



ICA-AP NEWSLETTER

News from members, ICA-AP activities,
ICA-EU Partnership update & more!

August Newsletter

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16th ICA-AP Regional Assembly – Registrations Open!



ICA-AP will hold its 16th Regional Assembly in Manila, Philippines from 6 to 10 November 2023. The Regional Assembly is being hosted by the Philippines Cooperative Affiliates (PCA) on behalf of the Philippines Cooperative Movement, marking their return as hosts since the last assembly held in 2003 in Cebu.

The Regional Assembly encompasses the Asia-Pacific Cooperative Forum, Regional Board Meeting, various events organized by the regional sectoral and thematic committees, and the statutory meeting of the Regional Assembly. The theme for the 16th Regional Assembly, 11th Cooperative Forum and related events is, “Cooperatives: Our Common Agenda.” ICA-AP will deliberate upon key opportunities and challenges to build a common agenda for cooperatives and chalk out concrete and achievable action points.

The registrations for the Regional Assembly are open until 30 September 2023 on the official website only which also provides all program and logistics information at <http://regionalassembly.coop>.

Deadline Extended for the ICA Asia-Pacific Cooperative Excellence Awards Nominations



The ICA-AP Regional Office is inviting nominations for the ICA Asia-Pacific Cooperative Excellence Awards that aim to honour outstanding individuals, cooperative organizations, and

government ministries/ departments that have made remarkable contributions to the growth of cooperatives and have significantly benefited the cooperative movement. By acknowledging the extraordinary efforts and achievements of these entities, the awards aim to foster a culture of excellence and innovation within the cooperative sector.

Nominations are open until 10 September 2023, and the winners will be announced at the 16th ICA-AP Regional Assembly on 8 November 2023, in Manila, Philippines.

All the information and nomination forms are available at <https://bit.ly/apcoopawards>.

11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference



ICA-AP, in collaboration with the Jordan Co-operative Corporation and the Ministry of Agriculture, will organize the 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference (APCMC). It will be hosted by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan from 28 to 30 April 2024 in Amman, Jordan.

The APCMC was instituted by the ICA-AP in 1990. It is a quadrennial conference to provide a platform for cooperative leaders and ministers in charge of cooperatives from countries in the Asia Pacific to discuss current and emerging issues, set a common agenda for the development of cooperatives and advocate an enabling legal and policy environment for cooperatives to operate.

The theme for the 11th APCMC is "Government-Cooperative Partnership for Cooperative Resilience, Sustainable Development & Inclusive Growth in Asia Pacific & MENA Region".

The Conference will examine the contribution of cooperatives in the Asia Pacific region to build resilience, promote sustainable development, and ensure inclusive growth. It will analyze the existing partnerships between governments and cooperatives, highlight the benefits of their collaborative initiatives, identify challenges in building partnerships and propose strategies to overcome them. It will also aim to provide recommendations for policymakers and cooperative stakeholders to strengthen and expand such partnerships for sustainable and inclusive development.

Stay tuned for more!

Global Innovation Cooperative Summit – Montreal 2023



Global Innovation Cooperative Summit (GICS) 2023 will be held in Montreal from 27 to 29 September. With the theme, Act Now To Lead A Circular And Digital Future The Cooperators Way, the Montreal event will focus on taking the lessons from the first Summit in Paris and turning them into action. ICA-AP is pleased to be an institutional partner of GICS 2023.

The Summit founders call upon cooperatives to be circular, in a digital life to carry out together the necessary transformations for the benefit of their members and their communities.

The event will feature interactive dialogues and discussions, and participants will attend workshops that are designed for active participation and engagement. There will be a total of 12 workshops related to the three themes of cooperative leadership, circular economy, and digitalization.

The most detailed program can be found [on this page](#). Registration is open [on the GICS website only](#), until the day of the event.

ICA-AP Updates

ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting



The second meeting of the ICA-AP Regional Board in 2023 was held on 21 August at the Resorts World Awana Genting Highlands in Pahang, Malaysia in hybrid mode. It was hosted by the Malaysian National Cooperative Movement (ANGKASA). Board members and observers from India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka and ICA-AP Regional Office staff were present in person, while members from Australia, China, Iran, and Vietnam joined online.

