

YOUTH CHRONICLE

2025 EDITION



15th Annual Statutory Meeting of ICYC and Youth Talk Show

The ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC) convened its 15th Annual Statutory Meeting on 25 November 2025 during the 17th ICA-AP Regional Assembly in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The meeting brought together 10 members onsite and 15 members virtually via Zoom, reflecting the committee's growing regional engagement.

Earlier in the day, ICYC hosted a vibrant Youth Talk Show, designed in a 90-minute podcast-style interactive format. The session featured an engaging panel comprising Mr. Alireza Banaeifar, Deputy of International Affairs at the Iran Chamber of Cooperatives, ICA-AP Board Member, and former Chairperson of the ICA-AP Youth Committee; Ms. Sreeja Murali, Director, ULCCS

India; and Dr. Patrick John Rico, President, Prime Aces College and ICYC member who engaged in an insightful discussion which revolved around four key clusters central to youth concerns and cooperative action: Food Security and Employment; Education, Health, and Gender Equality; Environment, Peace, and Solidarity; and Youth Rights and Participation. Full Video on the Youth Talk Show will be out soon.

The statutory meeting opened with welcome remarks from the office bearers, followed by the Chairperson's Report delivered by Atty. Dulce Bustamante-Delmo. She highlighted a year marked by Regional Youth Dialogues, Cooperative Study Visits, International Exchanges, and an expanded role of youth in cooperative



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initiatives across the Asia-Pacific region.

Members unanimously approved the formal renaming of the committee—from the International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific Committee on Youth Cooperation to the ICA-AP Committee on Youth (ICYC)—establishing a clearer and more unified identity.

A key agenda item was the presentation of candidates for the post of 2nd Vice Chairperson, with nominees Mr. Abhishek Kumar (India), Mr. Amirhossein Shahidi (Iran), and Ms. Khitam Al-Mazaydeh (Jordan) sharing their vision for strengthening youth participation within the cooperative movement. Following the election, Mr. Abhishek Kumar secured the highest votes and was elected as the new 2nd Vice Chairperson, with his term extending until the next Regional Assembly in 2027.

During the closing session, Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav, President of ICA-AP, delivered a congratulatory message. The meeting also

noted the appointment of Ms. Monalisa Kashyap as the new Secretary of the Committee, who will support coordination efforts and contribute to strengthening youth-focused initiatives in the region.

The committee concluded by discussing the proposed agenda and activities for 2026, reaffirming its commitment to youth leadership, regional cooperation, cooperative identity, and inclusive participation aligned with ICYC’s long-term strategic vision.

The 17th ICA-AP Regional Assembly in Colombo, Sri Lanka, also featured key committee engagements, including the 12th MBO Council Meeting and the ICA-AP Trade and Business Committee Meeting, which brought together representatives from across the Asia-Pacific region to review progress and outline future directions for cooperative collaboration.

ICYC Chairperson Atty. Dulce S. Bustamante Shares a Message on IYC 2025



Dear Cooperators and Youth Leaders,

Happy International Year of Cooperatives!

As we embark on 2025, the International Year of Cooperatives, we are reminded of the transformative power of cooperatives in driving sustainable development and strengthening communities worldwide. This year serves as both a celebration and a call to action—a time to reflect, innovate, and reimagine how cooperatives can address the world’s most pressing challenges.

Youth stand at the forefront of this movement. With their energy, creativity, and passion, young cooperators are shaping the future

through bold ideas, digital innovation, and socially responsible leadership. Their active participation not only strengthens the cooperative model but also ensures its adaptability in an ever-evolving world.

At the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), we remain committed to fostering youth engagement in cooperatives. Through initiatives such as the Coop Pitch, Youth Summits, and capacity-building programs, we provide platforms for young leaders to learn, collaborate, and drive meaningful change. This year, we are also amplifying the Go Green Campaign, which connects youth with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through climate action. By empowering young cooperators to champion environmental sustainability and lead impactful initiatives, we aim to inspire a greener, more resilient future.

Let 2025 be the year we invest in the next generation of cooperative leaders—encouraging them to dream big, lead boldly, and cooperate for a better tomorrow. Together, we can ensure that cooperative principles remain a guiding light of hope and progress for generations to come.

I invite all stakeholders to join us in celebrating and advancing the International Year of Cooperatives. Let’s make 2025 a milestone year for cooperatives and youth worldwide.

In solidarity and cooperation,

Atty. Dulce S. Bustamante

Chairperson, ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC)



Exploring Japan's Cooperative Movement through ICYC's Lens

The office bearers of the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC) recently visited Japan, gaining valuable insights into the country's cooperative ecosystem and the pivotal role youth play in driving sustainable cooperative enterprises. From engaging with

university cooperatives to exploring worker-led initiatives, the visit reinforced the importance of youth participation in the cooperative movement.



A Landmark Event: Launching the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) 2025

A key highlight of the trip was the grand launch of the IYC 2025, co-hosted by the ICA-AP, the IYC 2025 Japan Committee, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Office for Japan at the United Nations University of Japan. Youth representatives from the National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NFUCA) and ICYC, through their presentations, underscored the importance of integrating young leaders into the cooperative movement. A full report of the launch event can be read [here](#).

The IYC 2025 will continue to celebrate and promote the cooperative model throughout the year, emphasizing its role in inclusive economic development, social equity, and sustainable solutions to global challenges.

ICYC's Visit to University Cooperatives: A Model for Youth Engagement

ICYC, along with delegates from ANGKASA, visited the Tokyo Metropolitan University, and we had the opportunity to explore the Student Cooperative and University Cooperative Store, which

are entirely managed by students. Mr. Ichiro Nakamori, Managing Director & CEO of NFUCA, gave an overview of the University and provided a brief on the student cooperative committee. NFUCA has around 213 members, out of which 205 are university coops, five are intercollege coops, two are business associations, and one is a federation (Co-op Kyosai). There are 1,565,091 individual members, out of which 85% are students.

