



A CO-OPERATIVE DECADE IN ACTION

Cape Town, 1-5 November 2013



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The global economic crisis that ignited in 2007 has had dire consequences on employment, health, food supply, access to credit and other basic needs for tens of millions of human beings. It has also shown that the world was becoming increasingly unsustainable but also interdependent economically, socially and environmentally. The ongoing decade is the one in which long-lasting solutions have to be urgently found to these globally shared problems. Cooperatives have a major responsibility in this respect: their proven resilience, democratic governance, capital accumulation and local development practices provide strong inspirational elements for the solutions that will have to be found.

With that challenge firmly in mind, during the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives, co-operatives from ICA's 100 member countries adopted a Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, identifying five critical areas in which game-changing strategies are needed: **participation**, through which ordinary citizens organize together in cooperatives; **sustainability**, through the establishment of a whole array of inter-cooperative business support systems and enterprise networks based on shared values and sustainable principles; **identity**, through which cooperatives' distinctive business model is exercised and disseminated; **legal frameworks**, through which such identity can be protected and enhanced; and **capital**, through which cooperatives finance and ensure their long-term development;

This conference will analyse some of the main challenges we have to meet during this decade: how to ensure food security, provide access to community services, deliver credit while ensuring savings and fight against indebtedness, provide an opportunity to the youth, women and all human groups facing inequality, and how to build knowledge. The conference will attempt at showing how the cooperative movement is contributing, and how it could contribute even better, to solving these problems in an entrepreneurial and democratic manner, and to ensure shared growth globally.

THE CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS:

THEME A – FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS

By 2050, the population of the Earth will stand at 9 billion. In order to feed all of these people, there is going to have to be an increase in food production as well as changes made to the way producers and consumers behave. To begin with, food waste – at both ends of the food chain – needs to be vastly reduced. In developing countries, over 40% of food losses happen after harvest and during processing and in industrialized countries, over 40% occur at retail and consumer level. By supporting and campaigning for: the sustainable use of natural resources, higher agricultural and forestry competitiveness, a sensible system of land management and a higher quality of life for farmers, co-operatives can play a vital role in nurturing rural development throughout the world and in ensuring food security for every human. Co-operatives also have a duty to inform and educate consumers on the importance of sustainably produced food products.

- WORKSHOP A1: The role of agriculture and fisheries co-operative in providing food supply
- WORKSHOP A2: Challenges in the food supply chain
- WORKSHOP A3: The role of retail/consumer co-operatives in ensuring distribution of food in a sustainable way
- WORKSHOP A4: Coop to coop trade – White paper
- WORKSHOP A5: Supply chain finance

THEME B – ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES

Access to community services (health, education, environmental protection, the labor integration of disadvantaged groups, energy production etc.) is one of the most important areas of work for the co-operative movement. By empowering the various local actors involved (e.g. doctors and patients, teachers and parents) through joint, democratic control and in a strictly entrepreneurial fashion, co-operatives, through their local enterprises, are in many ways uniquely placed to provide access to these services. Given the present rate of growth of these needs, and the rate at which co-operatives are becoming involved in these activities, community services are thus of vital strategic importance for the whole co-operative movement and the future of this must be planned carefully. In fact, it is fair to say that community services such as those mentioned will be a key component of economic development, sustainable employment and social cohesion in the 21st Century.

- WORKSHOP B1: Introduction to community services
- WORKSHOP B2: Establishing a framework for the Co-operative Decade (roundtable)
 - Participation
 - Sustainability
 - Capital
- WORKSHOP B2 (continued) + WORKSHOP B3:
Establishing a framework for the Co-operative Decade (roundtable)
 - Identity
 - Legal framework

Conclusions & recommendations



THEME C – THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION

In order to meet the needs and aspirations of ordinary people around the world, it is vital to reach out to, and to engage young people, women and other under-represented groups. Not only would this reinforce the cooperative movement's mission and expand it to hitherto unforeseen levels, it would also breathe new life into it. In order to reach out to these target groups, it is vital for the cooperative movement to step up its communication and media presence, including in the social media.

- **WORKSHOP C1: The Power of Branding**

The ICA is spearheading the development of a new co-operative visual identity, which will provide a 'promotional umbrella' and 'unity of purpose' for the global co-operative movement. The new brand will be voluntary and capable of almost unlimited application – contemporary and business-like and capable of cross-border use in an integrated communications campaign. The new visual identity will enable consumers to be more aware of what they are choosing when faced with the option between a co-operative or an investor or privately-owned business. Now is the time to encourage widespread alignment by the global co-operative community.

This session will introduce co-operatives who have been recognized as brand leaders and will examine how they have adapted in the global economic crisis using member participation and access to capital in order to meet consumer needs.

- **WORKSHOP C2: Participating in the Media Revolution**

How can co-operatives reach the under-represented voices of women and youth; engage their members, customers and employees and help build the next generation of co-operatives? The answer is through a larger presence in communication and media, including social media. In addition to this, having a vivid and commanding presence on applications such as Facebook and Twitter would allow co-operatives to communicate to its customers in new ways.

- **WORKSHOP C3: Unite the world through the power of a story**

Stories are designed to engage and capture imaginations around the world. Use the power of people coming together to tell your co-operative's story and reach all areas of society, including the voices of women and youth. This session will help you to reach out to the media with a clear and concise message about your enterprise; engage with your customers, members and employees on a new level and learn how to share best practices with other co-operatives around the world.

