



International  
Labour  
Organization

# ILO and Cooperatives

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## Editorial

The last quarter of 2013 has witnessed key realisations that form significant points of reference for ILO, its constituents and cooperative stakeholders for years to come. From working toward creation and conservation of employment through workers' cooperatives in Greece, to adoption of a resolution on statistics on cooperatives critical benchmarks have been laid down.

In a historical first ILO partnered with the Greek Confederation of Trade Unions and their training centre to provide training on "Creation and conservation of employment through workers' cooperatives". With ILO support, a global guide on job preservation has been released in Greek.

Another historical first was the adoption of a resolution on statistics on cooperatives at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians calling for developmental work on the measurement of cooperatives and a progress report at the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2018.



The ILO had a strong presence in ICA's Global Conference on "A Co-operative Decade in Action" in Cape Town, held in Africa for the first time, with ILO Deputy Director General Greg Vines representing the ILO Director General (DG). The ILO sessions sharing findings of the initiative on cooperatives and the post-2015 development agenda were very well attended both in Cape Town and at the 6th Mont-Blanc Meetings in Chamonix. We share the survey highlights on the role and potential of cooperatives for achieving the goals under the new sustainable development framework here with you.

A delegation from the World Farmers' Organization visited the ILO, meeting with the ILO DG, and ILO resource people participated in a seminar on International Trade among Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific in Kunming. ILO participated in the Day of Cooperatives in Nîmes, the tradition of which had a strong influence on Albert Thomas, ILO's first DG and an eminent cooperator.

Rawand Al-Madmouj, who coordinated and oversaw the promotion of women's participation, empowerment and equality in cooperatives in the oPt on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment", is the COOP Champion featured in this issue. We also welcome Marina Bresciani, the new coordinator of the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives who answered our questions.

The 2nd Meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy took place with the participation of a growing number of UN agencies. In this issue ILO COOP is announcing the launch of its new visual identifier which is based on the global cooperative marque that was adopted as the symbol of the cooperative movement in late 2013 to strengthen the identity of cooperative enterprises.

In late 2013, the cooperative world lost two great leaders in the course of a few weeks: Professor Ian Macpherson, a leading cooperative historian and Dr. Yehudah Paz, a distinguished academic and a board member of the ICA. They will be sorely missed as their legacies live on in the vast body of work they leave behind inspiring generations to come.

**Simel Esim, Manager, Cooperatives Unit**

## ICA General Assembly and Global Conference Was Held in Africa for the First Time in Its History

The ILO participated in the 118<sup>th</sup> International Co-operative Alliance Global Conference in Cape Town in November 2013 along with 1,100 people from across the globe. The conference on “A Co-operative Decade in Action” was organized around the interconnecting themes of the Blueprint strategy on participation, sustainability, identity and finance. It was the first time the ICA held its Global Conference and General Assembly in Africa with 350 participants joining in from the region.

Greg Vines, Deputy Director General for Management and Reform, represented the ILO DG giving a keynote speech. He highlighted three areas of joint action for the ILO: Cooperatives and sustainable development; statistics on cooperatives; and application of labour standards in cooperative enterprises. Mr Vines held a meeting with the ICA President, Dame Pauline Green and Director General Chuck Gould following upon the priorities identified during the meeting of the ILO DG with the ICA President in Brussels in December 2012 and extended an invitation to the ICA President to take part in the International Labour Conference in 2014.

Mr Vines chaired an ILO session on cooperatives and the post-2015 development agenda with close to 100 cooperative leaders, researchers and practitioners participating. Simel Esim, ILO Cooperatives Unit Head, pointed out how cooperatives were absent from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that come to an end in 2015. Professor Fredrick Wanyama shared the results of his study on cooperatives' contributions to the MDGs and the proposed sustainable development goals. ILO Pretoria Office Director Vic Van Vuuren who joined the session as a discussant provided insights on the role of cooperative enterprises in the private sector and their relations with the government. Rodrigo Gouveia, ICA Policy Director also reflected on the ways the cooperative movement can engage in the UN processes around the post 2015 development framework to ensure that the contributions of cooperative enterprises to sustainable development are recognized.



The ILO took active part in other sessions during the ICA event. Simel Esim spoke on a panel on private sector development policies and strategies and the added value of cooperative enterprises along with representatives from FAO, Fair Trade Africa and COMESA and chaired a session on the challenges to achieving gender equity in membership and leadership of cooperatives in a day-long meeting on “Growing Cooperative Enterprises Globally”, organized by Cooperatives Europe and ICA Africa. She also participated as a speaker in a session organized by EURICSE on the relation between cooperative movement and social innovation. A number of ILO staff and partners, including Grania Mackie, Cebisile Nyambe and Mirna de Hart, COOP Champions who actively promote working with cooperatives and social economy, participated in the sessions during the conference exchanging with cooperative stakeholders.