The University Coop has programs created by students to support student life on the campus, including:

1. **Dietary Support:** Promotes healthy eating habits with a comprehensive food menu. They organise various fairs while focusing on nutrition education to encourage better eating habits.
2. **Living Alone and Daily Life Support:** This program is dedicated to assisting students in finding accommodations upon enrolment and supporting them throughout their academic journey.
3. **Educational Research and Study Support:** It offers a diverse array of products and services aimed at supporting the educational and research endeavours of faculty members and researchers.

4. **Learning and Growth Support:** It provides various courses at the university, including how to use a computer, driver's license acquisition, language training, job hunting support, and preparation for civil service examinations.
5. **Healthy and Safe Living Support:** These include initiatives to prevent auto accidents and alcohol-related incidents, conducting health checks, and providing dietary and lifestyle counselling.

Visit to Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA)

We visited the Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA) to understand the overall status of cooperatives in Japan. Mr. Kenki Maeda, General Manager, gave a brief on the structure of JCA and its work.

JCA is an apex body of cooperatives, established in April 2018 with a mission to function for the development of the cooperative sector, which contributes to creating better life and work in sustainable local communities. Mr. Maeda provided insights into Japan's inter-cooperative collaborations, spanning multiple sectors, including Agriculture, Credit Unions, Fisheries & Forestry, Consumer Cooperatives, and Worker Cooperatives. JCA currently has around 624 member organisations as their members who are categorized in three levels – National Level Federations, Prefectural Agriculture Coops, and Primary Cooperatives.

JCA's main objective is to create better life and work in sustainable local communities which works towards promoting Inter-Cooperative collaborations, Advocacy, Policy Proposals, and Education & Research.

Visit to Japan Workers' Cooperative Union:

At the Japan Workers' Cooperative Union (JWCU), we explored the transformative role of worker cooperatives in supporting marginalized communities. Mr. Osamu Nakano, Secretary General, JWCU and Chairperson of CICOPA-AP, Vice President of CICOPA, shared insights on CICOPA-AP and JWCU.

CICOPA is an international organization of cooperatives in industrial and service sectors, established in 1947. The principal objective of cooperatives in the industrial and service sectors is to serve members' employment and business activities. It has three regional organizations: CECOP (CICOPA Europe) with 25 organizations in 14 countries, CICOPA Americas with 11 organizations in 9 countries, CICOPA Asia Pacific with 12 organizations in 9 countries, and CICOPA Africa with 3 organizations in 3 countries.

Mr. Nakano also gave a brief on the JWCU, a national federation of worker cooperatives in Japan since 1979 with 45 member organizations. They have 450 business centers with 17,000 workers and a 37 billion Yen turnover.

There was a presentation on the Central Workers' Cooperative (CWC), the biggest worker coop in Japan, established in 1987. Currently, CWC has 10,000 workers, with 70% women workers, and their main objective is to provide childcare, elderly care, care for people with disabilities, operation of public facilities, cleaning service, logistic service, community farming and forest management, and renewable energy business.

We also came across Creators 440Hz, a cooperative formed by young creatives in film-making, graphic design, and website development, which demonstrated the power of youth-led cooperative entrepreneurship. Their success highlights the potential for small, youth-driven cooperatives to thrive when supported by strong cooperative networks.

This visit was not just about learning—it was about taking action. During our trip, ICYC successfully:

- Secured NFUCA and JWCU's commitment to nominate youth representatives to ICYC, expanding our youth network.
- Strengthened partnerships with key cooperative organizations in Japan.
- Engaged in meaningful discussions on youth leadership, sustainability, and entrepreneurship.

As we continue strengthening youth engagement within the cooperative movement, this visit reaffirmed the need for greater awareness, education, and leadership opportunities for young cooperators. By expanding networks and fostering collaboration, we can ensure a thriving future for youth in cooperatives across the Asia-Pacific region. Check out the teaser on ICYC's visit to Japan here. Stay tuned for more updates on ICYC's initiatives and partnerships!



“ Today, we celebrate the strength, resilience, and invaluable contributions of women around the world. As the Chairperson of the International Cooperative Alliance-Asia Pacific Committee on Youth Cooperation, I am proud to honor the women who have been trailblazers in the cooperative movement and beyond. Let us continue to foster an inclusive and empowering environment where women are not only celebrated but supported in realizing their full potential. Together, we can build a future where gender equality is the foundation for sustainable development and collective success. ”



Go Green Campaign 7.0



The ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), in partnership with the Rotary Club of Imus and the Rotaract Club of Imus, celebrated the seventh edition of the Go Green Campaign (GGC) on 7 July 2025 in the Imus City of the Philippines. GGC aims to empower young leaders in building a sustainable future and promoting green jobs.

Rotary International is one of the largest service organizations in the world with the mission to "provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through [the] fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders." Rotaract, the youth (18 years and older) arm of Rotary Club, is a global movement of young leaders who are developing innovative solutions to address the world's most pressing challenges. Both have various clubs around with community partner and focus on programs like environmental protection, youth, and community service.

GGC was launched in 2018 with a vision to connect youth with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enhance the cooperative movement's identity as a sustainable model for the environment and society.

