



# ILO and Cooperatives

## Table of Contents

International Day of Cooperatives 2012 .....	2
International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) follow-up	3
ILO and IYC national events .....	4
Cooperatives and Rio+20 .....	6
ILO and Japanese co-op partnership .....	7
Cooperative option for migrant workers .....	7
COOP and ACTRAV promote workers' co-ops .....	8
Cooperative resilience in the news .....	8
My.COOP training package roll out .....	9
ILO COOP updates .....	10
New publications .....	11
Upcoming events .....	12

## Editorial

Times of change open up new realms of opportunities as they challenge us to explore innovative ideas and ways of working. This issue of COOP NEWS comes in such times. On the last working day of September, Mr Juan Somavia handed over three keys symbolizing the tripartite structure of the ILO to Mr Guy Ryder, who took office as Director-General on 1 October. The same week witnessed the first meeting of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which focuses on sustainable development.

The achievement of sustainable development requires overcoming collective action problems at different levels. For national and international agencies, it entails understanding the factors that help people engage in collective action and devise their own institutions, and developing enabling policies. That was a key message of the late Elinor Ostrom, who remains the only woman recipient of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences. As she put it in her prize lecture, “a core goal of public policy should be to facilitate the development of institutions that bring out the best in humans”.

Success therefore depends on increasing trust and reciprocity among stakeholders. Cooperative values and principles, along with social dialogue, are well in line with this perspective, as evidenced by a wealth of historical experiences around the world. The International Day of Cooperatives, which this year came as the ILO celebrated

the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), witnessed a flurry of activities by cooperators and their allies for showcasing successes and planning ahead.

Legislative reforms to enable cooperative development are underway in various countries. In July, Brazil introduced Law No. 12.690 on the organization and functioning of workers' cooperatives. France has announced that a draft law on the social and solidarity economy would be presented in the first half of 2013 after extensive consultations with stakeholders. The high-level cooperative conference hosted by the Cyprus presidency of the Council of the EU highlighted the need for national legislative reforms and discussed the potential revision of the European Cooperative Statute.

The Office has received requests for technical support on cooperative development from Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Tunisia, and Burundi, signaling growing demand from constituents for strengthening the potential of cooperatives. The interest in My.COOP continues to expand to new countries, regions and sectors, including financial cooperatives, social service cooperatives, and workers' cooperatives. As a reflection of this growing interest, the Preview of the ILO's Programme and Budget proposals for 2014–15 has highlighted cooperatives for their ability to contribute to decent work in the rural and informal economies. In preparation for the exciting tasks ahead, the Cooperative Branch held its own retreat in July, with the team-building exercise resulting in a strategic plan to concretize priorities, and participated in the Global Enterprise Team retreat in September in Turin.

As this newsletter goes to print, a number of highly visible global studies on cooperatives are generating interest beyond the traditional cooperative circles. Several critical global meetings are underway, promising to mark the beginning of a world-wide campaign to take the cooperative way of doing business to a new level well after the International Year of Cooperatives comes to a close. Outcomes include a Declaration emerging from the 2012 International Summit of Cooperatives in Québec (Canada), a Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade being launched at Cooperatives United in Manchester (UK), and an International Plan of Action to be introduced during the IYC closing ceremony in New York. In these times of change, we are inspired by the words of ILO Director-General Guy Ryder: “Let our actions reinforce the cooperative movement and enable cooperatives to go from strength to strength”, “as vehicles for decent lives, decent work and sustainable development.”

**Simel Esim**

## International Day of Cooperatives celebrated worldwide

On 7 July 2012, people around the world were reminded that cooperatives are a successful form of enterprise contributing to economic and social development for millions of people. The 18th United Nations International Day of Cooperatives was celebrated with a wide array of activities, from announcements on policies for cooperative development to community events. The observances showcased how cooperatives build a better world, the theme of both International Day of Cooperatives 2012 and International Year of Cooperatives.

“Cooperatives empower their members and strengthen communities. They promote food security and enhance opportunities for small agricultural producers. They are better tuned to local needs and better positioned to act as engines of local growth.”

*UN Secretary-General in his video statement for the International Day of Cooperatives*

Concerts, parades, and family events were held, reinforcing the spirit of community while providing a means for people, and in particular young people, to learn more about cooperatives. For example, in Trinidad, credit unions delivered financial literacy workshops for youth between the ages of 12 and 17, while in Panama a study visit was organized between Panamanian and Costa Rican youth cooperators. On a lighter side, in Singapore more than 1,700 pre-school children penned their thoughts on postcards on what they have experienced from cooperative activities – and revitalized the diminishing practice of using stamps by mailing these postcards using the recently launched cooperative postage stamps.

“Guided by the compass of social justice, cooperatives are vehicles for promoting decent work and decent lives for all. As democratic, value-driven and locally-controlled organizations, they foster social inclusion.”

