



# ICA-AP Committee on Women

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## Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development



Participants with Dr. G. Hossein Hosseininia and Dr. Chan Ho-CHOI

### From the Editor

During this quarter, we reached out to our Iranian members through ICC. Women in Iran cooperatives are very enterprising and eager to develop B to B relationship with counter parts in other countries. The usual concerns are credit and market. The cooperatives are generally of small size with 7 or more members and employing workers for manufacturing/weaving etc., thus generating employment. In order to achieve financial sustainability and creating a market, they need to expand member base for increased share capital and number of service users along with linkage to thrift and credit cooperatives/banks for easy access to credit.

– Savitri Singh

*“I would like to recall the UN Resolution adopted by the General Assembly in February 2010. It noted that “recognizing that cooperatives, in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of all people, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous people, are becoming a major factor of economic and social development and contribute to the eradication of poverty...”* said Dr. CHOI, Regional Director in his opening speech of the ICA-AP/ICC Training Program on ‘Management Capacity Building of Women for Co-operative Development’ held on 14-18 October 2013 in Tehran, Iran, hosted by the Iranian Central Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC).

During this 5 days training program for women trainers, conducted by Mrs. Savitri Singh, 2 participants from ANGKASA-Malaysia and 32 women cooperative leaders from various provinces of Iran participated intensely.

Dr. G. Hossein Hosseininia, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare, Mr. Dariush Pakbin, Secretary General of ICC and Mr. Zakaria Motevalli, Deputy Secretary General of ICC also addressed the opening and expressed their views. The Deputy Minister thanked ICA for conducting the program for cooperative members of Iran and talked about schemes and programs run by the ministry for cooperative development and inclusion of women. Mr. Pakbin welcomed ICA delegation and participants and talked about the importance of women



*A training session in progress*

empowerment through cooperatives in Iran and gave an account of ICC initiatives. Ms. Savitri Singh also welcomed the participants and delegates and gave briefing of the program in her introductory address.

Ms. Simel Esim, Chief of the ILO Cooperative Branch couldn't join the program due to some last minute urgent business in ILO, but provided her speech for the inauguration. Her speech was read by Mr. Babak wherein she mentioned that, "We welcome ICA efforts in promoting gender equality in cooperatives going back to a resolution and strategy on gender equality adopted in 1995. The ILO and the ICA worked together in developing training materials then, which have recently been updated by the ICA's Asia Pacific region through its Regional Women's Committee."

The session on the topic 'Situation of Women and UNDP Programme for Gender Mainstreaming in Iran' was conducted by Mr. Ali Farzin, Programme Specialist, Inclusive Growth and Development Cluster, UNDP, Iran.

As resource speaker, Mr. Ali Farzin talked to the women participants about UNDP programs and initiatives. He also invited one of the women entrepreneurs' promoted by UNDP Program to talk about setting up of Bee keeping business which was appreciated by the participants. The participants found information by Mr. Ali very useful and were keen on keeping in touch with him in future for guidance.

The Status Paper from ICC, Iran was presented by the Chairperson of the ICC Women Committee. The training

started with introduction, expectation check and group formation by Mrs. Savitri Singh and she also conducted sessions on:

- i. ICA Gender initiative and Leadership Development of Women in Co-operatives – The Global Perspective
- ii. Various Aspects of Management of a Co-operative business
- iii. Understanding Gender
- iv. Introduction of the "Resource Guide for Advanced Training of Co-operatives on Entrepreneurship Development of Women and Gender Equality".

The participant from ANGKASA, Malaysia introduced the organization and made presentation on various cooperatives in the country which generated lot of interest among the participants resulting into many questions to the presenter.

An 'Experience Sharing Session' was exclusively conducted

for the Iranian Co-op Entrepreneur participants who came from about 30 provinces of Iran and got opportunity to meet each other. The session came out to be very useful as it provided lot of information sharing and networking opportunities. There were some interesting sectors of coops represented by the participants such as horse breeding coop, coop in building and monument preservation business etc. The training completed with study visit to a Agriculture cooperative in the neighbouring city where participants got opportunity to interact with the office bearers along with visiting farm equipment museum and testing of delicious farm products.