Members of the ICYC, Rotary Club of Imus, and Rotaract Club of Imus planted around 30 Banaba saplings along Ragatan Road. The location was specifically chosen by one of the partners, the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, as this road is included in the Strategic Plan of the local government to be developed into a friendly community for all motorists, pedestrians, and the whole community of Anabu I-C. It is a public space wherein future parks, commercial spaces, and other infrastructures will be built — thereby needing balance ecologically. The Banaba saplings, known for their vibrant purple flowers and ecological benefits, were generously provided by the City Agriculture Office of Imus City. The Banaba saplings are expected to grow mid-size after a year and bloom completely within two years. It is also known as the "City Tree" because of its benefits and beauty.

ICYC also encouraged its members, who could not join the campaign in the Philippines, to initiate environmental programs (such as tree planting or clean-up, and seminars) with their cooperatives in their respective countries. As part of the ICYC's ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability, the seventh edition of the GGC will focus on promoting green jobs, creating awareness, and providing opportunities for youth to engage in sustainable employment.



ICYC at Cooperative Law Symposium, Manchester

On 1 July 2025, ICYC Chairperson, Ms Dulce participated as a speaker at the Cooperative Law Symposium held in Manchester, United Kingdom. The symposium was jointly organised by Manchester City Council and the ICA Law Committee and brought together policymakers, legal experts, and cooperative practitioners to discuss contemporary issues in cooperative law and policy.

During the session, ICYC presented on the policy framework governing youth and laboratory cooperatives in the Philippines. The presentation highlighted how youth cooperatives are legally recognised, supported through enabling policies, and positioned as platforms for youth leadership, entrepreneurship, and decent work. It also shared insights into the role of laboratory cooperatives in providing young people with practical exposure to cooperative governance and enterprise development.



The contribution generated meaningful discussion on how cooperative law can better respond to the needs of young people and promote inclusive economic participation. The symposium

provided an important international platform to exchange experiences and strengthen global dialogue on progressive cooperative legal frameworks.



Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Dialogue

A Collaborative Initiative by ICA Asia-Pacific Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)

12-13 August 2025
Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand



The International Forum “We, the Youth” (IFWY) is a new model of youth engagement that reimagines how young people participate in shaping social change. With its participatory, bottom-up approach to selecting youth representatives and its blend of policy dialogue and cultural expression, IFWY creates an inclusive and dynamic space for action. Its key objectives are to empower youth to lead real-world change, ensure representation from diverse and underrepresented communities, harness cultural engagement for solidarity, and co-create actionable strategies with lasting impact.

As part of its “Regional Dialogue – Walk the Talk” initiative, IFWY brings together 250 young leaders from five regions: Asia-Pacific, Latin America & the Caribbean, Africa & the Middle East, North America, and Europe for conversations addressing global challenges such as inequality, climate change, and social exclusion.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Dialogue was held on 12–13 August 2025 at the Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. IFWY is a global youth-led initiative co-organised by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and Munhwa

Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), with support from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea. The Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) hosted the Asia-Pacific segment of this global event.



Bringing together 50 young leaders from across the region representing countries such as Afghanistan, Australia, Bhutan, China, Fiji, Iran, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, and Vietnam; the participants were selected from over 330 applicants. The Dialogue created a unique platform for

collaboration and exchange. The ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC) was well represented, with 12 members representing India, Jordan, and the Philippines, reflecting the Committee's strong commitment to amplify youth voices and strengthening youth-led cooperative development in the region.



The two-day programme was facilitated by Mr. Bharat Nair, Co-Founder of the Centre For Development Initiatives (CDI), a non-profit dedicated to sustainability and social impact consulting, and Mr. Mehar Mossa, Social Innovation Educator and Co- Founder of TinkerHub Foundation, a non-profit advancing grassroots tech learning and youth empowerment representing India.

They were joined by Dr. Patrick John R. Rico, Head of Externals at ACDI Multipurpose Cooperative and President of Prime Aces College; Ms. Gelizabeth Cabuhat, Sales and Marketing Head for Visayas at 1CISP, Vice Chairperson of the ICA Asia-Pacific Youth Committee and Board Member of Youth Connect Cooperative, and Mr. Jay-Vee Marasigan Pangan, brand strategist, multimedia journalist and digital media specialist representing the Philippines.



The facilitators played an important role in supporting the sessions, and ensuring that the dialogue followed its participatory and inclusive approach.

Over the two days, participants engaged in interactive discussions, workshops, and learning exchanges centered on six thematic areas:

1. Environmental Sustainability
2. Economic Transformation
3. Social Justice & Equality
4. Technological Innovations & Ethical Considerations
5. Peace & Cooperation
6. Collective Action & Solidarity

These discussions not only highlighted the pressing challenges faced by youth across Asia-Pacific but also generated practical solutions and recommendations for a more sustainable and inclusive future.

During conclusion of the Dialogue, the young leaders adopted a set of recommendations under the theme **"If We Connect for Change: Regional Voices for Sustainable Peace and Cooperation."** Among the key proposals were:

- The S.A.R. Approach – institutionalising Safety, Awareness, and Respect in schools, workplaces and communities.
- Media Accountability and Literacy – promoting ethical, unbiased journalism through fact-checking and media education.
- A Global Biosecurity and Pandemic Preparedness Framework – coordinating prevention, funding, transparency, and youth participation in global health security.
- Bridging the Digital Divide – setting up science and technology parks and inclusive digital hubs.
- Youth LIVE Hubs (Learning, Innovation, and Venture/Enterprise Hubs) – creating safe spaces, mentorship opportunities, and entrepreneurship support.
- The use of drone technology for sustainable food security.
- Establishing a Regional Youth Co-Creation and Decision-Making Accelerator (RYCDA) – ensuring youth are recognised as decision-makers and co-creators of public policy.



Asia-Pacific youth underscored that they are not passive observers but active co-creators of transformation. They called upon governments, international organisations, civil society, and the private sector to institutionalise youth leadership in governance, ensure equitable access to education, technology, and green jobs, strengthen mental health support and human rights protections, and embed youth inclusion in decision-making frameworks at all levels.

