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Global protocol to be developed for co-operative response to natural disasters

The ICA along with several major international co-operative development organisations have decided to work together to develop a protocol for a coordinated co-operative response to natural disasters.

The decision was taken at the recent COPAC organised 5th Agencies meeting of co-operative development organisations held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 24-26 January 2006.

The co-operative movement has a strong record of responding to disasters. When the tsunami struck Asia on 26 December 2004, co-operative organisations and co-operative development agencies immediately responded to the appeals for help. The recent Colombo meeting was organised to specifically share lessons



learned from the Tsunami disaster response and to understand challenges and best practices for dealing with similar future situations.

The idea to develop a protocol for greater coordination has grown out of an analysis of the international co-operative's movements response to the Tsunami.

Continued on page 2

Co-operatives are ideally suited to the reconstruction phase of disaster relief

2006 theme for International Day of Co-operatives, 1 July 2006 announced

The 2006 theme, *Peace Building through Co-operatives* was chosen by the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) at its recent Board meeting in Sri Lanka on 27 January 2006.

COPAC which includes the ICA, a number of United Nations agencies and several co-operative development organisations has the annual task of selecting the theme.

The ICA has a long history of support for international peace initiatives. The selection of this theme will help highlight the contribution co-operatives are making to peace building throughout the world.

A special *Peace and Co-operation Workshop* in British Columbia, Canada has also been arranged for this year. Background on the theme will be shortly available, in the meantime see COPAC's web-site www.copac.coop

This year's theme: "peace building through co-operatives"

From the editor's desk



Garry Cronan
Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of the ICA *Digest*.

Our lead story this issue concerns the decision by the recent meeting of co-operative development agencies to develop a framework or protocol for co-operative responses to disasters.

This is an important and logical outcome of the collaboration which occurred following the Asian Tsunami in 2004.

In this issue we also preview the ICA's activities in 2006. The year is already shaping up to be a very busy one.

A round of four ICA Regional Assemblies will be focused on the ongoing regionalisation debate within the ICA. We also carry reports of two recent meetings focused on this issue.

Increased regionalisation brings with it the need for greater coordination, a

theme which will be pursued in the area of communications and information sharing. The theme of information sharing is also picked up in series reports in this issue.

Finally, as this is our first issue of 2006 we carry a message on the year ahead from the ICA President.

Garry Cronan

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“The world needs a strong and united co-operative movement focused on its high values...”

Ivano Barberini

ICA President sets out direction for 2006

2006 is going to be a very important year.

It is one in which the ICA will be focused on carrying out the restructuring process of the ICA. It will also be further developing the network of relationships with the ILO, UN, and other international organisations to achieve the common objectives of fighting poverty, peace and social justice.

The world needs a strong and united co-operative movement focussed on its high values.

My sincere thanks to those of you who sent Christmas and New Year greetings.

Let me add a warm thank you to all member co-operators for their support of ICA activities. I look forward to working with you during 2006.



Ivano Barberini

“...co-operatives will also be encouraged to channel relief through strategic partnerships ...”

Global protocol for co-operatives (continued....)

The new protocol is expected to focus on the role of co-operatives in the reconstruction phase of disasters. It is hoped it will lead to greater coordination through better exchange of information, joint planning, monitoring and evaluation among the various international co-operative agencies.

The signatories to the protocol will pool needs assessments and fact finding. Co-operatives will also be encouraged to channel

relief through strategic partnerships with organisations that recognise co-operatives as long term reconstruction agents. The protocol will also be drafted to respect the autonomy, independence and leadership of local co-op movements as well as local cultural practices.



It is envisaged that a small sub-group of CO-PAC members will begin work on drafting a protocol, which will then be circulated for comment.

Governance Working Group considers regionalisation issues

ICA's Governance Working Group (GWG) held its most recent meeting in Geneva on 7 February 2006.

The focus of the meeting was on regionalisation proposals, principally, but not only centred on Europe. The GWG discussed the current European proposal for a form of immediate separate legal incorporation. It conveyed its views, to the Regionalisation Group on the need for a broad consensus to be reached within the ICA on such proposals which

was meeting the following day, see *item below*.

The GWG meeting also considered the progress on implementing its detailed governance recommendations which were approved by the last ICA General Assembly.

The GWG has undertaken to develop a set of draft standing orders for Board meetings based on their recommendations. They have also called on the Board to convene a special ICA Board meeting devoted to strategic planning in September 2006. The need for a new strategic

planning framework and direction were one of the GWG's key governance recommendations.

The GWG will also be reporting to the next Board on the need to carry out one of its other key recommendations concerning induction and training of Board members.

For more information contact the GWG's Convenor, Gun-Britt Mårtensson gun-britt.martensson@hsb.se

Governance



“The regionalisation debate which is underway within the ICA is a difficult but necessary one if we are to remain relevant to our members....”

Iain Macdonald

Regionalisation Group starts its work

The first meeting of the ICA's new interim Regionalisation Group (RG) was held in Geneva on 8 February 2006.

Representatives from each of the ICA's four regions and the Governance Working Group were present. The RG is chaired by the ICA Director-General.

The RG has been charged

with the task of developing recommendations on how to bring about more effective regionalisation within the ICA - making both the global and regional aspects of the organisation stronger.

The RG received background papers outlining the views of the various regions on how this might occur. It is also building on the work of the consultative meeting on this issue held in Geneva

in December last year.

The group's focus at this stage is on the following: the split of global, regional and sectoral functions and roles; the legal status of each region; membership, including the categories of membership, level of fees and point of collection, plus budgetary and programme issues.