*ILO Director-General in his message for the International Day of Cooperatives*

Many governments and cooperative organizations also reported reforms in cooperative policy, regulation and law. The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Zambia, Hon. Emmanuel Chenda, announced that his government intends to introduce a cooperative development recapitalization fund, saying that this will create an enabling institutional and legal environment that will contribute to socio-economic development and poverty reduction. In Malta, the International Day of Cooperatives was the occasion to announce the creation a new cooperative bank to provide essential credit to the cooperative movement.

Many governments noted the contribution of cooperatives to advancing sustainable development, social integration

and decent work. Some provided statistics evidencing the importance of cooperatives to national as well as local economies.

- In Germany, 800,000 jobs are maintained by cooperatives, which bring together more than 26 million people in membership.
- In Ireland, agricultural cooperatives boast an annual turnover of €12 billion and employ 12,000 people at the national level, and a further 24,000 people outside the country.
- In Malaysia, 9,600 cooperatives bring together 7 million members, generating RM23.09 billion (approximately USD7.6 billion) worth of sales.
- In Morocco, cooperatives generated a total turnover of MAD 6.3 billion (approximately USD 700 million) in 2011.
- In the United States, over 2 million jobs are maintained by cooperatives.



Bhutan celebrated the International Day of Cooperatives for the first time in 2012, bringing together cooperatives and farmers groups.

*In 1995, the United Nations declared the first Saturday of July as the International Day of Cooperatives coinciding with the already existing International Cooperative Day celebrated annually by the International Cooperative Alliance since 1923. See more information: <http://www.copac.coop/idc>.*

### ILO news releases feature cooperatives' contribution to sustainable development and decent work

Message by Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO - [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_184791/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_184791/lang-en/index.htm)

Cooperatives: Resilient to crises, key to sustainable growth - [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/comment-analysis/WCMS\\_184623/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/comment-analysis/WCMS_184623/lang-en/index.htm)

Turning waste fruit into a profitable business - [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/features/WCMS\\_184737/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/features/WCMS_184737/lang-en/index.htm)

## ILO Executive Director engages with Ministers on International Day of Cooperatives

Mr José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Director of the Employment Sector participated in the Ministerial Breakfast on “Promoting productive capacity for sustainable livelihoods: the role of cooperatives” which was held at during the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) in New York on 5 July. The meeting, held on the occasion of the United Nations International Day of Cooperatives and hosted by the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), ILO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), provided an opportunity for dialogue on the challenges and successes of cooperative promotion and development.

Opening the session, UN Director for Social Policy and Development of DESA, Ms Daniel Bass, noted that “cooperatives are important agents for promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work in the effort to eradicate poverty. It is our hope that together, we can promote and strengthen cooperatives towards these ends, and to build a better world”. Mr Salazar presented his remarks, following which Mr Jürgen Schwettmann, Director of ILO’s Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation (PARDEV) opened the floor for Ministers and UN agency representatives to share their



experiences on how cooperatives constituted agents for inclusive, productive and decent work. The discussion focused on strategies and policies on how to promote and strengthen the development of sustainable cooperatives for employment generation as well as experiences with regard to conducive policies and regulatory frameworks for cooperatives.

The summary of the discussions served as a contribution to the 2012 ECOSOC outcome.

>> Read Mr Salazar’s full statement: [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_184846/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_184846/lang--en/index.htm)

## Cooperative experts deliberate on follow-up to International Year of Cooperatives

A global forum and workshop, “Harnessing the Cooperative Advantage to Build a Better World”, brought together experts on the cooperative enterprise model to provide input into a plan of action. Participants looked into what areas need be addressed to sustain action on achieving the objective of the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) regarding cooperative development and promotion following the close of the year. Held at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 4-6 September, participants shared research findings, good practices, successes and challenges in sessions aimed at knowledge sharing and capacity building, while identifying areas for action in 2012 and beyond.

The ILO Cooperative Branch provided key input in the planning stage, assisting in the identification of key thematic areas, resource persons and invitees from academia, cooperatives, the NGO community, government, donors and international organizations. ILO Cooperative Branch’s Ms Maria Elena Chavez Hertig participated in the event as a presenter and moderator. Ms Chavez Hertig spoke to the topic of the role of cooperatives in promoting sustainable livelihoods, sharing the ILO perspective on cooperative enterprise and decent work. She also moderated sessions on creating and maintaining successful cooperatives and creating an enabling environment for cooperatives. She was joined by Mr Sam Mshiu, cooperative expert and former staff member of Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup> who presented ILO’s approach to policy and legislative reform and the experience of Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup>. The interest and discussions in the session on cooperative policy and legislation underlined the continued demand for guidance and advice, both at



in general and in more sector-specific terms, and highlighted the increasing complexity of ensuring policy and law that do not stifle cooperative formation, growth and innovation.