*A coop store and carpet weaving centre in Tehran*

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# Promotion of Gender Equality in Cooperatives

## A GLOBAL OVERVIEW

(Presentation sent by Ms. Simel Esim, Head of Cooperatives Unit, ILO, Geneva to the TOT in Iran-2013)



### **GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORLD OF WORK AND COOPERATIVES: STATE OF AFFAIRS**

#### **EQUALITY # SAMENESS**

- Equality does not mean sameness
- Gender equality does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but

their responsibilities rights and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female

- Gender equality means that different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally
- Gender equality is about social justice, social responsibility (concern for community, principle 7)

#### **GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORLD OF WORK**

- Equality of opportunity and treatment in employment
- Equal remuneration for work of equal value
- Equal access to safe and healthy working environments and to social security
- Equality in association and collective bargaining
- Equality in obtaining a meaningful career development
- Balance between work and home life that is fair to both men and women
- Equal participation in decision making including in cooperatives (leadership)

#### **GENDER EQUALITY IN COOPERATIVES**

- Limited membership – Fewer women members in mixed cooperatives (agriculture)
- Horizontal segregation – Majority in sectors associated with traditional home making skills' (artisanal, marketing, education, health and care)
- Vertical segregation – not in leadership roles and responsibilities in mixed coops (lower levels)
- Small scale – women only coops stay small, disconnected from cooperative support institutions
- Power/Control –connections to power vs own skills benefits controlled by family, community
- Emerging – Saving and credit coops, care coops, domestic worker coops, tourism coops, cultural coops

#### **CONSTRAINTS ON WOMEN**

- Social barriers – perception of men as household heads and as breadwinners, women are caretakers, home makers
- Institutional barriers – non-gender responsiveness of existing cooperative leaders
- Gender division of labour at home and work – Care responsibilities, time allocations
- Legal barriers- Membership, bank accounts
- Access to control over, ownership and possession of physical assets – land, money, property

- Mobility constraints – permission from family, transport infrastructure
- Knowledge and Skills – managerial, financial, accounting

#### **ACTIONS TO DATE: Two prong strategy**

- Promote women membership in mixed and men only cooperatives
- Promote development of women only cooperatives
- Encourage more women to become members
- Support existing women members into leadership positions
  - Include women in cooperative leadership training
  - Create temporary quotas for women in boards
- Involve women in decisions even if not in decision positions
- Formulate gender responsive policies, plans and strategies
- Include gender equality on cooperative agendas
- Establish women committees and women networks
- Address gender equality issues (unpaid work, sharing care responsibilities, GBV in cooperative training and education)
- Establish women units in coops
- Women networks in coop unions, associations

#### **PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF “WOMEN ONLY” COOPERATIVES**

- Develop capacities of existing women only cooperatives (management, membership, growth and market access)
- Help establish women only cooperatives where establishing mixed cooperatives is not viable, women to women services
- Reach out to network with other cooperatives (women only, men only and mixed) for inputs of production and markets.
- Raise awareness on gender equality (unpaid work, sharing care responsibilities and GBV in coop training and education)
- Encourage activities in higher return skills beyond traditional home making skills
  - Cultural cooperatives
  - Tourism cooperatives
  - Professional cooperatives
  - Designer cooperatives

#### **WAYS FORWARD**

- Build alliances for gender equality – among women coops, between sector of coops
- Join forces with other natural allies women business associations, trade unions, researchers
- Advocate with governments and cooperative support organisations for better training and support services
- Engage with researchers for better data and statistics, and identification of research topics
- Develop campaign for improved legislation and policies
- Adopt gender equality strategies – national cooperative movements, large cooperatives

# Participation of Women in Coops in Nepal

With the restoration of democracy in 1990 and promulgation of a new Cooperative Act in 1992, there has been resurgence in the cooperative movement in Nepal. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of registered cooperatives has grown to 26,501 (Statistics on Nepalese Cooperative Societies & Unions, Government of Nepal, Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperatives, Department of Cooperatives, 2012) as compared to 830 in 1990. With the increase in number, cooperatives have diversified their involvement in micro and medium level enterprises. Indeed cooperative sector is flourishing and has become one of the largest private sector business enterprises in Nepal.

