



International Co-operative Alliance



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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ICA unveils plan to guide co-ops into their strongest growth phase

Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade launched at Co-operatives United

Manchester, United Kingdom. 31 October, 2012; The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) today outlined an ambitious strategy to make co-operatives the fastest growing business model by the end of the decade.

"We want to see co-operatives rise to the top of global business as the fastest growing business model by 2020," said Charles Gould, Director-General of the ICA. "Actors on the global economic stage are seeking answers to pressing financial and social problems and this model provides many of the solutions they seek."

The co-operative decade strategy not only aims to make co-operatives the fastest growing form of business but also seeks to make co-operatives the acknowledged leader in environmental, social and economic sustainability.

President of the ICA, Dame Pauline Green, said today was a pivotal moment in the history of the co-operative sector. "This international year has seen the global co-operative movement come together in a way which was previously unimaginable. Now our challenge is to build on this hard work in a way which garners results. We now are in a position to cement our business model in markets worldwide."

The blueprint aims to take co-operatives to a position of being the preferred model by people worldwide.

Dame Pauline and Mr Gould called upon all sectors and members of the co-operative movement to not only rally behind the co-operative decade but to pick up the strategy and develop its own campaigns to further that strategy.

"This is an ambitious plan which will only work with the collaboration and support of the entire, global co-operative movement," said Dame Pauline, who was a member of the Planning World Group which advised on the drawing up of the blueprint.

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. **The International Co-operative Alliance** is the global voice for the values-based business model of the co-operative, uniting co-operatives worldwide and providing a forum for knowledge and concerted action.

ICA members are international and national co-operative organisations from all sectors of the economy including agriculture, banking, consumer, fisheries, health, housing, industry, insurance and tourism. The ICA has member organisations from almost 100 countries, representing approximately 1 billion individuals worldwide. Around 100 million people work for a co-op globally. ICA was established by co-operatives in 1895. In 1946 the ICA became one of the first three non-governmental organisations to be accorded "consultative status" with the United Nations.

2. **Co-operatives** are successful values based businesses owned by their members. Whether they are customers, employees or residents, the members get an equal say in the business and a share of the profits.
3. The United Nations has declared 2012 the **International Year of Co-operatives**. With its theme of 'co-operative enterprises build a better world', the Year is an opportunity to raise public awareness of how co-operatives are successful values based businesses owned by their members.
4. Further information about the International Year of Co-operatives is available at www.2012.coop.
5. Follow the ICA on **twitter** at @icacoop. Like the ICA's **Facebook** page at www.facebook.com/internationalcooperativealliance
6. To read a copy of the blueprint go to www.2012.coop