Datuk Seri Dr. Abdul Fattah Abdullah, President of ANGKASA and Vice-President of ICA-AP welcomed all the participants. He proudly shared with the Board the success of the recently held Asia Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit (APCYS) 4.0 that brought together 185 youth from across the region in Sabah, Malaysia. He invited the Board Members to attend the Cooperative to Cooperative (C-2-C) Trade & Business Conference and the cooperative visit to Koperasi Ladang Berhad in Kuala Lumpur. He encouraged them to experience the rich recreational activities at Genting Highlands and participate in the tour to Genting Skyworld.

Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav, President of ICA-AP thanked Datuk Fattah and ANGKASA for hosting the Board meeting. He shared that the Indian Cooperative Congress was held on the International Day of Cooperatives on 1st July. The Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi addressed more than 3,500 cooperators from across the country. Dr. Yadav noted that these events are important in creating the 'Political Will' to support the cooperative business model.



Dr. Yadav mentioned that the G20 Presidency of India will conclude in September and various working groups are concluding their discussions and drafting the policy recommendations. Indian Cooperatives participated actively in Business-20, Civil Society-20 and Women-20 groups and Cooperatives have been mentioned in some of the policy recommendations. He congratulated the ICA-AP Women's Committee on their upcoming 25th-anniversary celebrations.

The Regional Board welcomed and ratified the nomination of the new Board member Atty. Maria Corazon S. Montallana from NATCCO, the Philippines.

Ms. Chitose Arai, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Women reported on the key activities – Pilot training of trainers on Climate Change held in Vietnam in collaboration with NATCCO, upcoming 25th-anniversary celebratory event, and the statutory meeting and Women's Forum being planned in November 2023. She invited the Board members to attend the 25th Anniversary celebration in Japan. Mr. Alireza Banaeifar, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), presented updates on the Go Green Campaign (GGC) 5.0, APCYS 4.0, and upcoming activities like the International Youth Day 2023 Webinar, ICYC elections and the statutory meeting to be held in November 2023.

Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP presented the key activities undertaken by the Regional Office since the last Board meeting, and updates on projects (ICA-EU FPA2, SuPER WE Coffee project in Laos PDR, and EU-CSO proposal). He also presented the ICA-AP financial report from January to June 2023 and shared updates on membership and subscription status. Dr. Yadav and Regional Board members acknowledged the activities carried out by the office.

Mr. Iyer shared key updates on the ongoing planning of the ICA-AP Regional Assembly, the Cooperative Forum and other related events. He informed the Board of the collaboration with Jordan Cooperative Corporation to organise the 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers. Conference in Jordan, in April 2024 and with the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka to organise the 17th Regional Assembly in Sri Lanka in 2025.

The Board approved the date and venue of the next Regional Board Meeting, to be held in the Philippines on 6 November 2023. Dr. Yadav thanked the members for their active participation in the meeting.

Cooperative-2-Cooperative Trade & Business Conference for Sustainable Development and Climate Action



The ICA-AP Trade & Business Committee, in collaboration with the ASEAN Cooperative Organization (ACO) and the Malaysian National Cooperative Movement (ANGKASA), organized the Cooperative to Cooperative (C-2-C) Trade & Business Conference from 22 to 23 August 2023, at the Resorts World Awana Genting Highlands in Pahang, Malaysia. The conference aimed to address global challenges related to Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13) on Climate Action and SDG 17 on Partnerships for Sustainable Development.

The program had three key objectives. Firstly, it aimed to highlight the significant role of cooperatives in achieving SDG 13 and SDG 17 while promoting sustainable development. It showed how cooperatives contribute to fighting climate change and fostering sustainable partnerships for a better world.



Secondly, the program intended to showcase successful examples of cooperative partnerships in areas like clean energy, green tech, farming, forestry, transportation, and tourism. These partnerships demonstrated how cooperatives can effectively address climate change and promote sustainable development in practical ways.

The conference brought together 66 participants representing 30 cooperatives from 12 countries. Discussions centred on the interconnected challenges of sustainable development and climate change, with an emphasis on the need for strategic planning and ethical business models that prioritize environmental preservation.



The event featured two forums on renewable energy, green energy, and sustainable agriculture, as well as the role of cooperatives in sustainable forestry and community development. Additionally, a buzz session explored the potential of cooperatives in promoting sustainable tourism for community development.

Key figures present at the event included Datuk Seri Dr. Abdul Fattah Abdullah, Vice-President of ICA-AP and President of ANGKASA, and Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav, President of ICA-AP.

An official dinner hosted for international and local participants, providing a platform for networking and collaboration.