Contact Iain Macdonald macdonald@ica.coop

Regionalisation Timetable 2006/7

Feb-April 2006 - Regionalisation Group (RG) develops recommendations

March 2006 - ICA global Board receives interim report from RG

May 2006 - ICA global Board considers RG final recommendations

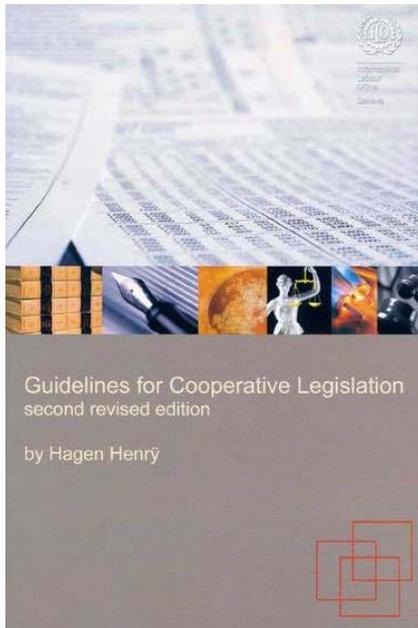
May - Nov 2006 - 4 ICA Regional Assemblies consider Board and RG recommendations

- July - Americas
- August– Asia-Pacific
- October - Africa
- November - Europe

Oct 2007 - ICA General Assembly considers and gives approval to any changes

Legislation

2nd edition of *Guidelines for Co-op Legislation* now available



The ILO/COPAC have recently published the second revised edition of the “Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation”.

This second revision edition builds on a wide consultation process and takes into consideration both the UN Guidelines adopted in 2001 but also the ILO’s Recommendation 193 of 2002 promoting co-operatives.

The *Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation* can be used to develop a checklist of items to be considered when drafting a new co-

operative law or amending an existing one. It is not prescriptive and allows for options that best fit the realities of the movement and countries in which the law is to be enacted.

The electronic version of the publication will shortly be available. In the meantime, hard copies are available through the ILO with limited copies available through [COPAC](#).

Please also note that the French version of the publication should become available in the near future.

ILO seminar on co-operative policy and law

The ILO International Training Centre is organising a seminar entitled *Cooperative Policy and Law* from 15-26 May 2006 in Turin (Italy). The seminar will be held in English.

The general objective of the course is to contribute to the elaboration, administration and monitoring of co-operative policy and law at the national level. At the end of the course, the participants will be able to:

- Compare their national co-operative policy and law with the new ILO Recommendation 193;
- Design a strategy to reform and/or update

their national co-operative policy and law on the basis of the ILO Recommendation 193.

This course is aimed at all those involved in the decision-making, design and implementation of co-operative policies and legislation, including government officials; co-operative sector representatives and representatives of organisations dealing with the development of co-operatives who have a legal background and/or relevant work experience; and pri-

vate professionals and consultants advising governments in co-operative policy and legislation.

Those interested in participating in the course are invited to contact by e-mail at sme@itcilo.it or by phoning the ILO Turin Centre in Italy at +39 011 693 6435. More information <http://learning.itcilo.org/entdev/coop/>

ILO Recommendation 193 on co-ops has been used to improve national co-op policy or legislation in at least 40 countries

The ILO Co-op Branch maintains the world’s largest database of co-operative law. It includes legislation from over 30 countries with over a 1000 entries.

[More](#)



2nd anniversary of ICA-ILO Memorandum of Understanding

MoU

The 2nd anniversary of the groundbreaking MoU between the ICA and the International Labour Organisation was celebrated at ICA's head office on 15 February 2006.

ICA President, Ivano Barberini welcomed ILO Director-General, Juan Somavia and other senior ILO officials including the staff of the ILO's Co-operative Branch to the ICA.

The ICA and the ILO have had a very close association since the ILO was formed in the early 1920's. The first Director-General of the ILO was a member of the then ICA Board.

In 2004 a MOU was signed between both organisations. It provides a platform on which ICA can intensify its collaboration with the ILO with resources being committed for a number of joint projects.

The second anniversary meeting provided an opportunity to review progress on the implementa-

tion of key joint programmes during 2005 under the *Common Co-operative Agenda*.

The meeting of the senior leadership of the ILO and the ICA also enabled both parties to explore the broadening of the scope of the ICA-ILO collaboration.

The review concluded that very significant progress had been made in a number of key areas under the MOU. Several new areas for possible collaboration were suggested and discussed.

José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, ILO Executive Director of Employment with ILO Co-op Branch Head, Jürgen Schwettmann



ICA President, Ivano Barberini and ILO Director-General, Juan Somavia share a light moment at the anniversary meeting



Some of the ILO, ICA and joint projects under the MoU for 2006 include:

- Development of strategies on local development and co-ops; peace building and co-ops; protection of indigenous peoples; youth and rural employment, etc
- Launch of a new INDISCO project in the Philippines; 6th phase of the ILO-INDISCO
- Continuation of the FORCE & LEP project in West Africa
- Training course on co-op policy and legislation, Turin, Italy
- Training tools and publication: LED toolkit; SYNDICOOP Handbook *Let's Organise*; INDISCO toolkit for the training of indigenous trainers; Guidelines on Rec 193 (French); Guidelines on Co-operatives for Trade Unions, (French); manual on shared service co-operatives (with DGRV); Guidelines for Co-operative Auditing, (including social audit); Manual on the role of co-ops fighting HIV/AIDS
- Tsunami reconstruction projects in Tamil Nadu and Andaman & Nicobar, Banda Aceh, Sri Lanka
- Conference on role of co-operatives in poverty alleviation, in Vietnam, March
- Seminar on impact of WTO on small family farmers, India, April
- Peace and Co-operation seminar, Canada, June

ILO and ICA officials at the start of the 2nd anniversary meeting

ICA's Global 300 project enters second phrase



Following the launch of the concept of the **Global 300** at the ICA General Assembly in September last year considerable work has been done.

A draft ranking of the largest 300 co-operative and mutual organisations in the world, based on turnover, has been compiled.

A logo has also been developed, see *opposite*, as well as a draft communications strategy for the launch of the global ranking developed. These activities complete the first phrase of this project.

The next stage involves detailed validation of the data set by checking with all relevant, national, sectoral and regional organisations. The ICA will also be confirming the data with the listed co-operatives.

We are also hoping to involve all relevant national organisations in what will be a major media campaign for the launch of the **Global 300**.

For more information contact: Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop

Communications

Need to better monitor and analyse media reporting of co-operatives

Is the co-operative message being fairly reported in the mainstream media? Are co-operatives largely invisible in such media or if reported is the focus largely negative or not fully understood?

If co-operatives are to have a larger and more visible profile in the general media, then a good starting point is to better understand how their

activities are being currently being reported.

