

EDITION-4

COOP CONNECT



APRIL 2026

The Network for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific (NEDAC) is a regional forum that unites 30 apex cooperative organizations across eight nations. Established in 1991, NEDAC was created on the recommendation of the 1990 International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), Regional Conference of Cooperative Ministers, with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The primary objective is to support agricultural cooperatives in promoting agricultural and rural development.

Partnerships

1. NEDAC Partners with Haliéus to Strengthen Global Cooperative Development

NEDAC has partnered with Haliéus, linked to Legacoop, representing over 10,000 cooperatives and 7 million members.

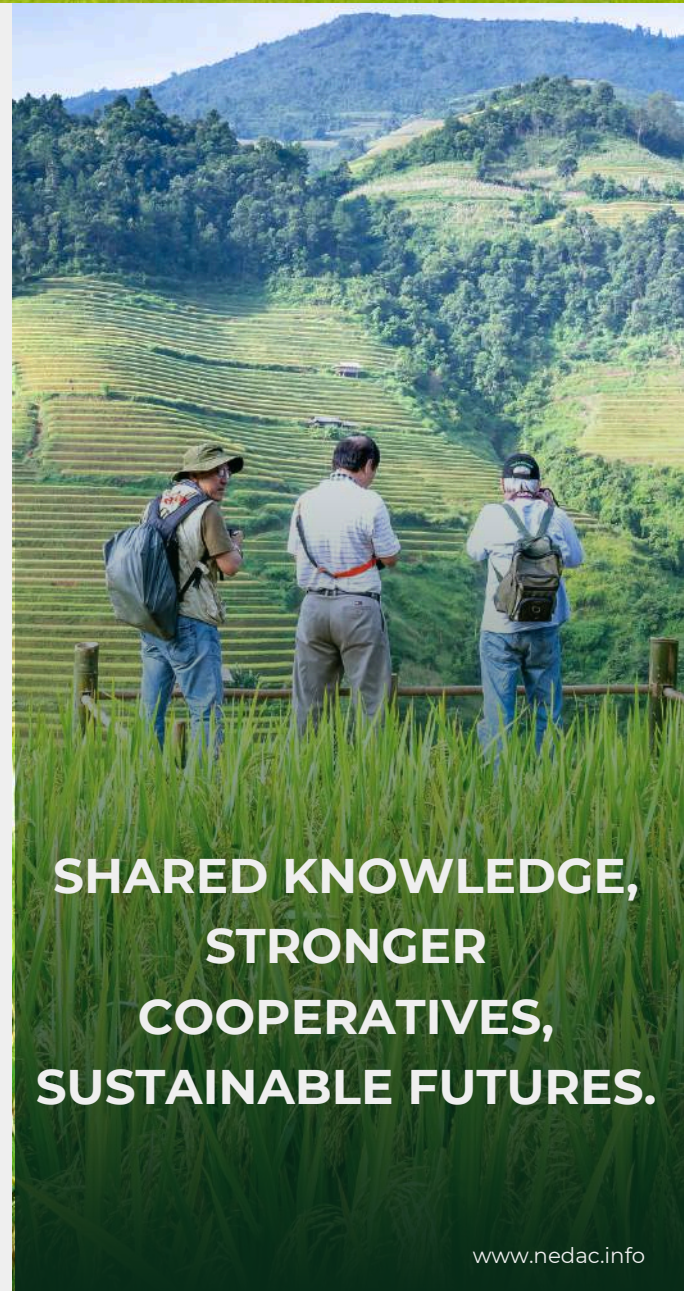
The collaboration aims to strengthen cooperative institutions, improve farmer livelihoods, promote social equity including women and youth participation, and support sustainable value chains, fostering cooperation between Asia-Pacific and European cooperative ecosystems for global growth.

2. NEDAC Partners with IDACA Japan

NEDAC has entered into a strategic partnership with IDACA Japan through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperative development. This collaboration focuses on capacity building, knowledge exchange, and sustainable practices, aiming to empower cooperatives, enhance livelihoods, and promote inclusive economic growth through joint initiatives and technical cooperation.