Cooperative Tour and City Tour

In parallel with the conference, international participants had the opportunity to participate in cooperative and city tours. The cooperative tour included a visit to Koperasi Ladang Berhad, Kuala Lumpur, in the morning, followed by an evening cable car ride to Genting SkyWorlds.

ICA-AP Trade & Business Committee Met in Malaysia

In a hybrid format, the second ICA-AP Trade & Business Committee meeting for 2023 convened on 23 August 2023, at Resorts World Awana in Genting Highlands, Pahang, Malaysia. Representatives from six countries, including Malaysia, the Philippines, Korea, Sri Lanka, and Palestine, participated in person, while delegates from China joined virtually.

During the meeting, two new members from Sri Lanka joined the committee, increasing its membership to a total of 22, along with 3 observers, representing 12 cooperatives from 8 countries. Discussions revolved around side events during the Regional Assembly in Manila, Philippines, including a trade fair and a seminar on Enhancing Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7 November 2023, in Manila, Philippines, coinciding with the 16th Regional Assembly. The meeting concluded with closing remarks by Datuk Seri Dr. Abdul Fattah Abdullah, expressing appreciation for active participation and encouraging ongoing communication and collaboration among members.

ICA-MAFF (Japan) Women Training Course Begins



The 1st ICA-MAFF (Japan) Training Course on Capacity Building of Rural Women on Their Roles for Vitalization of Rural Economy in the Financial Year 2023 was kickstarted on 22 August in Bangkok, Thailand. The training program is offered by ICA to its member organisations in Asian countries and is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan.

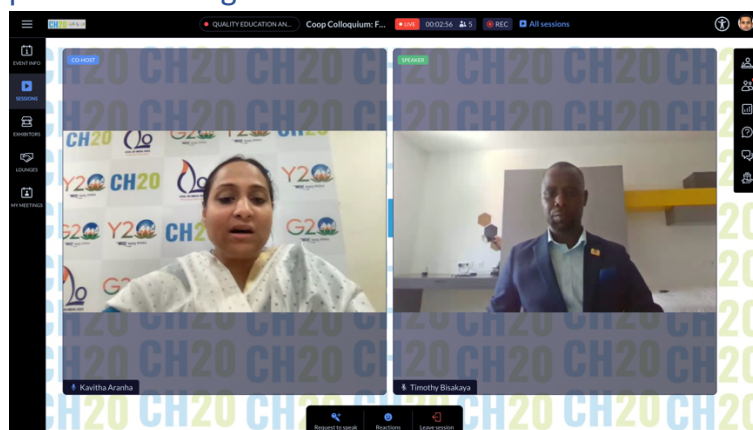
This training is divided into two parts. Part 1 is being conducted in collaboration with the ICA member - the Cooperative League of Thailand in Bangkok from 22 to 31 August 2023. Part 2 will be conducted in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA-Japan) in Tokyo from 1 to 14 September 2023.

The training course is designed to learn how women's activities have been promoted and strengthened in rural communities and in their cooperatives, and how it impacts the local economy. The course comprises of modules covering brief lectures and study visits. It is expected that through this course, the participants will improve their knowledge on the role of rural women and women's cooperatives in rural communities; and enhance their understanding of the different kinds of activities or interventions that can be taken to boost rural women's incomes in their respective countries.

7 women have been selected for this training course from India, Kiribati, Malaysia, Nepal, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

Stay tuned for more updates from the training!

7th COOP Colloquium: Fostering a Culture of Collaborative Youth Research



ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research (CCR) organized the 7th COOP Colloquium on 18 August. The Colloquium was held in collaboration with the Changemakers20 Summit along the theme 'Fostering a Culture of Collaborative Youth Research'. It was held in partnership with India's Connecting Dreams Foundation and the US-based Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET). 28 participants from 5 countries joined the session.

Mr. Timothy Bisakaya, Coordinator, Young Scholars Initiative (YSI) Cooperatives Working Group, INET discussed "How do we grow a culture of cooperative research among the youth?" He shared how cooperatives have been able to provide opportunities for youth in the academic context. The cooperative form presents a way forward for youth to shape their own futures. Research capabilities have been created and enhanced for young coop scholars in the global academic arena. YSI's Cooperatives Working Group aims to bring together researchers interested in cooperatives from a wide range of disciplinary and regional backgrounds. They get scholars interested in cooperatives and economic cooperation talking to one another, sharing their research, and developing new questions and ideas to better understand economic cooperation.