The meeting addressed issues such as understanding the Cooperative Identity, enabling inclusive development, social protection, financial inclusion and local economic development through cooperatives, promoting sustainable livelihoods, women’s empowerment and equity, cooperative governance, member participation and human resource development.

Mr George Okutho, Director of the ILO Country Office for Ethiopia and Somalia delivered closing remarks on behalf of Mr Charles Dan, Regional Director of the ILO Regional Office for Africa.

The event outcome will inform the intergovernmental processes at the United Nations, providing expert opinions in the formulation of the International Plan of Action on Cooperatives, a proposed outcome of the International Year of Cooperatives, as well as input to the Report of Secretary General to the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly in 2013.



## Caribbean countries hail importance of cooperatives

The Caribbean region has witnessed a flurry of activity in 2012, as many countries supported the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives (IYC). According to Mr Kelvin Sergeant, Sustainable Enterprise Development and Job Creation Specialist in the ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean, the cooperative movement in the region is seen as an important vehicle for economic development and job creation. It is also linked to the development of a vibrant small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector.

A major event the region was the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual International Convention and Cooperative Symposium of the Caribbean Confederation of Credit Union (CCCU) and the Credit Union Executive Society (CUES), held from 23-26 June in Montego Bay, Jamaica. The event highlighted the significance of credit unions in the region as economic and social actors. The CCCU serves 17 countries in the region and brings together in membership of 2.1 million people, 353 affiliated credit unions with savings of US\$3.1 billion, total assets of US\$3.8 billion, and total loans of US\$42.6 billion.

Under the theme of the IYC, "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World", the Convention was formally opened by the Honourable Minister of Finance, who at the time was also the Acting Prime Minister, Hon. Mr Peter Phillips. Mr Phillips hailed the cooperative movement in the region as pioneer for economic development. He noted that the Bank of Jamaica was moving swiftly to further strengthen measures to safeguard the financial sector, and encouraged credit unions to accept the new regulations currently under discussion. ILO was invited to address a special symposium on non-financial cooperatives held during the symposium. Mr Sergeant presented on the "Role of producers and service cooperatives in SME development".



Mr Peter Phillips, Minister of Finance, Jamaica.

The Governor-General of Jamaica, H.E. the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, delivered the keynote address at the IYC awards banquet, expressing support for the cooperative movement in the Caribbean, and stressing that against the background of economic instability worldwide, the movement could contribute to economic growth.

He noted that it would be difficult to fully quantify the impact that the cooperative movement has had in Jamaica, but that the extraordinary success of the movement was deserving of celebration. He said: "Today we have a total of 213 cooperatives in a variety of sectors, at the grassroots-level cooperatives have bonded people, created important synergies, and fuelled a passion for social engagement". He further added that local credit unions were demonstrating the required spirit of social activism, and he commended them for their many social outreach programmes. More information at: <http://www.caribccu.coop>

The ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean has also been invited by the Governments of Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago to support them in realizing the objectives of the IYC.



Ms Yvonne Ridguard Harris, President, Caribbean Confederation of Credit Unions, Mr Kelvin Sergeant, ILO, Mr Michael Edwards, Chief, counsel and Vice-President, World Council of Credit Unions at IYC Lecture series in Trinidad and Tobago.

The ILO is providing technical support to the cooperative movement of Dominica, holding a workshop on small business development. The movement itself has undertaken a series of activities for the IYC, including public awareness campaigns, school and community outreach and a showcase of producers' cooperatives.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the ILO is participating in the IYC national committee and supporting the efforts to implement the Year. Many activities by both financial and non-financial cooperatives have been held covering issues related to cooperative growth, including youth, technology and social media, education, training, and information, and the participation and capacity building of women cooperators.

Many other countries in the region, including Bahamas, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, have also held activities in support of the IYC, which indicates that the cooperative philosophy is alive and well in the region, and has been given a boost by the IYC.

## Indonesia to reduce poverty and create jobs through cooperatives

The ILO in collaboration with the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia and Allianz, a private insurance company, have launched a programme to enhance the financial literacy of cooperative members and increase their capacity in managing risks. The programme was launched in a seminar, "Reducing Poverty and Creating Jobs through Cooperatives", held in Jakarta on 12 June during the International Year of Cooperatives launch.

The seminar was held in recognition of the increasing role of cooperatives in poverty reduction and economic and social development. It aimed at raising the awareness of cooperative values and principles and of the importance of the cooperative model as one way of doing business.



Dr. Setyo Heriyanto, MM, Deputy Minister for Cooperative Organization, Ministry of Cooperative and SMEs, Ms Simel Esim, Chief, ILO Cooperative Branch and I Wayan Dipta, Deputy Minister for Research and Development, Ministry of Cooperative and SMEs.