>> For more information on the International Cooperative Alliance General Assembly and Global Conference, see <http://ica.coop/en/events/2013-ica-global-conference-and-general-assembly>

>> Read the ILO Inside Interview with ILO DDC Greg Vines [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---ifp\\_seed/documents/event/wcms\\_230603.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_seed/documents/event/wcms_230603.pdf)

>> Read about and watch the video of Simel Esim's introduction to the session on cooperatives and the post-2015 sustainable development framework <http://www.thenews.coop/40168/news/development/co-operatives-need-be-un%E2%80%99s-post-2015-development-agenda/>

>> Watch the interview with Professor Frederick Wanyama on his paper on “What have cooperatives got to do with sustainable development goals?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiPyZQ4W72A>

>> Watch Simel Esim's Interview on CNBC Africa on “How vital are co-operatives in creating economic prosperity?” [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Y46zCTjJk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Y46zCTjJk)

>> Read about the session on cooperatives and social innovation <http://www.thenews.coop/40188/news/consumer/co-operatives-must-become-innovation-leaders/#.UussibRIFLs>

## COOP Participation at the Mont-Blanc Meetings

The 6<sup>th</sup> *Mont-Blanc Meetings: the International Forum for the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Leaders* took place on November 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Chamonix, France. Participants to the Forum came from all around the world, and several international and regional institutions were present.

ILO's COOP Unit organized a plenary session to present the highlights of its initiative on cooperatives and sustainable development goals in the post-2015 development agenda. The manager of the Unit, Ms Simel Esim was joined in the plenary by Mr. Peter Utting from UNRISD as a discussant, and Mr. Jean-Philippe Poulnot of the Groupe Chèque Déjeneur as facilitator. The discussion was preceded by a pre-recorded statement from the ICA President Dame Pauline Green on the ICA Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade with an emphasis on the sustainability principle.

Ms Esim presented the initiative of the ILO and partners from conceptual, methodological, statistical and operational perspectives. She reflected on the examples of cooperatives' contributions to the MDGs and ways they can continue to do that in more substantial ways for the upcoming universal development goals, and shared some of the preliminary results of the online survey.

Mr. Utting highlighted the importance of accumulating evidence on the cooperative advantage in achieving development goals in general and employment related ones in particular.



## Les Rencontres du Mont-Blanc The Mont-Blanc Meetings

The ILO presentation was followed by comments and questions from the participants on a range of issues including cooperatives and the post-2015 development agenda.

The Mont-Blanc Meetings' vision is to promote and bring visibility to the SSE, and this year's theme was "Changing the course of globalization through social and solidarity economy: Towards post-2015 Development Goals".

>> For more information on the Mont Blanc Meetings, see <https://www.rencontres-montblanc.coop/>

>> Read the Final Declaration of the Meeting: <https://www.rencontres-montblanc.coop/en/page/final-declaration-mbm-2013>

>> For a video of the plenary session (in French), see <http://webtv.coop/video/Organisation-Internationale-du-Travail-%2528OIT%2529/c55fa26bdcb39b790fb907adfe1f94fa>

## Survey on Cooperatives and Sustainable Development

As mentioned in the previous issue of COOP News, the Cooperatives Unit has launched an initiative seeking to ensure cooperatives' voices are being heard in the discussions towards setting up a new post-2015 development framework after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) come to an end. As part of the initiative, the Unit disseminated a survey aiming to look into the cooperative movement's views on the role and potential of cooperatives for achieving the goals under the new sustainable development framework. The survey received more than 275 responses from cooperative stakeholders around the world.

On the MDGs the survey findings show that the respondents deemed MDG 3 on promotion of gender equality and women empowerment and MDG 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability as the goals that cooperatives played the most important role in.

Most of the respondents believe that cooperatives need technical and financial support as well as conducive legislation

and enabling environment to be able to fulfill their potential. Some also voiced the need for cooperation between cooperatives, as outlined in the sixth cooperative principle, to avoid competition – something that happens as cooperatives expand. In relation to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, close to half of the respondents indicated they did not participate actively in any consultation process. The main reason given was lack of information. When asked whether the proposed SDGs were in line with cooperatives' priorities, 93 percent answered yes.