New news aggregation technologies, such as RSS give us the opportunity to combined in one place most news reports of co-operatives. The ICA is currently developing a news aggregation site which will take feeds and input from a wide range of co-operative and general media sites and sources.

It is hoped that this site will be live, at least in test format within the next two months.

When fully operational it will allow for not only news aggregation but also the opportunity to better understand and response to negative or misinformed reports of co-operatives.

For more information contact cronan@ica.coop

“...such a listing will enable co-operative communicators ...to better share ideas and content...”

ICA preparing listing of global co-operative media

Throughout the world most co-operative organisations have some form of communications. It ranges from simple newsletters and websites to fully fledged corporate communications involving multimedia, online and print outlets.

The ICA is currently

compiling a listing of such media, publications and contacts.

Once completed such a listing or network will enable co-operative communicators throughout the world to better share ideas and content and lead on occasion to a more coordinated approach to present-

ing the co-operative message.

The listing which will ultimately include many thousands of contacts will be used at the time of the **Global 300** launch. If you would like to be included in the listing and to share such information contact cronan@ica.coop

Harmonisation trend in WTO proceedings: potential threat to co-operatives

WTO

The WTO Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong in December 2005 set an end-date for negotiating a draft world trade deal (modalities) by April 2006.

From the agricultural perspective, Ministers confirmed a general framework for negotiating on the key issues of trade-distorting farm subsidies (domestic support) and market access, which have yet to be resolved. They also made a commitment to end export subsidies by 2013 and to discipline food-aid practices and export credit. It further singled out the need to ensure that trade distorting practices of State Trading Enterprises are eliminated.

Although, agricultural co-operatives around the world should be following and influencing their governments on the negotiations, some of the issues that are being addressed show potential dangers for the co-operative model of enterprise in general.

The WTO, like other international regulatory bodies, is moving towards

harmonisation, whether it be trade rules, legislation or accounting standards, and all based on the understanding that enterprises are capital-centred companies. Without a proper understanding of what co-operatives are, some of the support measures that co-operatives enjoy today, which should be fixed "on terms no less favourable than those accorded to other forms of enterprise and social organisation", could be put at risk especially if these are seen to be in some way trade distorting. These special measures include tax benefits, loans, grants, access to public works programmes, and special procurement provisions which are provided to co-operatives on the condition that they perform a special service to the community which national governments wish to promote.

The discussions on state trading enterprises which are a way that farmers have used in a number of countries to organise the market, may be the precursors of questions on how people use co-operatives to organ-

ise markets. It is a short jump to equate support that state trading enterprises provide and how they are supported, to that of how co-operatives help producers and the different treatment that they may be granted, especially



The WTO's headquarters are located in Geneva not far from the ICA's HO

for co-operatives that organise large segments of the market.

This underlines once again the important role of the ICA and the responsibility of all movements around the world to raise the profile of co-operatives and help government understand the role of co-operatives in society -- alongside the public and more traditional private sector. ICA has and continues to develop materials to assist co-operatives put forward these arguments.

ICA attended the recent Hong Kong WTO meeting. It is also seeking to increase its involvement in WTO activities

"Sustainable Fisheries and Trade" statement made to WTO

A number of ICA members with fisheries interests adopted a statement on "Sustainable Fisheries and Trade" during an event at the WTO Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong in December 2005.

ICA member, the National Federation of Fish-

eries Cooperative Associations (JF ZENGYOREN) and the All Japan Seafood Import Consultative Group (YUTAIKYO) held an International Symposium on Sustainable Fisheries and Trade on 14 December 2005.

The statement calls on the WTO to ensure that trade liberalisation rules on fish

and fishery products respect the conservation and management of fish stocks. It further asks that new trade rules should avoid threatening the culture and traditional value of fisheries and fishing communities. ICA sectoral organisation, the International Fisheries Cooperative Organisation (IFCO) was one of the signatories.

Copies of the "fisheries" statement can be obtained from the ICA website [More...](#)

Priorities in 2006



Iain Macdonald
ICA Director-General

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Global ICA priorities and programmes for 2006

The ICA global activities are spread across five main programme areas:

- Networking, including member services
- Communications and Intelligence services
- Development
- International standing
- Administration

The 2006 work pro-

gramme, which was approved at the December 2005 ICA Board meeting, includes a number of on-going as well as new initiatives.

During 2006 it is expected that in line with the recommendations of the Governance Working Group an integrated strategic process and framework

will be developed for the whole ICA.

This will mean that all regions and global will be reporting using common terms and programme descriptions within an agreed planning and reporting timeframe and direction.

Networking and membership

Member Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit/represent ICA at member meetings
ICA Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and prepare statistical analysis of membership • Maintain updated contact information on members, partners, government agencies dealing with co-ops, UN agencies, media, etc
Membership Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage membership subscriptions • Member recruitment in collaboration with regions • On-going Membership subscription review
Legislative Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Legal Advisory Group • Liaise with the ILO <i>CoopReform</i> programme • Liaison with Regional initiatives
Thematic Committee Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariats for ICACC; ICA GEC; ICA HRD and Research C'ttees • Link work of thematic committee with related ICA activities,
Sectoral Organisation Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure information exchange, inputs and links between sectors, regions and thematic committees • Finalise agreements with each sectoral organisation on mutual support and provide specified services
General Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare 2007 General Assembly, Singapore

Communications and intelligence

Website(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and develop the global website, www.ica.coop
News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an online daily news aggregation and analysis service
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICA Digest (12-15 issues in 2006) • ICA Review (1 issue in 2006) • ICA Annual Report • ICA Global Business Journal - launch date early 2007
Media and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICA media pack for International Day of Co-operatives • Prepare and disseminate ICA media releases
Corporate Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote integrated/consistent corporate image for whole ICA
Global 300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch <i>Global 300</i> with major media campaign
Intelligence services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake internal knowledge audit • Pilot co-op business trends and competitiveness project

