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### Editorial

For those working on cooperative enterprises, sustainability, employee ownership, innovation and crisis resilience have been high on the agenda with an eye for positioning cooperatives as viable business forms for the future of the world of work.

In the first quarter of 2015, ILO's work on cooperatives was characterized by partnerships that build on synergies around mutual areas of concern through research, advocacy, training and policy dialogue. One of these cooperative efforts was the study on cooperatives, gender equality and women empowerment jointly undertaken by the ILO and the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). The study findings were shared at a side event at the 59th session of the Committee on the Status of Women on March 10, 2015 in New York titled "Women power cooperatives".

The 74th annual board meeting of Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) also took place in New York in March where the committee's coordination responsibilities passed on from the FAO to the ICA. The COPAC board has also identified equality as the theme for the International Day of Cooperatives, "Choose co-operative, choose equality", which will take place on July 4th this year.

Following a consultative meeting on cooperative statistics in the ILO's Ankara office, a multi-stakeholder working group on cooperative statistics was established in Turkey as part of the efforts in assisting national statistical institutes to collect more and better data on cooperative enterprises. Other countries will follow as pilots shortly.

More than 150 papers were received for the international research conference on cooperatives and the world of work, co-organized by the ICA Cooperative Committee on Research and the ILO. The conference will take place in Antalya, Turkey (November 8-10, 2015), with a large number of with participants from Brazil, Canada, Italy, India and Poland among others.



From left: Simel Esim, Savitri Singh, Xiomara Nuñez, María Eugenia Pérez Zea, Dame Pauline Green at the joint International Co-operative Alliance and International Labour Organization side event to the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (10 March 2015, New York).

A validation workshop took place in Amman in December 2014 for the ILO study titled "Cooperating out of isolation: the case of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, Jordan and Kuwait" with the participation of migrant domestic workers, trade unions and NGOs as well as international representatives of domestic worker cooperatives. In other news from the field, cooperative activities of ILO projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Tunisia are highlighted.

The COOP Champion introduced in this issue is Kelvin Sergeant, the Senior Enterprises Specialist from the Port of Spain office of the ILO, who has been supporting financial cooperatives and cooperatives of informal economy actors in the English-speaking Caribbean.

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Other ILO initiatives on cooperatives and social and solidarity economy that are highlighted in this issue include My.Financial.Coop, a joint initiative with the Social Finance Unit. This year, there will be two SSE Academies: one in South Africa (July/August 2015); and another in Mexico (November 2015).

Included in this issue are also noteworthy resources on cooperatives, report launches, and a calendar with highlights

of upcoming cooperative and social and solidarity economy events. We hope you enjoy this edition of ILO COOP News Update. Thank you for continuing to share your thoughts and suggestions with us in COOP.

Simel Esim - Manager - ILO COOP

## Women Power Cooperatives

The ILO and the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) co-organized a side event at the 59th session of the Committee on the Status of Women on the role cooperative enterprises play in achieving gender equality and empowering women in New York on 10 March 2015. Bringing together over 30 participants from the cooperative, women's, and trade union movements, as well as staff of UN agencies (UN WOMEN and UNRISD), delegates of UN Member States (Mongolia), and representatives of civil society organisations, the event built upon the preliminary results of a study co-commissioned by the ILO and the ICA. The study, inspired by the first women president of the ICA Dame Pauline Green, captures the perceptions of close to 600 survey respondents and qualitative, in-depth interviews with 18 leaders from cooperative businesses, civil society organisations, and labour and trade unionists from all over the world.

At the event, Dr. Lisa Schincariol, the lead researcher of the study, shared preliminary findings – which constitute the first global and cross-sectoral exercise in examining the role cooperatives play in closing the gender gap. Over three-fourth of the survey respondents felt that cooperatives have improved the quantity and quality of participation of women in the last 20 years. While respondents indicated that cooperatives fare better than their counterparts in the marketplace, public and private, in providing opportunities to women for leadership, they also noted that cooperative enterprises on the whole do not meet their full potential in fully representing diversity and equity for women in leadership positions. The study also identified regulations concerning land ownership, property titles, and inheritance laws among impediments that curtail the ability and access of women to economic autonomy.

Vanessa Bransburg, Director for Cooperative Development at the Center for Family Life in Brooklyn, New York, shared her experience in facilitating the grassroots development of no less than nine immigrant-women's cooperatives in Brooklyn – a very diverse and disadvantaged community where one-fifth

of the population lives below the poverty line. Ms Bransburg pointed to community-wide, psychological benefits of cooperatives in Brooklyn: instances of self-confidence are higher, depression lower. Cooperatives like Si Se Puede may appear small and emerging in size and stage, but they are sound in their cooperation. This power can be further harnessed by a rigorous implementation of the 6th Co-operative Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives.

In the discussion, Ernestina Ochoa Lujan – a Peruvian domestic worker organizer and Vice President of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) expressed the need for the dissemination of the domestic worker cooperative model as a lighthouse that can be reproduced around the world. Simel Esim, Head of the ILO's Coop Unit and moderator for the session, emphasized the importance of building broad based alliances between women's, cooperative, and trade union movements.

This study, and its launch at the side event at the CSW, marks the beginning of renewed cooperative commitment to achieving gender equity and women's empowerment. The ILO and the ICA are committed to seeing this initiative through to its next steps in partnership with other members of the Committee on the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC).