While respondents' answers are more likely to be perceptions than precise accounts, the survey has provided useful insights on the perspectives of cooperative movement opinions on relation to sustainable development, and the new goals being proposed. The COOP Unit will be sharing the results of the survey at various platforms around the Post-2015 Development Agenda during 2014-2015. To find out more about this initiative and the survey, please contact the ILO COOP Unit at [coop@ilo.org](mailto:coop@ilo.org).

**ILO COOP has a new visual identifier!**

ILO COOP announces the launch of its new visual identifier which is based on the global cooperative identity that was adopted as the symbol of the cooperative movement in late 2013. The global cooperative marque aims at strengthening the identity of cooperative enterprises differentiating them from other types of business.

>> For more information on the cooperative marque and how it can be used, visit <http://identity.coop/>.

**ICLS Resolution on Statistics on Cooperatives**

Accurate, reliable and relevant statistics are needed as the basis for sound policy advice and support to countries. Statistics on cooperatives are not an exception to this rule. In addition to their importance for the design of appropriate policies and interventions, statistics on cooperatives are essential to quantify the impact they have on their members and on the economy as a whole, as well as how they cope in times of crisis.<sup>1</sup>

The International Conference of Labour Statisticians<sup>2</sup> (ICLS) held in Geneva from 2-11 October 2013 gave ILO constituents the opportunity to reaffirm the importance of having more comprehensive and internationally comparable statistics on the cooperatives. It is worth mentioning that a specific item on statistics on cooperatives was included in the 2013 ICLS agenda for the first time in its history.

The Office was encouraged by the delegates to introduce the topic for more in-depth discussion at the forthcoming ICLS. The session allowed delegates to share examples on how cooperative statistics are already being collected through different surveys in different countries. Challenges in collecting them included inadequate questions and information, lack of information on informal cooperatives, lack of comparable statistics, and issues in collecting the required information through establishment surveys.

Several country representatives expressed their interest in sharing their experiences and to participate in pilot exercise to test various measurement approaches on cooperatives. At the end of the session, a draft resolution concerning further work on statistics of cooperatives was discussed. Proposals for amending the text of the draft resolution were made and agreed upon.

Paragraph 8 of the Recommendation 193 on the Promotion of Cooperatives states “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”

>> To read the full text of the Recommendation 193, see [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEX\\_PUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:R193](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEX_PUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R193)

**19<sup>th</sup> International Conference  
of Labour Statisticians****Geneva, 2–11 October 2013**

>> To read the room document “Statistics on cooperatives”, see [http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS\\_222036/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_222036/lang--en/index.htm)

>> To read the Conference Report, including the Resolution concerning further work on statistics of cooperatives, see [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms\\_234124.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_234124.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> ILO : *Statistics on cooperatives, Room document 6, 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (Geneva, 2013)*.

<sup>2</sup> *The ICLS is a statutory conference of the ILO that is convened by the Governing Body of the ILO and guided by its Standing Orders.*

## Training on Worker Cooperatives in Greece with Trade Unions

In October 2013, ACTRAV and COOP Unit partnered with the Greek Confederation of Trade Unions (GSEE) and its training centre (KANEP) to provide training under the theme of "Creation and conservation of employment through workers' cooperatives".

Faced with a large number of enterprise closures and layoffs, Greek confederation has been exploring ways in which sound enterprises, experiencing problems induced by the crisis, could be kept in operation under new forms of ownership to preserve jobs.

The training which took place in Athens convened members of GSEE emanating from workplaces and regional councils, as well as educators from KANEP. Representatives from the Ministry of the Economy were also present.

The sessions covered issues such as the need and means to monitor the health of an enterprise ("transparency"), the recourses available in the event of a likely closure ("business recovery"), and the ways to create and operate under a coop-

erative model. Specialists from France, Italy and Quebec as well as from CECOP-CICOPA were invited to share their experiences and applications to the Greek situation. A report drafted by CICOPA "Promoting cooperatives and the Social Economy in Greece" was released for the occasion in Greek, and a state of play of the situation regarding the creation of cooperatives in Greece was also presented for participants to discuss ways forward.

The discussions concluded with an agreement on the need to modernize the laws and the support system in Greece. A number of regional councils of GSEE also committed to developing local action plans to provide support for initiatives in this area. Finally, with the support of the ILO, a global guide on job preservation will soon be released by the trade union confederation.

>> To read The Tyee's article about Greece's first worker-run factory, see <http://thetyee.ca/Life/2013/10/17/Greek-Crisis-Response/>

## World Farmers' Organization Visits the ILO

World Farmers' Organization (WFO) is an international organization that brings together national producer and agricultural cooperative organizations throughout the world to strengthen their positions within value chains.

