

10TH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE



*Sarova Panafric Hotel
Nairobi, Kenya
22-24th May ,2023*



TCAMCCO 2023

Acknowledgement

International Cooperative Alliance – Africa (ICA - Africa), on behalf of its Board of Directors and the Management would like to thank the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development and ICA–Africa members in Kenya: CAK, KUSCCO, CIC Group, CoopBank, CUK, KCCE & NACHU for hosting the 10th Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference (TCAMCCO).

We extend our deepest gratitude to all our distinguished speakers, paper presenters, session moderators and facilitators for their commendable work during the conference. Finally, we acknowledge the financial support from our sponsors that enabled us to carry out this event.

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Introduction

The ICA-Africa 10th Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference (TCAMCCO) was jointly organized by ICA-Africa and its members in Kenya. The conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya from the 22nd – 24th May 2023 at Sarova Panafric Hotel. The first Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference was held in May 2014 and thereafter, ICA-Africa has successfully organized the conference every year, which has had the benefit of monitoring of cooperative development progress from the African countries. The theme of this year's conference is: ***“Transforming Cooperatives for a Stronger Africa: Building Better Co-operative Identity, Sustaining Cooperation and Reinforcing Institutional Capacity”***.

The main objective of TCAMCCO is to bring together Cooperative Leaders, Government officials, Cooperative Technocrats and other stakeholders to meet and deliberate on issues affecting the development of cooperatives in the Africa continent and forge collaborative efforts to tackle those issues. The specific objectives for this conference included:

- Strengthening Cooperative Identity
- Enhancing partnerships for sustainable cooperation
- Reinforcing of institutional capacity for a prosperous Africa

To help achieve these objectives, there was a thematic conference with a panel session and various paper presentations on the following sub-themes

- Re-imagining cooperative identity for a stronger Africa: Cooperatives as builders of the economic and social fabric from selected sectors
- Sustaining cooperation through stronger networks, trade, strategic partnership, financial inclusion and cooperative professionalism
- Cooperative structures, tenets and legal frameworks

The conference saw a participation of 176 participants drawn from 23 countries. The countries represented at the conference were Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Denmark, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Eswatini, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The participants in the various sessions of the conference included government officials, cooperative leaders, cooperators, partners and other stakeholders.

Session 1: Opening Ceremony

Remarks by the CEO Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) – Mr. Daniel Marube



Mr. Marube welcomed all in attendance and stated that indeed cooperatives bring people together and it is evident by the over 20 countries represented in the conference. He mentioned that the progress made so far within the Kenyan cooperative movement can be attributed to collaboration and respect of roles between the government and the movement. National cooperative policies are developed in consultation with the movement and the Minister arbitrates disagreement.

He explained that CAK targets to have every Kenyan be part of a cooperative and aspires to aggregate cooperative products and services; for this to happen he encouraged cooperatives to re-organize themselves in the required manner. In addition, cooperative legislation would improve cross border trade and investments.

He concluded by asking all conference guests and participants to enjoy their stay and enjoy Kenya's touristic activities and hospitality.

Remarks by the Regional Director of ICA-Africa – Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa

The ICA-Africa Regional Director thanked all in attendance for their participation and support. She also thanked the host country: Government of Kenya and ICA members in Kenya for hosting the event.

She stated that cooperatives and the continent will have to adapt to unprecedented changes and challenges. For instance, GDP in Africa declined by 1.8% in 2020 for the first time in more than 25 years, pushing 23 million people into extreme poverty and exacerbating inequality.



She concluded that to adapt to these changes, cooperatives should continue to be resilient and transform themselves to remain significant and impactful. Cooperatives should carry the torch of transformation; igniting spark everywhere in the continent.

Remarks by the Vice President of ICA-Africa & Chairman KUSCCO Ltd – Mr. George Magutu

The ICA-Africa President expressed gratitude for the privilege to host the conference and stated that Kenya would gracefully be willing to host more conferences.