>>See programme of the side event at the 59th session of CSW [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---coop/documents/event/wcms\\_347855.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---coop/documents/event/wcms_347855.pdf)

>>See press release on the ILO and the ICA Study Findings [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_349679/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_349679/lang--en/index.htm)

>>See ILO COOP brief on women's empowerment and gender equality [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---coop/documents/publication/wcms\\_307217.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---coop/documents/publication/wcms_307217.pdf)

>> See full write up on the side event at the 59th session of CSW <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/women-power-co-operatives>

## The 74th board meeting of COPAC takes place in New York

The 74th annual board meeting of the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) took place on Thursday, 12 March 2015 in New York with the participation of its members. The board meeting started with members providing updates of their activities in 2014 and was followed by the report of the COPAC Coordinator. There was a discussion of the 2015-2016 COPAC Strategic Roadmap and Communications Strategy (based on decisions from the 73rd COPAC board meeting).

During the course of the meeting COPAC members reached an agreement on funding the second phase of the study initiated by the ILO and the ICA on gender equality and women's empowerment in cooperatives. Members also agreed that work on statistics on cooperatives will be a priority in 2015 and will include several phases: stocktaking of internal and external activities of member institutions; analysis of gaps and overlaps and a meeting that brings together countries and institutions with good practices on the topic. It was

also agreed that the COPAC logo and website would be redesigned and updated using the international cooperative marque as a basis.

Members agreed to the following rotation for the chair position: ICA, ILO, WFO, UNDESA and FAO. The ICA was appointed as the new chair of COPAC for a term of two years. New members will be integrated into this calendar as

they come on board. Ms Fran McCrae was reappointed as COPAC coordinator. It was agreed that she will be based in Washington, DC for the period when the ICA is the chair of COPAC. The members agreed to join in the organization of the International Day of Cooperatives event in NYC that will be led by UN DESA.

>>See COPAC website for more information [www.copac.coop](http://www.copac.coop)

## Coop statistics multi-stakeholder working group launched in Turkey

A multi-stakeholder working group on cooperative statistics has been set up in Turkey with the support of the ILO. The working group will be coordinated by the Cooperatives Directorate General in the Ministry of Customs and Trade and technically supported by Turkish Statistical Institute.

With this effort, Turkey has become the first pilot country to follow up on the Resolution on statistics on cooperatives that was adopted at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2013.



The ILO delegation with staff of the Cooperatives Directorate General in Ankara

The resolution recognised the need to produce statistics on cooperatives in all countries of the world. It also recommended that interested national statistical offices carry out further development work on the measurement of cooperatives, conducting pilot studies and preparing progress reports for discussion at the 20th ICLS.

Paragraph eight of the ILO's recommendation 193 on the promotion of cooperatives also encourages governments to ensure that national policies "seek to improve national statistics on cooperatives with a view to the formulation and implementation of development policies".

The Turkish cooperative movement welcomed the creation of the cooperative statistics group, which emerged out of a decision taken at the cooperative statistics roundtable in Ankara on 3 February.

ILO's Turkey office along with ILO Statistics and ILO COOP will provide further technical support to the working group on a needs basis and through progress meetings that will take place every six months.

The first meeting of the working group took place at the end of March. The progress of the working group will be presented in a workshop in Geneva in early 2016 along with and the results achieved will be further elaborated upon at the 20th ICLS in 2018.

>>See ICA news on coop statistic multi-stakeholder working group launch <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/co-op-statistics-multi-stakeholder-working-group-launched-turkey>

## Cooperatives and the World of Work Research Conference 8 – 10 November 2015, Antalya, Turkey

The International Cooperative Alliance's Committee on Co-operative Research and the ILO's Cooperatives Unit are organizing an International Research Conference on Cooperatives and the World of Work that will be held in Antalya, Turkey, on 8-10 November, 2015. The conference is expected to bring together researchers, students, practitioners, advocates, policy makers and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations working in areas of cooperative enterprises and social and solidarity economy organizations, as well as labour research and themes related to the world of work. On 8th November, the conference will host around 20 young scholars followed by two days of programme.

More than 150 responses were received to the recent call for papers which sought proposals exploring areas of job creation,

rights at work, social protection and social dialogue among others. Interest in the conference came from all parts of the world, with a large number of submissions from Brazil, Canada, France, India, Italy, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The research conference will welcome Camila Piñeiro Harnecker from Cuba as a keynote speaker who holds a degree in sustainable development from the University of Berkeley, California. She is currently a professor at the Centre for Studies on the Cuban Economy at Havana University, and her works on cooperative has been published both in Cuba and outside the country.

>> More details will be also available shortly at CCR's website <http://ccr.ica.coop/en>

## News from the field

### FOCUS ON MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS' COOPERATING OUT OF ISOLATION IN ARAB STATES

In 2014, the ILO has initiated a study entitled "Cooperating out of isolation: the case of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, Jordan and Kuwait". The study maps out the current legislative and policy frameworks, institutional structures and membership-based initiatives that can provide domestic workers with the space to economically organize into cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy organizations in the Middle East.

A workshop on validating and prioritizing the findings of the assessment was organized in Amman, Jordan between 14-15 December 2014 with the participation of representatives from governments, workers' organisations and NGOs from the region as well as international solidarity organizations like the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF).

The workshop provided a good opportunity to analyse challenges and opportunities for migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, Jordan and Kuwait with regard to exploring the potential of providing services to members through cooperative enterprises. The international experiences of domestic workers in establishing cooperatives were well received by the NGOs from the region which have experience in working on protection of migrant domestic workers' rights and struggling with respect to innovative solutions when it comes to addressing economic empowerment concerns.