During the closing ceremony, Mr. Poramate Intarachumnum, President of the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT), thanked participants and celebrated the spirit of solidarity, declaring: "Today we are no longer alone. Today we are not a silent minority anymore—our voice was heard."

He urged participants to recognise that youth rights are often being violated, especially among rural and underrepresented groups, and stressed that the Dialogue had produced a "repository of scalable solutions," from climate action to ethical AI and cooperative enterprise development. He called for stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships and appealed to the UN and ICA "to consider the voice of youth in forthcoming meetings."

Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director of ICA-AP, emphasized that youth are not just the future but the present and encouraged participants to take ownership of the recommendations and assuring them of ICA-AP's continued support.

Ms. Dulce Bustamante, Chairperson of ICYC, closed the Dialogue by thanking **UNRISD** and **Debate Korea** for designing the program, and **MBC** for sponsoring the Dialogue



The Regional Youth Dialogue in Bangkok thus became an important milestone, uniting diverse voices from across Asia-Pacific to shape a shared vision of change. The recommendations will now be carried forward to the global IFWY Forum, ensuring that the perspectives and priorities of Asia-Pacific youth are reflected in international youth-led transformation.



Youth Cooperators Lead the Way at World Food Forum 2025

Held on 15 October 2025, the side event, "Seeds of Inclusion: How women and youth-led cooperatives are transforming agrifood systems", builds on the ongoing collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). The collaboration aims to promote inclusive, cooperative-led approaches to agrifood systems transformation, recognizing the pivotal role that cooperatives play in empowering women and youth, both as producers and consumers—particularly in the lead-up to the 2025 International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) and the 2026 International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF).

In the lead-up to the World Food Forum (WFF) side event, ICA-AP, under the ICA-EU Financial Framework Partnership Agreement (FFPA) Phase 2, nominated Atty. Ms. Dulce S. Bustamante, Chairperson of ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), to represent young cooperators and engage with fellow youth leaders from across the globe in shaping a strong, collective voice for agrifood systems transformation.

Ms. Bustamante contributed to the co-creation of the Youth Declaration on Cooperatives in Agrifood Systems, which was developed through a series of online regional preparatory consultations held between July and September 2025. The



declaration, endorsed during the WFF event in Rome, captures the collective vision and commitments of 32 young cooperators from 26 countries, advocating for youth inclusion, gender equality, climate action, and innovation in agrifood systems.

The event featured lightning talks from youth cooperative leaders and highlighted inspiring examples of youth-led cooperative innovation, from digital agribusiness hubs in Africa and Asia to sustainable farming cooperatives in Latin America and Europe. These discussions reinforced the cooperative model as a vital instrument for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Zero Hunger, Gender Equality, and Climate Action.

The Youth Declaration calls upon governments, international organizations, and cooperative stakeholders to create enabling environments for youth and women cooperators through access to land, finance, education, and technology. It further urges investment in cooperative education from an early age and recognizes cooperatives as catalysts for equitable, climate-smart agrifood systems.

Through her participation, Ms. Bustamante and other young leaders reaffirmed the ICYC's commitment to advancing cooperative-led solutions to global agrifood challenges, ensuring that youth are not only beneficiaries but active partners in shaping the future of food.

Strengthening Youth Voice in Cooperative Governance: ICA-AP Board Endorses Voting Rights Agenda at 17th Regional Assembly

The cooperative movement in Asia and the Pacific took an important step toward deepening youth inclusion in governance with the approval of a dedicated voting rights agenda for young cooperators. The decision was endorsed and approved by the Board of the International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP) during the 17th ICA-AP Regional Assembly held in Colombo on 27th November 2025.

Advancing Democratic Participation of Youth

Recognising that young people are vital to the sustainability and renewal of the cooperative movement, the ICA-AP Board approved measures to strengthen youth participation in formal decision-making spaces. Central to this agenda is the principle that youth structures within the cooperative movement should not only be consultative but also enjoy meaningful representation and voting rights in governance bodies where policies, strategies, and regional priorities are decided.

This endorsement reflects growing consensus across member organisations that intergenerational governance is essential to keep cooperatives responsive to emerging socio-economic challenges, including digitalisation, climate resilience, and decent work for young people.

From Engagement to Representation

Across Asia and the Pacific, youth networks have expanded significantly over the past decade, contributing to entrepreneurship, cooperative education, and community development. However, representation in statutory governance bodies has often lagged behind participation in programmes and events.

The ICA-AP Board's approval signals a shift from youth engagement toward institutionalised youth representation. It encourages member organisations to review statutes, bylaws, and governance

frameworks to ensure that youth wings or committees can elect representatives with voting authority at national and regional levels.

Alignment with Global Cooperative Principles

The voting rights agenda aligns with the cooperative principle of democratic member control and reinforces commitments made under global cooperative youth strategies. It also echoes discussions within the International Cooperative Alliance Asia & Pacific Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC), which has consistently advocated for structured youth representation across ICA Asia Pacific region.

By recognising youth as stakeholders in governance rather than beneficiaries alone, ICA-AP members reaffirm that cooperatives are intergenerational institutions where leadership renewal is built into democratic processes.

Implications for the Region

The decision taken in Colombo is expected to:

- Encourage national cooperative federations to formalise youth seats with voting rights on boards and assemblies.
- Strengthen youth accountability and ownership in regional programmes and partnerships.
- Create clearer pathways for young leaders to transition into senior cooperative governance roles.
- Enhance legitimacy and relevance of cooperative institutions among younger generations.

