



ICA Housing e-bulletin

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Issue 8

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ICA Housing is a sectoral organization of the International Co-operative Alliance. It was established to promote the development of co-operative housing in all countries, and in particular developing countries, as an economic and social contribution to the problem of providing shelter.

Greetings from ICA Housing President for International Year of Co-operatives 2012



On behalf of ICA Housing members and Board, I wish all our readers a very happy New Year and best wishes for co-operative success during 2012.

2012 is an auspicious and significant year for the international co-operative movement. Declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Co-operatives 2012 (IYC 2012) it is a unique opportunity for us to show our members, employees and the general public the benefit of co-operatives as highly successful business enterprises that are responsible and care about people and the planet.

The UN logo and strap-line “Co-operative enterprises build a better world” (which features prominently in this bulletin) is emblematic of the message the UN wishes to convey to the global community. The aim of the ICA during the international year is to raise public awareness of the scope and nature of co-operative business enterprises. It is a unique opportunity, at a time of global disaffection with the capitalist, investor owned model of business enterprise, to show the world how successful co-operatives are and particularly how resilient and sustainable they are at a time of global financial and economic crisis.

Later in this bulletin we explain the initiatives ICA Housing is planning as part of IYC 2012, but I encourage you and your members to find your own way of publicizing the way your co-operative helps to build a better world for your members and the wider community it serves. You can participate in our IYC 2012 banner publicity campaign, join in our good governance project to show housing policy makers and the wider public your co-operative’s commitment to open, transparent and accountable democratic governance or organize your own event to publicize the co-operative business sector in whatever way you think appropriate. **If nothing else, IYC 2012 is a good excuse for your members to mark it with a party!**

With co-operative greetings to all fellow housing co-operators,

David Rodgers
President, ICA Housing Sector Organisation

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ICA Housing is one of the eight sectors of the International Co-operative Alliance. We are very proud of the fact that we are the apex body of the worldwide co-operative housing movement. Our mission is to unite, represent and serve the international movement for co-operative and mutual self-help housing.

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Please note, we are currently experiencing difficulties with our icahousing.coop email addresses. Until further notice, please use david.rodgers@cds.coop jane.cameron@cds.coop and jpmsm@globetrotter.net [for Sylvie Moreau]

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The ICA General Assembly 2011 Cancun Mexico



Every two years co-operatives that are **members or associate members** meet in general assembly to discuss matters of common concern and to elect representatives to the ICA's global board and the boards of the global co-operative business sectoral organizations, of which ICA Housing is one.

The ICA's biennial General Assembly 2011 was held in Cancun, Mexico, in November. It was a major success attended by over two thousand two hundred delegates from co-operative member and associate member organizations in ninety eight countries. The hospitality of our Mexican co-operative hosts was warm and generous. **Thank you Mexico!** Click here for [General Assembly news](#).

Our ICA Housing meetings, held during the week of the general assembly were also highly successful. I am pleased to share with you the key elements of these events.

The number of delegates who attended the General Assembly was the largest number in the history of the ICA. It also gave us the opportunity to finalize our plans for and launch IYC 2012. The continuing and resilient success of co-operative business enterprises was shown by some of the key statistics about co-operatives that were reported at the General Assembly:



Globally:

- o over 900 million individual members worldwide are members of co-operatives affiliated to the ICA
- o the largest 300 co-operatives – the Global 300 – turnover US\$1.6 trillion per annum – a turnover equal to the world's 9th largest economy - and that is just our top 300!
- o co-operatives provide more than 100 million jobs worldwide – greater than the number of jobs created by global capitalist business enterprises
- o financial co-operatives serve over 857 million people - 13% of the world's population
- o if you include members, employees and their dependents, according to the United Nations, over half the world's population depends on co-operative enterprise of one type or another to improve their basic standard of living

In Europe there are:

- o 160,000 co-operative enterprises
- o that have 123 million members
- o have created 5.4 million Jobs
- o with an annual turnover of € 300 billion
- o a significant part of the economy of Europe

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A report by Johnston Birchall, Professor of Social Policy in the Department of Applied Social Science at Stirling University, Scotland and Lou Hammond Kettilson, Director of the Centre for Co-operative Studies the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, commissioned by the International Labour Organization entitled "[Resilience of the Co-operative business model in times of economic crisis](#)" has shown that Co-operatives of all types, including co-operative banks and credit unions have been much more resilient in the face of the global economic crisis than the investor capital owned model of business.