The international experiences underlined the need for building broad based alliances between unions, associations and cooperatives providing services needed by their members. Domestic workers and their support institutions continue to establish worker and service cooperatives around the world. As the workshop was underway, the National Union of Domestic Employees in Trinidad & Tobago announced the establishment of an employment services cooperative for its members with support from the ILO Port of Spain office. ILO offices from Ethiopia, South Africa, Bangladesh and the Philippines are also looking into building migrant domestic workers cooperatives into on-going and upcoming technical cooperation projects.

Relevant Links for the Validation Workshop:

>>Website for the validation workshop [http://www.ilo.org/beirut/events/WCMS\\_325235/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/beirut/events/WCMS_325235/lang--en/index.htm)

>>Concept note and agenda for the validation workshop [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_325237.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_325237.pdf)

>>Poster based on the paper [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/image/wcms\\_325317.jpg](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/image/wcms_325317.jpg)

>>Brief of the background paper [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_325243.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_325243.pdf)

>>Video on the background paper and the validation workshop [http://www.ilo.org/beirut/events/WCMS\\_325235/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/beirut/events/WCMS_325235/lang--en/index.htm)

>>Report of the validation workshop [http://www.ilo.org/beirut/WCMS\\_344646/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/beirut/WCMS_344646/lang--en/index.htm)

### FORUM FOR DIALOGUE ON MAKING MARKET LINKAGES STRONGER AND SUSTAINABLE: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD FOR PRODUCER COOPERATIVES SUPPORTED BY ILO LEED PROJECT IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA

The forum was organized and facilitated by the ILO LEED project in Jaffna, capital of Northern Province in Sri Lanka, on the 31st of March, 2015 with the participation of the stakeholders. Its key objective was to gather all the key stakeholders of the project's market linkage programme and create a platform for dialogue to strengthen the established linkages. The LEED project, since it started its activities in 2011, has supported more than 20 primary and secondary cooperatives to produce demand driven agricultural crops, fish and aqua-cultural products and facilitated identification and linking to markets. So far 15 exporters have been linked with these cooperative societies that produce fruits such as papaya, passion fruits, vegetables (potato, green chillies, cassava) and other traditional fish and aqua culture products such as crab, shrimp, sea bass, milk fish and sea cucumber.



Participants at the validation workshop in Amman, Jordan between 14 to 15 December 2014



Participants at the forum for dialogue on making market linkages stronger and sustainable in Northern Province of Sri Lanka

These initiatives have helped to ensure that income for poor and vulnerable cooperative members is guaranteed, decent employment opportunities are created and safety and health of members are protected.

Funded by AusAid, the LEED project has allocated more than 3.5 million USD to support the cooperative societies in its project districts. The project which will be phased out by the end of 2015 has been taking effective steps to ensure sustainability after the project ends. The forum for dialogue is a move to bring the producer cooperatives supported by the project, exporters, government counterparts such as the Department of Cooperative Development and the Department of Agriculture together to discuss the opportunities, challenges and issues. This was the first time such a platform was created for all the actors of these value chains. One of the key outcomes of this forum was that the National Chamber of Exporters that has been working with the LEED project since 2014 has agreed to facilitate the future fora.

>> For more information on LEED project, visit [http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/features/WCMS\\_340072/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/features/WCMS_340072/lang-en/index.htm)

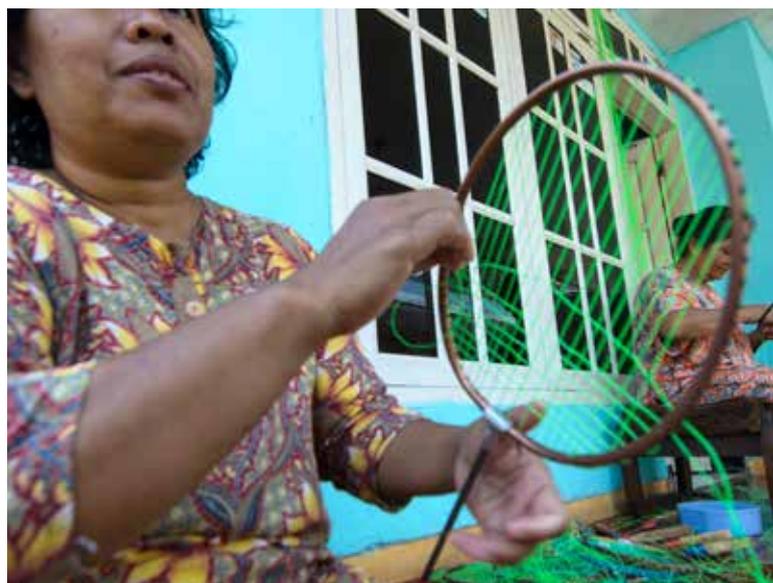
[http://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS\\_146166/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_146166/lang-en/index.htm)

## EMPOWERING WOMEN HOMEWORKERS IN INDONESIA

The ILO/MAMPU Project on Access to Employment and Decent Work for Women (Phase II) is part of the Programme on Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction in Indonesia funded by the Government of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and has been working to provide decent work to those who are vulnerable in the labour market, especially women engaged in home-based work. Together with government, employers' and workers' organizations as well as civil society organizations (CSOs), the project creates awareness on home based work, promotes decent work for them and carries out research to collect evidence based data for advocacy. The project also supports capacity building and organization of women homeworkers to strengthen their representation and voice to improve their working conditions in North Sumatera, West Java, Banten, Central Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java.