He mentioned that conference participants should learn best practices of cooperative activities in respective sectors e.g., Egypt – housing sector, Kenya – financial sector, Rwanda – agriculture sector etc. He concluded that he hopes that the knowledge to be gained, relationships to be built and commitments to be made during

the conference will lead to a brighter future for cooperatives in Africa.

Remarks by the President of ICA-Africa – High Chief Oriyomi Ayeola

The ICA-Africa President welcomed all participants and thanked the host country and organizing team for their hospitality. He stated that the conference theme is befitting as we find ourselves at a pivotal moment; when the world is undergoing significant transformations, and Africa stands to seize new opportunities while addressing our persistent challenges. As we navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing global landscape, cooperatives must adapt, innovate, and reinvent themselves to remain relevant and be impactful.

For instance, he stated that the world is experiencing an unprecedented digital revolution, and cooperatives should harness the potential of technology to enhance their operations, improve efficiency, and reach new markets. Furthermore, inclusivity should remain at the core of cooperative development; marginalized groups should have equal access to cooperative opportunities and actively involved in decision-making processes.



He reiterated that cooperatives have always been an integral part of Africa's social fabric, embodying the spirit of harmonious community, unity, and self-help. Through collective action, cooperatives create employment opportunities and enhance livelihoods for millions of Africans. This he said should continue and be bettered.

In conclusion, he encouraged the movement to continue working together to build a

future where cooperatives play a central role in shaping Africa's destiny; one which encourages our best to stay in the continent, and the Africa we can all be proud of. He called on governments and all relevant stakeholders to support the growth and vitality of cooperatives, especially the resolutions from the 13th Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference and their implementation frameworks.

Remarks by the Guest of Honor – Hon. Simon Kiprono Chelugui EGH; Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development



Hon. Chelugui welcomed all distinguished guests and conference participants on behalf of the President and Government of Kenya. He noted that the President recognizes the importance of cooperatives and this is evident in the formation of a stand-alone ministry for cooperatives. This recognition, he mentioned goes a long way to speak to people in Kenya and beyond.

On the development status of the continent, he stated that the past may be dark, but the promise and future of Africa is bright and cooperatives should play a significant role in this transformation. Cooperatives should collectively pool their resources and aggregate their products for the economic blocs to succeed.

The Kenya cooperative movement he mentioned has made some progress with their development and stated some of the impressive statistics of the movement e.g., an asset base of Kshs 1.5 trillion and 30% of the national saving. He stated that the government's model of the bottom-up economic transformation, mirrors the cooperative principles and ambitions. In addition, government intends to use the value chain approach to reach many people, and have already identified some key value chains.

In conclusion, he commended the cooperative movement for the recent UN resolution on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) and pledged support of the government during the Pan-African Parliament Cooperative Model Law consultations. He encouraged cooperatives to embrace e-commerce platforms and invest in education and training to equip cooperative members with adequate knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to manage their enterprises successfully. He cited recently launched programs to lower cost of service delivery for cooperatives in Kenya; CoopTech and SACCOCentral. He wished participants a successful conference and a pleasant stay in Kenya.

Thematic Conference:

Background Paper – Presented by Dr. Chiyoge Sifa (Mrs.)

Dr. Sifa started her presentation by highlighting the importance of cooperatives and why their transformation is important for a stronger Africa.

Cooperatives in all regions, contribute to the sustainable economic growth and stable, quality employment, providing jobs or work opportunities to 280 million people across the globe, in other words, 10% of the world's employed population¹ Also, the number of cooperatives throughout the world is over 2.94 million and the number of members in all types of cooperatives is over 1,217.5 million.

She stated that cooperatives with its dominant presence and enormous potential, can hasten the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063. There are several ways in which cooperatives can contribute to these initiatives through: fostering inclusive economic development and growth, enhancing food security and agriculture, gender equality and empowerment, promoting cooperative education and capacity building, facilitating and engaging in renewable energy solutions, addressing social protection and healthcare issues, and fostering partnerships.