So let's demonstrate to the world the scope and the benefits of co-operatives. ICA Housing has adopted its programme of activities for the Year. We hope you will join us by participating in our activities. We also urge you to grasp the opportunity presented by IYC 2012 to show the success of co-operative business enterprise to your fellow citizens. We know we have a credible and proven alternative to the economic, social and environmental challenges the world is facing. Let's together show the world how strong and sustainable our co-operatives businesses are.



89% of the GA delegates vote in favour of ICA Housing Proposed Resolution

Back in October 2010 during the symposium "[Cooperative Responses to the Climate Challenge](#)", ICA Housing accepted the challenge raised by the representative from The Borneo Initiative to call on ICA Housing members to make a commitment only to use timber and other forest products from sustainable forest management programmes. To that effect, ICA Housing put forward a [resolution](#) at the last GA in Cancun.



89% of the delegates voted in favour of the resolution which called on housing co-operatives and the whole of the co-operative family in the ICA to only use timber and other products that are certified as sourced from sustainably managed forest resources.

With only 30 votes against, our resolution on sustainable sourcing of timber and other forest products received the **biggest majority vote in favour on any resolution**. The feedback we received from some of those who voted against the resolution relates to the cost of achieving certification, not an objection to sustainable forest management. In some countries small community owned forest management schemes consider that the cost of achieving FSC certification too high or beyond their capacity. ICA Housing will be asking the FSC and PEFC to consider offering such small community owned forestry schemes a viable route to certification.

The resolution is not about using less timber, it is actually about using more timber in housing construction and maintenance because trees are a carbon sink. Trees absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere as they grow during daylight hours and emit oxygen, but the global balance is precarious and there is significant losses of forest cover every year because of illegal logging and unsustainable exploitation of forest resources. Deforestation is a major global environmental threat. To avoid it timber must be harvested in a sustainable way that maintains rather than destroys the world's forests. Timber frame housing construction also has 40% lower carbon emissions during construction than alternative brick and concrete construction technologies, but timber must be sustainably sourced. [Click here](#) for a factsheet you can distribute to your members.

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Let's also note that the passing of this resolution links IYC 2012 with the past two UN International Years: 2011 the International Year of Forests and 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. If implemented by co-operatives around the world this commitment will reduce deforestation and help combat climate change.

The challenge for you and all co-operatives is to make sure that you implement this important environmental commitment only to use timber and other forest products that are certified as being sourced from sustainably managed forests. ICA Housing will ask you, during IYC 2012, to confirm that you and other member housing co-operatives have embraced and implemented this commitment so that we can report-back to the next ICA General Assembly in 2013.

Largest attendance ever to the Plenary and Seminar

It is with a lot of satisfaction that we have welcomed the largest ever attendance during our Cancun meetings. The ICA Housing Board of Directors sees this as the confirmation that our work is valuable and serves the needs of our members.

Dealing with ICA Housing Business at the Plenary

The Plenary meeting is the official gathering to carry out ICA Housing business. The president reviewed our accomplishments since the last Plenary in 2009. [Click here](#) to see the presentation. Amendments to the Rules were adopted by the members on the recommendation of the Board. These amendments were proposed to clarify and standardize the membership provisions included in all the ICA sectoral organizations (SO) Rules and ICA Global. You can find the revised version of the Rules [here](#).



The Plenary is also the moment to elect the new board. Before the election, the president David Rodgers thanked the retiring board member Roy Berg Pedersen, from Co-operative Housing Federation of Norway (NBBL) Norway, for his committed and constant participation and

wished him all the best for the future.