Since mid-2014, the project identified 1,540 homeworkers (1,454 women and 86 men), and supported the organization of 37 groups of homeworkers. One of the groups in North Sumatera formally established a trade union of homeworkers called Serikat Pekerja Rumahan Sejahtera (Prosperous Homeworkers' Union) in January 2015. Some groups in East Java started a small business (e.g. making and selling soaps) to secure income during the low season when they don't have work from employers. With increased knowledge and strengthened capacities, women homeworkers have successfully negotiated with their employers for an increased piece-rate wage, and started to earn additional income through new income-generating activities. In order to further build on the achievements to date, the project plans to continue strengthening their groups and group management by providing training on relevant topics such as business group formation and cooperatives. The project also plans to conduct pilot training on establishing community-based childcare facilities to address barriers faced by women in accessing decent work.

>> To see more information on MAMPU Project on Access to Employment and Decent Work for Women, visit [http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS\\_183299/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_183299/lang-en/index.htm)



Women home based workers in Indonesia

## MESSAGE BY GUY RYDER, ILO DG TO THE OPENING OF THE INSTITUTE FOR SOLIDARITY-BASED SOCIETY (JTUC/RENGO GRADUATE SCHOOL), JAPAN

The opening reception of the Institute for Solidarity-based Society, Hosei University (in other name RENGU graduate school) was held on 2nd of February 2015. The institute was established by the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO) in collaboration with the National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Cooperatives (ZENROSAI) and the National Association of Labour Banks (Rokin Bank) as well as non-governmental organizations, social enterprises and cooperatives. It aims to grow future leaders with multi sectoral perspectives in solidarity institutions.

>> See ILO Director General's video message at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6M3HhLOMVWM>

## COOPERATIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH MILLENNIUM GOAL ACCELERATION FRAMEWORK PROJECT: UPDATE FROM ILO DAR ES SALAAM

In Tanzania, the ILO contributes to all of the six agreed UN Outcomes that are expected to address the mismatch between growth and poverty reduction. In these outcomes, ILO plays a pivotal role in incorporating decent employment across various macroeconomic and sectoral interventions designed by UN Agencies. In addition, ILO is contributing to the country's achievement of the MDGs through Millennium Acceleration Framework (MAF) in which Tanzania has identified a number of strategic objectives. These goals can be achieved through promotion of sustainable enterprises more especially cooperatives.



Interventions to enhance agricultural productivity to youth cooperative in Zanzibar

### Cooperative Development Activities

ILO's approach to cooperative development has focused on rebuilding the cooperative movement in Tanzania by changing perceptions on the contribution of cooperatives to social and economic development, by supporting the development of policies and laws for cooperative development as well as carrying out activities and providing assistance to strengthen cooperatives. The ILO's assistance for cooperatives is aligned with Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and project outcomes so as to contribute to:

**Strengthening the capacity of governments and social partners to establish an enabling environment for cooperatives:** The ILO has assisted the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar to develop its cooperative development policy and strategy for the implementation of the policy. The activity aims at creating an enabling environment for cooperative enterprises, promoting the development of economically sustainable cooperatives that will significantly contribute to the country's economic growth. Policy forms the basis for the review of the country's (oldest) Co-operative Act No 4 of 1986. ILO is supporting the Government of Tanzania to develop a national cooperative

data base; Computerized Data Analysis System (CODAS), which will provide comprehensive statistics, knowledge and understanding of the cooperative business model and an evidence based policy making framework.

ILO works with the national partners and cooperative stakeholders to promote cooperative development among youth. This activity is implemented in collaboration with Moshi Cooperatives University (MoCU) to build the capacity of key national institutions and constituents. A total of 4 Ministries, department and agencies (MDA's) and 22 Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in 8 regions have been reached with this intervention, in addition to cooperative enterprises, youth support and youth community based organizations. The immediate outcome of the activity is the improvement of the capacities and understanding of potentials of youth cooperatives among the cooperative support offices and organizations. Furthermore, the intervention has aided the creation of a cadre of cooperative support service providers who will provide cooperative business development services at conveniently lower cost, reliably and sustainably.

Apart from the macro level interventions, the ILO works with cooperative enterprises to help them establish and grow through capacity building in entrepreneurship and business development. The capacity building activities utilize some of the tools developed by the ILO like My.Coop (Managing your agricultural cooperative), Get Ahead (Gender and entrepreneurship together), etc. This activity also entails support to access to appropriate equipment and technologies as well as value-chain upgrading and clustering. This activity has resulted in increased productivity and market access. To make these and other interventions' sustainable, ILO promotes access to financial services and has also been working with financial cooperatives to improve their financial management capacities and service delivery. A targeted financial assistance to grow financial cooperatives' loan portfolios, is included in the interventions. Over 30 cooperatives with more than 11,000 farmer members have been reached by the ILO and have significantly contributed to local economic development.

>> See link to ILO Country Office for the United Republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda <http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/about-us/offices/dar-es-salaam/lang--en/index.htm>

>> See link to the UNDP project <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/afpro/daressalaam/activities/undap.htm>

### ART BISHKEK: ILO AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN CIS COUNTRIES

On March 18 and 19, ILO COOP, the Belgorod University of Cooperation, Economics and Law, and the International Academy of Management, Law, Finance and Business in Bishkek held a meeting to set the grounds for the collaboration between training institutions through the assistance of the ILO project "Applying the G20 Training Strategies". In the meeting, representatives from both institutions signed the agreement that offers the frame for exchange of academic staff, students, common publications and research materials as well as the organization of joint events for five years.