The endorsement at the 17th Regional Assembly marks a milestone in ensuring that youth are not only the future of cooperatives but active co-architects of their present and governance.



ICYC Members' Meetings in 2025: Strengthening Engagement and Collective Action

In line with the general practice of committees within the International Cooperative Alliance to maintain regular consultation and engagement with their membership, the International Cooperative Youth Committee (ICYC) convened a

series of members' meetings throughout 2025. These meetings served as an important platform for dialogue, coordination, and collective decision-making among youth representatives from cooperative movements across regions.



During the year, ICYC successfully organised four members' meetings in March, May, June, and November 2025, ensuring continuous interaction with its members and creating space to discuss emerging priorities for cooperative youth. These meetings enabled members to share updates from their respective regions, reflect on ongoing initiatives, and contribute to shaping ICYC's work plan and strategic direction.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to discuss youth engagement within the broader cooperative movement, identify areas for collaboration, and strengthen connections among youth networks globally. Through these exchanges, members explored ways to enhance youth participation in cooperatives, promote

leadership opportunities, and contribute to key international cooperative agendas.

Regular members' meetings remain an essential mechanism for ICYC to uphold transparency, inclusivity, and participatory governance. By convening consistently throughout the year, ICYC continues to foster a vibrant community of young cooperative leaders who are committed to advancing the cooperative values and principles worldwide.

These engagements reaffirm ICYC's commitment to ensuring that the voices of young cooperators remain central to the development and future of the global cooperative movement.



ICYC Chairperson Participates in ICA Coop Identity Meeting in Manchester

The International Cooperative Youth Committee (ICYC) in the ICA Coop Identity Consultation Meeting held on 3 July in Manchester, organised by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). The meeting brought together cooperative leaders and representatives from various regions to discuss the evolving understanding and relevance of cooperative identity within today's global context.

Ms. Dulce, Chairperson of ICYC, participated in the meeting and contributed to discussions from a youth perspective. Her participation highlighted the importance of ensuring that young cooperators are actively involved in conversations shaping the future of the cooperative movement, particularly around the cooperative values, principles, and identity.



During the meeting, participants exchanged views on how the cooperative identity can remain relevant and responsive to contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges. The dialogue also emphasised the need to strengthen awareness of cooperative principles among new generations and integrate youth voices into ongoing global discussions.

Through its participation, ICYC reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that youth perspectives are represented in key policy and conceptual discussions within the cooperative movement. Engagement in forums such as the ICA Coop Identity Meeting provides an important opportunity for young cooperators to contribute to shaping the future direction of cooperatives worldwide.



ICYC Participates in International Forum on Cooperation in Arkhangelsk, Russia

The International Cooperative Youth Committee (ICYC) was represented at the International Forum on Cooperation held in Arkhangelsk from September 3–7, 2025. The forum brought together cooperative leaders, practitioners, and stakeholders from different countries to exchange knowledge and strengthen international collaboration within the cooperative movement.

Ms. Dulce, Chairperson of ICYC, participated in the forum and contributed to discussions highlighting the importance of youth engagement in advancing cooperative development globally. Her participation emphasized the growing role of young cooperators in promoting innovation, inclusion, and sustainability within the cooperative sector.

The forum also took place in the context of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025, under the theme “Cooperatives Build a Better World.” Participants discussed the role of cooperatives in addressing global challenges, fostering economic resilience, and supporting community-led development.

By taking part in this international gathering, ICYC reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening youth participation in global cooperative dialogues and ensuring that the perspectives of young cooperative leaders contribute to shaping the future of the movement.



ICYC Members' Stories

KoopKicks 3.0: Empowering Youth to Pitch Change through Cooperatives

KoopKicks 3.0 is a flagship youth pitching and learning initiative under **YOUthCAN** (Youth Cooperatives in Action for the Next Generation). The program serves as a dynamic platform for young cooperative members to develop, present, and refine innovative project proposals that respond to real community needs.

Now on its third run, **KoopKicks 3.0** strengthened its focus on **youth leadership, social innovation, and cooperative values**, bringing together aspiring youth leaders from various cooperatives across the country. Participants were challenged to transform ideas into actionable programs aligned with cooperative principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The program featured a structured learning and pitching process, combining capacity-building sessions, inspiration from experienced leaders, and a formal pitch presentation before a panel of judges. Youth participants showcased proposals addressing key areas such as community development, financial inclusion, youth engagement, environmental sustainability, and digital innovation in cooperatives.

More than a competition, **KoopKicks 3.0** emphasized **mentorship, collaboration, and confidence-building**—encouraging young people to speak up, think critically, and lead with purpose. The event culminated in the recognition of outstanding proposals that demonstrated feasibility, impact, and strong alignment with cooperative ideals.

Building on the success of its third iteration, **KoopKicks will return for its fourth run in April 2026**, continuing its mission to strengthen youth participation in the cooperative movement and provide a bigger platform for young changemakers to pitch bold, community-driven ideas.

KoopKicks 3.0 reaffirmed **YOUthCAN's** commitment to nurturing the next generation of cooperative leaders—youth who are not only equipped with ideas, but empowered to turn those ideas into meaningful action for their communities.

Video Link: https://www.canva.com/design/DAGkkV6JlJg/3DEXdcmfkO9SxRUzGa IZA/watch?utm_content=DAGkkV6JlJg&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=hea2bca6c60



Growing the Future of Cooperation: Advancing Youth Leadership through Specialized Programs and Participatory Governance

Recognizing the crucial role of the Filipino youth in shaping the federation’s narrative and growth towards a sustainable future for the co-operatives, MASS-SPECC established the Co-operative Youth Parliament (CYP) as a dedicated platform for leadership development. In alignment with 2025 International Year of

Cooperatives (IYC), the CYP joined the co-operatives worldwide in turning that global momentum into impactful local action. Through strategic governance and a revitalized commitment to grassroots youth leadership, we strengthen youth voices within the co-operative movement.