Global linkages and development

Priorities in 2006

Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create enabling environment • Trade (regional trade integration and facilitation) • Advocacy, skills training and business administration for members • Work through Strategic Grant Agreement to build ICA's capacity to address members development needs • Expansion of Syndicoop Programme
Campaign against Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise seminars, maintain campaign website • Seek partners to join campaign • Link with Global Call for Action Against Poverty (GCAP)
Partner Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review development project/programme reports from regions prior to submitting to partners • Ensure continued on-going collaboration with partners • Seek out new partners in collaboration with regions • Prepare ICA brochure on development activities
Planning visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and monitor development project activities • Review and monitor financial and budgetary compliance
Tsunami Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select/manage projects to be funded by Tsunami Reconstruction Fund • On-going project monitoring

Advocacy and international standing

UN Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of existing relations and ICA representation at: ILO, FAO, Habitat, UN Secretariat, WHO, World Bank and WTO • Establish new relations with IFAD, UN Global Compact, UN Commission on Social Solidarity
COPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide secretariat to COPAC (fee-based) • Participate in COPAC Board meeting and on-going activities • Meeting of Co-operative Development Agencies focussing on co-ordination of Tsunami reconstruction efforts
International Accounting Standards Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Working Group meetings • Disseminate information
Global Economic and Social Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Forum annual meeting (October, 2006) • Link with participating organisations
DotCoop Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate as observer member of the DCLLC Board • Provide services as verification partner
Fédération des Institutions Etablies à Genève (FIIG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in meetings as elected Vice-Chair • Link with FIIG member organisations political and administrative issues

Administration and governance

Statutory Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and attend 3 to 4 ICA Board meetings • Participate in all regional assemblies
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Financial Control Handbook • Implement recommendations of Governance Report and restructuring proposals
Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and coordinate head and regional offices for yearly audit – to be IFRS compliant • Service and support Audit & Control Committee

2006 Work Plans and Priorities



*Shil-Kwan Lee
Asia-Pacific Regional
Director*

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Asia Pacific

ICA Asia Pacific has for a number of years been operating under regional strategic plans. The current four year work plan for 2005-2008 was the result of a detailed review of the previous five year programme. This review noted a number of significant economic and social trends which had been affecting the region over this period, resulting in the need to make some adjustments to the previous plans.

As a result the 2005-2008 plan has the following priorities:

- Propagation of Co-operative Values and Principles
- Co-operative Legislation and Policy Reforms
- Strengthening of Co-operative Governance and Management Capabilities
- Active Participation in Poverty Alleviation
- Promotion of International Co-operative Trade
- Gender Mainstreaming and Involvement of Youth
- Improvement of Education, Information and Technology in Co-operatives

The programme has the following focused components:

- Expansion of ICA membership in Asia-Pacific by enrolling more new members
- Development of co-operatives in least developed countries – Laos and Cambodia
- Catalysing the process of co-operative legislation and policy reforms
- Formulation of workable strategy for involvement of co-operatives in poverty alleviation
- Promotion of effective dialogue between co-operatives and governments
- Enhancing role of co-operatives in development of social sector, i.e. education, healthcare, as well as rehabilitation of victims of natural disasters; and
- Promoting co-operative to cooperative business.

Specifically, the 2006 work plan includes the following activities.

Capacity Building/Co-operative Development

- Project on Organization of Informal Workers in Co-operatives, Nepal, January-December.
- Capacity Building of Co-operative Leaders of Afghanistan, India, March.
- Replication of Success Story of "SAIGON CO-OP" to other Regions, Vietnam, March.

Communications/Information Services

- Publish Quarterly Newsletter (ASPACON)/ Annual Report & Webpage and Information Service
- Publication of report on sex dis-aggregated data of co-operatives, ICA-AP Office, April.

Conferences, Forums, Assemblies

- Office Bearers Meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee, Philippines, March
- Board Meeting of Asia Pacific Health Co-op Organization (APHCO) & Workshop on Prevention of HIV/AIDS, Vietnam, May.
- Conference on Gender Integration in Co-ops – 10 years before and after, Philippines, May.
- Committee Meetings (Agriculture, Consumer, University, HRD, Women, RCBA), Sri Lanka, 14-15 August.
- 3rd Regional Youth Seminar, Sri Lanka, 15th August.
- HRD Seminar on New Trends in Co-operative Leadership Development, Sri Lanka,

ICA Europe - "Co-operatives Europe"

ICA Europe together with the Coordinating Committee of European Co-operative Associations (CCACE) has established a common platform for delivering services to members and raising the visibility and presence of co-operatives. The common platform is known as *Co-operatives Europe*.

Co-operatives Europe has developed an Action Plan for 2006. The key aspects of this plan are outlined below.

Action Plan 2006 - Overall Objectives

- Enhance co-operative identity, visibility and image
- Recognition of co-operatives as main economic & social partners (social and civil dialogue, consultation on policies) at EU institutional level
- Develop a strong co-operative system in the enlarged EU and European region

Action Plan 2006 - Key Strategic Actions

- Consolidation of the common platform *Cooperatives Europe* bringing together ICA Europe and CCACE
- Follow up of European resolution and active participation in ICA regionalisation and restructuring process.
- Organise Regional Assembly, prepare legal status and new rules
- Continue enhancing visibility through image building, communication and statistics.
- Further enhancing EU consultation through CCACE and legal group.
- Membership support, promotion and development
- Stimulate project development in the Europe region.

ICA Asia Pacificcontinued

- 15th August.
- 4th Research Conference, Sri Lanka, 15-16 August.
- 4th Regional Co-operative Forum, Sri Lanka, 16-17 August.
- 7th Meeting of ICA Regional Assembly and Co-op Forum, Sri Lanka, 18th August.
- International Co-operative Trade Exhibition, Iran, November.

Education and Training

- 20th ICA-Japan Training Course on Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-ops, India/ China/ Japan, 15th January to 22nd April.
- Seminar on WTO Impact on Small Family Farmers and Co-operatives, India, April.
- Campus Co-operative Development Workshop, Iran, June.
- 6th ICA-Japan Rural Women Leaders Training Course, Japan, August-September.
- 6th Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Co-ops, Singapore, September.
- Study Tour to Agricultural Co-operatives, Republic of Korea, September.
- Four Training Programs for Managers of Consumer Co-ops, Miyagi/Tokyo/ Kanagawa/Kobe, September-December.
- Trainers' Training Program for Women Leadership Development, Vietnam, November.

