

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF ICA-AP 2019

The ICA-AP team wishes you Happy Holidays and a Prosperous 2020! Our holiday card captures the diversity we have in the office – years with ICA-AP, gender, age, regions. This diversity is also reflected in the Asia-Pacific region – members, culture, history, approach. What pulls us together is the common cause – advancement of people-centered model of business – cooperatives!

The highlight of the year was ICA President Ariel Guarco's visit to eight countries in the region – China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam! At the end of his visit, President Guarco said, "In Asia, the cooperative movement has very diverse organizations. We have large enterprises that compete in the market with very powerful capitalist companies; others with small productive units meet the needs at local level. There is a clear commitment to sustainable development and comprehension that integration among cooperatives, within each country, in each region and worldwide, is what makes us a key tool to meet the objectives set by the United Nations to build a more just, solidary and peaceful world." A first-person account of Mr. Guarco's visit can be found at: <http://ica-ap.coop/icanews/travels-ica-president-20-balu-iyer-regional-director-ica-ap>

The Second Asia-Pacific Registrar's Forum was held in partnership with the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance and the Institute for Organic Agricultural Economics and supported by the ICA-EU Partnership on Cooperatives in Development (#Coops4Dev). The Forum on Creating Enabling Legal Framework and Policies to Promote Sustainable Development of Cooperatives in the 21st Century, was organized to focus on the challenges relating to food security, nature of work and employment, financial inclusion, economic growth, gender equality & equity, climate change, and freedom of association.

The ICA-Asia and Pacific region has 107 members from 32 countries. During the year, we were joined by the Uralungal Labour Contract Coop Society Ltd., India; the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives, Kiribati; the International Solidarity of Korea Cooperatives, Rep. of Korea; the Department of Coop Business, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Fiji; the Tirumalla Tirupati Multipurpose Cooperative Credit Society Limited, India; the Metro South Cooperative Bank, Philippines; and the 1 Cooperative Insurance System of the Philippines Life and General Insurance, Philippines.

The ICA-AP office and members increased their engagement with Africa in 2019. The first Cooperative Development Conference for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries was held in Morocco to foster partnerships and enhance collective action on SDGs. The ICA-AP Committee on Educational Institutions (ICEI) organized a workshop during the ICA Kigali conference to share knowledge and technical know-how among ICA members in Africa and other stakeholders about cooperatives in educational institutions (universities, colleges, and high schools). Members from Africa participated in the ICAO General Assembly in Korea, the International Agricultural Produce and Agricultural Input Trade Fair and Seminar in China and the SDG-13 Climate Action capacity building program in Thailand.

The ICA-AP Research Committee organized the 14th Research Conference in collaboration with the University of Newcastle in Australia. During the conference, the 2019 Dr. Mauritz Bonow Award for Young Researchers was awarded to Heira Hardiyanti for her paper on Worker Cooperatives in Indonesia and to Jihyun Jeong for her paper on Fair Trade in Korea. The Trade and Business Committee organized a seminar in Johor Bahru on Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth in conjunction with the Malaysia Carnival of Cooperatives' Products and Minister Services exhibition. The ICEI organized a seminar on curriculum development in Kathmandu in conjunction with its annual meeting. The Committee on Women with support from the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union organized an international workshop on "Enhancing Gender Equality in Cooperative Business" with the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) in New Delhi and a Training of Trainers on Management Capacity Building of Women and Gender Integration in Cooperative Development with the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka in Colombo. The Youth Committee organized the second edition of Go Green campaign and the second Global Youth Cooperative Webinar on 'Transforming Education' to highlight initiatives in making education inclusive and accessible for youth. The Consumer Committee in addition to its regular training programs organized a workshop on 'Social Contribution of Consumer Cooperatives in Asia-Pacific with iCOOP Korea.

During the year with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan training courses were organized on "Fostering Core Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives", "Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives", and "Fostering Coordinators to Build Food Value Chains". In addition, a follow-up guidance and survey of ex-participants to assess the impact of training was organized in Thailand and Mongolia. The Malaysia Business Office (MBO), JCCU and ANGKASA jointly organized a seminar on "SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth in Kuala Lumpur. The ACFSMC organized the following programs during the year - training program on development and practices of Agricultural Cooperatives' Services and seminar on business promotion among cooperatives. The 17th edition of the NACF Joint workshop on cooperative systems was held in Seoul to help the development of agricultural cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region.

The ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development People Centered Businesses in Action Project in its fourth year was active on a number of fronts. All the events and activities were to address the Project's three strategic priorities – Sustainable Development Goals, Youth Inclusion and Work and Ownership. The team organized the first capacity building program on SDG13 - Climate Action on the theme 'Save the Environment to Sustain Future Generations' with the Cooperative League of Thailand in Bangkok; the Second Forum on Development of Cooperatives in the Pacific Islands at the University of Newcastle in Australia which was attended by members and representatives from Fiji, Kiribati, Australia and New Zealand; national workshop for women's cooperatives with the Gujarat Self Employed Women's Association in Ahmedabad; and the Young Development Professionals meeting in New Delhi. The Global Cooperative Entrepreneur project to identify youth entrepreneurs in India, Indonesia and Malaysia culminated with the training for Ambassadors in Kozhikode, India. Coopathon 2.0, was organized with NCUI and Coop Mic with Mr. Rajiv Khandelwal,

Executive Director of Aajeevika Bureau, India. On the research front, two reports were released, one on the 'Autonomy and Independence of Cooperatives in India' and the other 'Cooperatives in Industrial and Service Sectors in the Asia and Pacific Region.' As part of the global thematic research on youth, the country level reports for India, Indonesia, Iran, Korea and Philippines were completed as were the legal framework analysis of 17 countries. The mapping reports for Iran and Philippines are available on the #coops4dev website. The [Aroundtheworld.coop](#) video series covered the Bhabishya Nirman Sana Kishan cooperative in Nepal, the School Cooperative MRSM Kepala Batas Berhad in Malaysia and the Boomalli Artists Cooperative in Australia.

We mourn the passing of Dr. Jaya Arunachalam, Founder of the Working Women's Forum (WWF) and the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW); Mr. Stephen Sallun, Registrar Office of Cooperative Societies, Papua New Guinea; and Mr. R.B. Rajaguru, Regional Director of ICA-AP from 1977 to 1986.

We are thankful to our MBO sponsoring organizations – ACFSMC, China; Angkasa, Malaysia; JCCU, Japan; and NACF, Korea. We continue to receive generous support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Government of Japan to foster leadership and develop cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region. The ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development People Centered Businesses in Action is helping strengthen capacity of federation, increase advocacy, and improve visibility of co-operatives as development actors. During the year, the regional office entered into an agreement with Aflatoun; took part in the India International Cooperatives Trade Fair (IICTF) organized by the National Cooperative Development Corporation; and expanded relations with the Asian Farmers Association; the Institute of Rural Management, Anand; the Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network.

The ICA-AP Regional Office was formed on November 14, 1960 and begins its 60th year of uniting, promoting and developing cooperatives in Asia-Pacific! We look forward to your continued support in 2020 and the decade ahead! Attached to this report is the list of activities planned in 2020. Please feel free to reach out to us in case you are interested in participating in any of the activities. We will also be happy to organize an activity with your organization based on mutual interest. The significant events in 2020 are the Global Youth Forum in February in Malaysia; the ICA Congress and ICA-AP Regional Assembly in December in Korea. We look forward to seeing you there!