- **WORKSHOP C4: Communications in practice**

Social media is a naturally co-operative way of communicating, and with one billion members we all need to be doing more to raise awareness of the co-op way of doing business. This workshop aims to dispel some of the myths, agree some key messaging and help boost confidence in the use of Twitter, Facebook and blogging.

- **WORKSHOP C5: An Integrated Internet Identity**

Having a comprehensive plan for your internet identity as a cooperative includes your primary website as well as a coordinated social media plan. Learn how innovative co-operatives use their websites to provide information to their members and their communities. Listen to discussions about how they have integrated social media with their existing technology platforms. See how they are sharing their cooperative identity through use of the .coop domain and other activities as they weave a cooperative story on the web.



THEME D – AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC AGE

The resilience of co-operatives to the economic crisis has reinforced their credibility. Credit unions, cooperative banks and insurance cooperatives have been at the peak of such resilience. They have massively continued to operate in the real economy at the local level, in close contact with ordinary people's and SMEs' needs. At the same time, huge challenges are looming ahead such as compliance to banking regulation and the increased influence of non-banking financial actors such as equity funds. This workshop will look at ways in which financial cooperatives can overcome these challenges and reinforce their mission of developing the local economies.

- WORKSHOP D1: Towards the future: Strength and complementarity of co-operatives and mutual
- WORKSHOP D2: New Co-operatives & Innovation
- WORKSHOP D3: Accountancy Standards
- WORKSHOP D4: Financing co-operatives for sustainable development

THEME E – BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

One of the paths through which tomorrow's generation of co-operators will join the movement will be through their education at the various universities and business schools of the world. It is thus vital that we act now to ensure that the courses they will take will cover in detail the co-operative business model. Furthermore, this would attract more of academia's brightest minds to conduct research on the co-operative movement – something which we can only benefit from. It is thus important to bring together the leaders of this field to discuss together and to share their programmes with each other.

- WORKSHOP E1: Inspiring the Next Generation
- WORKSHOP E2: Co-operative Development: Starting & Sustaining
- WORKSHOP E3: Building Research Capacity



- PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME -

SATURDAY, 2nd NOVEMBER 2013

19:00 Welcome reception

SUNDAY, 3rd NOVEMBER 2013

From 08:00 Registration desks

09:00-10:30 OPENING SESSION

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XXX

Keynote speaker from Africa

10:30-11:00 Break

11:00-12:30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS IN PARALLEL - 1

THEME A	THEME B	THEME C	THEME D	THEME E
FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS	ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES	THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION	AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC AGE	BUILDING KNOWLEDGE
A1 The role of agriculture and fisheries co-operatives in providing food supply	B1 Introduction to community services	C1 The Power of Branding	D1 Towards the future: Strength and complementarity of co-operatives and mutual	E1 Inspiring the Next Generation

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS IN PARALLEL - 2

THEME A	THEME B	THEME C	THEME D	THEME E
FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS	ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES	THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION	AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC AGE	BUILDING KNOWLEDGE
A2 Challenges in the food supply chain	B2 Establishing a framework for the Co-operative Decade (roundtable) -Participation- -Sustainability- -Capital-	C2 Participating in the Media Revolution	D2 New Co-operatives & Innovation	E2 Co-operative Development: Starting & Sustaining



15:30-16:00 Break

16:00-17:30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS IN PARALLEL - 3

THEME A FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS	THEME B ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES	THEME C THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION	THEME D AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC AGE	THEME E BUILDING KNOWLEDGE
A3 The role of retail/consumer co-operatives in ensuring distribution of food in a sustainable way	B2 (continued) + B3 Establishing a framework for the Co-operative Decade (roundtable) -Identity- -Legal framework- Conclusions & recommendations	C3 Unite the world through the power of a story	D3 Accountancy standards	E3 Building Research Capacity

17:30 End of the first day conference

19:00 Concurrent networking receptions

MONDAY, 4th NOVEMBER 2013

From 08:00 Registration desk

09:00-10.30 ICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY – Plenary Session
Opening
Orientation to voting procedures
Approval of the agenda
Approval of the Minutes: Manchester UK (2012)
Director –General’s Report
Presentation of Board candidates
Election of Board

10:30-11:00 Break

11:00-12:30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS IN PARALLEL - 4

THEME A FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS	THEME C THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION	THEME D AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC AGE
A4 Coop to coop trade & white paper	C4 Communication theory into practice	D4 Financing co-operatives for sustainable development

12:30 Lunch



14:00-15:30 ICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY – Plenary Session
Ratification of sectoral organization elections
Financial Report
Selection of auditor
Resolutions
Announcement of Board election results
Future meeting schedule

15:30-16:00 Break

16:00-17:30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS IN PARALLEL - 5

THEME A FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS	THEME C THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION
A5 Supply chain finance	C5 An Integrated Internet Identity

19:00 Concurrent Networking Receptions

TUESDAY, 5th NOVEMBER 2013

From 08:00 Registration desks

09:00-10:30 PLENARY SESSION ON IDENTITY

The new Guidance Notes

10:30-11:00 Break

11:00-12:30 PLENARY SESSION ON CAPITAL

Blue Ribbon Commission on Co-operative Capital

12:30-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 PLENARY SESSION ON LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

The future of Africa: Panel of African Ministers

15:30-16:00 Break

16:00-17:30 CONCLUSIONS

Mr. Paul Singer, Secretary of State for Solidarity Economy

18:30-22:00 Celebration of Co-operation Dinner & Rochdale Pioneers Award

WEDNESDAY, 6th NOVEMBER 2013

08:30-16:00 SPECIAL ICA AFRICA CO-OPERATIVE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

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