

End of Year Newsletter 2015

The Youth Network greets all co-operators worldwide, -those who are part of the International Co-operative Alliance, its board members, its regional offices and global office, networks and committees - all of which together build day by day a better world.

Season's Greetings and a very Happy New Year!

Message from the President



Our intention for this newsletter is to wish you a good end of the year and share some of its prominent moments. We will soon announce our 2016 projects.

During 2015, the Alliance Youth Network focused on growing, on integrating the youth of the four regions and on organizing its first Assembly along with the Global Conference and the General Assembly that the International Co-operative Alliance celebrated in Turkey in November. The Executive Committee was tasked with creating strategies to improve communications, develop projects which allow us to get to know each other better and facilitate participation in order to do so. We represented and answered to the needs of youth and contributed to the development of the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade.

The General Assembly of the Alliance on November 2015 finished with Dame Pauline Green's farewell, who received the Rochdale Pioneers Award, and with the election of a new President for the International Co-operative Alliance. We welcome Monique Leroux as the next President. It is our intention to underline that the election of the President was a democratic process which had four candidates, a fact without precedent in the Alliance's recent history and which shows interest in participating and initiates us in the practice of debating ideas and projects for the movement.

We form part of an international movement, therefore it is important to know what happens in the place where we live but also in our region and in the world. It is important to know that there are problems that have global effects, whose solutions require agreements and commitments of different social actors, with different levels of responsibilities.

We are living the consequences of capitalism. This was a production and accumulation model that privilege goods, capital and boundless profit instead of people. This neoliberal model generated an economic crisis that came with increasing wealth concentration and growing levels of unemployment, climate change, food insecurity, It has made it more complex to generate energy and led to war, extreme violence and the re-emerging of sectarianism. All these situations cause massive migration in search of a place to live. We think that knowing and understanding these problems is vital in terms of trying to solve the problems using the transformative power of co-operatives, strengthening solidarity, integrative and cooperative expressions. Because we form part of a movement that generates work, inclusion, local development, promotes equality, shares knowledge and proposes alternative practices of consuming, production and distribution and that distributes wealth, we join our voices to those that believe and imagine that another world is possible.

If we believe that co-operatives are not moderating the inequalities of an unfair economic system, instead of transforming it, then we, young people, have to participate in all possible places to bring about the changes we want. We have to have more dialogue within the cooperative movement and with other groups out of it that share our purpose. We have to invite other young people to form part of the cooperative movement. We have to be in the places where decisions are taken. We have to struggle for ideas within the cultural field. We have to be part of a process of making new and more inclusive practices which strengthen genuine bonds between people, organizations and countries - a process of transforming society, growing in equality, political, economic and communicational democratisation where we can all live with dignity.

2015 ACTIVITIES

This new year we renew our commitment to the youth network and look forward to working together with joy and cooperation. Below you will find some of the most important activities of 2015.

Youth Network Assembly



The Youth Network Assembly that took place on 10 November presented the activities and projects of the regions and the global Network projects 2015. Collective planning for 2016 was started and new members of the Executive Committee were elected.

The new Executive Committee is formed by Gabriela Buffa (Argentina), Sukesh Zamwar (India), Carlos Medrano (República Dominicana),

Mattia Affini (Italia), Emily Lippold Cheney (Estados Unidos) y Ahsan Ali Thakur (Pakistán). During the meeting, group work was done with the purpose of reflecting on the job done by the Network, thinking about the integration between regions and how to increase participation, getting to know the opinion of the participants about the network projects so as to make proposals for 2016. At the end of the meeting Pauline Green said some words to the youth.

YOUTH NETWORK PARTICIPATES IN ANTALYA

The youth network had a strong role in different activities carried out during the Alliance Conference in Turkey.

Panel: Identity: Presentation of the Guidance Notes on the co-operative principles

Gabriela Buffa participated in this panel highlighting that the Guidance Notes are a resource and an important tool to learn more aspects of the cooperative principles that are guiding our practices, and how they are interpreted today. They allow us to understand who we are and share what we do with others - they allow us to dialogue. They were developed by the Principles Committee who conducted a writing process, systematization and consultation that took three years. The youth were also part of the open consultation process and Emily Lippold Cheney worked on the draft of the 6th principle. Young people can come up with creative ways to use these guidelines to deepen the debate and raise new challenges. [Read the Guidance Notes here.](#)

Panel: Sustainability

During the Antalya Conference in Turkey, Rhiannon Colvin participated as a speaker on the sustainability panel. She raised the important point that although many co-operatives were thinking about the environmental sustainability of their co-operative, they were not thinking about the sustainability of their membership and it was important that they also saw sustainability in terms of inspiring, engaging and empowering young staff already within their business and attracting more young members.

