

# ASIA PACIFIC CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

BUILDING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

27-28 FEBRUARY 2018

HOTEL GALADARI, COLOMBO (SRI LANKA)

Organized in Partnership with the Sri Lankan Co-operative Movement and the  
ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development: People Centered Businesses in Action

## Invitation

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the *Asia Pacific Co-operative Development Conference (APCD)*, a strategic dialogue among stakeholders in the form of a conference on development policy, which is aimed to create structured exchange and development partnerships among co-operatives and stakeholders in the pursuit of Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup>. The APCD will be organized in Hotel Galadari (Colombo, Sri Lanka) on 27 and 28 February 2018 with the objective of **building multi-stakeholder partnerships on sustainable development** and feature sessions on the following themes: a.) Sustainable Development Goals, b.) Work & Ownership in Co-operatives c.) Youth inclusion and a field visit to co-operatives in Sri Lanka. The conference will also host a meeting of ICA-AP members who are currently and actively engaged in international development<sup>2</sup> to explore the possibility of creating a physical co-operative development network in Asia Pacific.

## Background

The Alliance and the US Overseas Development Council jointly organized the global co-operative development meeting, under the mandate of the development partnership, on the theme: Co-operatives and International Development: How can Co-operatives and mutuals do more and better together? The meeting was organized on the side-lines of the International Summit on Co-operatives in October 2016 in Quebec, Canada. The key areas of deliberation during the meeting were: Acknowledging socio-economic and geopolitical global trends and challenges; Increasing our capacity to act – adapting to the new business reality; Expanding our economic power – sectoral challenges and business opportunities; Co-operatives in action to reach the SDGs. The meeting in Quebec made the following recommendations and paved the way for meetings on development in other ICA regions including Asia Pacific, as well as in organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the International Co-operative Development Platform and the formation of the ICA Committee on Development on 18 November 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

### Knowledge Sharing:

- a.) Create an Open Trusting Environment, b.) Create an Online Development Database, c.) Establish Key Performance Indicators.

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<sup>1</sup> Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1987 [Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future](#), "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Greigman, 2011 [Guide on International Development: Public Service Careers and Opportunities](#), www.Harvard.edu "International Development...encompasses a broad range of disciplines and endeavours to improve the quality of life of people around the world. It includes both economic and social development and encompasses many issues such as humanitarian and foreign aid, poverty alleviation, the rule of law and governance, food and water security, capacity building, healthcare and education, women and children's rights, disaster preparedness, infrastructure, and sustainability."

#### Joint Projects:

- a.) Share Human & Financial Resources, b.) Share Strategy and Vision, c.) Engage in Participative Decision Making

#### Advocacy & Donor Approach:

- a.) Engage in Political Dialogue with Multilateral Actors, b.) Build Capacity to Access Funding and c.) Adopt a Bottom-Up and Top-Down Approach.

In the context of the Asia and Pacific region, given the diversity and geographical spread, it was decided to organize a series of sub-regional meetings in 2017 with all culminating in a joint co-operative development meeting in 2018. The first sub-regional co-operative development meeting was organized in February 2017 in collaboration with the Jordan Co-operative Corporation and the Economic and Social Development Council of Palestine, the second sub-regional co-operative development meeting was organized in Manila (The Philippines) for movements from ASEAN member States in collaboration with the Philippines Co-operative Centre, and in Ulan Bator (Mongolia) in October 2017 for movements in East Asia in collaboration with the National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Co-operatives. The objective of the CDMs was to begin the conversation on SDGs and explore ways to highlight the role of co-operatives in achieving the global goals as well as devise mechanisms to measure the impact co-operatives create within the communities they operate in. The Alliance as the global voice of the co-operative movement and custodian of the co-operative principles, is committed to enhancing the capacities of co-operative enterprises in implementing the SDGs, in collecting information about contribution of co-operatives, better positioning co-operatives as partners in the development process. The CDMs were organized in line with this commitment to create awareness on the SDGs, engage co-operatives with government and stakeholders in the pursuit of the global goals, and create a multi-stakeholder platform. The 3 sub-regional meetings covered SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 17 in particular, and saw the participation of resource persons from Alliance membership, CSO umbrella organizations and International and Intergovernmental development agencies. The overlapping outcomes of the sub-regional meetings include the need to create a platform of co-operative actors to enhance concerted action on development regionally, create mechanisms to monitor policies and regulations on co-operatives and assess & measure the contribution of co-operatives to the 17 SDGs and the targets therein (Main decisions of the sub regional meetings at Annexure 1).

