

**THE ALLIANCE AFRICA
12TH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
AND
2ND AFRICA CO-OPERATIVE CONFERENCE**

Theme: “Co-operatives in Africa Embracing Sustainable Development Goals”

28TH-31ST OCTOBER, KIGALI, RWANDA



INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development builds on what the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not complete. The Agenda has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) namely: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health And Well Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and Partnerships for the Goals.

The 169 Targets corresponding to the above 17 Goals, are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development which are the economic, social and environment. The Goals and Targets are designed to stimulate action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet, which are also at the core of the co-operative movement in Africa.

The theme of the 12th Regional Assembly and the 2nd Africa Co-operative Conference is: “**CO-OPERATIVES IN AFRICA EMBRACING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**”. This year’s conference is three fold incorporating Gender and Research, Youth and Housing Co-operative sessions. The conference will bring together all continental co-operative stakeholders for discussions and decisions on how to further strengthen the co-operative business enterprises and institutions across Africa with a more gender balanced approach and inclusion of the marginalized such as youth while ensuring decent habitat for all .

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the conference is to initiate an open and high level discussion on the theme with a view to formulate concrete resolutions and proposals which will be conveyed/ presented to the co-operatives members and networks, national governments, academia and other development agencies for their further action.

CO-OPERATIVES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Co-operatives are enterprises created by and for people to serve their members’ economic and social needs. Based on the values such as; self-help, democracy, equality, and solidarity.



Guided by principles inspired by values, co-operatives focus on long-term goals for the greater good, rather than short-term profits for a few. Through a co-operative, disadvantaged people can create their own economic opportunities; participate in decision-making processes that concern them, and turn individual risk into collective risk. (*Report Produced by the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Co-operatives 2016*).

One of the seven principles to which co-operatives subscribe to is concern for community, which includes the idea of socio-economic and environmental sustainability. Co-operatives are often pioneers in ways to eliminate food losses and food waste along the supply chain, in addition to offering infrastructure to smallholder farmers to help minimize post-harvest losses and engaging in innovative recycling and reuse programs.

Given their focus on people and their needs, co-operatives have proven to be resilient, and even recorded growth, during times of crisis. They also generally place more emphasis than their corporate counterparts on job security, competitive wages, and additional income through profit-sharing.

Co-operatives are a source of decent work and increase inclusion of marginalized groups, such as youth and indigenous people, in the workforce. At least 250 million people around the world secure their livelihoods through co-operatives, either through direct employment or by organizing their activities through a co-operative. Being enterprises democratically controlled by their members, co-operatives also allow workers to participate in the decision-making processes that affect them.

Being socially minded enterprises, co-operatives offer non-economic benefits to their members, which include education and training, one of the seven principles to which co-operatives adhere to. These educational opportunities can take the form of professional development training, management skills building, or adult education offerings.

The co-operative principle of “concern for community” means that co-operatives invest in the long-term well-being of the communities in which they operate.

Co-operatives are also significant economic players. The 2015 World Co-operative Monitor



shows that the total turnover of the world's Top 300 co-operatives and mutuals increased from USD \$2,205.70bn in 2013 to USD \$2,360.05bn in 2014. The world's largest 300 co-operative businesses recorded a 6.9% growth in combined turnover to just under USD 2.4 trillion. The Top 300 of the 2015 Monitor were spread over 25 countries, with 40% based in the insurance sector, 32% in agriculture and food industries, and 17% in wholesale and retail trade.

In the 2014 Monitor, the top 300 co-operative and mutual enterprises accounted for 2,205.7 billion USD in turnover. Covering 26 countries, the top 300 co-ops were involved in the insurance sector (46%), the agricultural and food sector (27%) and wholesale and retail trade (20%).

Among the 25 countries, two of our members from Kenya are ranked among the 300 largest co-operatives in terms of turnover. These are the co-operative bank of Kenya and the Co-operative Insurance Group of Kenya.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

It said that the MDGs have made some progress, but inequalities persist. While a small portion of the population enjoys prosperity, many continue to endure poverty, unequal access to education and employment opportunities, disease, conflict and harsh living conditions, particularly in Africa; hence the development and adoption of the SDGs.

