

ICA GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE (GEC)

ANNUAL MEETING

DECEMBER 11, 2024

CHITOSE ARAI

CHAIRPERSON, ICA-AP COMMITTEE ON WOMEN

MEMBER, ICA GEC

MEMBER, ICA-AP REGIONAL BOARD

VICE-PRESIDENT, JAPANESE CONSUMERS' CO-
OPERATIVE UNION (JCCU), JAPAN



OFFICE BEARERS



CHITOSE ARAI

CHAIRPERSON



PRITI PATEL

VICE-CHAIRPERSON



SIMREN SINGH

SECRETARY

MEMBERSHIP STATUS

The Committee has
40 members from 27 ICA member
organizations (MOs) in 17 countries

In 2024

We received 9 new members from 7 ICA
MOs

3 new countries joined – Bhutan, Fiji and
Indonesia

COUNTRY	REPRESENTING ORGANISATION(S)	NO OF MEMBERS PER COUNTRY
Australia	BCCM	1
Bhutan	DAMC	1
China	ACFSMC	2
Fiji	Dept. of Co-op Business	2
India	NCUI, IFFCO, CHBFC, NAFCARD	4
Indonesia	INKUR	1
Iran	RCEC	2
Japan	JCCU and JA-ZENCHU	4
Jordan	JCC	1
Malaysia	ANGKASA	2
Myanmar	CCS	1
Nepal	NCF and NCBL	4
Palestine	ESDC	2
Philippines	NATCCO, 1CISP, AIMCoop, MASS-SPECC, Providers MPC	7
Republic of Korea	iCOOP	2
Sri Lanka	NCCSL and MDCHS	3
Vietnam	VCA	1

CALENDER 2024

Activity	Month
International Women's Day – Solidarity message	8 March
Virtual Side Event at the NGO CSW68 Forum in collaboration with the Credit and Banking Committee	12 March
Committee Newsletter	23 April
Participation in the 11th Asia-Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference, Jordan	28-30 April
Asia-Pacific Women CEOs in Cooperatives Summit, Vietnam	29-31 July
E-Lecture on Emotional Wellness for Women Cooperators: Stress and Anger Management	6 September
Training of Trainers on Climate Change and Action for Women Cooperators, Bhutan	21-24 October

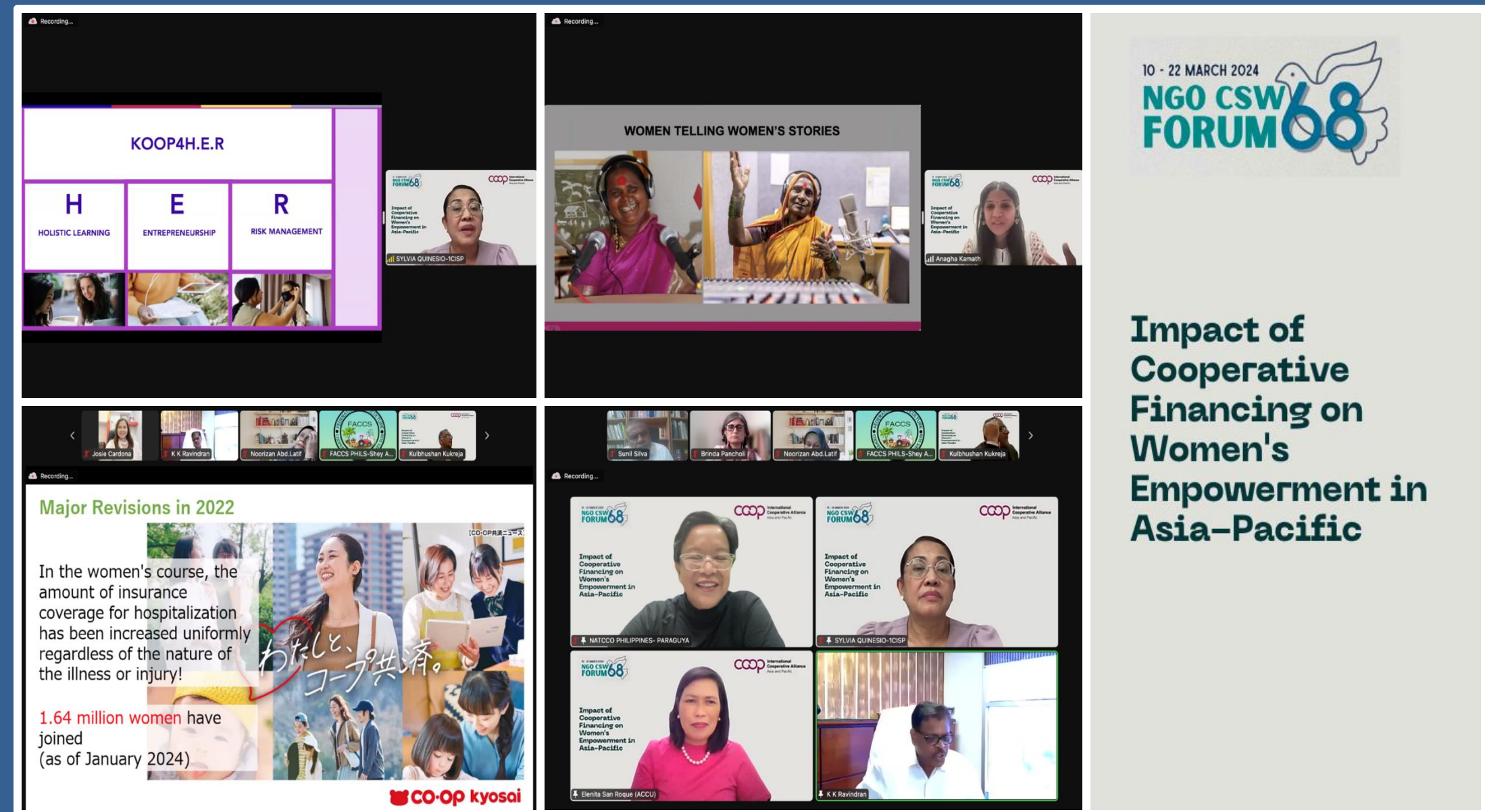
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SOLIDARITY MESSAGE

