

CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES BY ICA IN 1995. The ICA Tokyo Congress held in 1992, initiated steps to review the current ICA Co-operative Principles of 1966 and make possible changes to prevent the erosion in values of co-operation. Based on the direction given to Dr. Ivan Mac Pherson (Canada), he reviewed the principles and submitted a report in 1994 which was approved by ICA General Assembly in Manchester in September 1995. This report contains seven principles:- The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3. Member Economic Participation Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4. Autonomy and Independence Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external

sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6. Co-operation among Co-operatives Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members. To conclude, that the above said principles are the important qualities that make co-operative institutions effective, distinct and valuable. The Government should provide a conducive environment for the co-operatives in which they may combine in their working co-operative values, socio-economic objects and competitive strength in the Globalized Era. School of Distance Education