Cooperative sector in Kyrgyz economy is faced by emerging needs of highly qualified personnel. In addition to theoretical and practical training in different fields of knowledge, they need educated in the spirit of cooperative principles and values and cooperative forms of management.

Cooperative educational institutions of CIS countries founded the Council of Rectors of CIS cooperative high school which embraced the universities of Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. One of the most active members of the Council is the Belgorod University of Cooperation, Economics and Law, Russia. The University has developed a multi stage system of continuous personnel training, starting with pre-high school training, secondary vocational, high professional, post-diploma and further professional training. Currently the University offers educational programs in 23 specialities of higher, 15 specialities of secondary vocational training, 15 bachelor level courses and 9 master level ones, 10 programs of post-diploma professional training (post-graduate courses and doctoral studies) and programs of further professional education and professional training.

The experience and the academic potential of Belgorod University of Cooperation, Economics and Law will be extended in Kyrgyzstan on the basis of the International Academy of Management, Law, Finance and Business in Bishkek. The academy trains more than 3,000 students from Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and other countries each year.

>> See website of the Belgorod University of Cooperation, Economics and Law at <http://www.university-directory.eu/Russian-Federation-%28Russia%29/Belgorod-University-of-Cooperation--Economics-and-Law.html>

>> See website of the International Academy of Management, Law, Finance and Business at <http://www.maupfib.kg/>

### STUDY TOUR FOR THE TUNISIAN DELEGATION TO COOPERATIVES IN BURSA, TURKEY

A five-day study tour was organized by the ILO for a Tunisian delegation to visit cooperatives in Bursa, Turkey from 30 March to 4 April, 2015. The study tour was conducted in the context of the action plan for youth employment under the ILO's DEPART project. The 12 delegates who participated in the study tour came from government institutions, workers' and employers' organization to explore cooperative experiences and knowledge in Turkey. During the study tour a presentation on cooperative policy and legislation in Turkey was delivered by Huseyin Polat, an ILO consultant. The participants visited cooperatives in a range of sectors from education, housing, finance

and agriculture to pharmacy, marketing and rural development. At the end of the study tour, the participants discussed lessons learned and ways forward in promoting cooperatives in Tunisia based on the Turkish cooperative experiences in Bursa. In May 2015, a tripartite workshop is scheduled to take place in order to finalize the action plan with a specific focus on cooperatives and social and solidarity economy policy and strategy. ILO COOP will participate in this workshop.

### COOP IN FRAGILE STATES

Though there is no universally-agreed upon definition of the term "fragile state", it is commonly understood as a state where the government does not deliver core functions to the majority of its vulnerable population. Those states are often characterised by weak governance, lack of national unity and democratic processes, poor economic and physical infrastructure, and on-going violence and insecurity.

Between 1 and 1.5 billion people are estimated to live in fragile states, in environments of recurring and violent crises, which the ILO has defined and divided in to four types: natural disasters; financial and economic down turns; difficult social and political transitions; and armed conflicts.

Since 2004, the ILO has implemented 159 projects in fragile states, half of them with components on local development. In area-based approaches, cooperatives play a key role, particularly in countries affected by wars or in the aftermath of natural disasters.

By reducing vulnerability of disadvantaged communities and giving them the means to protect themselves, cooperatives contribute to recovery and reconstruction, but also contribute to crisis prevention, preparedness and mitigation.

Besides wars and post-conflict situations, cooperatives are also key actors in natural disasters response, where the effects are especially damaging in weak countries with no or extremely low disaster preparedness and response capacity.

On the way path transition to peace and stability, job creation is essential to re-establishing a decent life. In this context, the ILO and its partners implement Local Economic Development (LED) strategies with cooperatives involved in delivery. These programs stimulate, create and sustain employment, generate income, with a specific focus on youth and women empowerment. Given the magnitude of challenges faced in fragile situations, the cooperative movement has provided answers in recovery situations generating employment and providing viable solutions to affected groups.

In failed or recovering states, the cooperative approach can be different with additional emphasis on mutual self-help by stakeholders - which not only survives, but also prospers in adversity. Cooperatives have a proven advantage in their resilience to crisis and must be recognized as key local actors emerging out of in fragile situations.

>> To read more on ILO's projects in fragile states, visit [http://www.ilo.org/pardev/development-cooperation/WCMS\\_235634/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/pardev/development-cooperation/WCMS_235634/lang-en/index.htm)

>> More precisely on cooperative responses out of conflicts in fragile states, visit [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---ifp\\_crisis/documents/publication/wcms\\_116630.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_crisis/documents/publication/wcms_116630.pdf)



The Tunisian delegation in front of the girls' dormitory of an education cooperative in Bursa, Turkey

## COOP Champions: Kelvin Sergeant, ILO office for the Caribbean

COOP Champions features ILO colleagues from around the world working on cooperatives. It highlights their contributions towards promotion of cooperatives, and shares highlights on their experiences, current work, and future aspirations.