Nicholas Gazzard, ICA Housing vice-president led the election as chair of our election committee. Eight positions were filled.



The new board is as follows:

David Rodgers, president/CDS Co-operatives, UK

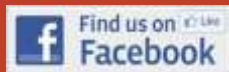
Nicholas Gazzard, vice-president/Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada

Alexandra Wilson, treasurer/Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada

Anders Lago, HSB, Sweden

Errum Bhajji, Karachi Co-operative Housing Societies Union, Pakistan

Herbert Ludl, GBV, Austria



Luciano Caffini, Legacoop Abitanti, Italy

Mehmet Aksoy, TURRKENT, Turkey

Muhammad Sharif Bhajji, Karachi Co-operative Housing Societies Union, Pakistan

Tomasz Jordeczka, Auditing Union of Housing Co-operatives, Poland

Thor Eek, Co-operative Housing Federation of Norway Co-operative Housing Federation of Norway (NBBL), Norway

Vit Vanicek, Union of Czech and Moravian Housing Co-operatives, Czech Republic

Our Polish member, the Auditing Union of Housing Co-operatives, took the opportunity presented by our plenary meeting to publicly thank ICA Housing president Mr. David Rodgers for his help in their successful appeal to the Polish government to stop the adoption of detrimental bills for co-operatives which would have had the effect of totally dismantling the housing co-operative sector in Poland. This is a perfect example demonstrating what support from the ICA can achieve and how important it is to work together.



Our Plenary concluded with a very informative presentation on a housing co-operative project in Mexico by Professor Rodolfo Rios Baez. Professor Baez works at the Faculty of social and political sciences at the University of Mexico. He is a member of the board of directors of the Confederacion Nacional Cooperativa de Actividades Diversas de la Republica Mexicana. The presentation generated a lot of interest and several questions and comments were raised by the participants. Professor Baez also indicated the housing co-ops' intention to create a national federation of housing co-operatives. ICA Housing has offered its support and hope to count on the participation of the Mexican housing

co-operatives in the future. Professor Baez's presentation is here – [Spanish](#) and [English](#).

An excellent response to our Seminar:

Environment Sustainability and Climate Change: Sustainable Sources of Timber and Forest Products

To further our commitment towards sustainable sources of timber and forest products and to provide to co-operators more information on the certification programmes and successful sustainable initiatives, ICA Housing organized a seminar during our Cancun meetings.



Close to 100 participants attended this very informative and inspiring seminar. Mr Rodgers, ICA Housing president, explained our initiative.

He noted that the housing industry is a large consumer of natural resources and that housing co-operatives with over 20 million dwellings around the world, can make a difference by the choices they make to operate in an environmentally sustainable and responsible way.



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ICA Housing is most grateful to the excellent presentations we received from our speakers.

Sergio Madrid Executive Director of Consejo Civil Mexicano Para La Silvicultura Sostenible

What's up there?

Sergio Madrid, author of several publications on community forestry, deforestation and forest policy and representative of the Forests Stewardship Council (FSC) in Mexico, gave the participants an overview of the FSC certification scheme and the work accomplished by this international network. He called participants to "think FSC" and provided several suggestions.



Dr Alfredo Arana Velasco Executive Chairman of COOMEVA, Colombia

COOMEVA Project Production of timber for housing

Dr. Alfredo Arana Velasco, presented Induguada SA, the Industria Colombiana de la Guadua S.A. born from a solidarity campaign called "Today for You, Tomorrow for Me". The company processes bamboo, an excellent renewable source fast-growing, easy to use providing economic, social and environmental benefits to rural communities of Columbia.

Linn Matic Social Policy Manager, HSB Sweden
HSB, Environmental Policy

Linn Matic, presented HSB's environmental policy and shared with the participants the experience of HSB of building with environmental principles. HSB, one of the two large co-op housing federations in Sweden, is an important co-operative housing developer. The use of certified timber is already included in their environmental policy that guides their construction work.