The year of 2012 is an important year for the cooperatives. I greatly welcome the organization of the seminar, as it is in line with the government's goal and programme to revitalize and improve the cooperative movement. The small and joint business ventures are the key to boost the economic growth that, in turn, will reduce poverty and create more job opportunities"

*H.E. Syarief Hasan, Indonesian Minister for Cooperatives and SMEs.*

In addition to knowledge sharing, the seminar provided networking opportunities. Representatives from national, provincial and district governments, together with social partners, engaged in dialogue. They discussed how to develop effective strategies and generate improved policy recommendations to enhance contributions of cooperatives to the socio-economic development in Indonesia.

Ms Simel Esim, Chief of the Cooperative Branch emphasized in her intervention at the seminar that Indonesia was "a good example of a country witnessing a revival of cooperatives, which have been contributing to economic growth while promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and sustainable development."

*The cooperative movement in Indonesia is one of the largest civil society organizations with approximately 192,443 cooperatives and 33.68 million members.*

>> More information at [http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_183301/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_183301/lang--en/index.htm)

## Philippines forges solidarity among cooperatives, trade unions and social enterprises

In celebration of the UN International Year of Cooperatives, the University of the Philippines School of Labour and Industrial Relations (UP SOLAIR), through the Centre for Labour and Grassroots Initiatives (CLGI) in cooperation with Centre for Labour Education, Advocacy, Research and Development, Inc. (CLEARED, Inc.) organized a conference on the theme, "Forging Greater Solidarity among Cooperatives, Trade Unions and Social Enterprises" on 20-21 September.

Mr Jeff Johnson, Director of the ILO Country Office for the Philippines joined national and international cooperative and trade union leaders. He reminded participants on how cooperatives help establish decent and productive work within communities around the world, and shared specific information on the work of ILO in supporting indigenous women and farmers in the Philippines through cooperative initiatives. He shared information on ILO's partnership with the Cooperative of Women in Health and Development (COWHED) in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, which operates a microfinance facility with ILO assistance. Mr Johnson reported that, "it has become a model of individual and collective self-reliance among

indigenous women". A second initiative, a pilot project using a cooperative model of innovative financing for farmers to help them adapt to climate change in Agusan del Norte, was also highlighted.

The meeting enabled dialogue among trade unions, cooperatives and other sectors on issues and policies that relate to economic equity, social justice and inclusive growth, as well as promoting transformative practices that espouse a pro-people, pro-environment, pro-nationalist and fair-sharing development strategies. Participants learned from the managerial and operational practices of successful trade union-managed cooperatives in the Asian region (Japan, Singapore, Philippines, etc.), and highlighted the benefits that can be derived from trade union and cooperative collaboration.

>> See Mr Johnson's full intervention at: [http://www.ilo.org/manila/info/public/sp/WCMS\\_190426/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/manila/info/public/sp/WCMS_190426/lang--en/index.htm).

>> For more information on the ILO's partnership with the Cooperative of Women in Health and Development (COWHED) at: [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_186860/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_186860/lang--en/index.htm).

## China examines cooperative capacity to promote sustainable development

The All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) hosted an international symposium, Cooperatives Boosting Sustainable Development, in Beijing, PR of China on 11 June 2012, an event that figures in the national observance of the International Year of Cooperatives. The Director of the ILO Country Office for China and Mongolia, Ms Ann Herbert, addressed the meeting, which included high level government officials, chief executives of successful cooperatives and other cooperative leaders including the President of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), Dame Pauline Green.

In the opening session, Chinese Vice-Premier Hui Liangyu noted that cooperatives continue to play a major role in ensuring China's social equity and promoting sustainable development. He recognized cooperatives as "an important force in the development of social production forces", as they "promote economic development and prosperity, social fairness and justice". "Through cooperatives we can achieve common prosperity", he added.

Ms Herbert echoed the sentiment in her remarks to the meeting. She noted that the ILO and the international cooperative movement have a longstanding relationship, a natural alliance, built on common values of solidarity and social justice. She emphasized that cooperatives "provide the world with the living proof that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility through a business model that empowers people, improves livelihoods, promotes democratic principles

and offers pathways out of poverty". Citing the resilient nature of cooperatives, Ms Herbert noted the potential of cooperatives in tackling issues of sustainability from youth unemployment to recycling and the provision of services for social care.

Dame Pauline further noted the important role of cooperation among cooperatives, one of the Cooperative Principles. She highlighted, "how the Chinese movement is working vigorously with other cooperatives, researching different forms of cooperative business that are as yet untried in China, and which might bring support and increasing prosperity to the Chinese people, particularly in the rural economy".

The event was part of a series of initiatives to enable the sharing of knowledge and experience for cooperative development and growth.

*ACFSMC also known as China Co-op consists of 31 provincial, 336 prefecture, 2,370 county federations, and 22,537 primary cooperative societies with 160 million member peasant households, and more than 1.282 million employees.*



## Rio+20: Cooperatives key for sustainable development

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 20-22 June 2012 – twenty years after the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in Rio - brought together world leaders, along with thousands of participants from the private sector, and civil society, including from workers' and employers' organizations and cooperatives.