3. NEDAC welcomes its new member Alliance Multi State Cooperative Society Limited (AMCSL)

AMCSL established in the year 2023, and society registered under the provisions of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. The Society works on cooperative principles to support capacity building, facilitation, and coordination-based initiatives in collaboration with stakeholders, members, and partner organisations, strictly in accordance with its registered bye-laws. The Society is committed to promoting inclusive growth, cooperative development, and sustainable progress across India by implementing welfare-oriented initiatives in all sectors and regions.



**SHARED KNOWLEDGE,
STRONGER
COOPERATIVES,
SUSTAINABLE FUTURES.**



NEDAC Stakeholder Meeting in Manila Advances Asia-Pacific Vision for Cooperative-Led Development



The NEDAC Philippines Stakeholder Meeting on Cooperatives, convened under the NEDAC initiative, marked a significant step toward strengthening bilateral cooperation in the cooperative sector. Held in Philippines from April 13 to 18, 2026, the meeting was organized in association with the Cooperative Development Authority.

The meeting brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, government institutions, cooperative federations, development organizations, and private sector entities from both countries.

It served as a valuable platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the sharing of best practices. The primary objective was to explore collaborative opportunities for strengthening agricultural cooperatives, with a focus on governance, market linkages, financing, and service delivery—areas widely recognized as critical for building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable cooperative systems.

The welcome address by **Usec. Alexander B. Raquipo, Chairman of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Philippines**, who highlighted the critical role of cooperatives in fostering inclusive growth and supporting rural livelihoods.

He also stressed the importance of strengthening regional cooperative networks to enhance coordination, scalability, and impact across the sector.

This was followed by a powerful address from **Lionel Dabbadie, Country Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization in the Philippines**, highlighted the urgent need for deeper cooperation within the agricultural ecosystem.

He stressed that the true identity of cooperatives lies in their ability to collaborate effectively while embracing modern technology. He pointed out that integrating digital tools and innovative practices can significantly enhance productivity, resilience, and sustainability for farmers.



He also lauded the programmes and policies of the Ministry of Cooperation, noting that they are being implemented on a large scale with remarkable efficiency.



Speaking at the conference, **Mr. Jyoti Saroop, Director of Unati Cooperative and Marketing Society Limited**, emphasized that cooperatives are the true drivers of transforming local goods and services onto the global stage. It showcased how the integration of advanced technologies—such as AI-based governance, drone applications, smart agriculture analytics, and blockchain-enabled traceability—can significantly enhance productivity, transparency, and resilience within the cooperative ecosystem. He highlighted the role of women in cooperatives as real gamechangers.



The session also outlined emerging opportunities in climate finance, carbon credit generation, and the proposed development of an Asia-Pacific Climate-Smart Cooperative Corridor. He said that under the Chairmanship of Mr. Pankaj K. Bansal, Additional Secretary in Ministry of Cooperation, Govt of India we are here in NEDAC is planning to collaborate with the member network on a large scale.

To discuss the Policy and Institutional Perspective – Philippines
Usec. Luz H. Yringco from the Cooperative Development Authority, who outlined the policy and institutional framework supporting the cooperative sector in the Philippines.



The presentation underscored the country's strong constitutional and legal foundation for cooperatives, anchored in landmark legislations such as the Philippine Cooperative Code and the CDA Charter. These frameworks position cooperatives as vital instruments for promoting social equity and driving inclusive economic development.

The session also emphasized the importance of digitalization, improved access to institutional markets, and building partnerships for logistics and financing.

Notable growth trends in agricultural cooperatives were highlighted, with significant increases in assets, membership, and overall business volume. Strategic priorities identified include strengthening farm and fishery clustering, expanding financial inclusion, promoting value chain integration, and encouraging consolidation to achieve economies of scale.

At the same time, key challenges remain, including fragmented support programs, limited awareness of the benefits of cooperative federations, and the need for more region-specific development strategies.

Looking ahead, the discussions emphasized a strong forward focus on enhancing productivity, promoting sustainability, strengthening capacity building, and expanding access to wider markets.