A delegation from the WFO, led by Executive Director, Mr. Marco Marzano de Marinis and WFO President, Mr. Robert Carlson, visited the ILO on October 2. The delegation met with the ILO DG, Mr. Guy Ryder, to discuss the role of farmers' organizations in rural development and potential future collaboration of the two organizations. The WFO delegation was encouraged to hear about ILO's renewed commitment to work in rural economies, particularly through the selection of Decent Work in the Rural Economy as one of ILO's eight Areas of Critical Importance (ACIs).

In addition to meeting the ILO DG, the delegation met with leaders and members of the ACI on rural economy, as well as COOP and other Enterprises Department staff. As members of the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement



of Cooperatives (COPAC), both organizations expressed their interest in strengthening and revitalizing COPAC in promoting cooperatives, particularly in rural areas.

>> Visit the WFO website at <http://www.wfo-oma.org/>

## ILO Participation in the Seminar on International Trade among Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific

In partnership with the ICA, the All-China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) organized a seminar on International Trade among Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific in Kunming, China, in November. 35 participants from 15 countries attended the seminar. Resource people from ILO offices in Indonesia and Sri Lanka were invited along with several other cooperative organizations.

Upon request of the ACFSMC, a background paper was prepared and presented by Mr. Huseyin Polat on *Competitive Advantage of Cooperatives in International Trade and Marketing*.

Following the presentations by experts from Singapore, Korea and other countries, a forum was organized to discuss how to facilitate trade and cooperation among cooperatives.

During the seminar, the ILO, ICA and ACFSMC discussed the potential and importance of future cooperation on cooperative development. The ILO's training package for agricultural cooperatives, My.COOP, has already been translated into Chinese by AFCSMC, and ILO COOP will be contacted to organize a joint testing workshop for a selected group of ACFSMC managers in 2014.

## Interview with the New COPAC Coordinator, Ms Marina Bresciani



COOP News talked with the new coordinator of Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), Ms Marina Bresciani, on the role of the Committee with respect to the UN initiatives on promotion of cooperatives and the global cooperative movement. Read here what Marina had to say to us.

### Could you please briefly introduce yourself; what is your background, where have you worked before?

In my studies, I concentrated on languages as well as economics and marketing. I was quite young when I started at the United Nations system in Rome in 1992. I worked for ten years in different divisions in FAO before moving onto working with the third sector in general and cooperatives in particular in Confcooperative in Italy.

In 2006 I started working as a European project technician, followed by work at the European Commission to design the axes of multifunctional agriculture. In 2009, I was asked to become a Regional Coordinator for Coldiretti, the biggest farmers' organization in Italy, to undertake fund raising and advocacy activities.

Since October 2013, I have been working as COPAC coordinator while I continue part-time with Coldiretti.

### How do you see the current role of COPAC in relation to the UN agency activities in promotion of cooperatives and with respect to the global cooperative movement?

The Committee represents a unique platform for advocacy, coordination and exchange of information on promotion of cooperatives. By working together on equal terms, COPAC members can complement and reinforce the work already undertaken by member organizations to encourage the international development community to become more supportive of cooperatives.

As the interface of United Nations agencies with the international cooperative movement, the Committee can bring out the message of the resilience of cooperatives in economic downturns and in impoverished communities. Bringing to the forefront international guidelines on promotion of cooperatives, including the ILO's Recommendation 193 (2002), is another critical role that COPAC can play.

### As a new coordinator, what is your vision for COPAC during your term? What do you think are your biggest opportunities and challenges?

COPAC has the capacity to represent an example of public-private partnerships in the world. The UN agencies and two private organizations in cooperative movement, the International Cooperative Alliance and the World Farmers Organization, have the opportunity to bring out critical success factors to strengthen cooperative enterprises in the world.

>> Visit COPAC website at <http://www.copac.coop/>

>> To find out more about Confcooperative, see [www.confcooperative.it/](http://www.confcooperative.it/)

>> To find out more about Coldiretti, see [www.coldiretti.it/](http://www.coldiretti.it/)

**The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC)** is the coordinating body for international inter-agency collaboration between the cooperative movement and the UN system on activities related to cooperatives and sustainable cooperative development.

Current members of the COPAC are ILO, ICA, FAO, UN DESA, and WFO.