Mr. Kelvin Sergeant holds an MSC in economics and has over 20 years of experience both in the public and private sectors, especially in finance. Kelvin spent a number of years teaching University courses in finance, economics, statistics and entrepreneurship. Currently Kelvin is based in the ILO office for the Caribbean at Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. As Enterprises Specialist, he engages in various area of work from SMEs, cooperatives, green economy and green jobs to productivity, social finance and job creation issues. He works closely with the Skills specialist, and colleagues in ACTRAV and ACTEMP.

Kelvin became interested in the cooperative sector when he worked as a consultant to provide advice to the Cooperative Credit Union League in the 1990s. He soon began advising financial cooperatives on various issues from the impact of the Free Trade Area of the Americas Programme on Credit Unions in the Caribbean to issues on globalization, the impact of technology and economic development on the movement.

Currently as focal point for cooperatives, he has provided technical assistance for cooperatives in Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, Grenada, Guyana and Dominica. He says "Although some of these countries may be

small the ratio of the population involved with cooperatives is quite high. In Dominica for example, over 80% of the population is involved in cooperatives. In some countries, the assets of financial cooperatives rival that of the largest commercial banks in the country." With this view, Kelvin works closely with cooperatives in different sectors as well as cooperative support institution such as government agencies, cooperative registrars and apex organization. More recently, he has been working very closely with COOP Unit on tool development "Begin and Expand Your Cooperative (BE COOP)".

Kelvin sees that there is demand for supporting cooperatives and the social and solidarity economy work in the region. He is committed to the development of new tools for the sector and he will continue to work with cooperatives to strengthen them and to ensure that they remain relevant and competitive as social and economic organization in a context that is profit oriented.

He says "The cooperatives care about people. Cooperatives are where members can get their first loans to buy a house or a car or even to educate their children". He thinks there is an urgent need for advocacy, skills training and the design of new strategies to attract the youths to non-financial cooperatives. In that regard, he considers there are many opportunities for training and research in a number of areas. "For example, should credit unions be regulated by central banks?" He believes that research is needed in this area urgently to counter the prevalent view that suggests that one size fits all.

>> For more information, visit ILO office for the Caribbean website <http://www.ilo.org/caribbean/lang--en/index.htm>



Domestic workers' cooperative launched on Clotil Walcott Day, 7 September, 2014.

## ILO Participation in “External Dimension of the Social Economy” organized by the EESC

The conference “**External Dimension of the Social Economy**” organized by the European Economic and Social Committee on Social Economy (EESC) was held on January 28 and 29 in Brussels.

The social economy is increasing in importance in the EU's development policies with its counterparts across the world. This development offers an opportunity for the EESC to reinforce its activities and links with civil society counterparts in third countries. In this light, the EESC Section organised debate, to generate recommendations for the EESC to boost its external action through more strategic, coordinated and effective work on the social economy.

Approximately 150 participants from EESC members, university, social economy and civil society organizations took part in the event.

Roberto Di Meglio from ILO COOP participated in the panel on the role of international organisations in promoting social economy. He presented the links between social economy, social cohesion and ILO activities since 2009. The main proposal from ILO was to reinforce the collaboration among on-going activities on SSE that each organization is undertaking. He also suggested exploring the possibility to define a joint technical cooperation project with the support of DEVCO, in order to strengthen SSE at the global level.

>> To see more information on European Economic and Social Committee on Social Economy, visit <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.home>

## ILO Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy in Puebla (Mexico)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the National Institute of Social Economy of Mexico (INAES) are organizing an Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) that will take place in Mexico, from 23 to 27 of November 2015, at the Ibero-American University in Puebla.

The collaboration stems from the fact that “Mexico, like many other countries in the Americas, has placed the promotion and development of the SSE on its agenda as an alternative advancing social and economic development for its population.” The need to create spaces to share experiences and generate knowledge among SSE actors from different sectors and countries of the continent and elsewhere”.

INAES' mandate is to promote the social economy in order to boost inclusion, strengthen labour markets by means of collective and associative entrepreneurship, develop or strengthen social safety nets, and promote better management and the revival of territorial spaces.

The 2012 Mexican Law on Social and Solidarity Economy underpinned the creation of INAES and provided the framework for its strategy and objectives, which comprise the dissemination of the SSE, training, support to productive projects, research and the fostering of participatory spaces.

One aim of the Academy is to spread the concept of SSE and to make its practices more noticeable in Mexico and elsewhere. The SSE is gaining importance in Mexico, since “the sector consists of around 60,943 social enterprises, comprising 12 million members (about 23 percent of the economically active

population occupied in the country, which is estimated to be just over 52 million persons). The Rural Social Organizations alone gather about 3 million people and hold 100 million hectares, which represent 51 percent of the country, 80 percent of its forests and 33 percent of its coastlines”.

Another objective of the Academy is to contribute to the recognition of SSE as a relevant transversal element in federal policies for social cohesion, social development and public welfare.

In addition, the SSE Academy seeks to bring about a special occasion for training and for the emergence of SSE agents in 32 states of Mexico. It is expected that around 70 people will participate in the academy including representatives of agencies of the social sector of the economy, government officials, scholars and representatives of civil society, as well as another 70 people coming from different countries of the world.

A set of articles and documents will be produced in the preparation for the Academy. It is expected that this material will support the development of the SSE in Mexico and contributes to feed the newly established Mexican SSE Observatory. The academy also intends to open participatory spaces for social economy agents, thus encouraging the emergence of new connections and joint actions and projects aiming at the development of the SSE in Mexico, in the Americas and all over the world.