NATCCO Strengthens Cooperative Movement in the Philippines with Inclusive Growth, Innovation, and Capacity Building Initiatives

At the meeting, the **National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO Network)**, Philippines, was highlighted as one of the most influential and trusted cooperative federations in the country, widely recognized for its strong values of solidarity, financial inclusion, and people-centered development. Over the years, NATCCO has built its reputation in the Philippines by empowering grassroots cooperatives and promoting sustainable, member-driven economic growth.




Sylvia Okinlay-Paraguya
Chief Executive Officer,
National Confederation of
Cooperatives (NATCCO)



Capacity-building programmes such as the Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) were also showcased, focusing on strengthening governance systems, leadership development, and institutional effectiveness across member cooperatives.

The discussion further underscored the **importance of microfinance innovation through partnerships**, along with strengthening inter-cooperative collaboration. Key priorities identified include improving data systems, expanding access to sustainable financing, and enhancing overall cooperative capacity to ensure long-term resilience, productivity, and sectoral growth.

The presentation by **Ms. Sylvia Okinlay-Paraguya, Chief Executive Officer of National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)** highlighted the scale and diversity of cooperative operations under its network, particularly multi-purpose cooperatives engaged in agriculture-based value chains such as dairy, rice processing, coconut, cacao, and high-value crops.

It emphasized innovative financing mechanisms, including tailored loan products and the ANGEL Fund, designed to support small and medium cooperatives in strengthening their financial resilience and operational capacity. These initiatives reflect NATCCO's continued commitment to inclusive and accessible cooperative finance.

Innovations in Cooperative Services – Stakeholder Meeting Highlight (Philippines)



At the stakeholder meeting on cooperatives in the Philippines, the session on innovation in cooperative services highlighted a strong and scalable model presented by **Mj. Gen. Gilbert Llanto, Chairperson of ACDI Multi-Purpose Cooperative**.

The discussion showcased how ACDI Multi-Purpose Cooperative has evolved into a diversified ecosystem spanning financial services, agriculture, retail, real estate, education, and healthcare. ACDI is the country's largest cooperative, serving members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), their dependents, and civilian personnel.

This diversification reflects a strategic approach discussed during the meeting, emphasizing resilience, member welfare, and sustainable growth within the cooperative sector.

A major focus was its fully integrated agribusiness model, which covers the entire value chain—from production and processing to distribution and retail. Participants noted that this model strengthens efficiency, enhances value addition, and improves market linkages for smallholder farmers.



The session also highlighted how ACDI's investments in agriculture contribute to food self-sufficiency and sustainability, while promoting circular economy principles and inclusive participation of rural producers. Its efforts in integrating smallholder farmers into structured value chains were recognized as a key strength.

Additionally, the cooperative's involvement in national initiatives, including school-based feeding programmes, was noted as an example of how cooperatives are contributing beyond economic activities to broader social development goals and community welfare outcomes.

Bilateral Stakeholder Dialogue Between NEDAC Members Strengthens India-Philippines Cooperative Collaboration



As an outcome of the bilateral dialogue, Indian and Philippine cooperative organizations identified a set of priority areas for future collaboration through the NEDAC platform.

These focus areas are designed to strengthen institutional linkages, improve operational efficiency, and unlock new economic opportunities for cooperative members. To begin with, a key priority is the streamlining of cooperative registration systems.

Recognizing **India's extensive experience and scale in the cooperative sector**, the Philippine side acknowledged the importance of adopting more efficient, transparent, and digitized registration processes. Sharing best practices in regulatory frameworks, governance structures, and administrative procedures can help simplify processes, reduce delays, and create a more enabling environment for the growth of new cooperatives. Building on this foundation, both sides identified export development and market expansion as a critical area of cooperation.

Participants highlighted the potential for cooperatives to access international markets by aligning quality standards, enhancing product value, and strengthening export capabilities. Collaborative efforts such as knowledge exchange, joint training, and institutional support can help cooperatives expand beyond domestic markets.

In parallel, the dialogue emphasized the importance of digitalization and financial system strengthening. This includes cooperation in digital payments, financial inclusion, and technology-driven service delivery systems, which can improve efficiency, transparency, and accessibility for cooperative members.