Clemente Augusto Jaimes Puentes, President of CONFECOOP and Executive President of La Equidad, Colombia (presentation not available)

Pacto Verde Cooperativo from ICA Americas and ECOOP Forest Project

Clemente Augusto Jaimes Puentes, economist with long-term professional experience in the co-operative financial and farming sectors, presented the ICA Americas Pacto Verde Cooperativo adopted in September 2009 by ICA Americas members. The resolution asked members to take actions to preserve the environment. Mr Puentes also presented a forest project called ECOOP implemented in Columbia that promotes activities, implements and manages environmental projects, agro-industry and business.

A sample sustainable timber and forest product procurement policy provided by FSC Netherlands was also distributed to participants to assist them in the implementation of such initiative. Click [here](#) for a copy of the policy.

**Let's not miss this unique opportunity:
The IYC 2012**

While IYC 2012 is an opportunity for co-operatives to organize events for members to celebrate their resilience and success, the major thrust of activities will be directed outwards to raise awareness among politicians, opinion formers and the general public of the existence, nature, extent, success and economic importance of co-operatives. We want to show that, globally, co-operatives as a form of democratic, people centred, business enterprise are highly successful.

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ICA Housing has five specific global projects for IYC 2012. They are:

Certified timber and other forest products Campaign



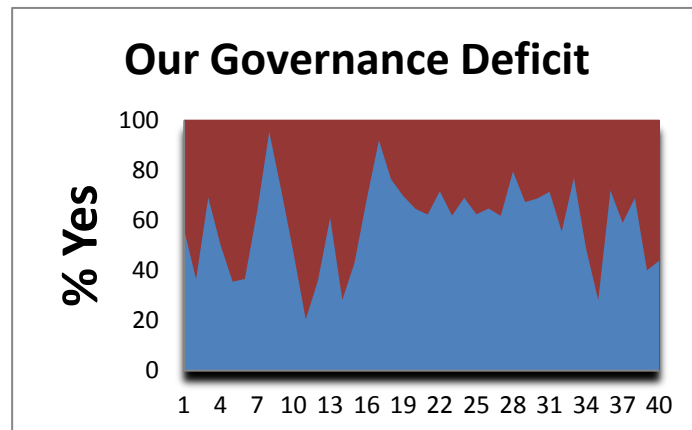
Passing a resolution as the GA delegates did in Cancun is one thing, ensuring that it is implemented is another. ICA Housing will be providing the lead to engage housing co-operatives and through its partnership with the ICA sectoral organizations (SO), the large family of co-operatives, to endorse and implement the resolution.

Already FSC International has offered their co-operation to assist us. We want to provide the necessary tools - such as policies and information sheets - to support apex and regional co-operative organizations to get the broader commitment possible from their members.

Watch for more information to come on this vital initiative on our website icahousing.coop

The Governance Project for sound co-op housing governance

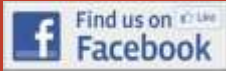
ICA Housing commends the 20:20 Vision project for governance and "its good governance test" initiated by CHF Canada, the national apex organization for housing co-operatives in Canada. The test designed by CHF Canada results in a governance chart which illustrates compliance with an objective standard governance code. CHF Canada is encouraging its member co-ops to publish and make available to members and the communities they serve their governance test results and their plan of action to address any governance deficits identified. Below a sample governance deficit chart looks against key governance standards: (blue indicates compliance and red non-compliance with a code the individual standards of which are indicated by the numbers along the horizontal axis).



Recognizing the importance of good governance, ICA Housing has decided to put this issue at the forefront of its 2012 actions by proposing this approach to all housing co-operative members around the world. It is particularly important in today's context where citizens are organizing pro democracy movements and desperately fighting for the right of democratic participation in politics and governance which has long been denied them. Our good governance project will help to ensure that member co-operatives have the proper democratic governance tools to make that goal of democratic participation by all members real and effective.