Participation of women in different types of cooperatives is increasing significantly. The number of cooperatives established by women covers around 25% of total number of cooperatives in the country whereas the participation of women in the cooperatives is around 42%.

## Statistics of Women Cooperatives

S.No.	Types of Coops	No. of Coops	% in Total Coops	No. of Women	% in Women Coops
1.	Agriculture Coops. (Farm)	5373	20.27	200793	10.37
2.	Dairy Cooperatives	1749	6.59	28303	1.46
3.	Veg. and Fruits	196	0.74	17717	0.91
4.	Tea Cooperatives	97	0.36	1347	0.069
5.	Coffee Cooperatives	80	0.30	1704	0.088
6.	Multi-purpose Cooperatives	4136	15.60	544565	28.14
7.	Herbal Cooperatives	144	0.54	1530	0.079
8.	Electricity Cooperatives	406	1.5	12005	0.62
9.	Health Cooperatives	85	0.32	4256	0.21
10.	Consumer Cooperatives	1416	5.34	40307	2.08
11.	Sugarcane Cooperatives	48	0.18	287	0.014
12.	Bee-Keeping Cooperatives	65	0.24	1546	0.079
13.	Information and Communication Coop.	102	0.38	3980	0.20
14.	Junar (Citrus Fruits)	31	0.11	304	0.015
15.	Savings and Credit Cooperatives	11851	44.71	1029424	53.21
16.	Others	722	2.72	46483	2.40
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26501</b>		<b>1934551</b>	

Source: Department of Cooperatives, GoN, 2012

The services provided by the women cooperatives have not only been benefiting the people who have been deprived of the formal financial services, but also contributing to income generation, establishing micro-enterprises and creating employment in rural areas. The effort for the development of women cooperatives is still scattered and ineffective and more integrated approach is required for the promotion and strengthening of the women cooperatives enterprises.

## Membership in Cooperatives by Gender

Sl. No.	Types of Cooperatives	Total Membership	Male	Female	% of Woman in total cooperatives
1.	Agriculture Cooperatives (Farm)	412583	211790	200793	4.32
2.	Dairy Cooperatives	102808	74505	28303	0.60
3.	Veg. and Fruits Cooperatives	30996	13279	17717	0.38
4.	Tea Cooperatives	5215	3908	1347	0.028
5.	Coffee Cooperatives	4017	2313	1704	0.036
6.	Multi-purpose Cooperatives	1864033	1316382	544565	11.71
7.	Herbal Cooperatives	4719	3189	1530	0.032
8.	Electricity Cooperatives	60641	48636	12005	0.25
9.	Health Cooperatives	8908	4652	4256	0.091
10.	Consumers Cooperatives	71932	31625	40307	0.86
11.	Sugarcane Cooperatives	1266	979	287	0.006
12.	Bee Keeping Cooperatives	3760	2214	1546	0.033
13.	Information & communication Coop.	12569	8579	3980	0.085
14.	Junar (Citrus Fruits)	1004	700	304	0.006
15.	Saving and Credit Cooperative	1958922	929498	1029424	22.14
16.	Others	104136	57653	46483	1.000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4647549</b>	<b>2709902</b>	<b>1934551</b>	

Source: Department of Cooperatives, GoN, 2012

Women face some major constraints such as:

- Poverty as a serious problem of individuals or households
- Lack of resources, abilities/opportunities,
- Traditional method of business,
- Excluded from exercising of economic, social, cultural and civil rights,
- Discrimination in access to the social benefits in the society,
- Lack of access to capital, raw material, technology, human power or skills etc.

## Upcoming Events:

1. Meeting of the Women's Committee, November 2014
2. Regional Women Forum, November 2014

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