Poverty Reduction/Co-operating Out of Poverty campaign

- Post Earthquake Rehabilitation Project in Gujarat, India, January-March.
- Post Tsunami Rehabilitation Project, India/Sri Lanka, Jan-December.
- Conference on Role of Co-operatives in Poverty Alleviation, Vietnam, March.

Regional priorities in 2006



Rainer Schlüter
European Regional Director

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Regional priorities in 2006



*Manuel Mariño
Americas Regional
Director*

ICA Americas has 61 members in 19 countries in the region. Membership is expected to increase to 67 members in 2006

www.aciamericas.coop

ICA Americas

The priorities of ICA-Americas have been defined in the context of the ICA Americas Strategic Plan for the 2005-2008 period. A series of detailed programmes have been developed to achieve these priority areas. The 2006 priorities are in five main areas:

- Policy and institutional development
- Development and sustainability of the regional office
- Co-operative promotion and development
- Innovation and learning
- Communications, image and dissemination

Policy and institutional Development

The goal of this programme is to forge alliances and obtain the support of civil society in order to have modern co-operative legislation. A network of legislators will be strengthened; they will meet periodically for the promotion and encouragement of the co-operative model as an instrument for social and economic development in the region. As a crosscutting theme, gender equity will foster the development of women's participation in the organisational dynamics of ICA-Americas. Youth participation will also be encouraged.

Development and sustainability of regional office

Redefine the organisational structure in order to tackle challenges and new projects effectively in the future, with the greatest value added possible. Part of the consolidation of self-sustainability will include a renewed focus on financial policy oriented toward greater financial independence.

Co-operative promotion and development

Inter-cooperation and sectoralisation, along with co-operative excellence and co-operative services, are the key elements. Under these guidelines, ICA-Americas will develop joint work programmes to improve the process of inter-cooperation and sectorisation, enabling it to contribute and facilitate the application of policies and instruments for the development and consolidation of co-operative quality.

Innovation and learning

ICA-Americas will promote the application of innovative teaching methodology with prestigious institutes of higher learning, for co-operative formation, innovation and knowledge management improving administrative management. It will also encourage formation in the co-operative model among youth and women. Through an on-line training platform, ICA-Americas will facilitate individualised learning at distance. This innovative platform will enable co-operative formation in different themes and areas.

Communication, image and dissemination

To improve access to information that ICA-Americas sends to member organisations and vice versa, work will focus on strengthening communications media and there will be more extensive dissemination of the information produced by ICA and ICA-America, as well as other organisations, with more linkage between the websites of co-operative organisations in the region.

For a full listing of ICA Americas regional events in 2006 go to the ICA global calendar www.ica.coop/calendar

ICA Africa

Regional priorities in 2006

ICA Africa programmes and activities for 2006 are in four main areas:

- Creating an enabling environment for co-operatives
- Organising the ICA Africa's Regional Assembly and "Co-operating Out of Poverty" Conference
- Information management, surveys and capacity building
- Institutional development of the regional office

Creating an enabling environment for co-operatives

There are several activities under this programme which will be undertaken during 2006. These include:

- Analyse the experience of co-operative policy and legislation in three countries
- Support co-operative policy and legislation reform processes in three countries
- Popularise the new co-operative policy and legislation documents
- Advocate for the positive role of co-operatives in Africa development
- Support ICA Africa members networking



Ada Suleyman Kibora
African Regional Director

Regional Assembly and other conferences

The ICA Africa's Regional Assembly will be held in Arusha, Tanzania from 2 to 6 October 2006. A Regional Conference on: "Co-operating out of Poverty" was held 5 to 10 February 2006 in Pretoria, South Africa in collaboration with ILO and DGRV of Germany.

Information management, surveys and capacity building

The main activities during 2006 include:

- Collect and disseminate information, data and best practices
- Support studies and research on co-operative relevant issues
- Support capacity building for members

www.icaafrica.coop

Institutional development of the regional office

The main activities 2006 activities include:

- Promotion and lobbying activities of new membership,
- Promotion and lobbying activities to increase institutional partnerships

ICA Americascontinued

The main conferences and meetings to be organised by ICA Americas during 2006 include:

- Gender Equality meeting, Honduras - 15 March
- Meeting of ICA Americas Regional Council, Honduras - 16-17 March
- 1st International Business Meeting, Costa Rica - 11-12 May
- Seminar on *Influence of the co-operative sector in the development of the Public Policies in Latin America*, in Panama - 23-24 May
- 14th Regional Conference on *Competitiveness and Co-operative Positioning: Challenges and Opportunities for Economic and Social Development*, Peru - 17-21 July
- 4th Meeting of Legislators, Peru - 17 July
- 3rd Women's Meeting, Peru - 19 July
- 3rd Youth Meeting, Peru - 19 July
- 2nd Meeting of the University Network, Peru - 19 July
- Meeting of School Co-operatives, Peru - 19 July

Poverty Campaign

**COOPERATING
OUT
OF
POVERTY**

ICA invited to help shape future direction of the Global Call to Action against Poverty

ICA has been invited to a special meeting of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP).

The meeting to be held in Beirut, Lebanon, 13-15 March 2006 will discuss the future direction for GCAP.

Kumi Naidoo, Chair of GCAP notes that "2005 has seen some significant breakthroughs in the fight against poverty and a huge

demonstration of public support worldwide with over 30 million people taking action.

ICA's work has been a vital part of that campaign and we want to make sure that the ideas and suggestions of ICA help shape the future of the GCAP.

The meeting will update the Johannesburg declaration where the Global Call to Action was developed and it will determine the policy demands and mobilisation moments for 2006 and be-

yond".

ICA's Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen has welcomed the invitation as acknowledgement of the contribution ICA's *Cooperating Out of Poverty* campaign has made to the broader GCAP initiatives.



Jan-Eirik Imbsen

Youth



Juan Carlos Mejia Cuartas Youth Network representative on the ICA Board

Visit the ICA's Youth Network's website icayouth.coop

The ICA's Youth Network has become increasingly active over the last few months.

One of the most obvious manifestations of this is the creation of its new website.

The new site icayouth.coop was created for the Youth Network

by Graham Mitchell from *Co-operatives UK*.

As the youth representatives say on their site "we all owe a huge thanks to Graham for all the hours of his private time he has given to help us".

