss the requirements and standards of large enterprises, TNCs and co-operatives to be met by the SMEs that would make them more partnership-ready;
- review the reasons why quality has become an issue of paramount importance and a pre-requisite to enter the world market and become a supplier of other companies; and
- learn from the best practice of Government policies and TNCs experiences in providing special support programmes for SMEs to meet the requirements of suppliers, in outsourcing, subcontracting, franchising

and in the creation of supply chains.

The Forum will be chaired by Mrs. Signe Ratso, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Telecommunications of Estonia. Key-note speakers include: Joseph Smolik, Senior Economist, UNECE, who will highlight how to create spillover in the European economy; Professors Marie-Laurence Caron-Fasan and Humbert Lesca from the Grenoble Ecole Supérieure des Affaires, Réseau des I.A.E., who will analyse the environment of SMEs in order to be a supplier of large companies and TNCs; Iain Macdonald, Director General of the International Co-operative Alliance will argue how to do business in a democratic way and also discuss co-operative values, ethics and globalization; and Marc Hochuli, Vice President of Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS) will explain how to respond at the local level to the requirements of global standards.

The meeting will also involve a Round Table on Corporate Philosophy and Social Responsibility at which top managers from IKEA, LUKOIL, MAGMA, MIGROS, PRONOVA, SIEMENS, VOLVO and UNILEVER will participate. Further, there will be a special session focussing on the issue of why quality is considered as key in a contractor-supplier relationship. Professors from Denmark, Russian Federation and Ukraine, together with experts from Croatia, Hungary and UNIDO, will present their experiences and methodology in developing quality management systems in enterprises in order to meet the requirements to be a supplier.

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ICA GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE

[Home](#)

[About the
GEC](#)

[Membership](#)

[Activities](#)

[Links](#)

[Site
Map](#)

International Women's Day 2003

Joint Message of the ICA President and Chairperson of the ICA Gender Equality Committee

This year, the International Women's day, will be celebrated in a very difficult period; never before as at present, are peace and security at risk. As we know, peace and security together with the need of freedom and social justice are the bases for economic development at the global level.

However, globalisation for women often represents a globalisation of inequalities more than a globalisation of equal opportunities. As the United Nations Secretary General reminds us " ...Study after study has shown that there is no effective development strategy in which women do not play a central role. When women are fully involved, the benefits can be seen immediately ..." And yet, women continue to make up the majority of the poor, the unemployed and very often they are the main victims of conflict situations. We must transform unequal situations reversing the marginalisation of women in political, economical and social spheres and in doing so improve our quality of life, increase the respect of peoples and build a more humane world.

The ICA and the Gender Equality Committee are convinced that this can be achieved by putting in practice our co-operative principles and values. We must ensure that co-operatives in every country improve their economic performance and visibility to make a real impact on their societies and the change process. On this, the International Women's Day, ICA encourages co-operatives to reflect on how we can build peaceful societies through the promotion of gender equality and removal of all forms of inequalities. Let us strive together -women and men- to build a better world for all.

Ivano Barberini, ICA President -- Vanda Giuliano, Chairperson ICA Gender Equality Committee

**Joint Message from Americas Continental Regional Women's Committee and ICA
Regional Office for the Americas
Mensaje de CRAMC-Américas y ACI-Américas**

"Cada ser humano sabe cuál es la mejor manera de estar en paz con la vida; algunos necesitan un mínimo de seguridad, otros se entregan al riesgo sin miedo. No existen fórmulas para vivir el sueño personal: cada uno, al escuchar su propio corazón, sabe cuál es el mejor modo de actuar." -- Paulo Coelho

La Alianza Cooperativa Internacional les desea a todas las cooperativistas de la región un Feliz Día Internacional de la Mujer.

Lourdes Ortellado, Presidenta, CRAMC-Américas -- Manuel Mariño, Director Regional, ACI-Américas

ICA Members Celebrate International Women's Day

Legacoop (Italy)
distributed postcards with the slogan,
"Women for Peace -- against war"



Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU)
translated the ICA message into Japanese
and posted it to its web site. Click on the
message to see the JCCU webpage.



NOTE:

For more information on International Women's Day, please check the United Nations official website -- <http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2003/> which includes the UN Secretary-General's Message in

English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese.

[Home](#) - [About the GEC](#) - [Membership](#) - [Activities](#) - [Links](#) - [Site Map](#)

Posted: 10 March 2003 - Updated: 18 March 2003

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79th ICA International Co-operative Day 7th UN International Day of Cooperatives (7 July 2001)



The Co-operative Advantage ?