>> To see more information on SSE Academy, visit <http://social-economy.itcilo.org/en/sse-academy-collective-brain>

## Official launch of the ILO publication “Tackling informality in e-waste management: The potential of cooperative enterprises”

The ILO publication “Tackling informality in e-waste management: The potential of cooperative enterprises” was officially launched on 28 January in the ILO headquarters in Geneva. This working paper is a joint effort by the ILO’s Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR) and the Cooperatives Unit (COOP) to look at the potential of cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy enterprises in formalizing and enterprises and workers in the electronic waste value chains.

The publication looks at the roles which cooperatives can play in responding to the challenges of e-waste recycling, and includes case studies from Bolivia and Serbia, among others. The recommendations brought forward in the publication include creation of improved enabling environment for the development of cooperatives working on e-waste; a more participatory development of public policies, guidelines and regulations on e-waste management; and training and capacity building to ensure workers’ awareness on sound e-waste management.

### ILO COOP publications

#### BOOK

H. Henry. 2015.

**Guidelines for cooperative legislation, third revised edition in Arabic**

*Guidelines for cooperative legislation, third revised edition is now available in Arabic.*

This third edition has been produced to incorporate more recent developments. It 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 innovations in cooperative enterprises. A Russian translation was undertaken by the Belgorod University and will be available online shortly.

>>English, French and Spanish [http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS\\_195533/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_195533/lang--en/index.htm)

>>Arabic [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/--emp\\_ent/documents/publication/wcms\\_345448.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/--emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_345448.pdf)

#### BLOG

**Work in Progress: Can cooperatives deliver more jobs and greater social inclusion in a changing world of work?**

In the ILO’s Work in Progress Blog, COOP’s Simel Esim and Waltteri Katajamäki report on cooperatives as a source of innovation. And provide answers as to how cooperatives engage in the changing world of work?

>>For more information visit; <http://iloblog.org/2015/02/18/can-cooperatives-deliver-more-jobs-and-greater-social-inclusion-in-a-changing-world-of-work/>

Around the time of the publication’s launch, the ILO was invited to present it in the Basel Convention webinar series, organized by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm Conventions. These two seminars attracted a total of more than 20 participants from all over the world, and the presentations by David Seligson of SECTOR and Waltteri Katajamäki of COOP were followed by discussion and sharing of experiences. The Spanish translation of the publication will be forthcoming shortly.

>> The publication “Tackling informality in e-waste management: The potential of cooperative enterprises” is available at [http://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/publications/WCMS\\_315228/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/publications/WCMS_315228/lang--en/index.htm)

>> The webinar recordings can be viewed at the Basel Convention website at <http://www.basel.int/Default.aspx?tabid=4210&meetId=0204039F-1A81-E411-B22F-005056856044&lang=en>

### Noteworthy resources

#### ARTICLES OF NEWSLETTER

**ICMIF and International Labour Organization working together, Voice 80, ICMIF, p16**

Voice is ICMIF’s quarterly magazine, containing stories and news embracing the sector as well as in-depth interviews with chief executives. A meeting last year between ILO DG Mr Guy Ryder and ICMIF’s Chief Executive, Shaun Tarbuck allowed ICMIF to renew links with the ILO, a UN agency which has played an important role for the cooperative business sector over the years.

>>To download Voice 80 magazine, visit <http://www.icmif.org/voice-80>

#### REPORT

**Survey of Co-operative Capital Report**

The Survey of Cooperative Capital Report examines the debt and equity instruments used to finance the assets and operations of cooperatives. The report looks at capital in cooperatives around the world. It tries to explore how to access additional member capital or external capital while still adhering to cooperative principles.

The research also focused on the special circumstances that apply to smaller and start-up co-operatives, providing an overview of selected programmes and innovations internationally. The survey includes references to new and smaller cooperatives, as well as some of the global 300 and financial cooperatives.

>>To download full text, see at <http://ica.coop/en/media/library/publications/survey-co-operative-capital-report>

## My.Financial.Coop – Is there a need for training material for managing financial cooperatives?

Financial cooperatives have a significant place among the cooperative movement. Although it is estimated that financial cooperatives represent less than 10 percent of all cooperatives in the world, they account for approximately 27 percent of all cooperatives' employees and over 65 percent of all cooperatives' member-customers.

Providing financial services requires specific technical knowledge and skills. However, many cooperatives are short of members and/or employees who are trained on financial management, making it challenging for a cooperative to provide effective and beneficial financial services. As a response to this challenge, the ILO has started to work on a training package on management of financial cooperatives tentatively called My.Financial.Coop.

In order to have a better picture of the need for training tools for managing financial cooperatives and whether this need has been already met, an in-depth qualitative survey was conducted with 12 ILO Enterprises Specialists based in field offices. The findings of the survey shed light on the current challenges that financial cooperatives are facing as well as on how training materials assisting financial cooperatives address these challenges. The main findings of the survey were as follows:

### *1) Training materials can help financial cooperatives in their most pressing challenges*

ILO Enterprises Specialists considered that lack of experienced and skilled human resources, inadequacy or absence of management tools, inadequacy or lack of IT infrastructure and limited access to finance are among the most critical challenges that financial cooperatives face. Training materials can build financial cooperatives' capacities equipping their leaders and members with skills on various aspects of financial cooperative management. Training materials can also provide their users with management tools. Although training materials cannot improve the IT infrastructure of financial cooperatives nor offer access to finance, they can point to examples of how financial cooperatives can improve in these areas as well.