The site has been developed following the inputs and ideas of youth repre-

sentatives at ICA youth events in Oslo, Geneva and Cartagena.

The site contains the latest information on Youth Network activities along with forums and discussions on a range of topics of interest to the network.

Sectors



Maurizio Davolio
TICA coordinator and
BITS board member

News from TICA on co-operative and social tourism

TICA is the ICA's global sector organisation for tourism co-operatives. It has a close working relationship with Bureau International du Tourisme Social, (BITS), strengthened by the fact that TICA Coordinator, Maurizio Davolio is also on the Board of BITS.

BITS recently jointly organised along with the European Commission a

conference *Tourism for All* in Brussels on 17 January 2006. Around one hundred participants from 19 countries took part including State representatives, social tourism associations, tourist operators, co-operatives, researchers and academics, journalists and union representatives.

[BITS's](#) World Congress on social tourism : towards a tourism of development and solidarity, will be held in

Aubagne (France) on 10-12 May.

Also of interest in the field of social tourism is *The second International Forum on Fair Tourism and Fair Trade* will take place in Chiapas (Mexico), from March 23rd to 27th.

Wide range of research conferences planned for 2006

Listed below are a series of regional or international research conferences which focus wholly or in part on co-operatives. The ICA is hoping to develop a more comprehensive listing of such conferences. We would welcome details about any conferences which are not included below. Please send the details to editor, cronan@ica.coop and we will include in future editions of the *Digest* and also list on our website.

- **30 May - 2 June: 2006 Annual Conference of The Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation, York University, Toronto, Ontario.** The theme of the conference is *Co-operating in a Global Economy: challenges to be faced, lessons to be learned.* [More...](#)
- **19-21 June 2006: 26th CIRIEC International Congress, Istanbul, Turkey.** The theme of the congress will be: *The public, social and cooperative economy in the context of globalisation: in the service of a more responsible, more solidarity-based economy.* Particular attention will be paid to the supranational dimension, for instance in the context of the World Trade Organisation and the General Agreement on the Trade of Services. See www.ulg.ac.be/ciriec/intl_en/index.htm for further details.
- **19-23 June 2006: International Conference on Co-operatives in the Pursuit of Peace, British Columbia, Canada**
The British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies and the ICA will co-host this conference. Presentations will examine the role of co-ops, past and present, in promoting social cohesion at the international, national, and local level. [More](#)
- **13-15 July 2006: 13th Conference of the International Association for the Economics of Participation (IAFEP) Mondragon University, Spain.** IAFEP is dedicated to exploring the economics of democratic and participatory economic organisations, such as labour-managed firms, co-operatives and firms with broad-based employee share-ownership, profit-sharing and worker participation schemes. The theme for this year's conference is *Expanding Democratic Firms, Broadening Economic Democracy.* [More...](#)
- **2-5 August 2006: Association of Cooperative Educators 2006 ACE Institute, San Juan, Puerto Rico.** Conference of co-operative educators and academics from USA, Canada and Puerto Rico. See www.wisc.edu/uwcc/ace/nl/fall05.pdf for details.
- **15-16 August 2006: ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Research Conference, Colombo, Sri Lanka.** The two themes for conference are:
 - *Natural disaster preparedness and rehabilitation in community through co-operative initiatives;*
 - *The role of co-operative leadership in preservation of co-operative identity*
 Contact: Madhav Madane mvmadane@pn3.vsnl.net.in or Akira Kurimoto, akira.kurimoto@jccu.coop [More....](#)
- **6-8 September 2006: International Conference, Reclaiming the Economy: the Role of Co-operative Enterprise, Ownership and Control, Cardiff, Wales.** The conference will explore the profile of co-operative forms of organisation with a view to establishing a multidisciplinary research agenda that serves the mutual interests of both academics and practitioners. Contact [Molly Scott Cato](#). Or see www.uwic.ac.uk/ubs/conferences/#Sugg
- **14-15 September 2006: ICA Latin American Research Conference - El Cooperativismo Latinoamericano: ¿visión integrada de lo económico y lo social? Rosario, Argentina.** Contact: Mirta Vuotto encaci@econ.uba.ar Sigismundo Bialoskorski Neto sigbial@usp.br
- **19-22 October 2006: ICA Co-operative Research Conference, Paris, France**
This is the regular biennial ICA European Co-operative research conference. Please contact: Caroline Naett cnaett@entreprises.coop or Yohanan Stryjan Yohanan.Stryjan@sh.se

Research Conferences

If your conference is not listed here, please tell us about it!

Special Report - Tsunami one year on

Impressions from a visit to Banda Aceh - Jan-Eirik Imbsen

One year after the tsunami hit Banda Aceh leaving destruction and death in its wake, visitors to the area are constantly reminded of the enormity of the disaster. More than 1,150 schools,



Inspecting the catch of the Bahari Karya fisheries co-operative. The fish are dried, processed and sold by the women from the fishing co-op.

5,800 km of road, and 490 bridges were destroyed, and more than one-third of the 4,312 villages had no functioning government after the Tsunami hit Aceh.

Less visible, but equally devastating is the trauma. Up to 50 per cent of the population experience significant psychological distress and 5 to 10 per cent developed diagnosable stress-related psychiatric disorder.

Having recently returned from a visit to Indonesia I was asked to sum up my impression of what I had seen and learned during my visit.

My first impression was one of awe at the force of nature that could cause such utter devastation. The television images that went to all parts of the world made a powerful impression, but the reality

was much stronger. Awe was coupled with a sense of profound sadness at the loss of lives made manifest by the mass graves.

However, I was also filled with a tremendous admiration for the people whom I met and their resilience, and I was deeply moved by their commitment to rebuilding their lives.

The wish to contribute to the reconstruction was, however, tempered by an acute sense of limitation in terms of meeting the obvious demand for assistance.

The ICA had last year undertaken an in-depth survey in Banda Aceh that paved the way for programme proposals in which six co-operatives (Meusaraya, Benging Jeumpa, Krueng Raba, Nelayan Lembah Lhok Seudu, Bahari Karya and Tuak Sakai) in three pilot areas of Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar and Pidie were chosen as model projects.

review and support from ICA members and development partners. *Co-operatives UK* responded positively and pledged support to two fisheries co-operatives. Of the 600,000 people who lost their livelihoods in Aceh, 50% were fishermen, so the need for assistance is huge.