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In order to turn this from a national to an international initiative there needs to be work done to produce a governance code and best practice guidance which can form an internationally agreed standard code but which permits adaptation to meet particular national requirements without diluting its core 'good governance' standards.



Nicholas Gazzard, the executive director of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada and Vice President of ICA Housing has been appointed by ICA Housing's Board to lead on this initiative, an appointment that was endorsed by the ICA Housing plenary meeting at the General Assembly in Cancun. He will lead a 'task and finish' project with a core group of ICA Housing Board members which includes representatives from

Austria, Egypt, Turkey, Poland and Pakistan, but which other national member apex organizations can also elect to participate in if they wish to contribute to the project. For more information about the progress of this initiative and to participate please email NGazzard@chfcanada.coop

Publication of Country Housing Co-operative profiles jointly with CECODHAS Housing Europe



Over the past few years, ICA Housing has worked with member apex organizations in each member country to produce profiles of co-op housing systems in each country, including details of statistics, history, legislation and administrative arrangements under which housing co-operatives operate in each country. There are currently 18

country profiles published and several others in draft form. These country profiles are available [here](#).

In partnership with the Co-operative Section of CECODHAS Housing Europe, the representative body for social housing providers in the European Union, ICA Housing and CECODHAS have agreed to update the country profiles, improve and standardize their format and publish them as a global information project during IYC 2012.

The publication event is likely to be held in the European Parliament during European Co-operatives' Week in Brussels during the week commencing 23 April 2012.

The Global ICA Housing banner

This project is specifically designed to get the core IYC 2012 message across to the general public that "Co-operative enterprises build a better world". Housing co-operatives around the world have many buildings at the heart of the communities they serve. They are therefore uniquely well placed to get this core message across by proclaiming it on their buildings.

ICA Housing has therefore decided to encourage members



of our member co-ops to hang banners proclaiming the key IYC 2012 message on their co-op housing buildings. As soon as practicable there will be two standard banner designs available on ICA Housing's website (in two styles – one for tall buildings and one for long terraced housing) with open source copyright which housing co-ops can use.



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Co-op housing development conference – probably South Africa

ICA Housing is aware that much of our activity, inevitably, centres on developed countries where there are established co-operative housing systems. There is therefore a desire, particularly during 2012 to respond to interest in housing co-operatives in the emerging economies and the developing world by holding an ICA Housing conference or symposium in the southern hemisphere that is designed for and accessible to emerging co-operatives and focuses on the issues that are relevant to their developing co-operative housing systems.

Planning for this conference, which will be held in September 2012, is at an early stage. It too will be finalized at the next ICA Housing Board meeting in Brussels. If viable, it will probably be held in South Africa where support from national and state governments may be forthcoming.

Tell us what you need from ICA Housing

A key part of ICA Housing's strategy is to offer to support and respond to the needs of members. We are also keen to develop our 'added value' service offer to ICA housing co-operative members. Please [contact](#) us if you need information and/or assistance and tell us what additional services you think we could provide to members.

Tell your story!



[Stories.coop](#) is the world's first global, digital campaign to spread the benefits of co-operation through the tradition of story-telling. They want the stories of co-operation from every corner of the globe; from the smallest co-operative to the biggest; from the co-operators with personal stories to tell or the stories of business success; to those with observations on the co-operative model. Let your co-operatives know so that they can join in and play their part in the campaign!



KAB- How Co-operative Housing Works in Denmark

KAB is a Danish Co-operative Social Housing Association and a member of Kooperationen, the Co-operative Employers' Organisation in Denmark. Watch their video [here!](#)

Video - Housing co-ops build community

Short video giving a taste of co-op life as seen through the eyes of co-op members in British Columbia, Canada. Watch their video [here!](#)



Mark your calendar for the next ICA Housing Rendez-vous

ICA Housing's next global board meeting and symposium will be held during the European Co-operatives' Week in Brussels, the week of April 23rd. **This week promises to be full of IYC Year 2012 activities and events; so plan not to miss it.**