Co-operatives have an invaluable role in the international community's roll-out of the sustainable development goals. Co-operatives can do anything that a for-profit business can do; even they can do it better. They can do it ethically, they can do it by not overly seeking profit, and they can do it by involving community. Co-operatives are an ideal way to implement the goals we want to achieve, but they must be recognized as such and given space to exercise their potential. Partnerships, support and recognition by the UN and other global bodies are crucial to maximize their potential.

Mentions of co-operatives appear in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Financing for Development (FfD) Action Agenda. In the FfD document there are several mentions to co-operatives, acknowledging the critical contribution co-operatives make in enhancing socio-economic and environmental sustainable development. Some of the mentions include;

"13. (...) we will strengthen our efforts to enhance food security and nutrition and focus



our efforts on smallholders and women farmers, as well as on agricultural co-operatives and farmers' networks.”

“39. (...) we will also support microfinance institutions, development banks, agricultural banks, mobile network operators, agent networks, co-operatives, postal banks and

savings banks as appropriate.”

“43 (...) National development banks, credit unions, and other domestic financial institutions can play a vital role in providing access to financial services.”

But most importantly, we managed to achieve a general recognition that co-operatives are part of the private sector and yet different from multinationals or other types of enterprises:

“35. Private business activity, investment and innovation are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation. We acknowledge the diversity of the private sector, ranging from micro-enterprises to co-operatives to multinationals.”

Given this recognition of co-operatives in UN development policy, co-operatives have an opportunity to show their value as partners in achieving sustainable development.

During a United Nations meeting held in New York on 02 July 2016 to mark the International Day of Co-operatives, the President of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), Monique F. Leroux, reiterated the key role that co-operatives play in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and pledged the co-operative movement's commitment to the United Nations SDGs saying that: *“I am honored to affirm today our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. Co-operatives are key partners for achieving the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, since our values and principles run parallel to the Sustainable Development Goals”*. As sustainable, people-focused businesses, fostering decent work and inclusion, co-operative enterprises will indeed play an essential role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Africa Co-operative Movement was not left behind and The 12th Regional Assembly and the 2nd African Co-operative Conference will adhere to and build on these commitments, and discussions will focus on the following three interrelated subthemes:

1. Transforming Co-operatives in Africa through research, practice and education: The



2020 Blue-print Agenda for Sustainable Co-operative Development.

2. Co-operatives promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth for youth in Africa.
3. Co-operatives enhancing access to adequate, safe and affordable housing in Africa.



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AGENDA

Date	TIME	EVENT	FACILITATOR
28/10/2016	0900hrs-1500hrs	Board Meeting	Closed Session
29/10/2016	0800hrs-0830hrs	Registration	Secretariat
	0830hrs-1000hrs	Entertainment Opening Session	MC
		Chairman NCCR Rwanda	Mr. Augustine Katarwa
		The Alliance Africa Regional Director	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa
		The Alliance Africa -President	Mr. Stanley Muchiri
		Director General-The Alliance	Mr. Charles Gould
		DG RCA Mr. Mugabo to Welcome the Minister	
		The Minister's Opening Remarks	TBT
	1000-1030hrs	Group Photo Tea/Coffee Break	MC
1030-1230hrs	Members Forum (Strategy and By-laws Session)	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa Open to Members only	



	1230-1300hrs	Clarification Seeking on Strategy and By laws. Q/A	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa Open to Members only
	1300-1400hrs	Lunch	MC
	1400-1800hrs	Research Conference	Prof. Esther Gicheru
30/10/2016	0800-1000hrs	Youth Conference	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa
	1000-1030hrs	Tea/Coffee Break	MC
	1030-1300hrs	Youth Conference Cont...	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa
	1300-1400hrs	Lunch	MC
	1400-1700hrs	Co-operative Housing Conference	NACHU
31/10/2016	0800-1000hrs	Regional Assembly	Alliance Africa- President-Mr. Stanley Muchiri
	1000-1030hrs	Tea/Coffee Break	MC
	1030-1300hrs	Elections	Election Committee
	1300-1400hrs	Lunch	
	1400-1600hrs	Information Session on SDGs and Co-operatives	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa
	1600-1630hrs	Announcement of Election Results	Election Committee
	1600-1700hrs	Closing Session	MC
			Chairman NCCR Rwanda





		The Alliance Africa Regional Director	Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa
		The Alliance Africa -President	Mr. Stanley Muchiri
		Director General-The Alliance	Mr. Charles Gould
		DG RCA Mr. Mugabo Welcomes the Minister	