Importance of Co-operatives to National Economies

Co-operatives as member-controlled enterprises have shown their advantages not only in terms of their overall benefits to members, but also as contributors to national economies. Their significance in the market place is not negligible as some continue to believe.

Co-operatives are major economic actors providing quality products and services, and creating and maintaining employment. Co-operatives enable people and citizens around the world to have better lives.

In many countries, co-operatives play a leading role in the production and marketing of foodstuffs, electricity, and consumer goods, as well as financial, insurance and social services. Kofi Anan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1999.

Below are examples of the significance of co-operatives in national economies based on statistical information collected by the International Co-operative Alliance from its members for 1999 unless otherwise indicated.

Country	Sector/Activity	Market Share
Burkina Faso	Cotton production	77%
Brazil	Information Technology Operations	4.7%
Canada ¹	Forestry Agricultural marketing	73% 64%
Colombia	Health	24%
Cyprus	Credit Wine production Fruit/Vegetable production	35% 30% 25%
Denmark	Milk intake Pig production Consumer goods	97% 90% 38%
Estonia	Retail trade	15%
Finland	Animal breeding Dairy Meat Egg production Consumer goods Agricultural supply Retail trade Forestry Banking	100% 97% 69% 50% 40% 40% 40.1% 38% 33%

France	Banking	5th largest
Germany	Agriculture Banking	50% 20%
Greece	Peach Orange	80% 80%
Honduras	Insurance Savings and Credit services	27.1% 14%
Hungary	Agriculture	40%
Korea	Agricultural marketing	40%
India	Edible oils Sugar production Consumer	51% 40% 37%
Malta	Pork Milk production Fisheries	100% 100% 90%
Mexico	Banking	30%
Netherlands	Potato production Flowers Milk collection Sugar Beet Processing Fruit/Vegetable production	100% 95% 84% 63% 58%
Norway	Housing	14%
Portugal	Dairy Credit Wine production	80% 66% 43%
Slovenia	Milk production Beef Wood	80% 80% 70%
Sweden	Milk Beef Cereals Non-life insurance Consumer	99% 80% 70% 20% 14.9%
Turkey	Fertiliser	26%
United States	Electricity	13%
Uruguay	Milk production Sugar production Exports Wheat	90% 50% 40% 30%

Ex-Yugoslavia

Cattle

93%

Note 1: 1998 Data

Last updated: 19 June 2001



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 Program MKM bersama Pelanggan akan diadakan pada setiap hari Sabtu minggu ke dua jam 9.00 am hingga 12.00 am.

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 [Berita Terkini / Peristiwa Semasa](#)

 [Permohonan Kursus Online](#)

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PENAFIAN

Pihak Maktab Kerjasama Malaysia tidak akan bertanggungjawab ke atas sebarang kehilangan atau kerosakan yang dialami kerana menggunakan maklumat dalam laman ini.



ICA PRESIDENT ADDRESSES 3TH ICA REGIONAL ASIA-PACIFIC WOMEN'S FORUM Cebu (Philippines), 18 February 2003

Madame Chairwoman, Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Thank you for your kind invitation. I am glad to have the opportunity to listen to you and to speak to you. I confess that I am a little bit afraid. Usually men know few things about women and most are wrong. Anyway, I like more to talk to women rather than to talk about women.

Now, the most widespread and awful word is- globalisation. Talking about Gender issues I believe that we can talk about "globalisation of inequality".

For a long time all over the world, a great number of women have been involved in the difficult task of having their worth recognised in management in companies and financial and business organisations. In these areas they have always been margined or if they have been able to take over an area it has been at the cost of enormous sacrifices compared to their male counterparts. ILO has noted that almost universally, women have failed to reach leading positions in major corporations or private sector organisations irrespective of their abilities.

The role of women in co-operatives is still quite limited, especially at the executive, managerial and leadership levels. This situation weakens the future development of our movement and takes into no account the very important presence of women which can "improve communication, co-operation, team spirit and commitment within organisations - qualities which today are essential in achieving excellence and maintaining the necessary networks of contacts and relationships".

For this reason, in 1995 ICA adopted the resolution for "Gender Equality in Co-operatives" establishing gender equality as a global priority for ICA and calling on members to establish action plans to address the issue. In 1997, as you know, the ICA General Assembly approved and added promoting ".....equality between men and women in all decision-making and activities within the co-operative movement...." and revised the standing orders to allow equal opportunity for qualified women and men to participate in ICA decision-making structures. Finally, in April 2000, the ICA Board approved the "ICA Strategy for promoting Gender Equality".

Now three years on we can do a first evaluation, even if it has been a rather short time in which to obtain any significant results. In the ICA organisation the presence of women has grown, even though it is still not enough.