The official discussions focused on two main themes: how to build a green economy to achieve sustainable development and lift people out of poverty; and how to improve international coordination for sustainable development.

After difficult discussion, an outcome document was agreed, "The Future We Want", which recognizes the role of cooperatives in promoting sustainable development in three specific references:

*Para.70. We acknowledge the role of cooperatives and microenterprises in contributing to social inclusion and poverty reduction in particular in developing countries.*

*Para.110. Noting the diversity of agricultural conditions and systems, we resolve to increase sustainable agricultural production and productivity globally, including through ... developing strong agricultural cooperatives and value chains; ...*

*Para.154. ...we encourage the private sector to contribute to decent work for all and job creation for both women and men, and particularly for young people, including through partnerships with small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives...*

The ILO showcased some of its successful experiences in the promotion of cooperative organizations at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). One of them, Oromia Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union (OCFCU), involves more than 200,000 coffee producers and almost 200 cooperatives in Ethiopia. The ILO also highlighted in its communications the way that cooperatives, by their very nature, can balance economic, environmental, and social needs.

>> See article, Green and fair: Cooperatives in Ethiopia at: [http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/features/WCMS\\_183643/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/features/WCMS_183643/lang-en/index.htm)



## ILO and Japanese consumer cooperatives partner for cooperative capacity building

The 2012 edition of a unique annual capacity building programme for African cooperative leaders was held from 2-9 September in Tokyo and Gunma, Japan. Started in 2010 as a joint programme between the Japanese Consumers' Cooperative Union (JCCU) and ILO Cooperative Facility for Africa Programme (Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup>), the ILO Office for Japan and the Cooperative Branch, it aims at assisting the African cooperative movement to strengthen its capacity by exposing its leaders from East Africa to the good practices accumulated by the Japanese cooperatives through lectures and study visits in Tokyo and its vicinity.

Four cooperative stakeholders from mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar visited and learnt about various aspects of the Japanese cooperative movement, such as consumers, insurance, workers, labour bank (Rokin) and agricultural cooperatives. This year, for the first time the participants had a chance to visit Gunma, a rural prefecture in Central Japan, where they were able to observe the whole process of value chains from producers (agricultural cooperatives)



Briefing by Board members and staff of CO-OP Gunma (a consumer cooperative)

### The cooperative option for migrant workers

The ILO International Migration Programme (MIGRANT) and the Cooperative Branch are currently elaborating a project proposal using the cooperative approach to generate employment and decent work for migrants by capitalizing on already existing institutions, channels and networks within the temporary labour migration scheme of the Republic of Korea. The proposal focuses on creating a Public-Private Partnership to engage relevant Government agencies, ILO social partners and the cooperative movements in Korea with those in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Vietnam. These countries have selected given their established relationships with Korea in the area of labour migration, but also ILO's own experience in these countries in the area of labour migration and cooperative promotion.

Migration has emerged high on the international policy agenda, partly triggered by the increasing importance of international labour and skills mobility to meet needs in

to consumers (consumers cooperatives). They also gained a better appreciation of local cooperative activities, particularly agricultural, which are deeply rooted in the local rural communities.

On the last day of the programme, a public seminar was held to provide a platform for participants to present their cooperative activities in Tanzania and share their valuable findings from the study tour, as well as have exchange with the Japanese audience. Salomi Sijaona, Tanzania's Ambassador to Japan, not only graced the event with her presence, but also stimulated discussion with her lively participation. Mr Katsumi Asada, President of JCCU, also participated throughout the three-hour session. He was pleased to host this programme as it fosters the spirit of cooperation and comradeship between Japanese and African cooperative leaders as well as enables sharing Japanese cooperatives' knowledge and practices and learning about African cooperative activities.

The 2012 programme participants were Mr Godwin Lemilia, General Manager, Arusha Cooperative Union; Mr Novatus Tiigelerwa, General Manager, Karagwe District Cooperative Union; Mr Khamis SIMBA, Director/Registrar of Cooperatives, Ministry of Labour, Economic Empowerment and Cooperatives, Zanzibar, and; Ms Dina Makota, Assistant Head, Women and Children's Department, Ministry of Social Welfare, Women Development and Children, Zanzibar.

*JCCU has 26.2 million members employing 49,416 people and in 2010 had a total turnover of 3,322 billion Yen. JCCU supports the strengthening of cooperatives through staff placement programmes, support for cooperative development particularly in the promotion of gender equality, university cooperatives, youth and medical cooperatives. They provide a wide range of capacity building programmes for consumer cooperatives in Asia through the Asian Cooperative Development Fund.*

destination countries as well as benefits for origin countries. Migrants all over the world face similar problems: obtaining work permits, accessing decent work, social security including health insurance, housing, education, safe and affordable money transfer services, as well as concern for the situation of the family that stays behind. The cooperative way of organizing has proven useful to support migrants in dealing with these problems whether it is the option of setting up cooperatives, or becoming member of cooperatives to access the specific services that migrant workers need.