## ILO COOP Participates in the CFS Side Event “Why Rural Cooperatives Are Needed in Feeding the World”

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) meets in Rome every year in October. In 2013 a side event on “Why rural cooperatives are needed in feeding the world” was organized by FAO, Plunkett Foundation, ICA and the ILO on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October. The theme of the side event was aligned with the World Food Day 2013 theme on sustainable food systems for food security and nutrition.

The side event was moderated by Ms Marcela Villarreal (Director of the Office of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development, FAO), with presentations from Mr. Peter Couchman (Plunkett Foundation) and Mr. Gwangseog Hong (ICA), followed by a commentary by Ms Sarala Gopalan (All India Women’s Education Fund Association), and closing remarks by Mr. Waltteri Katajamäki (ILO’s COOP Unit).

In his presentation, Mr. Couchman presented the Dunsany Declaration and its approach to rural cooperative development. He discussed the renewed interest in rural areas and cooperative principles, as well as the important role of women and youth.

Mr. Hong focused on cooperation among cooperatives, using Asia and Pacific region as an example on innovative approaches to transferring knowledge and information from coop to coop and emphasised the role of peer-to-peer approaches. Mr. Hong’s presentation showed that when working together, cooperatives in diverse economic activities can become successful.

In her commentary, Ms Gopalan shared experiences from India, related to women’s dairy cooperatives. She highlighted the importance of cooperative movement in the country. While cooperatives suffer a bad name, there are still an estimated 600,000 of them in all sectors of the economy.

Ms Gopalan emphasised the role of education, particularly for women; the social inclusion capacity of cooperatives; diversity and opportunities of cooperatives; and importance of organizing and working together, whether in a cooperative or another type of collective organization.

Mr. Katajamäki of the ILO gave concluding remarks presented some ways forward. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that cooperative legislation and policies are in line with the cooperative principles and that cooperatives have the right enabling environment to work in and access to services. He also emphasised the role of cooperatives in addressing job quality issues, related to decent work in food systems; and their role in democratization processes as they address the fundamental principles and rights at work as well as offering voice and representation for excluded groups. He also mentioned the ILO initiative around cooperatives and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and the role of cooperatives across all dimensions of sustainable development. Finally, Mr. Katajamäki brought up the issues of capacity building and partnerships, and the importance of statistics on cooperatives, which need to be improved to have reliable, internationally comparable quantitative data on the role cooperatives in creating quality jobs.

>> For information on CFS, see <http://www.fao.org/cfs/en/>

>> For more photos on the side event, see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/faonews/sets/72157636433418026/with/10209811224/>

>> To read the Dunsany Declaration for Rural Co-operative Development, see <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/645>



## UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (TFSSE) took place on the December 2<sup>nd</sup> in Geneva, with the participation of ILO, UNRISD, UN-NGLS, UNDP Geneva, UNDP Yemen, FAO, UN DESA, UNAIDS, and UNEP. The Task Force is a partnership initiative to assist countries, mobilize political will and momentum towards mainstreaming the issue of SSE in international and national policy frameworks.

The Inter-Agency TFSSE, established on September 2013, is an initiative aiming to bring together UN agencies and inter-governmental organizations with a direct interest in SSE as well as umbrella associations of international SSE networks. In this second meeting it was agreed that new members will be invited to join the Task Force, and umbrella associations of international SSE networks will be invited as observers (i.e. RIPESS, MBM, ICA and MEDESS, among others).

In order to raise awareness and improve the visibility of SSE within the UN system, the participants agreed to organize a side-event within the framework of the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Open Working Groups (OPGs) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The side event will be organized by the Mont-Blanc Meetings (MBM) along with the UNRISD and UN-NGLS, with the support of the governments of France, Ecuador and Morocco. The theme of the side event is "**Social and Solidarity Economy: Changing economic relations for equity and sustainable development in the post-2015 agenda**". The Declaration of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the MBM, the international Leading Group of the social and solidarity economy (SSE), and the recent creation of the Inter-Agency TFSSE, will be among the announcements at the event.

As the United Nations discusses the framework for the post-2015 development agenda and promotes development pathways that simultaneously foster economic dynamism, social and environmental protection and socio-political empowerment, it will be important to include SSE in the debate and show how the SSE organizations can play an important role in new development paths.

>> For more information about the TFSSE, visit: <http://www.unrisd.org/tfsse>

>> The secretariat of the Task Force will rotate from one member to another every six months, with UNRISD taking the first turn. For more information, please contact Marie-Adélaïde Mathei at [mathei@unrisd.org](mailto:mathei@unrisd.org)

### Coming soon...



The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy will be held in Campinas, Brazil, from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014.