MARCH



- The theme of this year's IWD was "Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress".
- The theme sought to highlight actions toward closing the gender gap to create prosperous economies and ensure sustainable societies.
- In our solidarity message on 8 March, we shared examples of ICA-AP members who have taken different initiatives to invest in women cooperators for their empowerment and sustainable development.

VIRTUAL SIDE EVENT AT THE NGO CSW68 FORUM MARCH




- The second virtual side event at NGO CSW Forum was organized in collaboration with the Credit and Banking Committee on 12 March.
- Representatives from cooperatives in India, Nepal, Japan, and the Philippines joined the event as speakers and discussed how cooperative banks, credit societies and cooperative insurance businesses impact women, and contribute to SDG 5 on gender equality.
- The program was attended by 80 participants from Asia, Africa, and Europe.

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

APRIL

ICA-AP Committee on Women Newsletter 2024



**International
Cooperative Alliance
Asia and Pacific
Committee on Women**

[Message from the Chairperson](#)

[IWD 2024 Solidarity Message by the Chairperson](#)

[Virtual Side Event at the NGO CSW68 Forum 2024](#)

Activity Updates from 2023

- [Pilot Training of Trainers \(ToT\) on Climate Change and Action for Women Cooperators in Vietnam](#)
- [Women's Committee Celebrates its 25th Anniversary in Japan](#)
- [Statutory Meeting in the Philippines and the release of the ToT Manual on Climate Change and Action for Women Cooperators](#)

ICA-AP Committee on Women Newsletter 2024

Member Updates

A) Every Day is a Women's Day: Gujarat Mahila Credit Cooperatives Society, India

As we celebrate IWD on March 8, it's crucial to recognize that the empowerment and celebration of women should not be confined to a single day of the year. Every day is an opportunity to honor and uplift the achievements, contributions, and resilience of women worldwide.

Every day is a Women's Day because women make invaluable contributions to the society daily. They are leaders, innovators, caregivers, and change-makers. Their achievements, both small and large, deserve celebration and recognition not just on a designated day but every single day.

Addressing systemic inequalities:

In the twenty-first century, women have recognized their power and fought tirelessly for their rights. Gone are the days when their roles were confined to the domestic sphere; today, women are making remarkable progress shoulder to shoulder with men in every field. This progress is not limited to a single day of celebration but extends to every day of the year.