Panel: Sustainability: Implementing sustainable development objectives

Sebasti  n Chaillou, President of Solidarit   Etudiante, France, and member of the youth network, participated in the panel.

Future co-operative leaders breakout session



The USA Cooperative Youth Council led a group of over twenty #coopyouth through a large group consensus seeking process called a Peoples' Movement Assembly (PMA). While the PMA discussion was youth-centric, almost twenty non-youth came in to observe the discussions, show their support, and participate in conversations on the same topics with other non-youth attendees. The PMA's focus was on the topic of "Cooperative Leadership" - what does leadership in the cooperative movement that is truly cooperative in nature look like? What changes need to be made to

our current movement leadership structures and practices to be truly cooperative? Discussion was contextualized by, first, exploring and acknowledging the role Neoliberalism has played in shaping the structures and practices of leadership in the cooperative movement. Over the course of ninety minutes, discussion built to outlining the specific steps that could be taken now in order to better align our intergenerational cooperative movement leadership structures and practices with our cooperative values. The outcome of this discussion is a statement that was read aloud during a conference plenary. You can view the spoken statement [here](#). A more formal, final statement will be drafted and distributed to seek implementation of the suggested changes by key organizations early in 2016.

Video "Working together for a co-operative future"



We participated in the world premiere of the video "Working together for a co-operative future". This video shares the story and the different experiences of young people who are part of 9 co-operatives from different countries: Japan, Argentina, Italy, Spain, France, United States, Brazil, Poland and South Africa.

"Working together" also has the distinction of being developed collaboratively with the coordination of CICOPA (the International Organisation of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producer's Cooperatives) and its regional organizations CECOP-CICOPA Europe and CICOPA Mercosur, and with the support of COOPERAR (the Cooperative Confederation of Argentina).

The video, which is a source of inspiration because it reminds us of the meaning and the need for cooperation, had a very good reception from the public and it is now available on Youtube:

- Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXsnVRS-Ni4>
- English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQXdydXbQI4>

We invite you to share the video and spread the word that we are seeking volunteers to help translate the video into other languages.

MESSAGES FROM THE REGIONAL COMMITTEES

Message from the Co-operatives of the Americas Youth Committee



At the end of another year of hard work and great efforts to create opportunities for youth participation, the Regional Cooperative Youth Committee of the Americas thanks the Regional Office and the International Cooperative Alliance for the valuable opportunity to serve and to create for other young people the spaces that have allowed us to grow and be the cooperative leaders we are today.

Among challenges and projects of great importance for our region, we are honoured to know that more and more cooperative organizations are committed to integrating young people in their areas of action and decision.

We have growing as an Executive Committee, and at the same time as a committee, we continue to grow as leaders of a just, participatory and democratic cooperative model. We hope that this new year, reap the successes of previous work and it becomes the seed of new projects that bring more young people in our respective countries in the region and the world.

In solidarity

- Carlos Medrano (chair) –Dominicana Rep.
- Leidy Lorena Restrepo – Colombia
- Amarilys Roldán – Puerto Rico
- Yilda Adary Oviedo –Dominican Republic
- Alicia Chávez – Peru
- Gabriel Di Francesco - Argentina

Facebook: CRJCOOP

Message from the office of the ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation (ICYC)

We have come a long way from our inception in the last decade and find ourselves motivated to continue with this united cooperative spirit in the coming year. This has been possible only from our togetherness and taking pride in our cooperative identity.

The year 2015 is drawing to a close but the committee work, in this cooperative decade, has only gaining momentum. There is no denial that there will be challenges on our way. We do pledge to set a higher target, foster a stronger membership in the committee, and stride at a faster pace until 2020 to have marked results from the ICYC. Challenges can be only overcome

by working together, which has been and will be our main strength.

Cooperative Principles have given us direction thus far and we can only hope for a better environment in the times we live in by their active practice. The world largely agrees that Youth is the yet we have claimed that youth is the as well! Future is not just a mirage or an imagination of an event that is waiting to occur, it is already here!

Giving shape and the right dimension to our unique international friendship will yield opportunities for the generations thus enabling youth to raise a voice that will not go unheard in the times to come. Prosperity and Happiness will follow!

Looking back at 2015, we are proud of what we have accomplished with our limited goals. Future 2016 beckons a renewed strategy and working plan that shall usher our target of making cooperatives the fastest growing enterprise model in the world by 2020.