Key Highlights

A definitive milestone in leadership was the collaboration with Institute of Cooperative Studies (ICS) and MASS-SPECC Consultancy Unit (MCU) to craft the “Cultivating Young Cooperative Leaders Program (CYCLP).” This specialized program, presented during the MASS-SPECC 2nd Round of Regional Ownership Meeting, seeks to address the urgent need to develop young co-operative leaders who possess not only technical competence but also a deep understanding of co-operative principles and social responsibility.

The Youth Congress, held on May 23, 2025 in Butuan City, served as a powerful space for 77 young co-operators from 45 member co-operatives. Aside from electing a new set of CYP Board of Trustees and amending By-Laws, the congress successfully passed a resolution to the MASS-SPECC General Assembly, which was subsequently approved by the Board of Directors—proving that youth-led policy can drive systemic change.



Empowering Rural Youth Through Employment and Opportunity in Patan, Rajasthan



Across rural India, young people often find themselves caught between ambition and limited opportunity. While they carry strong aspirations for education and employment, access to career guidance and formal job markets remains scarce. Responding to this challenge, the National Youth Cooperative Society organized a large-scale **Employment Fair at Asha Academy in Patan, Rajasthan**, aimed at connecting rural youth with pathways to dignified work.

More than 250 young participants from 25 surrounding villages attended the event, many encountering structured recruitment and career counseling for the first time. Representatives from several companies offered employment opportunities across different sectors, while career guidance sessions helped youth understand job requirements, prepare for interviews, and explore long-term career pathways. The fair was designed not only to provide placements but also to strengthen young people's confidence in navigating the world of work.

Community leaders, educators, and youth advocates were present to support the initiative, including Rajasthan State Representative Rajesh Gurjar, Asha Academy Director Nishchal Yadav, Rajnota Sarpanch Lal Singh Shekhawat, Mahipal Yadav of Asha Devi PG College, NYCS General Manager Abhishek Kumar, and Principal Sukhvir Yadav. Their participation reflected the importance of collective action in building systems that enable young people to transition from education to employment.

A defining feature of the Employment Fair was its focus on inclusion. By organizing the event in a rural setting, barriers related to distance, cost, and information were reduced. This ensured that youth from economically weaker backgrounds could participate on equal footing. For many families, the event represented a turning point where education began to translate into opportunity.



Aligned with the national vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India), the fair emphasized sustainable livelihoods over short-term or informal work. By combining job opportunities with training information and career mentoring, the initiative addressed both immediate needs and long-term resilience.

Beyond numbers and placements, the Employment Fair carried a deeper message: youth empowerment is about dignity, direction, and possibility. When young people are equipped with skills, guidance, and access to opportunity, they are better positioned to contribute to their communities and shape their futures. Initiatives like this demonstrate how localized action can create lasting impact ensuring that rural youth are not left behind in the journey toward inclusive development.



Empowering Rural Youth Through Employment and Opportunity in Patan, Rajasthan



पाटन में NYCS द्वारा रोजगार मेले का आयोजन, 250 से अधिक युवाओं ने लिया भाग

राज्य प्रतिनिधि राजेश गुर्जर सहित कई गणमान्य अतिथि रहे उपस्थित

दैनिक तेवर टाइम्स

पाटन, विक्रम खान टाइटिल/ केएनएन युवा कॉन्सल्टिंग संस्थाएटी (एनएचटी) द्वारा आज पाटन, राजस्थान में एक विशाल रोजगार मेले का आयोजन किया गया, इस मेले में अलग-अलग के 25 गांवों से जहां 250 से अधिक युवाओं ने भाग लेकर रोजगार की जानकारी प्राप्त की तथा अपना-अपना कार्यालय में आवेदन किया।

इस कार्यक्रम का मुख्य उद्देश्य ग्रामीण क्षेत्र के युवाओं को रोजगार अवसर एवं उनके उच्चतर अध्ययन की जानकारी देना है। उक्त उपलब्ध कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन कर अतिथि से अधिक युवाओं को रोजगार प्रदान कर सम्बन्धित किया जाएगा।

NYCS के प्रोत्साहित राजेश गुर्जर ने कार्यक्रम के अधिकारियों से बातचीत की।

राज्य प्रोत्साहित राजेश गुर्जर, अशा एकेडमी के निदेशक निखल यादव, राजस्थान सरपंच लाल सिंह रोडवार, आशाएटी पी.जी. कॉलेज के व्यवस्थापक महिपाल यादव, एनएचटी के महा प्रबंधक अशोक यादव, आशा देवी के निदेशक राजेश गुर्जर, प्रमुख सुदीप यादव, भाजपा नेता रामसिंह मौजूद रहे।

रोजगार मेले का आयोजन कर अतिथि से अधिक युवाओं को रोजगार प्रदान कर सम्बन्धित किया जाएगा।

NYCS के प्रोत्साहित राजेश गुर्जर ने कार्यक्रम के अधिकारियों से बातचीत की।

पाटन में भव्य रोजगार मेले का आयोजन

पाटन। राष्ट्रीय युवा सहयोग संगठन के तत्वावधान में पाटन में स्थित आशा एकेडमी में एक विशाल रोजगार मेले का आयोजन किया गया, जिसमें आस-पास के 25 गांवों से 250 से अधिक युवा प्रतिभागियों ने हिस्सा लिया। यह आयोजन युवाओं को रोजगार के अवसर उपलब्ध करने और उनके करियर निर्माण में सहायता देने के उद्देश्य से किया गया।

