



International
Co-operative
Alliance



**Amy Coughenour
Betancourt**

Chief Operating Officer
National Cooperative Business
Association—CLUSA International
(NCBA CLUSA)

16 March 2016



Women's Economic Empowerment in Rural Areas through Cooperatives

www.ica.coop

About the International Co-operative Alliance

- Global cooperative voice since 1895
- Represents 292 member organizations in 97 countries – 1 billion citizens
- Top 300 co-operatives: \$2.36 trillion in turnover – equal to 7th largest economy
- 250 million people secure livelihoods through co-operatives

The Alliance's Work on Promoting Women's Empowerment

- Gender Equality Committee
- Research
- Collecting information on member achievements



NCBA CLUSA's International Program

Celebrating 100 years

63 years in international
Development in 80 countries

Food Security/Nutrition
Sustainable Agriculture
Natural Resources Management
Climate Adaptation
Cooperative Development
Empowerment of Women/Youth



- Currently implementing in 20 countries, 860 staff
- Community-led, market-based approaches
- Innovative approaches for women and vulnerable populations
- Leaders in climate-smart and nutrition-led agriculture

Why Cooperatives?

Ownership and Empowerment

CO-OPS

in a nutshell:

Democratically-owned

People who use the co-op are the people who own it.
It is owned equally by each person (member).

Democratically-controlled

Members have equal say over the co-op's operations.

Democratically-benefiting

Equitably provides benefits to the co-op's members & their communities.

A Strong Foundation for SDGs: 7 Cooperative Principles



Women's Empowerment in Food Security



Availability



Access



Utilization



Governance

Focus on women's participation in activities across all 4 food security pillars

Availability of and Access to Nutritious Food: Senegal



7,000 hectares of
commercial and micro
gardens

Yields up from 250kg to
1MT

58% higher household
revenues

427 Community Solution
Providers (80% women)
link to coops, firms

Sold over \$2.5 million

Utilization of Food & Nutrition

3,250 Mother-to-Mother groups (57,000+ mothers and 85,500+ children)

33% decrease in underweight children

36% decrease in stunting

73% of households have a high dietary diversity score



Governance of Food and Nutrition Resources

Citizen Working Groups create local food security plans and advocate for resources

50% of participants in CWGs are women

Women make up 30% of CWG leadership



What Co-operatives Need

An enabling legal and regulatory environment

Coordination across Ministries and with partners from all sectors

Leadership and advocacy training for women to increase voice, empowerment, and demand for improved services and resources

Support for income-generation and access to markets

Co-op strengthening initiatives (gender inclusion, governance, financial management, business, marketing, foundational skills)



Thank you!