Despite the progress, the journey towards equality is far from over. Women still face countless challenges and obstacles in their pursuit of success. Discrimination based on gender persists in various forms, hindering their progress and limiting their opportunities. From the gender pay gap to limited representation in leadership

- The annual newsletter was released on 23 April, and was sent to Committee members, ICA-AP Board members, ICA GEC members, ICA President and ICA Director General, among others.
- The newsletter covers report on past activities, member updates and information about upcoming activities.
- It is an important medium to communicate with members about our activities and increase the visibility of women cooperators from the Asia and Pacific region.

PARTICIPATION IN THE 11TH ASIA-PACIFIC COOPERATIVE MINISTERS' CONFERENCE (APCCMC)

APRIL



Case practices from

- Philippines,
- Nepal
- India

were presented on cooperative policies and legislations that promote SDG 5.

We participated in the 11th APCCMC in Dead Sea, Jordan from 28-30 April and presented policy-based recommendations which included:

- Provisions and recommendations in policies and legislations for cooperatives to **foster SDG 5** should be **specific, time-bound, adoptable** and **measurable**.
- Having a **systematic framework** outlining **roles and responsibilities, time frame, budget** and **means of verification** helps in ensuring that the gender-based policies and programs are adopted by cooperatives.
- Creating mechanisms to **monitor** and **report** the progress of implementation and achievements on gender equality measures in cooperatives to higher authorities.
- The **Jordan Declaration** recognizes the importance of inclusivity and diversity for cooperative development and governance through equal participation and inclusion of women; and calls for accountability and regular reporting on participation in decision making roles.

