



International  
Labour  
Organization

# International Year of Cooperatives

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME (EMP/COOP)

This new series of bulletins is issued by EMP/COOP, the Cooperative Branch of the International Labour Organization, to provide regular updates on activities leading up to and during the International Year of Cooperatives.

## Background

On December 18, 2009 the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives (Res. A/RES/64/136). Since 1959, the UN has designated international years in order to draw attention to major issues and to encourage international action to address concerns which have global importance and ramifications.

### Main objectives of the IYC:

UN Resolution A/RES/64/136, Operational Paragraph 3:

“Encourages all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to take advantage of the International Year of Cooperatives as a way of promoting cooperatives and raising awareness of their contribution to social and economic development”.

>> For the full text of the Resolution in all official UN languages see: <http://www.copac.coop/>



*“For the excluded and vulnerable, cooperative enterprises have proven to be strong forces for social change and for economic advancement.”*

Juan Somavia,  
ILO Director-General

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## Dear All,

This is the second of a three-monthly bulletin which is to provide you with regular updates on the International Year of Cooperatives 2012 (IYC). The first issue can be found in the Publications section of our website: [www.ilo.org/coop](http://www.ilo.org/coop).

Please provide us with feedback, ideas and suggestions on how to best celebrate this IYC. We are putting our best efforts into preparing the IYC, but we need your support in order to get the best possible result!

## What has happened since our last update...

In August, the first implementation strategy meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Network for the IYC, organized by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), took place. Representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, UN DESA, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UN-HABITAT, the UN Regional Commissions (NY) and the World Food Programme discussed, amongst other issues, the objec-

Thanks to the efforts of our colleagues at UN DESA, the official website (<http://social.un.org/coopsyear/>) has been launched already at the beginning of August! The site does not only contain background information on the IYC with links to partner sites and a preliminary list of activities, but will also soon host the online game "Are you Cooperative-Savvy?" and a feature on the IYC in new social media. Check regularly to stay informed!

*"Cooperatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility."*

Ban Ki-moon,  
United Nations Secretary-General



tives of the year, planned activities and advocacy strategy. The need to have a timely meeting of a communication team was highlighted. Other meetings during this initial phase of planning will follow.

Subsequently, the foresaid Communication team met and discussed the slogan for the IYC 2012.

In our view, the slogan should underline the twofold nature of cooperatives as a form of doing business while respecting the cooperative values and principles.

Internally, the ILO is finalizing its strategy for the IYC which has been put high on its agenda. In close cooperation with the COPAC partners and other stakeholders, the ILO aims to facilitate the activities of the international cooperative movement and to support them in achieving their objectives for the IYC. The ILO Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, and the President of the International Co-operative Alliance, Dame Pauline Green, met to discuss the collaboration between the two organizations in view of the preparations of the IYC. Was also present the recently appointed Director-General of the ICA, Charles Gould. Mr. Somavia agreed that the IYC provides an extraordinary opportunity to show the size and scope of cooperatives that people simply do not know yet. The IYC was to take cooperatives into the future, Mr. Somavia pointed out, underlining the sustainability aspect of this modern form of doing business.

The International Co-operative Alliance has also launched "Countdown to 2012", a monthly e-news bulletin: <http://www.ica.coop/activities/iyc/>.

As a reaction to the a Note Verbale sent to Member States (<http://social.un.org/coopsyear/national.shtml>) in which the UN invited Governments to set up a national committee, together with all relevant stakeholders, including cooperatives, UN agencies and the civil society, the following countries have notified that they have already done so. View a list of National Committee Focalpoints here: <http://social.un.org/coopsyear/national-contacts.shtml>.

## ... and what will happen next:

- The organizational set-up will be formalized. The Secretariat shall start its operations as soon as possible. The first meeting of the Coordinating Committee is scheduled to be held before the end of 2010.
- A logo and a slogan for the IYC will be finalized until autumn 2010.