### Who is Organizing the Asia Pacific Co-operative Development Conference?

The Sri Lankan co-operative movement led by the National Co-operative Council, and Alliance members Sri Lanka National Co-operative Council, Consumer Co-operative Federation, SANASA Federation, Kotikawatta Thrift & Credit Co-operative and National Institute of Co-operative Development have partnered with the ICA-AP to organize this regional conference.

The conference is co-funded by the ICA-EU Partnership on Co-operatives in Development: People Centered Businesses in Action or '#coops4dev' (in the digital space). The Alliance entered into a partnership agreement with the European Union in 2016, to implement a 54-month development program to strengthen the position of co-operatives as development actors and enhance the role of co-operatives in international development. This global partnership program is being implemented by the ICA through its 4 regional offices and 1 coordination unit in Brussels, Belgium. ICA-AP currently works on three strategic development priorities as part of the ICA-EU Partnership's implementation namely, a.) Participation of Co-operatives in Achieving the SDGs, b.) Work & Ownership in Co-operatives and c.) Youth Inclusion.

### Conference Objective and Outcome

- ✓ The APCD Conference has been planned to bring together stakeholders in development in furtherance of the sub regional CDMs as well as ICA's participation at high level policy forums on development in the past, as a culmination point for regional co-operative actors to work together in a structured way in pursuit of international development and the SDGs.
- ✓ The ICA Asia and Pacific aims to establish its position on its three strategic development priorities and open discussions on the policy and regulatory environment affecting co-operatives in development and

devising mechanisms to monitor them, as well as bring together co-operative actors from this vast and diverse region to initiate the process of structured and concerted action on international development.

- ✓ The organizers of this conference and the participants of the three sub-regional meetings envision an Asia Pacific Co-operative Development Platform as the outcome of this networking exercise.

*“The history of co-operation can shape the present, just as the present can hope to shape the future”*

*– Ed Mayo, A Short History of Co-operation and Mutuality, 2017 Co-operatives UK*

### Conference Approach

The APCD will take a four-pronged approach - Inform, Engage, Build and Commit - towards achieving its objective. A fifth element on ‘policy positioning’ will be added to the Conference with the aim of establishing a harmonized position of movements in Asia Pacific.

**Inform** about the work co-operatives are doing in relation to the 3 strategic development priorities to members, government, donors and stakeholders. Inform will take place through meetings, presentations, position papers. Included in this will be the follow-up to resolutions taken at the Co-operative Forum (held in conjunction with Regional Assembly), Minister’s Conference, Summit of Co-operatives and other platforms.

**Engage** co-operatives (especially youth coops and emerging ownership structures in coops) with government, donor agencies and civil society on the subject of international development. There is need to understand country development plans, process of Voluntary National Reviews, donor approaches (for example EU Consensus on Development), and CSO platforms (CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness).

**Build** cooperative development tools to address the priority areas, incorporating sustainability language in their work, linking work to the SDGs, and including information in their communication. This would involve training staff and members and holding workshops on identified priorities. Build provides the opportunity to interact with the research committee, co-operative colleges, and other institutions. The lack of data impedes reporting and detailing contribution to SDGs, status of youth coops and exploring and promoting good practices on ‘work & ownership (structures) in co-operatives.

**Commit** to develop concerted actions, like the following

- Pledge on website (<http://www.coopsfor2030.coop/en>)
- Promote identity (identity.coop)
- Indicate SDGs and targets to be met
- Document and report – case studies, stories
- Establish a co-operative development network in Asia Pacific

**Position** co-operatives as development actors in international (multi-stakeholder) dialogues on development by working out a common & harmonized strategy for co-operatives on development, among stakeholders in development in the Asia Pacific region.

### Basic Structure of the Development Conference

+ A detailed concept note, full program and logistical information will follow this invitation.