She mentioned that with the important role of cooperatives, the movement led by ICA-Africa's strategic plan coined "One Cooperative – One Africa" envisions a stronger united cooperative, that will champion sustainable development in Africa. The strategy sets out the vision and mission for the sector, with recommended objectives and strategies for both the movement and African governments.

However, for the realization of this "One cooperative – One Africa" ambition, there is need to transform cooperatives by enhancing data, research and innovation, increased visibility and shared resources among others. In their quest to attain higher ambitions, cooperatives must work on improving the cooperative gaps and unprecedented changes with adjusted and improved strategies. Governance and strategies of cooperatives should continuously be innovative and adaptive, in tandem with both global and national policies and programs that support the transformation of cooperatives.

Some of the limitations and challenges identified are low cooperative identity, weak institutional capacity and insufficient cooperation among cooperatives.

Thus, she concluded that the thematic conference will cover topics geared towards:

- Strengthened cooperative identity

¹ <https://www.ica.coop/en/cooperatives/facts-and-figures>

- Enhanced partnerships for sustained cooperation and collaborations
- Reinforced institutional capacity

Despite all the unprecedented changes, the cooperative values and principles remain the same and this unites all cooperatives worldwide and set them apart from other form of enterprises. Therefore, cooperatives must build a strong identity, embrace a culture of cooperation and collaboration, and invest in building their institutional capacity to enhance their sustainability and contribution to Africa’s development.

Session 1: Re-imagining Cooperative Identity for a Stronger Africa: Cooperatives as Builders of the Economic and Social Fabric from selected sectors



Dr. Alfred Okiria Chief of Party HealthPartners Uganda, gave a presentation on health cooperatives for African development. He began by emphasizing the importance of health as illustrated in goal 3 of the AU 2063 agenda, SDG 3 and the Universal health coverage (UHC) in many national development strategies. He summarized the challenges to health as low domestic health investment, which in turn leads to high out of pocket costs and results

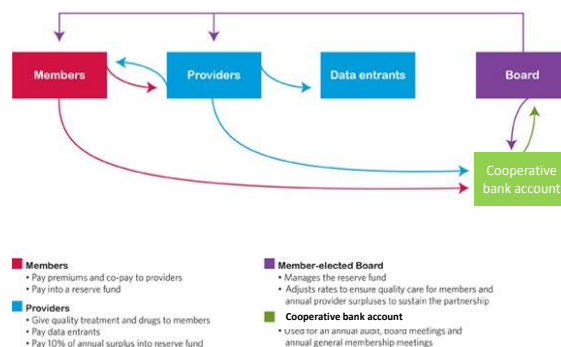
in poor health, impoverishment, inefficient health system that impedes economic and social development.

He stated that the formation of health cooperatives will contribute in finding solutions

One Solution: Health Cooperatives

Health Cooperative Model Highlights:

- **Prepaid**
- **Based on risk-pooling**
- **Direct relationship between members and providers**



Health cooperatives will encourage local ownership, financial resources, partnerships and infrastructure. He explained that the benefits to cooperative members will include financial protection, improved health outcomes and improved quality of care. There would also be significant contributions to social and economic development.

He concluded by recommending the support of health cooperative development especially where out of pocket costs are high. This formation can be part of a national scheme, if the political will exists. Finally, laws and regulations should be reviewed to ensure enabling environment for health cooperative growth.

Ms. Pamela Kaburu M&E Specialist at Global Communities, made a presentation on the establishment of worker cooperatives as a solution to youth unemployment. She mentioned that the Worker Cooperative Model, while new to the Cooperative sector in Africa, is gaining attention and recognition as a tool for equitable economic development and job creation among the youth.

She presented the case of Global Communities in promoting decent work opportunities for young people through cooperatives. The future of cooperatives lies with youth, and conversely, cooperatives have a great potential to impact the youth. Therefore, expanding youth membership and youth cooperative entrepreneurship within the cooperative movement could enhance the financial empowerment of the youth and advance Africa's overall agenda for a broad-based economic growth.