### *2) Marketing and exploring new financial products are topics rarely covered by training materials*

Majority of the respondents said that they are aware of existing training materials for financial cooperatives. They thought these training materials cover the basics of financial cooperatives (including types of financial cooperatives and cooperative principles), risk management and internal as well as external audit issues. On the other hand, topics such as marketing, information technology and financial cooperatives'

### TOPICS MOST COVERED BY TRAINING MATERIALS FOR FINANCIAL COOPERATIVES

Basics of financial cooperatives (incl. types of financial cooperatives & cooperative principles) ....	All
Internal and external audit .....	All
Risk management .....	All
Compliance/standards – accounting and financial reporting.....	86%
Credit and loan assessment and recovering.....	86%
Financial cooperatives' most common products: savings, and credit and loans .....	86%
How to start a financial cooperative.....	86%
Asset liability management .....	71%
Cooperative governance management .....	71%
Information technology .....	43%
Marketing.....	43%
Other potential products: Insurance, money transfer, payments, remittances .....	43%

less common products (for example, insurance, remittances, payments, etc.) are less frequently addressed in existing training materials for financial cooperatives.

### *3) Main target audience of training materials are the leader and members of financial cooperatives*

Most of the training materials have existing financial cooperatives' leader and members as their main target audience (86 percent). Some training materials focus on cooperative apex organizations (57 percent) and fewer on individuals who want to establish new financial cooperatives (43 percent).

In failed or recovering states, the cooperative approach is different since it emphasizes mutual self-help by stakeholders - which not only survives, but also prospers in adversity. Cooperatives have a proven advantage in their resilience to crisis and must be recognized as key local actors emerging out of in fragile situations.

>> To read more on ILO's projects in fragile states, visit [http://www.ilo.org/pardev/development-cooperation/WCMS\\_235634/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/pardev/development-cooperation/WCMS_235634/lang--en/index.htm)

>> More precisely on cooperatives' responses out of conflicts in fragile states, visit [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---ifp\\_crisis/documents/publication/wcms\\_116630.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_crisis/documents/publication/wcms_116630.pdf)

## COOP Staff News

After two years in ILO COOP, Mr Walterri Katajamäki has taken up a new position as JPO on monitoring and evaluation in the ILO country office for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. From April 2015, he joined to work with the YAPASA Project

to Promote Enterprise Development for Youth in Rural Areas of Zambia. Walterri has contributed to ILO COOP through his work on My.COOP, dissemination, development of a range of publications and acting as focal point on rural economy and green jobs.

Mr Guilherme Suedekum completed his six month internship with ILO COOP and Social Finance Programme at the end of March. He worked and contributed the background research on financial cooperatives. Guilherme will continue as an external collaborator on developing My.Financial.Coop training programme. Mr Hugo Oberson completed his six month internship with the ILO COOP at the end of March 2015. He worked and contributed to updating a brief on cooperatives in fragile and post conflict states.

Ms Lenore Matthew has begun a research internship on social care cooperatives, a joint placement in the Cooperatives Unit and the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch. Over the next six months, she will work on various projects focused on gender dynamics in care cooperatives, including a global mapping of existing social care cooperatives. Lenore is a social worker from the US and has worked in the US, Guatemala, Argentina and Brazil. She is currently earning her PhD in Social Work with a focus on gender, labor participation, and informal employment.

Ms Deborah Fassina has joined ILO COOP team as intern. In the next six months she will work on different projects

focused on Social and Solidarity Economy and Local Economic Development. Deborah is a student from Italy, has a degree in International Relations and she is currently doing a master in collaboration with EURICSE on the management of Social Enterprises.



From left Deborah Fassina and Lenore Matthew

## Upcoming events

### MAY

**27-30** ICA Research Conference 2015 in Paris “Future of the cooperative model: creativity, innovation and research Conference” For more information see, <http://www.ica-paris2015.com/>

### JUNE

**2-4** Call for Papers for the CASC Conference in Ottawa, (Deadline for Proposals 16 Jan, 2015) For more information, see <http://www.coopresearch.coop/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Call-for-Papers-CASC-2015-Eng-final.pdf>

### JULY

**27-31** ILO Academy on Social Solidarity Economy in Johannesburg, South Africa “Social innovation in the world of work.” For more information, see <http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org/en>

### AUGUST

**31 (up to 4 Sep)** ILO Academy on Sustainable Enterprises in Lusaka, Zambia. For more information, see [http://www.itcilo.org/calendar/25725?set\\_language=en](http://www.itcilo.org/calendar/25725?set_language=en)

### SEPTEMBER

**17-19** The 27th Annual EAEPE Conference 2015 (Call for papers on “Co-Operative Economy and Collective Ownership”. Deadline of abstract on 1st May 2015), in Genova, Italy. For more information, see [http://eaepe.org/?page=research\\_areas&side=z\\_cooperative\\_economy\\_and\\_collective\\_ownership](http://eaepe.org/?page=research_areas&side=z_cooperative_economy_and_collective_ownership)

### NOVEMBER

**8-10** ICA-ILO Cooperatives and the World of Work Research Conference (Deadline for abstracts 15 Feb, 2015) For more information, see [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---coop/documents/event/wcms\\_310424.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---coop/documents/event/wcms_310424.pdf)

**10-12** ICA Global Conference, “Toward 2020: What will your co-operative look like?” For more information, see <http://antalya2015.coop/>

**23-27** ILO Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy in Puebla, Mexico.



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