The ILO SSE Academy is an interregional training course gathering practitioners from around the world, to share their experiences and meet with leading SSE specialists. The main topic of this edition is "**Social and Solidarity Economy: towards inclusive and sustainable development**".

The partners of this edition are **CIRIEC** (International Centre of Research on Social and Cooperative Economy), **EESC** (European Economic and Social Committee), **FACAMP** (Campinas University), **BNDES** (Brazilian Development Bank), **SEBRAE** (The Brazilian Service of support for Micro and Small Enterprises),

**SENAES** (The National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy in the Brazilian Ministry of Labour), **UNISOL** (Union of Cooperatives and Solidarity Enterprises of Brazil).

The training programme will combine a distance-learning and an on-campus training. To this end, an interactive **distance-learning platform** will be launched shortly. Along with the **Collective Brain** (<http://www.sseacb.net/>), this tool will contribute to creating a worldwide network of people interested in SSE.

>> For more information about the ILO SSE Academy, please visit: <http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org/>

..Stay tuned!



## COOP Champions: Rawand Al-Madmouj

This COOP News presents Ms Rawand Al-Madmouj, who worked as a national project officer for “Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment”, as a COOP champion. Rawand, who has an MA in economics, joined the ILO in 2008, working on entrepreneurial, cooperative and skills development activities under the MDG Joint UN country programme on “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in oPt”, which included work on cooperative management training. Prior to joining the ILO she worked with UNCTAD and UNHCR and local organizations in SME development and capacity building.

In her current work, Rawand coordinated and oversaw promotion of women’s participation, empowerment and equality in cooperatives in the oPt (occupied Palestinian territory). She organized and conducted the first ToT workshop using ILO cooperative management tools adapted to the Palestinian context. This was followed by a capacity building programme targeting women-only cooperatives, and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Labour’s (MoL) Cooperative Department.

The Palestinian cooperative unions can benefit from the support of cooperative extension workers for enhancing their capacities to provide value added services to their members. Inactive membership still undermines the overall performance of Palestinian cooperatives and their ability to develop their social enterprises effectively. They lack the legal know-how to resolve membership issues and require support in that regard.

In mid-2013, with support from MoL and cooperatives movement, an assessment was undertaken on cooperatives on the basis of active/inactive membership among agricultural cooperatives, where majority of women cooperatives exist in. The assessment focused on 232 agricultural cooperatives,

and women’s participation in those cooperatives and the agricultural sector. A quantitative assessment for the agricultural cooperatives in oPt was concluded in December 2013, when the key findings and recommendations of the assessment were also presented to MoL and other stakeholders. Following to ILO interventions, the MoL Cooperative Department capacities have been strengthened to address cooperative membership issues, including gender mainstreaming.

Rawand underlines that cooperatives in oPt have the potential to play an important role in economic and social development, while their actual contribution remains limited due to many constraints. These include low membership coverage, limited scope of economic activities, insufficient financial resources, lack of proper enabling legal framework, poor management performance and restrictions imposed by the occupation on their operations, preventing them from building partnerships and commercial linkages at regional and international levels. There is very limited investment to support the creation of value chains for cooperative products which would increase income, create jobs and enhance local production.

>> See Action Brief ILO Initiatives on Promoting Women’s Participation in Cooperatives in oPt [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_195164.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_195164.pdf)

>> See Policy Brief on Mainstreaming Gender Equality Concerns in Palestinian Cooperatives [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_208250.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_208250.pdf)

>> See ICA article on Benefits of Women Led Coops in Arab States <http://ica.coop/en/media/co-operative-stories/benefits-women-led-co-ops-arab-states>



## Youth Project Support on Cooperatives in Morocco

COOP collaborated with the ILO Youth@Work project in Morocco in its efforts to increase employment for youth. Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, this four year initiative (2012-2015) targets three regions of Morocco: the Casa/Rabat Axe, the Oriental region and the Agadir region, and aims to improve employment opportunities for youth and women in Morocco. The project addresses key constraints on the demand side of the labour market (strengthening a weak demand through entrepreneurship education and training) and problems concerning the match-making function of the labour market (improving the relatively weak services of local public employment offices).

In February 2013, the project launched a new round of the Youth to Youth Fund to offer grants of between 50,000 to 100,000 DH (approx. 5,000 to 10,000 Euros) for youth-led cooperatives or associations that promote green jobs or women entrepreneurship. The grants are accompanied by capacity-building workshops and a comprehensive training programme. Winning proposals receive funding from the Y2F and capacity building support, as well as mentorship to implement their programmes. Eight concept notes were selected to receive a grant based on the submission of a fully-fledge proposal as a prerequisite. To this end, the project cycle management tool produced by the COOPAfrica programme was translated into French by the Youth@Work project and made available to participants.

