



International Co-operative Alliance
Alliance Coopérative Internationale
Alianza Cooperativa Internacional



Global Office: 150 Route de Ferney - C.P. 2100 - 1211 Geneva 2 - Switzerland - Tel: +41 (22) 929 88 38 - Fax: +41 (22) 798 41 22
ica@ica.coop - www.ica.coop



*Message from Dame Pauline Green,
President of the International Co-operative Alliance*



International Women's Day – 8 March 2013

“The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum!”

Over the last four decades, the position of women has made some progress, however, it is still too little and too long in coming. Let us encourage our daughters, and granddaughters. Let us insist that today's world demands equality for each individual whether man or woman.

Today the world faces unparalleled challenges. What we know today is that the traditional approaches to governing society, managing businesses, financing public services, handling conflict and war are simply no longer relevant.

Having more women in key decision-making places in political, economic and social decision-making at all levels in society is the way to move away from the sort of decision-making that has served us so poorly in recent years.

Today we want a different approach – one that values each individual and the contribution they can make to building a better world.

We can no longer put up with a world where it is acceptable to shoot a girl child for wanting to go to school, or to disregard the crime of rape against a woman who just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. We thought the campaign for equality was about low pay, discrimination, humiliation or glass ceilings in the work place, or by hunger and poverty. But its more, all too often it is a classic case of oppression and repression. Building a better world is about allowing each person to flourish and fulfil their potential – nothing else will do.

We want to prioritise policies for people; one that values businesses that have people at the heart of economic decision making and not profit; one that believes that money is better spent on creating a fairer, more just legal and social environment rather than funding political despots or trading in conflict.

Co-operative businesses have done so much to help women onto the ladder of economic activity. With that comes community respect, political legitimacy and influence. So far it has come too slowly. It is time for us to show that our co-operative movement can be a movement for the economic, social and political emancipation of all women.

This is the real co-operative message of International Women's Day.

Dame Pauline Green
President, International Co-operative Alliance