- Arrivals of Participants latest by 26<sup>th</sup> February (noon)

27 February 2018	28 February 2018
OPENING PLENARY (60’)	OPENING PLENARY (60’)
THEMATIC SESSION – 1 (120’)	THEMATIC SESSION – 1 (120’)
Monitoring Policy Processes for Sustainable Development	Exploring Work and Ownership Structures in Co-operatives

THEMATIC SESSION – 2 (120’) <b>The Future of Co-operatives is Young</b>	STUDY VISIT (Open) ASIA PACIFIC COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEETING (90’) (Invite-Only) <b>Institutionalizing a Network of Coops on Development</b>
CLOSING PLENARY (45’)	CLOSING PLENARY (90’)

- Opening Ceremony on 26<sup>th</sup> February (evening)

## Conference Participation: Who & How?

Representatives of co-operative movements from Asia and Pacific are invited to join the conference. Stakeholders in development such as international development agencies, UN system organizations, representatives of governments and academicians are welcome to actively participate and network with co-operative development actors.

Participants from the three sub-regional [co-operative development meetings](#) and the [International Co-operative Development Platform meeting](#) on 14 November 2017, are strongly encouraged to join, participate and lead this conference as well as become the first among members of the Asia Pacific Development Meeting (28<sup>th</sup> Feb).

A **campaign to collect co-operative case studies** that significantly contribute to the global development Agenda 2030 will ensue in the third week of December 2017 and will culminate at the Conference.

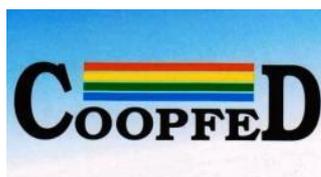
To Participate, please write to [anam.mitra@icaap.coop](mailto:anam.mitra@icaap.coop) with **APCDM in the Subject line** latest by **January 31, 2018**. We will then begin the process of your participation at the Conference and provide you with logistical support.

Please feel free to share your ideas and suggestions for the success of this Conference to the Mrs. Savitri Singh, Programme Director at [Savitri.Singh@icaap.coop](mailto:Savitri.Singh@icaap.coop).

## ICA Members in Sri Lanka



[WEBSITE](#)



[DIGITAL PRESENCE](#)



[WEBSITE](#)



[WEBSITE](#)



[WEBSITE](#)



## Annexure 1

### Main Decisions from the Sub-Regional Co-operative Development Meetings

- I. *Sub regional Co-operative Development Meeting for Arab Speaking nations in Asia Pacific, Jordan*
  - a.) **Creation of Asia-Pacific Co-operative Development Network (APCD)**  
[A network of co-operative actors who are actively engaged in development work – making their co-op structures Civil Society Organizations with an economic aspect (Biz.) or vice versa – Businesses with a mandate for Civil Society Action] The purpose is to provide a platform for co-operative actors to enhance their development work and jointly achieve much more in terms of outreach and impact.
  - b.) **Enhance Trade and Business Linkages and promote Development through Co-operative Trade**  
Research of coops and market opportunities; what product/service by which coops in the region need.
  - c.) **Monitoring Mechanism for Co-operative Policy and Regulations**  
Understand status and challenges on the following (non-exhaustive list)
    - i. Taxation policy
    - ii. Enabling environment
    - iii. Lack of government support

Learning from countries successes (on legal frameworks) and promote policies for fundraising/supporting different coops/levels for development oriented projects.
- II. *Sub regional Co-operative Development Meeting for movements from ASEAN member States, The Philippines*
  - a.) Nominate a **Focal Point** from Participating Organizations towards #COOPS4DEV
  - b.) Collaborate on **RESEARCH & POLICY ADVOCACY**
  - c.) Encourage Cooperators to make **PLEDGES** on [www.COOPSfor2030.COOP](http://www.COOPSfor2030.COOP) & Engage with National Federations and ICA-AP towards **VNR**
  - d.) Concretize a program for **International Youth Exchange** within and among regional groups like ASEAN, SAARC etc.
  - e.) Develop **SDG Targets and INDICATORS** through the COOP LENS & Develop Monitoring Tools for Co-operative Contribution towards the SDGs, and Participate in **ASIA PACIFIC COOP DEV MEETING 2018**
- III. *Sub regional Co-operative Development Meeting for movements from East Asian Countries, Mongolia*
  - a.) Create a **regional co-operative development network** and organize a ‘*participatory publication*’ highlighting the role of co-operatives in development in the context of the SDGs (uniform template).
  - b.) **International Development through Co-operative Trade** – To enhance Trade and Business Linkages among co-operatives – increase nominations and participation at the ICA-AP Committee on Trade & Business (estd.2016) and converge interests on development through trade.
  - c.) Create **Monitoring Mechanism for Co-operative Policy and Regulations** – To keep abreast about enabling and disabling environments for cooperative development and learning from best practices, while preparing for advocacy for better policies.

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