She concluded with some of the lessons learnt in the formation of worker cooperatives from the Kenyan case study summarized as follows:



Lessons

- Worker cooperatives are more easily understood and quickly adopted by younger graduates from tertiary and higher education, many of whom live in the informal sectors.
- Startup worker cooperatives can focus on setting up their business structures and systems especially during the initial stages of formation, instead of worrying about increasing their membership base.
- Adopting a legal framework for worker cooperatives will help guide the operations of newly established worker cooperatives and help steer them in the right direction.
- Startup Worker Cooperatives require technical and financial support to develop their businesses and become competitive in the market.



Lessons Continued

- Understanding the worker cooperatives governance and decision-making structure will ensure successful business management.
- Conducting periodic assessments of business performance is important for cooperatives and organizations supporting cooperatives in Kenya. Through this assessment cooperative development organizations can track the progress over time for evidence-based impact.
- Leveraging digital space as a marketing tool can help worker cooperatives create brand awareness and product online visibility.
- In Kenya, the cooperative movement's growth has been boosted by different waves i.e. the cash crop and food production wave followed by the financial cooperatives (SACCOs) wave and now we are at the onset of the worker cooperative wave.



Dr. Gratian Rekala Senior lecturer MOSHI Cooperative University, presented on cooperative coping strategies for marketing non-traditional crops by Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society (AMCOs). He stated that in Africa, over 70% of farmers marketing through AMCOs are reckoned to be smallholders who depend on the subsistence agriculture by growing cash and food crops, and spices. There is need to expand crop markets in terms of deploying other different crops to be marketed by cooperatives.



He concluded by recommending that primary agricultural cooperatives should make assessments of the available crops that can be marketed and make the possible marketing arrangements. Apex bodies and government institutions responsible for cooperatives, should assist agricultural cooperatives in business marketing arrangements that encourages multi crop business. Lastly, there should be a mechanism that removes middlemen, as this will expand the financial benefits that shall be obtained by cooperative members in the farm gate price.

Session 2 (Panel Discussion): Sustaining Cooperation through stronger Networks, Trade, Strategic Partnership, Financial Inclusion, and Cooperative Professionalism



The panel session had six (6) panelists, with the discussions geared towards listening to the experiences, challenges and success stories of relevant institutions in the related topics.

Dr. Todor Ivanov presented on the involvement of Consumer Cooperatives Worldwide (CCW) in building successful partnerships for accelerated cooperative development in Africa cooperative to cooperative trade. He explained about the development of the coop2coop platform (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4fuO9kAni4>) which he stated will be a good platform for cooperative trade and it will be useful to raise awareness about cooperative products.

He mentioned that the challenges to building successful partnership for trade ranges from lack of information, cash availability, capacity building and legal & administration restrictions. He concluded that the key success factor is to build a self-sustaining model like the case study of consumer cooperatives in the UK and producer cooperatives in Malawi.

Ms. Wanjira Njeru gave an account of We Effect East Africa's activities in contributing to sustaining cooperation through stronger networks. We Effect East Africa strengthens the capacity of smallholder farmers to realize empowered, resilient, gender responsive partner organizations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. She reiterated that indeed stronger networks can sustain cooperation

Mr. Alfred Orora & Mr. George Ototo of World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) & Kenya Union of Savings & Credit Cooperatives Ltd (KUSCCO) respectively, contributed to the discussion of promoting financial inclusion through cooperatives for development in Africa. To accelerate financial inclusion, the information asymmetry (of demand and supply of products/services) should be addressed. There should be a mapping of business development services.

Also, they explained that financial cooperatives need to influence related national policies and develop responsive product/service portfolio. Cooperatives can also leverage on partnering with other players.

