



INTERNATIONAL
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ALLIANCE

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Geneva, August 2009

TO: ICA Member Organisations

FROM: Iain Macdonald, ICA Director-General
Stefania Marcone, Chair, ICA Gender Equality Committee

REF: "ICA Gender Equality Strategy: 10 years after"

Dear colleagues,

The *ICA Rules* stipulate that one of ICA aims is "to promote equality between men and women in all decision making and activities within the co-operative movement". In order to better understand the advances and challenges of members in making gender equality a reality, the ICA and its Gender Equality Committee would request your assistance by filling in the attached survey. Our aim is provide a report to members on the status of gender equality at the upcoming ICA General Assembly on 19-20 November 2009.

Background

In 2000 the ICA Board approved the *ICA Gender Equality Strategy*¹ to build its internal and external capacity to promote gender equality – promoting organisational changes and systematically review existing "good" policies and begin "benchmarking" to see if they are in fact creating equal opportunity. The strategy was to strengthen activities to implement one of ICA aims "to promote equality between men and women in all decision making and activities within the co-operative movement".

The Strategy, addressed to ICA Structure (Elected officials, Staff, ICA bodies) and ICA Member Organisations identified specific actions to strengthen institutional capacity/arrangements to promote gender equality. Such actions included: the capacity-building of staff and membership on gender issues; gender balance of elected officials and staff; ensuring accountability and monitoring; and ensuring adequate human and financial resource allocation for gender issues.

The adoption of the *Gender Equality Strategy* represented a milestone leading to the implementation of important programmes and activities on gender equality and women's empowerment throughout world. Activities were undertaken by the ICA structures and in particular by its regions, as well as by member organisations.

The Survey

Ten years have passed since the Strategy was adopted. Today, we would like to review the status of gender equality.

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¹ *ICA Gender Strategy* – see background information and Strategy on the ICA website at: <http://www.ica.coop/coop/2000-gender-strategy.pdf>

Our specific aim is to:

- collect updated gender disaggregated statistics, to collect relevant information from a global perspective
- assess the current status of gender equality in the movement and,
- identify good practice on policies and programmes that have been successful in leading to change.

All of this information will enable the ICA to better inform partners and stakeholders on how the co-operative movement is addressing gender equality.

ICA Gender Equality Conference, ““Global Crisis: Gender Opportunity?”

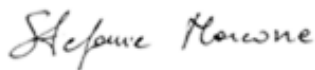
We would also like to take the opportunity to invite you to the ICA Gender Equality Committee events that are being held in conjunction with the ICA General Assembly. A conference, “Global Crisis: Gender Opportunity?” will be held on 17 November which is open to all General Assembly participants. The conference will look at the theme of the ICA General Assembly from a gender perspective and will also present the results of this survey.

We therefore request your kind collaboration in completing the attached survey as soon as possible. Please return the survey to Stefania Marcone at Legacoop, Italy by 20 September 2009 (e-mail: internazionaleuropa@legacoop.coop or fax .+39 06 84439402).

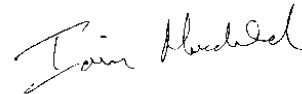
Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information.

We thank you in advance for your kind collaboration and look forward to receiving your completed survey at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Stefania Marcone
Chairperson ICA Gender Equality Committee



Iain MacDonald
ICA Director-General