The training workshop was organized to support selected applicants in project cycle management and proposal writ-

ing. The ultimate goal was to assist them in developing and finalizing their fully-fledge proposal before the release of the first instalment. COOP was asked to organize a session to share experiences and lessons learned from the COOPAfrica Challenge Fund. The Presentation made by the Unit on *'the ILO and Cooperatives'* highlighted the role of the ILO and its Cooperatives Unit in the promotion of cooperatives. The presentation included lessons from the COOPAfrica programme, in particular the Challenge Fund component (e.g. objective, target groups, elements of success).

The discussion that followed offered an opportunity for participants to reflect on elements of success of cooperative enterprises, capacity-building of support structures, and the importance of cooperative education for members. In addition, COOP participated as resource person in the facilitation of working group sessions to directly support applicants on project cycle management. A number of participants expressed the need for additional specific assistance on cooperative-related issues. COOP will continue to provide technical support for the implementation of the Y2F in Morocco.

>> For Youth Employment Network News on Morocco, see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/yen/resources/newsletter/33.htm>

>> For COOPAfrica Challenge Fund, see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/ent/coop/africa/areas/challenge.htm>

>> For the cooperative Project Design Manual (in English), see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/ent/coop/africa/download/coopafriaprojectdesignmanual.pdf>

## Day of Cooperatives in Nîmes

On October 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 the COOP Unit participated in the Day of Cooperatives in Nîmes (France) organized by the national cooperative movement. Nîmes' school of thought on cooperatives represents largely the history of the French cooperative movement. In the early 20th century Nîmes became an intellectual centre for the cooperative movement, with economists, sociologists and philanthropists of many nations coming to discuss and present their ideas. The School of Nîmes is closely associated with the name of Mr. Charles Gide (1847-1932) who, in turn, strongly influenced Mr. Albert Thomas (1878-1932), the first Director General of the ILO and also an eminent cooperator.

Mr. Gide served on the ICA Central and Executive Committees for 30 years. Among the results of his influence on the international movement were the continuing emphasis on the role of cooperatives in achieving and maintaining international peace and his advocacy of a Cooperative Flag/Rainbow Flag as an official ensign of its commitment to internationalism.

The thought of Mr. Gide and the School of Nîmes is still up-to-date, retaining its relevance in relation to the current challenges, such as the insecurity, the employment, the role of employers, the new economic approaches. *"The true*

*mark of vitality, it is not to last, it is to reborn"* stated Mr. Gide. The revival of the cooperative movement is underway.

>> To read more on the evolution of cooperative thought in France, see <http://www.uwcc.wisc.edu/icic/orgs/ica/pubs/review/vol-88/france.html>



## Loss of Two Distinguished Cooperative Leaders

The cooperative world lost two great leaders in the course of few weeks in late 2013.

Professor Ian Macpherson was one of the leading figures of the cooperative movement in Canada, and amongst the leading authorities on cooperative history in the world.

Dr. Yehudah Paz worked throughout his life for peace and the cause of international cooperation. He held many leadership and managerial positions in the Israeli cooperative movement. He was also a distinguished academic, and a board member of the ICA.

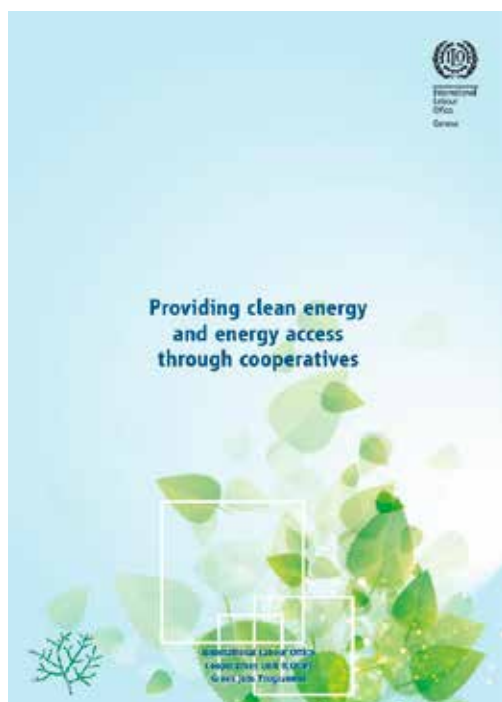
Both will be missed and remembered by the cooperative movement.