We are unique, we are one for all and all for one! Here is wishing your near and dear ones a very happy and fruitful 2016!!!



operation

Cooperatively yours,

- Dr. Sukesh Zamwar,
Chairperson
- Mr. Udaya Prabath, Vice
Chairperson
- Mr. Ahsan Ali Thakur, Vice
Chairperson
- Mr. P. Santosh Kumar,
Secretary (Santosh.kumar@icaap.coop)

Facebook: ICA AP Committee on Youth Co-

Message from the European Network of Young co-operators

The European network of young cooperators is moving with its first steps. It all started from different separated initiatives of young cooperators realizing that their potential contribution to the cooperative movement was still unexploited - the International Summit of Cooperatives in Quebec, but also other workshops organized in Poland, Italy, and others.

After its official launch at Cooperatives Europe General Assembly in April 2015 in Paris (France), a second meeting has been hosted by the Italian young cooperator movement in Bologna (Italy) in September. More than one hundred cooperators from all over Europe are working to make their voice heard in the cooperative movement and beyond.

The network has been set up to build a strong movement of cooperative youth in Europe through the following actions:

- creating online space for communication
- Regular meetings alongside cooperative events
- Creating a business exchange network
- Sharing educational resources as well as innovative cooperative business ideas and models
- Working together to get better youth representation on board and in movement
- Bringing in a more radical narrative of true democracy, equality, social and environmental responsibility into the cooperative movement.

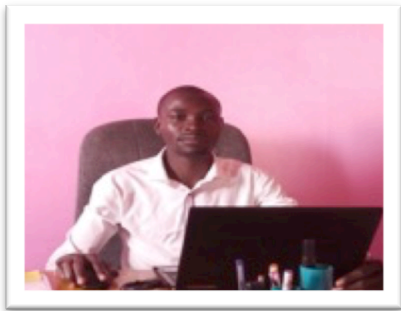
Four working groups have been created to lead the activities of the network in different fields:

- the governance working group (wg) is outlining the future functioning mechanisms of

- the network;
- the advocacy working group is defining a set of common objectives and principles;
- the business opportunities wg is analysing how the network could help prompting business exchanges for the members of the network;
- finally, the education wg is taking care of the promotion of the cooperative business model among students and young people.

The next step is the formal incorporation of the network in an association, which is foreseen at the next General Assembly in April 2016.

Message from the Africa Regional Office



During the Alliance Africa Regional Assembly in November 2014, the Alliance Africa Youth Network was adopted to be among its regional structures with the aim of strengthening the network structures and increase youth participation in the co-operative movement across the continent. The Office then requested its regional member organizations to submit names and contacts of their nominees to be in the Youth Network Committee. As at November 2015, the committee has seven members who are yet to apply for global membership.

The office had organized for a youth meeting in Botswana during the Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference in October, there were confirmations of some committee members but they did not manage to attend to the conference. However, the office went on and held a meeting with some other youth members from Botswana and South Africa. There were some tasks that the regional office needed to follow and put in place. The main tasks now is to organize for a virtual meeting with the committee members and second is to follow up on membership registration of the committee team then later target the registration of other cooperative youths.

In terms of regional youth events, we were glad that Lesotho was going to host the 4th Youth Co-operative Forum and Exchange Program date 14-18 December, which targets co-operators from BOLESWA countries (Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland). It is a sub regional event but the Office requested Lesotho to extend the invitation to other youth co-operators in the region. So far we can say that the speed is a little bit slow but it will catch up as we continue to integrate the Youth Network to the regional structure. This in a way has been caused by less or no support to the youths from their organizations and lack of resources for young co-operators thus hindering their participation in the movement.

"I am Geoffrey Asira and I joined The Alliance Africa last year in July and am currently a volunteer in the IT and Communications Department and also the regional youth Network coordinator"

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

Internship Opportunity

The youth network is seeking an intern to research the youth movement globally. For more information, please [click here](#).

Call for Consultant

The Youth Network of the International Co-operative Alliance seeks an expert consultant to conduct a feasibility study for a co-operative social media platform. The objectives of the co-operative social media platform are to support the aims of the Blueprint for a Co-operative

Decade. More information on the [study](#) and the call for proposals is available on our youth network page.

Become a Member of the Youth Network

The mailing list of the youth network is currently made up of those interested in co-operative youth and those who have attended various conferences. The new [constitution](#) of the Youth Network now formalises this mailing list into members and adherents.

Members will be those persons up to 35 years inclusive and associated to organizations belonging to the Alliance. Individuals will need to submit a form to the Youth Network secretariat which is signed by a member organisation of the Alliance.

Adherents will be persons that although they are not associated with members from Alliance, or are not of the age of youth, support the co-operative youth movement or want to develop it. Adherents can join the mailing list, but will not be able to participate as a Member of the Alliance Youth Network. To join the mailing list, contact the secretariat at hacquard@ica.coop.

To participate in the Alliance Youth Network as a member, please fill out the [membership form](#) today!