

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF COOPERATIVES 2025

COOPERATIVES BUILD A BETTER WORLD

On 19 June 2024, the [United Nations General Assembly](#) proclaimed 2025 as the [International Year of Cooperatives](#), underscoring the vital role cooperatives play in sustainable development.

[The COPAC Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives](#), a multi-stakeholder partnership of global public and private institutions, will serve as the official host of the IYC, championing and supporting people-centred and self-sustaining cooperative enterprises as leaders in sustainable development.



Following the success of the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives, on 19 June 2024, the United Nations General Assembly officially proclaimed 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) [under the Resolution A/RES/78289](#) under the sponsorship of Mongolia and Kenya. This initiative underscores the vital role of cooperatives in advancing sustainable development, eradicating poverty, and fostering inclusive economic growth. The theme of the year *Cooperatives Build a Better World* underscores the enduring global impact of cooperatives, positioning them as essential solutions to today's global challenges. It highlights their contributions to sustainable development across social, economic, and environmental dimensions, showing how cooperatives are key drivers in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The theme also emphasizes the unique ability of cooperatives to foster inclusive growth and strengthen community resilience.



Cooperatives are businesses owned and controlled by the very members they serve. This member-driven model distinguishes cooperatives from other types of enterprises, ensuring that decisions are made to balance both profit and the needs and interests of their members and communities. Whether the members are the customers, employees or residents, they have an equal say in what the business does and a share in the profits. Cooperatives come in many forms and operate across all sectors of society but are united in their values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

In 1995, the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, recognized the importance of cooperatives in the people-centered approach to development and agreed to *“utilize and develop fully the potential and contribution of cooperatives for the attainment of social development goals, in particular the eradication of poverty, the generation of full and productive employment, and the enhancement of social integration.”* (Commitment 9h). Within the United Nations System, the [Division for Inclusive Social](#)



[Development \(DISD\)](#) of the United Nations [Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(UNDESA\)](#) monitors the promotion and development of cooperatives at the national and international levels and works collaboratively with the COPAC Committee in organizing expert group meetings and special events to mark the International Day of Cooperatives.

[The 2024 Global Cooperative Conference](#) held on 25-30 November 2024 at the Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, India was the official launch of the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2025 (IYC) in the presence of global leaders, academics and practitioners. The conference marked an important moment as over 3,000 co-operators came together, demonstrating the power of cooperatives in tackling global challenges such as inequality, climate and conflict. There were more than 100 inspirational speakers and provocative panel debates, and delegates co-created cooperative visions and strategies during multiple break-out sessions. The conference theme, Cooperatives Build Prosperity for All, celebrated cooperatives as people-centred, purpose-led and progress-driven enterprises.

[The International Cooperative Alliance ICA](#), which has organized the 2024 Global Cooperative Conference for the launch of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025, actively collaborates for the success of the initiative. ICA unites, represents and serves cooperatives worldwide. Founded in 1895, it is one of the oldest non-governmental organisations and one of the largest ones measured by the number of people represented: 1 billion cooperative members on the planet. [The International Cooperative Alliance website](#) informs that the 3 million cooperatives on earth contribute to sustainable economic growth and stable, quality employment. In particular the website underlines that cooperative movement accounts for at least 12% of the global population, the top 300 cooperatives generate 2.4 trillion of USD in turnover; Cooperatives provide jobs or work opportunities to 280 million people across the globe. The ICA now has 310-member organizations, among which 272 are full members and 38 are associate members from 104 countries.

Throughout the year, all the actors involved will work together to raise awareness about the cooperative enterprise model. The UN General Assembly encourages establishing national coordination mechanisms for IYC activities, ensuring that global messages reach stakeholders at all levels.

- *Governments & Policymakers*: Develop supportive policies and regulatory frameworks that foster cooperative growth.
- *Cooperatives*: Highlight their role in sustainable development, nurture leadership, and collaborate with other cooperatives.
- *Institutions & Development Agencies*: Promote education, capacity building, and international cooperation to strengthen cooperatives.
- *The Public*: Learn how cooperatives drive sustainability and support local initiatives.

[The website invites all the actors interested to participate](#) to reach the main objectives of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025 that are to:

- Raise Public Awareness, highlighting the contributions of cooperatives to sustainable development.
- Promote Growth and Development, strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem and establishments for cooperatives.



- Advocate for Supportive Frameworks, encouraging the creation of enabling legal and policy environments for cooperatives globally.
- Inspire Leadership, fostering purposeful leadership and engaging youth in the cooperative movement.

To know more

[International Year of Cooperatives IYC 2025 website](#)

[Resolution A/RES/78289 United Nations Assembly](#)

[COPAC Coop website](#)

[COPAC Members](#)

[ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024](#)

[2012 International Year of Cooperatives](#)

[Events planned by the IYC2025](#)

[IYC 2025 in ICA Coop website](#)

[News 2024 in social.desa.un.org](#)

[UN International Year of Cooperatives in social.desa.un.org](#)

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