ILO already has some experience supporting cooperatives set up by returning migrant workers in Indonesia. This new initiative should help migrants returning from Korea to set up successful cooperatives which are sustainable and improve the lives of the returning migrant workers and their families.

## COOP and ACTRAV present study and documentary film on worker cooperative resilience

*Together: How cooperatives show resilience to the crisis* was featured in an event organized by the Cooperative Branch and the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). The documentary film and study were produced by the European confederation of cooperatives and worker-owned enterprises active in industry and services (CECOP-CICOPA Europe) as a contribution to International Year of Cooperatives 2012.

The documentary presents the stories of four European worker cooperatives. Through testimonies of the worker-owners in France, Poland, Italy and Spain, viewers learn how these have maintained jobs, safeguarded local skills and contributed to local economic development through economic and financial crisis.

Bruno Roelants, Secretary-General of CECOP-CICOPA Europe, one of the co-authors of the study, was the featured speaker at the film screening and publication presentation. He raised the wider policy issues for small and medium enterprise and the need to learn from the key elements drawn from the experience of cooperatives in terms of resilience to the crisis and enterprise development - internal restructuring dynamics, the maintenance and development of jobs and skills within the enterprises, the mutualization of business development organizations, common financial instruments and the clustering in horizontal business groups. A discussion followed the presentation that raised issues both on the need for increased

awareness on the success of worker cooperative model, but also on the need for further research to understand better the quality of the jobs that worker cooperatives create and maintain.

The event was organized in September as part of a part of a series of activities being held at the ILO for International Year of Cooperatives.

>> View the trailer of the film at: <http://vimeo.com/43884998> and the full publication at: [www.cecop-coop/IMG/pdf/report\\_cecop\\_2012\\_en\\_web.pdf](http://www.cecop-coop/IMG/pdf/report_cecop_2012_en_web.pdf).



## Cooperative resilience in the news

The resilience of the cooperative model of enterprise continues to be a subject attracting attention from media. Ms Simel Esim, Chief of the Cooperative Branch responded to the questions putting ILO Cooperative Branch in the news.

**Deutsche Welle (DW)** - German broadcaster, Deutsche Welle (DW) featured an article, "Together against Crisis" on the occasion of International Day of Cooperatives in which Ms Simel Esim, joined German cooperative leaders and a representative of German international development agency (GIZ) in an interview. Each provided evidence that cooperatives were strong financial institutions, were enterprises that fostered solidarity, put the "we" before the "me", and operated under ethical values. A number of those interviewed also pointed to the fact that cooperatives were more stable in the long-term than other forms of private enterprise. See the full article in German, "Gemeinsam gegen Krisen: Kooperativen weltweit" at: <http://www.dw.de/dw/article/0,,16076234,00.html>

**Magasin du Monde** - The Swiss Fair Trade association, Magasin du Monde, featured an issue of its magazine on "Cooperatives feed the world". ILO's Ms Simel Esim was

interviewed and focused on cooperative resilience. The article in French, "Les coopératives résistent mieux à la crise" is available in Ex-Aequo, Les coopératives nourrissent le monde, Issue no. 39, September 2012. More information at: <http://www.mdm.ch/spip.php?article677>





## My.COOP agricultural training package continues roll-out

The My.COOP agricultural training package continues to be of interest to cooperatives, trainers and support institutions. Registered users of the My.COOP platform has increased by 46% in the last few months. Currently 574 users are members of the My.COOP community. They have consulted or downloaded the training modules, have participated in the training of trainers distance learning courses or are participating in the on-line forum.

The platform is also providing a space for knowledge sharing. Participants are sharing their experiences in addressing key challenges in their cooperatives and possible responses. Based on the input of users, a new series of thematic case studies are being prepared in an initiative led by one of the My.COOP partners, KIT (Royal Tropical Institute in the Netherlands). Working in collaboration with other my.COOP partners, KIT will identify the themes that have been raised in the discussions and develop case studies that provide good practice or insights on the issue. These will constitute a resource for those using the training package.

The on-line platform and materials are now available in Spanish which led to the enrolment of 13 participants in the training of trainers (ToT) course which started in early October. A total of 43 participants are participating in the My.COOP training course.

With the support of ILO's Sub-Regional Office for the Andean region and My.COOP partners, country-level adaptations of the Spanish version of the package are already being used in training sessions in Bolivia and Peru and being rolled out under the same premise of the development of the package – a partnership approach. Discussions are underway for an adaptation for Colombia.

Other language versions of My.COOP are also being developed.