The purpose of my visit was to visit these co-operatives together with our Indonesian partners (LSP 21 and DEKOPINWIL) and ascertain the continued validity of the needs as expressed in the survey. I was also invited to participate in a one day workshop in Medan on the impact of the tsunami and the earthquake in March 2005 on the co-operatives in these areas.

The seminar was organised by Dr Ibnoe Soedjono and his Institute of Co-operative Development Studies of Indonesia (LSP21). I was also to meet with government officials, including the State Minister for Co-operatives in Jakarta. Being accompanied by Robby Tulus, Dr Ibnoe Soedjono and M.M. Hanafiah, I was privileged to benefit from their experience and insight. My first stop in Aceh was to the new, rebuilt office of DE-



The proposed programme which was presented for

Meeting with the chair and members of Nelayan Lembah Lhok

“...I was deeply moved by their commitment to rebuilding their lives. ..”

Jan-Eirik Imbsen

Impressions from a visit to Banda Aceh - Jan-Eirik Imbsen..cont'd

Tsunami one year on

KOPINWIL where the Chairman, Mr Hanafiah gave me an update of the co-operative situation in the region.

Part of the funds collected by the ICA from members and partners after the tsunami had been used to support the day-to-day management of DEKOPINWIL and to enable it to carry out the crucial work of motivating members and keeping the movement functioning.

The funds were also used for education and training of board members, supervisors and members of the 6 model co-operatives. Each of them also received some funds for activities like the registration of members, office rent for five months,

operatives enabled me to see for myself how essential these funds had been in ensuring the continuity of these co-operatives in the period immediately following the disaster, and to overcome the psychological impact of idleness waiting for assistance to embark on bigger programmes of reconstruction.

Before we went to visit the co-operatives, we paid a visit to the BRR, the Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh. There we met Mr Ari Sadewo, Deputy Chair in charge of the economic sector who gave us an overview of the reconstruction work in Aceh.

We were encouraged by the recognition of co-operatives

The first co-operative visited was the fishery co-operative



Dr Soedjono, Robby Tulus and others inspect the site of future training centre which the ICA hopes to help build.

Bahari Karya in Pidie. The members are men and women, the former doing the actual fishing while the women buy and process fish. The funds from the UK will be used inter alia to set up a cold storage on land donated by the chair of the co-operative.

The community spirit manifest in the willingness by individual members to support their co-operative by, for instance, donating land was impressive and far from confined to that co-operative only. The meeting with the members was followed by a tour of the village during which I was able to learn about the extent of the damage and the hard work to restore livelihoods.

In Lhok Seudu fishery co-operative in Aceh Besar, we met members of the co-op in a newly built house which also serves as a temporary office for the co-operative. In this village, the UK funds will be used to buy two palungs (two boats held together with a house on top where the fishermen stay for a week at a time at sea). They also need new storage for their catch, but they made it clear that what they needed from us was materials. The co-op would build it themselves. Instead of a new office for the co-op they wanted a truck to take

The second part of this report will appear in the next issue of the Digest

the fish to the market. They also showed us a plot of land donated by one of the members on which they hope in a few years time to set up a training centre for the co-op.



Jan-Eirik Imbsen with M.M. Hanafiah in front of the large tanker which was carried 4 kilometres inland to the centre of Aceh. A close friend of M.M. Hanafiah lived in a house which now lies beneath the tanker.

income subsidy for staff members for five months, and the provision of small loans to members. My visit to these co-

as agents of reconstruction and the efforts to integrate them into the economic sector. Just as our visit was a recognition of the role of the government as the main co-ordinator of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, it also served to establish the co-operative movement as a recognised and valued partner in this work.

Sectors

ICA sectors meet “online”



Bruno Roelants
facilitator of the ICA
inter-sectoral group
online meeting

Representatives from five of the ICA's nine sectoral organisations held their first online meeting on 14 February 2006.

Those participating included representatives from the following sectors: tourism, health, agricultural,

banking and worker sectors. Apologies were received from representatives in the insurance, consumer and fisheries sectors. Mike Doyle President of ICA Housing was intending to participate but the recent heavy snow in eastern north America wiped out his internet connection.

The objective of these

online (Yahoo Messenger) meetings is to achieve a far greater degree of inter-sectoral cooperation among the respective sectors of the ICA.

For more information contact ICA Sectoral Information Manager, Jin - K o o k K i m , kim@ica.coop

ICA adopts voice over internet protocol: new communication tool to reach out to members

Skype

Improving communication with members and among ICA offices has led ICA to adopt Skype, a free voice over internet protocol, (VoIP).

The system allows voice and text communication from anywhere around the world through an internet connection.

ICA introduced Skype to build on the existing internet services that ICA of-

fices are using, thus requiring no additional investment and calls made are therefore cost-free.

Although email has become an effective means of communication, a call and discussion can sometimes be the quickest way to resolve a problem, access information and share information. ICA is using VoIP not only to communicate between offices, among travelling staff, but also with

members. Members in Colombia, Sweden and Pakistan are already using Skype.

If you are not yet using Skype, consider joining the 15 million users around the world – see www.skype.com.

For those already using Skype, send us your Skype contacts.

ICA Head Office - Skype contacts:

Iain Macdonald
Maria Elena Chavez Hertig
Jan-Eirik Imbsen
Guy Malacrida
Garry Cronan

ica_macdonald
ica_chavez
ica_imbsen
ica_malacrida
ica_cronan

ICA President - Skype contact:

Ivano Barberini ivanobarb

ICA Americas - Skype contact:

Manuel Mariño manuel_marino

Open Source

Open source movement - natural fit with co-ops?

The second [Open Source World Conference](#) took place in Malaga, Spain on 15-17 February 2006.

One of the main sponsors of the conference is [CEPES-Andalucia](#).

CEPES ANDALUCIA is a business and inter-

sectoral organisation that was created in 1993. It includes social economy organisations (federations, associations and foundations) and represent over 5,800 co-operatives.

CEPES-Andalucia is one of very few Social Economy Confederations running a public programme on Re-

search and Technological Development and Innovation.

