
ICA General Assembly Resolution on Cooperatives for Development

*endorsing the conclusions of the ICA Global Conference
"Cooperatives for Development" (Kigali, 14-17 October 2019)*

KIGALI RESOLUTION

Reaffirming the International Statement on the Cooperative Identity as adopted by the Centennial Congress of the ICA in 1995, as the guiding document for cooperatives, governments and other actors to create an **enabling environment** for not only **the growth & development** of cooperatives but also towards maximising their potential and thus **contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals** and, in it, our collective pursuit to build a **peaceful planet** while asserting the continuance of the cooperative enterprise model that has survived over 200 years, including two World Wars and innumerable conflicts affecting the peoples of the world.

Considering that the nature of the cooperative enterprise model corresponds to the interlinkages and the interdependencies amongst the **17 SDGs**, it is crucial that cooperatives are recognised as an indispensable actor for the aspirational **multi-stakeholder partnerships** required to achieve sustainable development going beyond Agenda 2030.

The ICA General Assembly having convened in Kigali, Rwanda, on 17 October 2019, endorses the points of action reflected during the ICA Global Conference on the theme of "Cooperatives for development", while acknowledging the plurality of the stakeholders participating therein, resolves to report on the follow up actions periodically.

a. Cooperatives and Cooperative Organizations

- Operationalising the cooperative value of **openness** to foster inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships to enhance the impact of local communities and tackle global challenges, such as climate emergency, rising inequality, gender disparity, future of work, unfair value chains, peacebuilding;
- Being **self-critical** on a permanent basis and learn from their successes and failures and draw concrete lessons out of it.
- Promoting education, training and information to empower local communities with knowledge on the SDGs in order to effectively achieve the targets thereof;
- Increasingly engaging in climate-related activities and, if found useful, include it in the statutes to strengthen the implementation of the principle of **concern for community**;
- Ensuring that cooperatives put in place structures and incentives that foster **women's leadership** in decision-making processes on vital issues of development;
- Developing strategies to **fight societal inequalities** including all types of discrimination, particularly the worst forms of child labour, by upholding democratic practices through equal and equitable treatment of members from all sections, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged such as the ageing societies. Nation-building and nation-keeping requires social cohesion and thus low inequalities.
- Maximizing the **potential of inter-cooperation** to further facilitate sustainable entrepreneurial practices and work towards a whole-society approach. This should be supported by collection, analysis and dissemination of **comparable global data**, and do this in collaboration with all stakeholders so that we can better monitor, evaluate and implement collective actions;
- Developing and support a broadened scope of innovative financial and training services that can be accessible to **youth**. In this way, their **entrepreneurial capacity** can also

be developed and this would help in fostering transformative and inclusive economic systems.

Section Conclusions

This is what we have concluded as points of action for cooperatives. We should break our siloes and foster partnership amongst different cooperative types like housing, energy, consumer, workers, producers and professionals etc. This also means that we need to work with other actors like the farmers unions, workers unions, employers' organizations, Local Authorities, NGOs, Fairtrade movement, and other social movements.

b. Governments and Inter-Governmental Actors:

- Recognizing the importance of cooperatives and their **effectiveness in achieving the SDGs** because they are active at the local, national and the international level. As different types of cooperatives are contributing more specifically to different SDGs, they are a major vehicle for the implementation of the Goals.
- Being alerted that the implementation of the Goals is under a serious time-constraint especially because poverty and sustainability are multi-dimensional challenges;
- Partnering with the cooperative sector and **investing in building its capacities** in particular to strengthen and build its capacity to enhance levels of productivity and competitiveness for quality goods and service;
- Developing programmes in collaboration with the cooperative movement to enhance & build capacities by strengthening the organizational, management and financial skills of their members, while adhering to **gender equality** and empowerment of women;
- Examining and reporting periodically on existing legislation and regulatory frameworks concerning cooperatives at the national and international level and review on the basis of relevant UN Conventions, Recommendations and Declarations to reinforce the key role of cooperatives, in particular in the transition from the informal to the formal economy, in the **fight against inequalities** and in the edification of an inclusive society;

- Ensuring that whenever there is a change in legislation, the initiative should either come from the cooperative movement or endorsed by and in coordination with the national cooperative organization;
- Promoting cooperatives with business support services, **access** to markets, finance and new technologies to improve sustainable livelihoods; To promote the role of cooperative organizations by integrating the **cooperative identity in education programmes** at all levels to encourage **youth entrepreneurship**, talent and skills development;

Section Conclusion

The gist of these suggestions is that the governments and intergovernmental actors need to ensure sustained political commitment towards an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue acknowledging cooperatives as a key actor for development at all levels.