प्रमुख रूप से राजस्थान राज्य प्रतिनिधि राजेश गुर्जर, आशा एकेडमी के निदेशक निखल यादव, सुखवीर यादव, भाजपा नेता रामसिंह मौजूद रहे। जिसमें युवाओं को न सिर्फ नौकरियों की जानकारी मिली, बल्कि राजेश गुर्जर ने अपने संबोधन में कहा, का लक्ष्य है ग्रामीण युवाओं तक रोजगार की पहुंच को सुलभ बनाना और उन्हें आत्मनिर्भर भारत अभियान से जोड़ना। यह मेला उसी दिशा में एक सार्थक प्रयास है।

रोजगार मेले में 250 से अधिक युवाओं ने लिया भाग

न्यूज सर्विस/नवज्योति, पाटन। राष्ट्रीय युवा सहयोग संगठन की ओर से पाटन में स्थित आशा एकेडमी में एक विशाल रोजगार मेले का आयोजन किया गया। जिसमें आस-पास के 25 गांवों से 250 से अधिक युवा प्रतिभागियों ने हिस्सा लिया। यह आयोजन युवाओं को रोजगार के अवसर उपलब्ध कराने और उनके करियर निर्माण में सहायता देने के उद्देश्य से किया गया।

इस कार्यक्रम को सौभाग्यवश अनेक प्रतिष्ठित अतिथि उपस्थित रहे, जिनमें प्रमुख रूप से राजस्थान राज्य प्रतिनिधि राजेश गुर्जर, आशा एकेडमी के निदेशक निखल यादव, राजनीति सरपंच लाल सिंह शेखावत, महिपाल यादव (आशादेवी पी.जी. कॉलेज, व्यवस्थापक), एनवाईसीएस के महाप्रबंधक अभिषेक कुमार, प्राचार्य सुखवीर यादव, भाजपा नेता रामसिंह दासवाल, प्रदीप यादव (कालामेडा) और मनीष शर्मा (हसामपुर) विशेष रूप से मौजूद रहे। इस रोजगार मेले में विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से जुड़े रोजगार अवसरों, प्रशिक्षण योजनाओं और करियर मार्गदर्शन सत्रों का आयोजन किया गया, जिससे युवाओं को न सिर्फ नौकरियों की जानकारी मिली, बल्कि उनमें आत्मविश्वास और

ICYC Champions Youth Leadership at ICC 2025



Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - October 2, 2025 - Atty. Dulce Bustamante, Chairperson of the ICA Asia Pacific Youth Committee (ICYC), took the global stage as a virtual speaker at the **International Cooperative Conference (ICC 2025)** organized by the Cooperative Institute of Malaysia (IKMa), delivering a compelling call to action for stronger youth inclusion in the cooperative movement.

In her presentation, *“Youth for Cooperative Future: A Regional Perspective,”* she spotlighted the vital role of young leaders in shaping the future of cooperatives across the Asia-Pacific region. Representing a dynamic network spanning 12 countries, ICYC continues to advance youth representation, leadership development, and cross-border collaboration.

Addressing an international audience, she laid out the pressing challenges confronting young cooperators today—from limited representation in governance and outdated policies to gaps in innovation, engagement, and digital transformation. She emphasized that these barriers are not just youth issues, but sector-wide concerns that demand urgent and collective action.

At the heart of her message was ICYC’s **Five-Point Agenda**, a strategic roadmap aimed at empowering the next generation of

cooperative leaders. The agenda focuses on driving innovative programs, expanding youth membership and representation, strengthening skills development, fostering inclusive environments, and building stronger partnerships within the cooperative ecosystem.

She also underscored the growing influence of youth networks as platforms for advocacy, knowledge-sharing, and regional collaboration—highlighting their role in transforming dialogue into concrete action. She called for stronger support systems, including increased investments, mentorship opportunities, and policy reforms that enable youth to take on leadership roles in cooperative governance.

Closing with a powerful reminder that resonated across the conference, she declared: **“Youth is not the future—we are the present.”** The statement reinforced the urgent need for cooperatives to move beyond token participation and embrace genuine inclusion of young people in decision-making processes.

The Chairperson’s participation at ICC 2025 reaffirms the ICA-AP Youth Committee’s commitment to building a more inclusive, innovative, and future-ready cooperative movement—driven by empowered youth leaders across the region.



ICYC Inspires Young Leaders at 2025 Region IV-A Koop Lab Fiesta

Laguna, Philippines - October 28, 2025 - Atty. Dulce Bustamante, Chairperson of the ICA Asia-Pacific Youth Committee (ICYC), delivered an inspiring keynote address at the **2025 Region IV-A Koop Lab Fiesta**, championing the role of young cooperators in building a better and more inclusive future.

Held in Laguna, the event gathered student leaders, laboratory cooperatives, educators, and cooperative advocates under the theme, **"NextGen Co-operators: Youth Uniting for a Better World."** The gathering highlighted the growing importance of youth engagement in strengthening the cooperative movement from an early age.

In her keynote speech, she energized the audience with a powerful message: young people are not merely future leaders—they are already active changemakers today. She emphasized that through laboratory cooperatives, students are being equipped with core cooperative values such as self-help, equality, honesty, and concern for others—principles that set them apart in a world often driven by competition.

"Real success is not about standing above others, but about lifting each other up," she shared, reinforcing the unique role of cooperatives in fostering collaboration, empathy, and shared progress.

Anchored on the event's theme, she underscored how collective action among the youth can address real-world challenges such as

poverty, inequality, and environmental issues. She highlighted that even simple initiatives—school-based projects, community outreach, and everyday acts of cooperation—can create meaningful and lasting impact.