>> Obituary for Ian Macpherson: <http://www.thenews.coop/article/canadian-co-operators-mourn-death-ian-macpherson-0>

>> Obituary for Yehudah Paz: <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/israeli-movement-mourns-loss-leading-co-operator-and-campaigner-peace>

## Noteworthy Resources

### New COOP-related ILO publications



ILO COOP & ILO Green Jobs Programme: *Providing clean energy and energy access through cooperatives.*

This publication is a collection of case studies on cooperatives in energy production, distribution and consumption as a contribution to the on-going search for ways in which the goal of sustainable Energy for All can be turned into a reality.

Turkish translation of the publication by the Ministry of Customs and Trade is upcoming; if any of the COOP News readers is interested in translating the publication in other languages, please contact [coop@ilo.org](mailto:coop@ilo.org) for more information!

>> Download the publication at [http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/publications/WCMS\\_233199/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/publications/WCMS_233199/lang--en/index.htm)

ILO COOP & ILO HIV/AIDS and the World of Work Branch: *Cooperating out of HIV and AIDS. A Policy Brief.*

This policy brief looks at the potential cooperative enterprises have in overcoming HIV and AIDS through raising awareness, facilitating care and support, and creating employment.

>> Download the publication at [http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS\\_229621/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_229621/lang--en/index.htm)

ILO Sri Lanka & Australian Aid: *Building bridges with Papaya- Local Empowerment through Economic Development.* (ILO Sri Lanka)

This information note highlights the work of the ILO's LEED project in recovering livelihoods in post conflict Sri Lanka. Funded through AusAid, the project works through advancing the cooperative option for marketing the produce of the local communities. <http://www.ilo.org/coop>

The ILO publication "Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation" by Hagen Henry has now been translated into French and Spanish, and are available at [http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS\\_195533/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_195533/lang--en/index.htm).

The ILO publication "Resilience in a downturn: The power of financial cooperatives" by Johnston Birchall has now been translated into French and Spanish, and will be shortly available at [www.ilo.org/coop](http://www.ilo.org/coop).

### Other relevant resources:

The Canadian Co-operative Association have launched a "Discover the Co-operative Difference Programme" for cooperative members and employees. Check it out at <http://www.learninglibrary.com/ccacatalog233/p-816-discover-the-co-operative-difference-program-for-co-operative-members-and-employees.aspx>

## COOP Staff News

Ms Jia Qi and Ms Cathy Seya both completed their internships with the Cooperatives Unit in November, and have returned to their studies. While Jia Qi went to Beijing, Cathy returned to the Cornell University to finish her degree. COOP Unit wishes them all the best in their future assignments!

Ms Valentina Verze started her eight month internship on December 2, 2013 within the Italian programme "Master dei Talenti Neolaureati". She is supporting the organization of the 4th SSE Academy, scheduled for July 2014. She will work at the Cooperatives Unit in Geneva for four months, after which she will move to the ILO-ITC in Turin for the following four months.

## Upcoming events

**2014 is the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF)!** It aims at raising the profile of family and smallholder farming, with a goal to reposition family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies. Cooperatives can play a key role in providing services, stability and representation to family farmers.

For more information on IYFF and related events, see [www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/](http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/) and <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/co-operatives-embrace-international-year-family-farming>

### January

- 16-17.** Social Entrepreneurs: Have Your Say! Empowering Social Entrepreneurs for Innovation, Inclusive Growth and Jobs. Strasbourg, France. For information, see [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index_en.htm)

### February

- 4.** MBM Side Event "Social and Solidarity Economy: Changing economic relations for equity and sustainable development in the post-2015 agenda" at the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Open Working Groups on Sustainable Development Goals. New York. For information, see <https://rencontres-montblanc.coop/en/page/mbm-side-event-united-nations>

### May

- 7-9.** INAISE AGM and Conference, Bochum, Germany. <http://www.inaise.org/>

- 26-29.** Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation Annual Conference. Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. See <http://www.coopresearch.coop/conferences/2014-conference/>.

### June

- 25-28.** ICA Research Conference 2014, Pula, Croatia. Call for papers is now open, for details see <http://www.ica2014.coop/>.

### July

- 28-Aug 1.** Social and Solidarity Economy Academy, Campinas, Brazil. For information, see <http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org/> and page 8 of this COOP News!

### October

- 6-9.** International Summit of Cooperatives, Quebec, Canada. For information, see [http://www.sommetinter.coop/cms/en\\_CA/sites/somint/home.html](http://www.sommetinter.coop/cms/en_CA/sites/somint/home.html)

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