ASIA-PACIFIC WOMEN CEOS IN COOPERATIVES SUMMIT

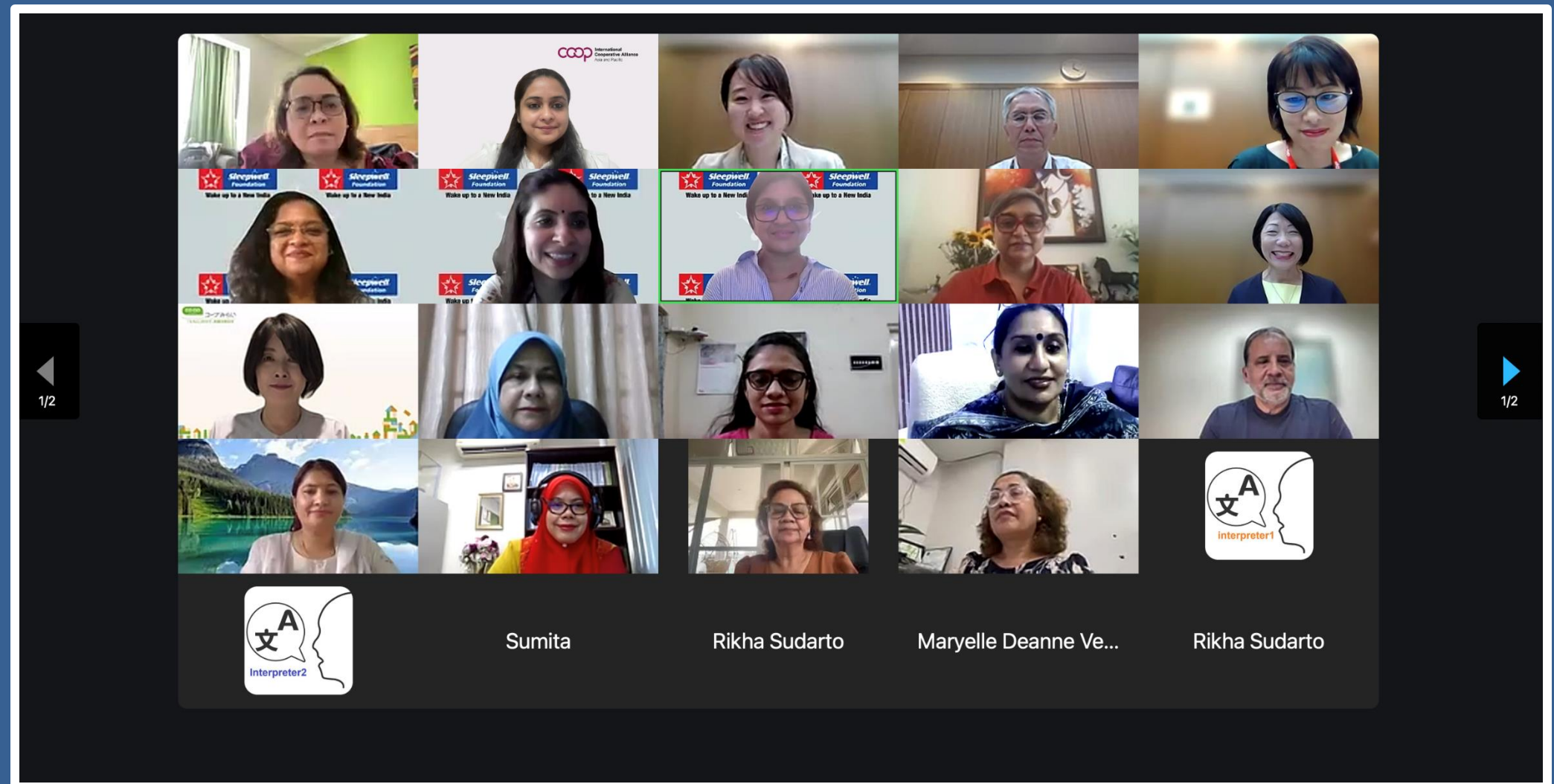
JULY



- The Asia-Pacific Women CEOs in Cooperatives Summit was organized in Hanoi, Vietnam from 29-31 July, in partnership with VCA. The Summit was co-sponsored by ICA-AP, JCCU and ACFSMC.
- The theme of the Summit was **“Empowering Leadership: Navigating the Future of Cooperatives with Women at the Helm”**.
- 66 participants from 12 countries attended the summit (China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Netherlands, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, UK and Vietnam).
- The summit had diverse thematic sessions focusing on:
 - Mentorship and leadership development;
 - Personal development and work-life balance;
 - Resilience in the changing work environment;
 - Inclusivity and social responsibility; and
 - Purpose-driven leadership by women in cooperatives

E-LECTURE ON EMOTIONAL WELLNESS FOR WOMEN COOPERATORS: STRESS AND ANGER MANAGEMENT

SEPTEMBER



- An e-lecture on Emotional Wellness for Women Cooperators was organized on 6 September, in collaboration with Sleepwell Foundation India.
- It was attended by 27 participants from India, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal and the Philippines.
- The lecture focussed on understanding how stress and anger reflects in the human body and impacts women differently.
- Due to the gendered nature of society, women's symptoms of stress and anger often go unnoticed or are ignored by women themselves. This gets amplified when women are in leadership positions and their capability to handle stress at work is compared to men.
- Healthy techniques to manage stress and anger were shared with the participants.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ACTION FOR WOMEN COOPERATORS

OCTOBER



- The first ToT on Climate Change and Action for Women Cooperators was organized in Thimphu, Bhutan from 21-24 Oct. It was hosted by the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC) and was conducted in partnership with NATCCO.
- Changes in weather patterns such as extreme temperature in different seasons and erratic rainfall are now common in Bhutan.
- 25 women participated in the ToT representing government agencies, cooperatives and private sector.

Focus of the training were following:

- Understanding the link between climate change and cooperative action
- Promoting environmental sustainability
- Building leadership capacity among women
- Practical action planning

MEETING WITH THE ICA GEC OFFICE BEARERS

NOVEMBER



- In November, we were pleased to meet the ICA GEC Chairperson Ms. Xiomara Núñez de Céspedes and Vice Chairperson Ms. María Eugenia Pérez Zea at the ICA Global Cooperative Conference and General Assembly in New Delhi, India.

CALENDER 2025 (Tentative)

Activity	Month
International Women's Day – Solidarity message	March
International Women's Day – Webinar	March
Committee Newsletter	April
Training of Trainers on Climate Change and Action for Women Cooperators	May
Joint Seminar with Trade and Business Committee: *Observance of the International Year of Cooperatives	July
13th Asia-Pacific Regional Women's Forum and Statutory Meeting of Members	November
Research studies - 1. Release of a publication – gender policies in cooperatives in Asia and Pacific 2. Launch of the data study (3 rd edition) on the status of women in cooperatives in Asia and Pacific	November
Office Bearers' meetings	January, July and November

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**