

Minutes of the ICA Global Women's Committee

December 2000, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Present

Vanda Guiliano	Chair, ICA Global Women's Committee
MariaElena Chavez	Secretary, ICA Global Women's Committee
Nancy Beatriz Botta	Consejo FECOTEL, Argentina
Norma Beatriz Tommasi	Consejo FECOTEL, Argentina
Isabel Fidanza	Colegio de Graduados en Cooperativismo, Argentina
Welia Silva	OCB, Brazil
E. Caetano de Oliveira	Brazil
Cleonica Pereira Pedroa	Brazil
Maria do Rosanio de Maraen	Brazil
Marian Lucas Jeffries	Co-op Atlantic, Canada
Miriam Baez Rojas	CONACOOOP, Costa Rica
Anne Santamaki	FCCA, Finland
Stefania Marcone	LEGACOOOP, Italy
Rahaiah Baهران	ANGKASA, Malaysia
Adam Piechowski	National Co-operative Council, Poland
Hanna Wroblewska	National Co-operative Council, Poland
Leslie Gutierrez	Coop PetroPeru, Peru
Celia Frutos	CRAMC, Paraguay
Rita Friere Eteves	COOMEICIPAR, Paraguay
Jorge Rato	FENACERCI, Portugal
Rogério Cacao	FENACERCI, Portugal
Galina Kissleva	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Nina Pravdina	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Natalia Prouttskova	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Natalia Sokolova	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Antonina Smirnova	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Valentina Poustynnikova	Centrosoyuz, Russia
Lulma Perdumo	FECOVI, Uruguay
Alba Aguilar	CUDECOOP; Uruguay

Apologies

Memouna Baboni	FECECAM, Benin
Béatrice Pedé	FECECAM, Benin
Diva Benevides Pinho	Organization of Brazilian Co-operatives OCB, Brazil
Ana Isabel Solano	Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica
Vera Srámková	Union of Czech & Moravian Consumer Co-ops, Czech Republic
Hatsuko Omori	Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union (JCCU), Japan
Akiko Yamauchi	Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union (JCCU), Japan
Kitazaski Hatsue	ZENGYOFUREN, Japan
Elba Echevarría Díaz	Co-operative Institute, University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico
Marioara Negoita	CENTROCOOP, Romania
Ramachandra Rameshwari	SNCF, Singapore
Muriel Russell	Co-operative Women's Guild, UK

Welcome

The Chairperson, **Vanda Giuliano**, and Secretary, **MariaElena Chavez**, welcomed members to the meeting. The Secretary expressed regrets received from Ana Isabel Solano and Elba Echevarría who were attending the Americas Regional Assembly meetings and a number of other members who was unable to travel to Rio. Many of these provided input to the meeting in written format.

Minutes of the Plenary meeting 1999, Quebec (Canada)

The **Secretary** presented the draft minutes of the plenary noting that no amendments were received. **Members** adopted the minutes.

Committee's change of name and review of Constitution

The **Secretary** reminded members that the ICA Board had made a specific request for the Committee to consider changing the name of the Committee for better reflect its new focus – that of promoting gender equality. The ICA Board had expressed hope that the Committee might open its membership to include women and men so as to together examine practical ways of making progress on the promotion of gender equality in co-operatives. The Chairperson, ICA Board Liaison, and Secretary drafted a proposal for the change of name of the Committee and revised the Constitution of the Committee to reflect the proposed role of focusing on the promotion of gender equality. Given the cost of travel to Rio, it was expected that there would be limited participation in the meetings, therefore comments and suggestions to the Constitution were solicited from members in advance of the meetings. Diva Benevides Pinho of the Organization of Co-operative of Brazil (OCB) sent extensive comments and a number of members sent supportive comments to the draft. The draft Constitution, circulated in the documentation for the meeting, incorporated the amendments suggested by members.

Norma Tommasi brought to the attention of members that the questionnaire asking for comments on the Constitution was never received in Argentina. The **Secretary** replied saying that this was likely as the questionnaire was sent to members of the Committee and not all ICA members. She encouraged ICA members in Argentina to become members of the Committee.

Members reviewed the document draft paragraph by paragraph and noted that some suggestions could not be withheld given that that they were discriminatory – either towards women or men.

The Secretary informed members that as the Executive Committee agreed that the change of name would only affect the Global Committee and that regional autonomy would continue. However, the Executive Committee encouraged the regional committees to discuss gender issues and policies and move toward a gender perspective.

There being no further specific comments on the draft the Constitution, **Members** unanimously adopted the Constitution and agreed to present it to the ICA Board for its formal approval in April 2001.

2001 Work programme

The **Chairperson** reported on the discussions of the Executive Committee with regard to the possible areas of activity for the year 2001. Statutory meetings were being planned - an Executive Committee in Rome and Seoul, and a plenary meeting should be held during the ICA General Assembly in Seoul (Korea) in October 2001. In addition, a joint meeting with Consumer Co-operative International and the International Agricultural Organization (ICAO)– the ICA specialized bodies for consumer and agricultural co-operatives were being planned to discuss women and the food security and safety issue. The **Chairperson** noted the importance of including women's point of view in the discussion of these issues as issues such GMOs and mad cow are issues that women as mothers, spouses and individual consumers must deal with on a daily basis.

She added however, that the Committee should increasingly focus on issues such as poverty and democracy and examine these issues from a gender perspective. This type of input could be useful to the ICA General Assembly. The Committee need to find a platform for action; it should become more visible and take part in ICA's policy discussions. Only in this way could gender mainstreaming become a reality and could the Committee concretely contribute to the implementation of the ICA Gender Strategy.

Miriam Baez Rojas added that another area of work for the Committee could be domestic violence. Co-operatives could have an important role to play to combat domestic violence and provide education and counselling to women in co-operatives who are victims of this type of violence. The Chairperson agreed that the wider of issue of women's human rights and domestic violence was an extremely important area of work for the Committee.

Members approved the draft work programme.

Elections

Members unanimously elected Ms. Barbara Blochen of the National Auditing Union of Workers' Co-operatives. They also noted there thanks to Vera Sramkova of the Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Co-operatives who was retiring from her organization in January 2001.

The **Secretary** reminded members that new year there would be elections to the Committee of both women and men as members.

Closing

The **Chair** thanked all members for their participation. She invited all to join us in Seoul and closed the meeting to enable the Plenary to convene.