Drawing from her regional experience as ICYC Chairperson, she shared insights from youth cooperators across Asia and the Pacific, noting that despite cultural differences, young leaders share a common vision: to build a better world through unity and cooperation. She praised the Philippines for actively promoting laboratory cooperatives, recognizing it as a strong foundation for values-driven leadership among the youth.

In a heartfelt closing, the Chairperson encouraged the young participants to embrace their role as changemakers—urging them to **carry forward the values of cooperation, use their voices to inspire others, and lead with compassion and purpose.**

"Let's show everyone what it truly means to be NextGen Cooperators—youth uniting for a better world," she concluded.

Her participation in the 2025 Region IV-A Koop Lab Fiesta reinforces the continued commitment of the ICA-AP Youth Committee to empower young leaders and strengthen the cooperative movement—starting from the grassroots and shaping the future, today.



ICYC Calls for Stronger Youth Leadership at ICOOP2025

November 21, 2025 - Virtual Conference - Atty. Dulce Bustamante, Chairperson of the ICA Asia-Pacific Youth Committee (ICYC), delivered an inspiring message and call to action during the **Youth for Cooperatives Session of the 5th International Conference on Cooperatives (ICOOP2025)**, reinforcing the urgent need to empower the next generation of cooperative leaders.

Speaking before an international audience of cooperative stakeholders, youth leaders, and development advocates, she emphasized that the sustainability of cooperatives goes beyond financial strength-it lies in people, leadership, and continuity. She highlighted the critical role of **succession planning** in ensuring that cooperatives remain resilient and future-ready.

"Leadership in cooperatives is not about power-it is about service," she stressed, underscoring that developing young leaders must be a deliberate and continuous process grounded in cooperative values.



Drawing from her presentation, she identified common challenges faced by cooperatives worldwide, including the lack of formal succession plans, limited youth engagement, and the perception that leadership is reserved for older members. She noted that without intentional efforts to mentor and involve young people early, even strong cooperatives risk stagnation during leadership transitions.

To address these gaps, she outlined key strategies for building a sustainable leadership pipeline: mentoring young members, investing in leadership education and exposure, establishing youth committees, and fostering a culture of trust and transition within organizations. These measures, she emphasized, are essential in creating inclusive spaces where young people can actively participate and lead.

At the heart of her message was a powerful call to action for both current leaders and the next generation. The Chairperson urged cooperative institutions to move beyond token participation and build concrete structures that enable youth to lead, innovate, and shape the future of the movement.

"The true test of leadership is not how long we stay in position, but how well we prepare others to take our place," she shared, reinforcing the importance of stewardship and continuity in cooperative leadership.

She also inspired young cooperators to take an active role in their communities-encouraging them to use their voice to inspire, their hands to serve, and their hearts to unite people for good.

ICYC's participation in ICOOP2025 highlights the continued commitment of the ICA-AP Youth Committee to advancing youth empowerment, leadership development, and inclusive governance in cooperatives across the globe.



ICYC Amplifies Youth and Women Empowerment at International Cooperative Forum in Russia

Arkhangelsk, Russia - International Cooperative Forum 2025 - The Chairperson of the ICA Asia-Pacific Youth Committee (ICYC) took part in multiple high-level sessions at the International Cooperative Forum in Arkhangelsk, delivering key messages on youth leadership, mentoring, and women's empowerment in cooperatives.

Representing the Asia-Pacific region, she participated as a speaker in the **Meeting of the International Women's Working Group of Cooperators on Social Issues, the Plenary Session, and the Youth Meeting**, where she consistently highlighted the critical role of inclusive and values-driven leadership in building sustainable cooperative systems.



During the Women's Working Group session, she shared the Philippine experience on social support for women, emphasizing how cooperatives serve as powerful platforms for empowerment. She underscored that in many communities, cooperatives provide women not only with economic opportunities but also with a sense of dignity, voice, and belonging. Drawing from real-life stories, she illustrated how women-led cooperative initiatives have strengthened families and communities—especially in times of crisis—proving that empowering women creates ripple effects across society.

At the Plenary Session, the Chairperson delivered a forward-looking presentation on **mentoring as a key strategy in building and sustaining youth cooperatives**. She emphasized that the long-term success of cooperatives depends on effective succession planning and leadership development. Highlighting global challenges such as limited youth engagement and lack of structured transition systems, she called for intentional investment in mentoring programs that bridge generations and transfer both knowledge and cooperative values.

She further proposed the development of an international mentoring initiative, envisioning a platform where experienced cooperative leaders guide young innovators from idea to implementation. According to her, mentoring is not merely guidance—it is a transformative process that builds confidence, strengthens leadership, and ensures continuity within the movement.

In the Youth Meeting, she reinforced this message, directly engaging young cooperators and encouraging them to take an active role in shaping the future of cooperatives. She highlighted that while young people bring energy, creativity, and innovation, they must also be supported through structured programs that enable them to translate ideas into sustainable cooperative enterprises. She reiterated that mentoring fosters not only skills development but also trust, collaboration, and intergenerational solidarity.

Beyond the conference sessions, she also joined fellow delegates—including ICA Board Members and ICA President Ariel Guarco—in a tree planting activity under the Go Green Campaign, reinforcing the cooperative movement's commitment to environmental sustainability and collective action.

Across all engagements, the Chairperson delivered a unified call to action: cooperatives must move beyond rhetoric and actively create systems that empower youth and women as leaders, not just participants. She emphasized that when experience and innovation come together, cooperatives become stronger, more adaptive, and better equipped to respond to global challenges.

Her participation in the International Cooperative Forum underscores the continued leadership of the ICA-AP Youth Committee in advancing inclusive governance, youth empowerment, and gender-responsive cooperative development on the global stage.