The Bahasa Indonesia version will be ready for a training session now planned for the end of the year. ILO is collaborating with VECO in Indonesia for the roll-out.

The French translation of the training modules is currently in a validation phase by My.COOP partners and will be available shortly on the My.COOP platform – [www.agriculture-my.coop](http://www.agriculture-my.coop). Work too continues on an Arabic versions with the support of ILO offices in the field and a Chinese version of the training modules will also be made available through collaboration with the All China Federation of Marketing and Supply Cooperatives (ACFSMC).



Download the current language versions of My.COOP and register to participate in an on-line discussion forum on agricultural cooperatives at: <http://www.agriculture-my.coop>

## The My.COOP app coming soon

The My.COOP mobile application (app) is being developed to make the My.COOP training package accessible via mobile-optimized web. This new development is a response to the increased use of smart phones and tablets and is in line with a strategy to make the package as open, innovative and accessible as possible. These are three core ingredients of the My.COOP partnership approach.

Following the development of the My.COOP mobile learning toolkit which provides information on how to deliver content, assign tasks, gather feedback and provide support through mobile phones, this app is the second initiative to make learning about the management of agricultural cooperatives as mobile as possible.



## ILO teamwork meeting features cooperatives

At the heart of being able to effectively work together is knowledge sharing. The Cooperative Branch took the initiative of providing both ILO headquarters and field staff information on the work on cooperatives during an ILO Employment Sector teamwork meeting held in Geneva on 21 June 2012. In a meeting held via video conferencing (webEx technology), the Cooperative Branch briefly presented the cooperative model of enterprise, the state of the cooperative movement worldwide and the rationale for why the ILO promotes cooperatives. An overview of the Branch's priority areas of work were provided including an introduction to the My.COOP Managing your agricultural cooperative training package as well as ILO's engagement in the International Year of Cooperatives 2012. The theme of International Day of Cooperatives 2012 was announced and ILO colleagues were encouraged to engage with the cooperative movement and

## Cooperative Branch confirms strategy

Communication, partnership, research/statistics/analysis, advocacy and technical cooperation were among the areas of work of the Cooperative Branch which staff members discussed in a Cooperative Branch staff retreat on 16-17 July 2012. The retreat confirmed the strategic areas of focus of the Branch and identified common aims and milestones for its implementations. Recognizing that the Cooperative Branch had limited human and financial resources, participants concurred that strengthening its collaboration with other ILO units, departments, ILO field offices and a wide range of cooperative and social economy stakeholders was key to the effective implementation of its objectives.

A number of immediate outputs that would assist in reaching out were agreed including the development of frequently asked questions about cooperatives and their

## ILO Cooperative Branch staff news

Carlén Van Empel left the Enterprise Department to take up a new position as Manager of the ILO Development Cooperation Policy and Management Unit (CODEV). She made outstanding contributions to cooperative development most notably through her work with Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup> and the development and launch of the My.COOP Managing your agricultural cooperative training package.

Guy Tchami finalized his consultancy with the Branch where he prepared a Cooperative and Decent Work Guide. The guide includes sections on youth employment, green jobs, local economic development, gender equality and HIV/AIDS.

Heidi Kumpulainen completes her assignment as an associate expert working on Social Economy in the ILO Regional Office for Africa in Addis Ababa. She will start

other cooperative stakeholders in the observance of the International Day and International Year.

Based on the discussions and questions raised, COOP is preparing a series of frequently asked questions which will be posted to the ILO Cooperative Branch's website – <http://www.ilo.org/coop>.



relevance to ILO objectives, the development of a database of cooperative consultants to enable quick access to experts in the field, the planning of publications and events for evidence-based advocacy on cooperatives and their contribution to the Decent Work Agenda.

Joined by former staff, interns and ILO International Training Centre staff, the two-day meeting laid the basis for ILO's Cooperative Strategy for 2013-15 to be shared with ILO colleagues and further refined through a series of consultations.

a new job with the European Union monitoring mission in Georgia in October.

Veronique Borfiga completed her assignment providing administrative support on a half-time basis. She has re-joined ITCOM on a full-time basis.

Claudine Baudin joined the Cooperative Branch as its administrative assistant on 1 September 2012 on half-time basis.

Jeff Bartelli completed a three-month internship under the Duke University Global Policy and Governance & Global Health Fellows Program in August 2012. He undertook research to update the knowledge-base on the contribution of cooperatives to promoting inclusion of persons with disabilities with particular focus on cooperatives of and for disabled persons and contributed an issue brief, *A cooperative future for persons with disabilities*.