The objectives of the open source movement would seem to have much in common with the co-operative movement's democratic and self-help ideals. For more information contact cronan@ica.coop

Gabriella Sozánski to leave the ICA

People

After more than thirty years in the co-operative movement, Gabriella Sozánski has decided to take a well earned rest.

Gabriella joined the ICA in 1994 to work with ICA Europe and in 1998 she was appointed as the Regional Director for Europe. From 2002-2004 she also looked after Member Services and was latterly appointed as Director of Knowledge Management.

At the beginning of her career she was involved in the international agricultural co-operative movement, and was the contact person with the ICA and other interna-

tional organisations for the National Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives in Hungary. Before joining the ICA she worked for the European Office of the World Council of Credit Unions. She studied international trade, holds a degree in Business Administration and completed graduate studies in Political Science.

A committed co-operator, Gabriella has been a well regarded member of the ICA team for many years and during her career has accumulated an unrivalled wealth of knowledge of the global co-operative movement.

With fluency in several European languages, Gabriella is

seeking pastures new and will now be working on co-operative projects on a consultancy basis.

Gabi will be officially leaving in early April 2006.



Gabriella recently received an award from the Hungarian co-operative movement for her services to co-operatives in Hungary and internationally.

Would you like to join ICA's new speakers list?

During the course of any year the ICA organises many major international and regional conferences, seminars and forums. Likewise almost all ICA members organise national and/or sectoral events.

The success of these events

often depends on an interesting programme and high quality speakers - experts in their fields.

To help facilitate the preparation of such programmes and events the ICA is establishing a speakers' list.

There are many excellent

speakers with expert knowledge within the co-operative movement.

If you are interested in being on the ICA speakers list please let us know. Contact **Garry Cronan** cronan@ica.coop

Conference Facilitation

Garry Cronan appointed ICA Director of Communications and Intelligence Services

People

As part of the recent series of changes at ICA Head Office, Garry Cronan has been appointed Director of Communications and Intelligence Services.

Garry joined the ICA in November 2003 as Communications Manager.

His new and expanded tasks will include continu-

ing responsibility for all the ICA's global communications activities as well as the development of new projects and initiatives in the area of knowledge and information services.

In particular, over the coming year, Garry will be further developing ICA's online services with a focus on helping to spread more news and information on

successful co-operative enterprises - the Global 300 project is one of the lead programmes in this area.

He will also be working on establishing an expanded network of co-operative communicators throughout the world. Contact: cronan@ica.coop

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*Remember your
ICA membership
subscription needs
to be paid by 31
March 2006.*

*Contact
chavez@ica.coop*

Copies of the ICA
Digest are archived
on the ICA's web-
site www.ica.coop

2006 Calendar of ICA events and related co-operative activities

24 Feb	Meeting of Executive Committee of International Co-operative Banking Association, (ICBA), Bangalore, India. Contact: biurowaw@kzbs.pol.pl
March	ICA Gender Equality Committee Executive, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: chavez@ica.coop
6-7 March	ICA Board meeting, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Iain Macdonald, macdonald@ica.coop
16-17 March	Meeting of ICA Americas Consultative Council, Honduras. Contact: Manuel Mariño direccion@aciamericas.coop
13-15 March	African Research Facility Conference, Ethiopia. Contact: imbsen@ica.coop
13 March	Co-ops Europe meeting, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Rainer Schlüter, r.schluter@coopseurope.coop
20-24 March	Seminar, International Co-operative Fishing Organisation (LCFO), Colombo, Sri Lanka. Contact: icfo@zengyoren.jf-net.ne.jp
31 March	International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) Board meeting, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Contact: direccion@fundacionespriu.coop
6-7 April	COPA - COGECA Seminar, <i>Public perception of the Common Agricultural Policy – analysis and ways of communicating policy</i> , Brussels, Belgium. Contact: grazyna.las@copa-cogeca.be
18-19 April	ICA CEO Forum, Imola, Italy. Contact: Garry Cronan, cronan@ica.coop
21 April	ICA Audit and Control Committee meeting, Geneva, Switzerland. Contact: Guy Malacrida, malacrida@ica.coop
3-4 May	ICA Board meeting, Washington, USA. Contact: Iain Macdonald, macdonald@ica.coop
11-12 May	Seminar on Encouraging International Co-operative Business in the ICA Americas region, San José, Costa Rica. Contact: Manuel Mariño direccion@aciamericas.coop
15-26 May	Co-operative policy and law seminar, ILO International Training Centre, Turin, Italy. See http://learning.itcilo.org/entdev/coop/
18-19 May	COPA - COGECA Seminar, <i>Reinforcing Agricultural Co-operatives in the New Member States</i> , Brussels, Belgium. Contact: grazyna.las@copa-cogeca.be
23-24 May	Seminar on <i>Influence of the co-operative sector in the development of the Public Policies in Latin America</i> , Panama. Contact: incidencia@aciamericas.coop
24-27 May	4th Annual International Youth Conference, Manchester, UK. Contact, UK Co-op College, Mervyn Wilson, mervyn@co-op.ac.uk
21 June	International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) Board meeting, Stockholm, Sweden. Contact: direccion@fundacionespriu.coop
23-28 June	Peace and Co-operation Workshop, Vancouver, Canada. Contact Ian MacPherson, cluny@uvvm.uvic.ca
1 July	International Day of Co-operatives (celebrated on the first Saturday of July every year)
17-21 July	ICA Americas Regional Assembly, Lima, Peru. Contact: Manuel Mariño, direccion@aciamericas.coop
17 July	ICA Americas, IV Meeting of Parliamentarians, Lima, Peru. Contact: banca@aciamericas.coop
19 July	ICA Americas Women meeting, Lima, Peru. Contact: genero@aciamericas.coop
19 July	ICA Americas, Youth meeting. Contact: genero@aciamericas.coop
19 July	ICA Americas, Universities Network meeting. Contact: genero@aciamericas.coop
27-30 July	2006 World Credit Union Conference, Dublin, Ireland. See www.woccu.coop/
14 Aug	Meeting of Regional Co-operative Banking Association for Asia-Pacific, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

[Click here further 2006 ICA and related events.....\)](#)