Changemaker20 was a five-day virtual Summit designed to bring together Young Changemakers from G20 countries and their partners, who are working to address pressing challenges in their respective regions. Through a series of engaging sessions aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), attendees shared experiences, discussed various strategies, and explored good practices to achieve the SDG 2030 Agenda.

Ms. Kavitha Aranha, Senior Program Manager, Connecting Dreams Foundation moderated the session. The colloquium was successful in bringing together cooperative advocates, practitioners, and young scholars from the G20 countries and beyond to inform them - particularly young opinion leaders and changemakers - about the nature and benefits of a cooperative enterprise.

ICYC Webinar on International Youth Day Webinar: Empowering Youth Through Green Skills

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the recommendation by the World Conference of Ministers of Youth (Lisbon, 8-12 August 1998) that 12 August be declared

International Youth Day (A/RES/54/120). Over the last two decades of International Youth Day celebrations, several innovative and timely themes have been explored, including mental health, intergenerational solidarity, safe spaces for youth and civic engagement.

In today's rapidly changing world, sustainability has emerged as a critical global need. Environmental challenges, such as climate change and resource depletion, demand urgent action and a new approach to address them. In this context, empowering youth with green skills becomes important. Green skills refer to the competencies that enable individuals to adopt environmentally sustainable practices in various sectors, ranging from renewable energy and sustainable agriculture to waste management and eco-friendly design. A successful transition towards a greener world will depend on the development of green skills in the population.

Commemorating IYD, the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC) organized a webinar on the theme, **“Empowering Youth Through Green Skills: Pioneering the Way for a Sustainable Future”** on 16 August 2023, which focused on green skills for youth, highlighting initiatives at the global and national levels and discussing relevant opportunities and challenges. The webinar aimed to

- ❑ Raise awareness of green skills and their relevance for achieving the SDGs, while highlighting the central role of young people in the green transition.
- ❑ Equip stakeholders with the knowledge and information necessary to understand the importance of green skills for young people.
- ❑ Showcase policies and practices that can nurture the development of green skills among young people; and
- ❑ Provide an inclusive platform for stakeholders to exchange views on such topics.

Mr. Alireza Banaeifar, Chairperson of ICYC, opened the webinar and welcomed the participants and speakers. Around 40 Participants from 10 countries attended the webinar which featured two distinguished speakers; Ms. Justine Lynn C. Limocon, LAMAC Multipurpose Cooperative in the Philippines and Mr. Rendy Aditya Wachid, Chief Executive Office, ParongPong RAW Lab, Indonesia.

Ms. Limocon spoke about Youth-Led Sustainable Initiatives and Innovation. Ms. Justine highlighted the active involvement of youth in creating innovative solutions for environmental challenges. Her insights were inspiring, showcasing the immense potential of young individuals to drive positive change within their communities and beyond.

Mr. Wachid spoke about Entrepreneurship and Green Startups Among Youth. His presentation highlighted the entrepreneurial spirit thriving among young people and the significant role they play in creating a greener and more sustainable world.

The webinar was also graced by a video message from Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP, setting an inspirational tone for the discussions. His words resonated deeply, emphasizing the pivotal importance of youth-led initiatives in shaping a brighter, eco-conscious future.

ICA-AP Training Program for Managers of Consumer Coops 2023, Japan



The ICA Committee on Consumer Cooperation for Asia and the Pacific (ICA-AP Consumer Committee) and Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) held the ICA-AP Training Program for Managers of Consumer Coops 2023 from 19 to 30 July in Japan. Five cooperative managers from Nepal, Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, and Malaysia participated in lectures and coop tours at the headquarters, stores, factories, and logistic centres of Japanese consumer coops.

The training program has been held every year since 1991 except for 2020 to 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the theme, "How Consumer Co-ops Survive in the New Era ~ Rediscover the Advantages of Consumer Co-ops," the five trainees tried to find the strong points of consumer co-ops and how they are able to run their businesses and activities sustainably in the post-pandemic period. They also tried to get hints for overcoming the challenges their cooperatives are currently facing.



During the first half of the program, the trainees visited the JCCU headquarters at Shibuya, Tokyo, and that of the Co-opdeli Group, the largest consumer co-op business federation in Japan. JCCU staff gave lectures on the overview of Japanese Consumer Co-ops, the CO · OP Brand products, environmental sustainability policy, and logistic systems. At the headquarters of Co-opdeli, lectures on its home delivery service and store business were conducted. The trainees also visited its co-op store and a food factory where the ready-to-eat food and side dishes of co-op stores are manufactured.