Prof. Esther Gicheru from the Cooperative University of Kenya, talked on cooperative



professionalism as it is essential for people to be educated on the principles and values of cooperatives. This training will help cooperatives retain their cooperative identity. She highlighted a range of courses available at the university targeting cooperative leaders to become professionals. In addition, research

activities will help to identify needs in the cooperative movement and find solutions.

In her conclusions, she recommended that ICA should work with cooperatives on a tool to audit if cooperatives are implementing the cooperative values and principles. There should be a framework through the cooperative development policy to standardize the training of cooperative members.

Lastly, **Mr. Morten Hagen**, made a presentation on a digital platform dedicated to improve financial inclusion. He explained that the target group for this platform is smallholder farmers and cooperation can be sustained by leveraging on technology to remove the trust barrier.

Session 3: Cooperative Structures, Tenets and Legal Frameworks



Ms. Olga Oyier the Kenya Country Team Lead and Policy & Legislative Affairs Specialist at Global Communities, presented on the Preservation and Promotion of Cooperative Identity in National Legal Frameworks. She started her presentation by giving a brief history of the cooperative identity and the origins of the Statement of Cooperative Identity.

On the cooperative identity in the Kenyan legal frameworks, she mentioned the Cooperative Societies Act; enacted in 1997 and revised in 2004, recognizes the specificities and identity of cooperatives. Entrenchment of the cooperative identity in policy and legislative frameworks is first phase towards promotion and preservation and the second phase should include robust stakeholder engagement; strategic partnerships; deliberate knowledge management; and management of institutional memory in a devolved system of governance.

She gave recommendations for the preservation and promotion of cooperative identity in national legal frameworks:

Recommendations

Two-phased approach

Vesting of responsibility

Leveraging strategic partnerships

Intentionality about knowledge management

Institutional memory management

What gets measured gets done



Mr. Bobby Munge Mwangi presented a case study presentation on the Constitutional change in Kenya, a trigger for legislative revision: Pearls and Pitfalls. He stated that the promulgation of a new Constitution in Kenya in 2010, not only radicalized the functional and structural nature of the Kenyan state through devolution; which not only engineered political and fiscal reforms, but also presented opportunities and challenges in how cooperatives are formed and regulated.

The pearls and pitfalls can be summarized as:

Pearls

- The Constitution is Supreme.
- International Obligations.
- National Values and Principles of Governance.
- Bill of Rights.
- Devolution.
- Delineation of Functions.



Pitfalls

The Role of the National Government.

Delay in Producing a Guiding National Policy and Legislation.

As the twig is bent, so inclines the tree.



He concluded that as in Kenya's case, each historical, political and economic turning point presented opportunities for reforming the cooperative movement. He recommended the principle of subsidiarity, enhanced intergovernmental cooperation, model frameworks for counties and the use of the Senate for tabling draft bill.

Country Progress Reports by the Technical Committee of The Ministerial Conference (TAMCCO)

Country Papers Presented	KEY HIGHLIGHTS & RECOMMENDATIONS
Egypt, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Cote D'Ivoire, Eswatini, Botswana, Malawi and Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperatives can offer health insurance as a product to their members - ICA need to use the country reports for evidence-based decision making - Promotion of school coops through collaboration with the ministry of education to mainstream school coops in the curriculum - Data collection enables decision making at the national level - At the national level, implementing a cooperative management system is important for the government - Cooperative policies need to be reviewed to meet the needs of the cooperative movement given new developments - Cooperative financing is still a great challenge - Mainstreaming gender in cooperative membership and leadership is important - Engagement of youth in cooperatives MUST be prioritized - Collaboration on cooperative development partnerships between countries is a best practice

	- Shared services and deposit guarantee fund for saccos is a good practice
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Annex

(i) Presentations

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TSZjfX4dHGbwmd6GhIW1wwvYkZilco?usp=share_link

(ii) Photos

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/198425878@N07/albums>

(iii) Evaluation Form

<https://forms.gle/h5HRRS9e5f912Tin6>