## Clear signs of cooperative revival in Africa linked to Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup>

Supporting cooperatives increases employment and income for the poor is the conclusion of the recently released a stocktaking report on the Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup> programme. The report reviews the contribution made by the project in the revival of African cooperative enterprises and their roles in fostering equity, empowerment, decent work and secure livelihoods as well as to the achievement of UN Millennium Development Goals and the ILO Decent Work Agenda. While it analyzes the underlying rationale for the approach adopted by COOP<sup>AFRICA</sup> and highlights innovative features in the process of setting up and implementing phase I of the project, it also suggests priority actions areas to address the continued challenges that the African cooperative movement faces in a phase II of the project.

Targeted at a wide audience including policy-makers, the cooperative movement, donors, ILO and its constituents, other UN agencies and the private sector, the publication includes case study examples that illustrate the programme's successes and lessons learned in areas such cooperative policy and legislation, gender equality, women's empowerment and youth entrepreneurship.

Coop<sup>AFRICA</sup> supported 4,124 primary cooperatives to improve incomes, jobs, and health of their members. It resulted in 287,274 cooperative members benefiting from new work opportunities and increased incomes in fourteen countries.

>> See full report at: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---ilo\\_aids/documents/publication/wcms\\_188624.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/publication/wcms_188624.pdf)



## Impact of cooperatives in Latin America

ILO's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, jointly with the International Cooperative Alliance Americas published the results of research undertaken to respond to the question, "what is the current situation and impact of cooperatives in development and poverty

reduction in Latin America?". A regional review and specific country studies were released in June. Available in Spanish only, they also represent a contribution to the International Year of Cooperatives.



**El cooperativismo en América Latina. Una diversidad de contribuciones al desarrollo sostenible**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_188087/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_188087/lang-es/index.htm)



**Visión panorámica del sector cooperativo en Bolivia. Un modelo singular de desarrollo cooperativo**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_188209/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_188209/lang-es/index.htm)



**Visión panorámica del sector cooperativo en Costa Rica. Una larga historia del sector**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_185287/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_185287/lang-es/index.htm)



**Visión panorámica del sector cooperativo en Guatemala. Un modelo de promoción del desarrollo y lucha contra la pobreza**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_185442/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_185442/lang-es/index.htm)



**Visión panorámica del sector cooperativo en Paraguay. Una importante contribución al desarrollo nacional**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_185891/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_185891/lang-es/index.htm)



**Visión panorámica del sector cooperativo en Perú. El renacimiento de un modelo**

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS\\_185026/lang-es/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/americas/publicaciones/WCMS_185026/lang-es/index.htm)



## Upcoming publications

The Cooperative Branch will soon release two new publications. Both are contributions to the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives.

The third revision of the [Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation](#) has been produced to incorporate new developments that impact how cooperative law is being developed. These new developments are multiple and include a general trend in the harmonization of law, the emergence of international regulations which directly impact enterprises, new regional cooperative legislation and regional framework laws as well as innovation in the cooperative form of enterprise itself. Since the last edition, there is also a renewed interest in the cooperative form of enterprise. Their documented resilience to crisis and thus sustainability, and their particularity of being principles-based enterprises that are member-controlled and led are increasingly drawing the attention of governments, policy makers and citizens around the world.

## 2013 Social & Solidarity Economy Academy focus on youth

The next Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), a capacity building programme, will take place in the first half of 2013 in a North Africa. The Academy will explore how the SSE can contribute to create more and better opportunities for youth under the theme, "Enhancing Youth Creativity".

A series of articles is being drafted by high-level experts from Africa, the Americas and Europe under the coordination of the Social Economy focal point, Roberto Di Meglio, within the ILO Cooperative Branch. These articles will be published in a Reader to be made available in English, French, Spanish, and for the first time in Arabic. It will include best practices from Brazil, Morocco, Kenya and other countries. The Reader constitutes the backbone of the training package to be delivered during the Academy.

>> [More information at: http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org/](http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org/)

A new study entitled, [Resilience in a downturn: The power of financial cooperatives](#) begins by telling the story of how financial cooperatives were invented in the 1850s, and then grew to be a worldwide movement, with a large slice of the global banking market. It then analyzes their performance during and after the 2007-2008 crisis, showing that they have continued to provide banking services to people on low incomes, to stabilize the banking system, regenerate local economies, and create employment. The study explains why financial cooperatives are able to do this, out of their unique combination of member ownership, control and benefit. It concludes with policy recommendations for the way governments and development agencies should approach cooperatives - not as 'conduits' but as partners in the wider aims of business development, insurance against episodic poverty, and decent work. The study will be launched in an event at the ILO in Geneva on 26 October 2012.

## UNRISD call for papers on social and solidarity economy

The United Nations Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) invites researchers to submit proposals for papers that critically examine the scope for expanding social and solidarity economy (SSE), and its potential and limits as a distinctive approach to development. The deadline for submissions is 15 November 2012.

>> [More information at: http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BE6B5/\(httpNews\)/AF5E07B3A6F372C4C1257A870043345B?OpenDocument](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BE6B5/(httpNews)/AF5E07B3A6F372C4C1257A870043345B?OpenDocument)



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