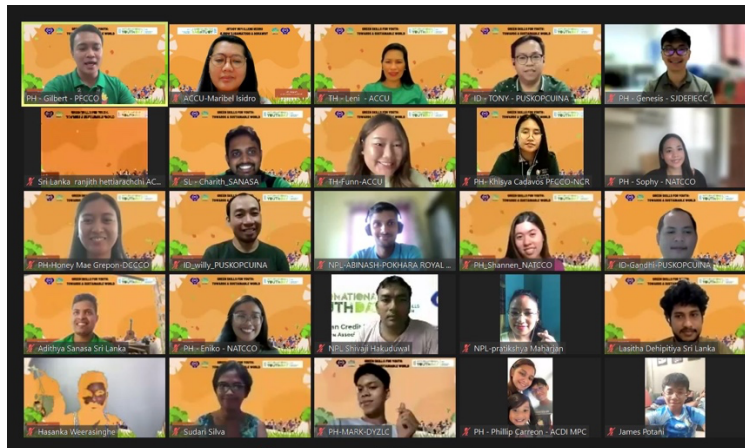
During the second half of the program, they visited Miyagi Co-op in Sendai, Miyagi, one of the primary consumer co-ops in the Tohoku Region. They learned about the overview of Miyagi Co-op, its IT and marketing strategy, the DX CO • OP Project, member activities, environmental activities, and the strategic policy of its store. They also visited the FamilyMart + COOP store and the newly renovated co-op store to explore the new store concept and strategy. A tour of the logistics centre was also conducted.



At the end of the program, the trainees gave a presentation on what they learned, what kinds of hints they got to overcome their challenges and the advantages of consumer co-ops they found during the program. The advantages of consumer co-ops they presented were consumer co-ops' community-driven approach, their activities with consumer members, the implementation of cutting-edge marketing strategies and technology, a home delivery system unique to Japanese consumer co-ops, and their environmentally friendly businesses and activities. Post the presentations, the certification of the completion of the training program was presented to them and they promised to bring back and share their experiences and learnings gained during this training program to their co-ops.

Member Updates

ACCU Celebrated International Youth Day



The Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU) celebrated International Youth Day with a successful webinar under the theme "Green Skills for Youth toward a Sustainable World". A total of 134 youth delegates from Australia, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam participated and actively engaged in discussions and activities.

ACCU invited Ms. Lasallete Gumban, the unit head of NATCCO Advocacy, as the speaker who delivered an insightful presentation. She shed light on the significance of green skills for young individuals, their connection to cooperatives, and why they play a vital role in shaping a sustainable future. She elaborated on various aspects like:

- Defining green skills and their relevance to co-ops
- Highlighting the importance of green skills for the youth
- Identifying the different types of green skills that young people can cultivate
- Discussing how cooperatives can actively promote green skills among their youth members

ACCU's official Facebook page mentions "We're inspired by the enthusiasm and dedication of all the attendees who are eager to make a positive impact on the environment. Let's continue to nurture these green skills and work together towards a greener, more sustainable world!"

SNCF's ACLC 2023 Program is Unveiled!

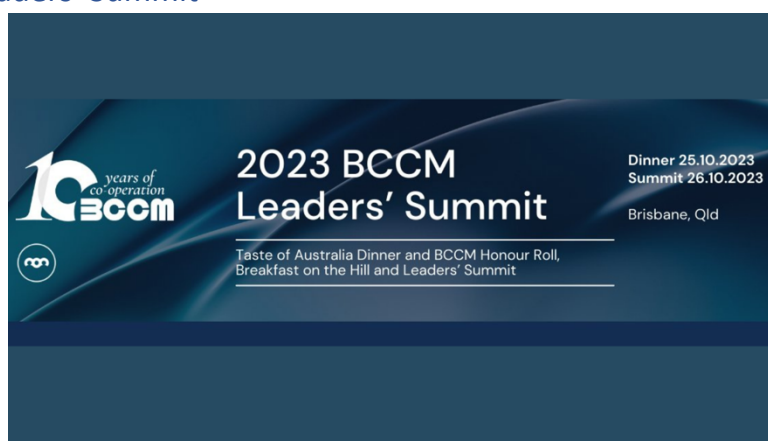


Picture credit: sncf.coop

The Singapore National Cooperative Federation will hold its Annual Co-operative Leaders Conference 2023 in Taipei, Taiwan from 15-18 October. The theme "Running Sustainable Businesses" tips hats to cooperatives' DNA to both do good and do well.