There are now 5 women on the Board; the president of ICA Europe-vice president of ICA is Pauline Green, a manager in the UK co-operatives who has, as well, recently received a notable sign of honour from her country; the presidency of the Audit and Control Committee has been taken over by a female

Swedish manager; and in other specialized committees and working groups female participation is high.

Rahaiah Binti Baheran, a Board member of ICA, is also an active participant of the ICA Gender Equality Committee. Also for this, in the last few years, ICA Asia-Pacific has been committed to Gender equality, developing numerous and important initiatives.

Basically, I believe, there has developed a deep conviction in co-operatives that: "Gender is not a women's issue but an issue that must be tackled by both men and women together" and "achieving gender equality will involve redefining power relationships, overcoming non-legal barriers to equality and confronting gender stereotypes". It is important to look at how we move forward in this direction in the scenario of the 21st century and the challenges that the co-operative movement must face entering into an increasingly difficult future.

The presence of women takes on even more importance if we consider the problems arising from globalization and the influence it exercises. The co-operative movement is an important part of the civil society and as such, contributes, and will have to contribute even more to the managing of problems that arise and those that divide our planet, culturally, socially and economically. A globalization that wants to ensure a sustainable and widespread economic growth must be closely linked with social cohesion. To achieve this, naturally, we cannot exclude half of the human race.

Women are an essential subject in social and economic development as the UN continually reminds all of us. Women make up the majority of the poor, the unemployed and very often they are the main victims of war and exploitation. We cannot think about a better and more peaceful world if we don't overcome these unjust situations. In fact, a world where a majority, mostly women, is marginalized politically, socially and economically will always result in an unfair imbalance and therefore, be in continual unrest. For this general reason women must be considered as a resource for a more humane world. Therefore, it is an issue of culture, perhaps more important than the same laws that govern co-operative businesses.

Laws can be interpreted and changed, while culture follows a long and difficult path and it is real only if it is deeply rooted in the mind and conscience of people. There are many examples showing that women involved in co-operative work provide an essential contribution in affirming a modern culture that blends together know-how and the innovation in strategies with the confirmation of basic values.

We have seen that when women have had the opportunity to play a role, at all levels, the result has usually been an increase in the quality of life and civility. Female co-operators are, therefore, an important resource in understanding where our world is heading and in acting in harmony with the new needs of people.

Entire co-operative sectors can attribute their birth and their imaginative resources to the determination and generosity of women. Often female co-operatives are scouts into new sectors e.g. healthcare, training and social services and so, they are able to guarantee the spread of the co-operative experience and renew co-operative values and principles facing the changes in our modern world. Here we can see the example of social co-operatives that have seen a important growth in the last 15-20 years in countries such as Italy. These are enterprises that provide assistance to the disadvantaged. They are co-operative values translated in to company practice.

A great deal of sensitivity and dedication towards others is required to be able to develop this work, respecting the dignity of people and improving their living conditions. In these co-operatives women often make up the majority of the member workers and exercise a strong and effective guiding role in the

co-operative.

We must also remember that women are important players in traditional co-operative sectors, e. g. agriculture, fishing, credit, textile and consumer. In the Asian Pacific Area we have some significant experiences of the above. There are solely women co-operatives (in India, Nepal and in other countries) carrying out an important role in their community.

Generally, the female approach to work involves a special way of feeling the work relations and the responsibility for results. From research carried out on co-operatives we can see some useful elements enabling us to better understand the role of women in the co-operative work environment.

An important element of women's relation with work shows that in many cases there is a very strong emotional involvement and an identification with a professional growth path, that has cost a lot, together with the need to make a project operative and see results. A second aspect concerns the relation between working life and family life. Women place great importance on work but they are strongly conscience of the need to balance it with their family life. This is a modern approach.

In looking at the issue of improving the position of women in co-operative management it would be useful to begin with best practices. Just as we need to take into account the differences in existing types in order to achieve gender equality. We need only to realise that "equal treatment of persons in unequal situations will simply perpetuate inequalities."

In conclusion, the co-operative company is an important opportunity to confirm the rights and meet the needs of women, more than any other type of company. It is in the condition to be able to update its business strategies in line with the changes in the market and act consistently with co-operative values and principles. One way is to support women's involvement in the decision making process worldwide, strengthening co-operatives and their democratic principles. Another is to promote and support female co-operatives through incentives, training, services and access to credit.

The ICA role is to support and strengthen women's participation.

Regarding this the previous and the present work of the Asian women in co-operative Development Forum is a major force in improving the role and position of women.

Thank you

Ivano Barberini

Posted: 10 March 2003



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