Another important area is capacity building and training. Both sides underscored the need for continuous learning through joint workshops, exposure visits, and leadership development programs to strengthen institutional capabilities and foster innovation.

Finally, knowledge exchange and policy collaboration were identified as cross-cutting priorities that underpin all areas of cooperation.

Regular dialogue, sharing of best practices, and collaborative research will play a crucial role in supporting evidence-based policymaking and sectoral innovation.





For 56 years, the **Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC)**—one of the largest agri-based cooperatives in the Philippines—has been helping farmers and its members to be successfully empowered by increasing their participation in the agricultural value chain and enhancing their access to more lucrative and dynamic markets through collective action.

Over the decades, SIDC has evolved from a small farmers' association into a large, diversified cooperative enterprise.

NEDAC delegation visited the SIDC to understand its successful cooperative model and explore opportunities for knowledge exchange.

The visit began with a comprehensive presentation by SIDC officials, highlighting its journey from a small farmers' group to a multi-billion peso enterprise. The delegation learned about SIDC's integrated approach, which combines production, processing, financing, and marketing into a unified system that maximizes farmer benefits.

The Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative operates its own feed mill—an ISO 9001:2015 certified facility—producing an average of 9,000 bags of feed per day. This modern facility reflects SIDC's strong commitment to quality, efficiency, and supporting the productivity of its member-farmers.

During the visit, the NEDAC delegation toured the feed mill along with other key facilities, including livestock farms and retail outlets. The delegation observed advanced feed manufacturing processes and quality control systems that ensure consistent and reliable feed supply.

Interactions with member-farmers gave the delegation valuable insights into how SIDC's programs—such as contract growing and input support—have significantly improved farm productivity, increased incomes, and created sustainable livelihood opportunities.





NEDAC–LINAC Workshop Strengthens Cooperative Leadership and Governance; 15 Organizations Participate

NEDAC organized a one-day workshop on Enhancing Cooperative Leadership and Governance Guidelines at the **Laxmanrao Inamdar National Academy for Cooperative Research and Development, Gurugram**, in collaboration with the National Cooperative Development Corporation. The event brought together representatives from 15 organizations, reflecting strong interest and active engagement from the cooperative sector.

The workshop focused on strengthening leadership capabilities and promoting effective governance practices within cooperative institutions. Participants engaged in interactive sessions, discussions, and case-based learning aimed at addressing contemporary challenges faced by cooperatives.

The program was designed to provide practical insights into leadership development, transparency, accountability, and strategic decision-making. Experts from the **Laxmanrao Inamdar National Academy for Cooperative Research and Development** and the National Cooperative Development Corporation facilitated the sessions, sharing best practices and policy perspectives to support the growth and sustainability of cooperatives across the country. The participation of 15 organizations—including FPOs, FFPOs, members, and partner institutions—contributed to a dynamic exchange of ideas and experiences, fostering collaborative learning.

Director General, LINAC, Manoj Kumar, addressed the gathering and emphasized that true progress begins with **“knowing your cooperatives,”** highlighting the importance of understanding grassroots realities for effective governance. The workshop concluded with a strong emphasis on continued capacity-building initiatives and the importance of adopting robust governance frameworks to enhance the performance and impact of cooperative institutions. Such initiatives reaffirm the commitment of LINAC and NCDC to empowering cooperative leaders and strengthening the cooperative ecosystem in India.



Presented by:
NEDAC Secretariat



Network For The Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific

Community of Practice Session-2

Transformation in Cooperatives

Guest Speakers

- Sri Balaji Farmers Welfare Multistate Coop Society Ltd.
- Duarbagori Cooperative Society Ltd. Assam
- National Cooperaive Exports Limited (NCEL)
- Alliance Multi State Cooperative Society Limited (AMCSL), India

 Join us on
May 5, 2026
 **11:30 am IST**



Scan to join →

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8248...>



Cooperatives and the International Year of the Woman Farmer

This year, we celebrate the power, courage, ideas, and cooperative values of women farmer cooperatives.

Dear members, if you have inspiring stories of our women cooperatives, please share them with us for the newsletter.

Let's honor and amplify their voices together.

Follow for more:



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