The conference will see local cooperative leaders coming together to learn from thought leaders and network with one another. ACLC 2023 will pay homage to the cooperative model's capability to empower communities and make profits. See the complete information [here](#).

2023 BCCM Leaders' Summit



The Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals (BCCM) will organise the 2023 BCCM Leaders' Summit and Taste of Australia Dinner on 25 and 26 October in Brisbane.

The event will witness an exciting line-up of national and international industry leaders in plenary sessions and interactive panel discussions looking at the challenges and opportunities cooperative and mutual enterprises face as they work towards building a better Australia against the backdrop of cost of living pressures and the impact of climate events. See the complete information [here](#).

Policy and Legal Watch

ILO Kickstarts the Social and Solidarity Economy in Asia Project in Vietnam



Picture credit: <https://twitter.com/simcim>

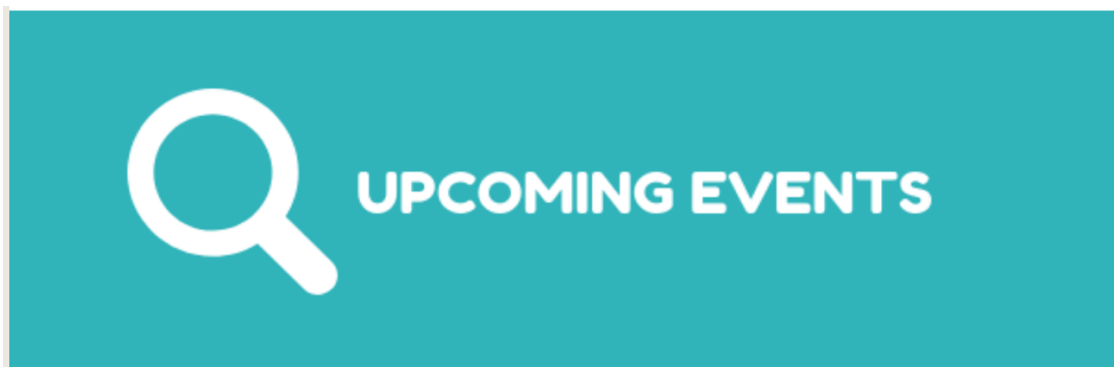
The national advisory committee met in a hybrid format in Hanoi, Vietnam on 30 August 2023 to create a shared vision, objectives, and plan for undertaking the study of the social and solidarity economy (SSE) in Vietnam.

ILO's Strengthening the Social and Solidarity Economy in Asia – Phase 2 Project is funded by the Ministry of Employment and Labour, Republic of Korea. It aims to contribute to increased awareness on the SSE's contribution to decent work and sustainable development and create policy dialogue in five countries in Asia and the Pacific - Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Ms. Ingrid Christensen, Director of ILO Vietnam noted that this project is relevant and timely in Vietnam, given the recent adoption of the [revised Law on Cooperatives](#), and the government's policy on promoting the collective economy.

The two consultant teams, the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA, an ICA member), and the Centre for Social Initiatives Promotion (CSIP) presented the national work plan for Vietnam. VCA shared the concern of not having an umbrella legislation or policy on the SSE while some forms of SSE entities such as cooperatives, mutuals, and social enterprises have legal and policy provisions. There is a lack of understanding and recognition of the SSE in Vietnam, including reliable, harmonized statistics on the SSE, as noted by VCA. The CSIP team plans to conduct surveys and interviews to assess social enterprises, women-led SMEs, household businesses and household businesses, both operating in formal and informal sectors against the seven principles of the SSE.

Read the full news article [here](#).



1. ICA-AP Committee on Women 25th-anniversary celebration in Tokyo, Japan – 19-20 September 2023. [Register here for online participation](#).
2. ICA Regional Workshop for Leaders of Consumer Cooperatives in Asia-Pacific in South Korea (only for members of ICA-AP Consumer Committee) – 16 to 20 October 2023
3. 17th ICA Asia-Pacific Research Conference in Manila, Philippines – 4 and 5 November 2023
4. 16th ICA-AP Regional Assembly in Manilla, Philippines – 6 to 10 November 2023
5. 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference, Amman, Jordan – 28 to 30 April 2024

