

ANNUAL REPORT

20
23

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

ICA-Africa stands proud of the milestones achieved in promoting co-operative values and fostering sustainable development across the continent. Let's take a comprehensive look at our journey throughout the year.

At the forefront of our achievements was the momentous signing of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the government of Botswana, officially establishing the new ICA-Africa Southern Africa office. The establishment of this sub-regional office stands as a monumental achievement, symbolising a commitment to enhancing our presence, visibility, and impact in Southern Africa. May saw the hosting of the 10th Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference (TCAMCCO) which brought together government representatives, co-operative leaders, and stakeholders under the theme Transforming Cooperatives for a Stronger Africa. Discussions centred on reimagining the co-operative identity and sustaining co-operation through networks, trade, partnerships, financial inclusion, and professionalism.

A significant highlight of ICA-Africa's endeavours in 2023 was the proactive engagement in legislative developments, particularly the Model Law consultations. In collaboration with the Permanent Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs of the Pan-African Parliament, we held consultations on the draft Model Law on Cooperatives in Africa.

This marked a pivotal moment in shaping Africa's co-operative landscape. Stakeholders shared valuable insights and proposals, culminating in a final communique outlining collaborative efforts and outcomes.

Our participation in international forums, such as the ACP-EU follow-up committee meetings and the Global Social and Solidarity Economy Forum (GSEF), showcased the global relevance and impact of the African co-operative movement. These platforms not only facilitated dialogue but also positioned African co-operatives as crucial contributors to global economic and social agendas.

We are grateful for the collaboration with our members, governments, partners, don't and other stakeholders in the cooperative development mission. These milestones couldn't have been achieved without your valuable support and we look forward to continue cooperative engagement in the next year.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

January

PROMOTING MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT IN EU EXTERNAL ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) held the ACP-EU Follow-Up Committee meeting on January 12-13 in Brussels with representation from ICA-Africa. This committee serves as a vital platform for promoting cooperation between ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries and the EU, in line with the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

During the meeting, participants engaged in meaningful debates about the contribution that the ACP region has on the Youth Action Plan in EU external action, reflections on the future activities in the Indo-Pacific region and the latest developments and participation of civil society in the economic partnership agreement.

March

ICA-AFRICA EXPANDS REACH WITH NEW SOUTHERN AFRICA SUB-REGIONAL OFFICE IN BOTSWANA



ICA-Africa signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Botswana for hosting the new ICA-Africa Southern Africa office.

The establishment of this new sub-regional office is a huge milestone for ICA-Africa as it will enhance our presence, visibility and impact in Southern Africa, promoting cooperation to build the capacity of cooperative member organisations to become sustainable.

44TH ICA-AFRICA REGIONAL BOARD



ICA-Africa held its 44th Regional Board Meeting on 22nd March, 2023 in Gaborone - Botswana.

PROGRESS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODEL LAW ON COOPERATIVES FOR AFRICA



As a follow up to the Resolution adopted by the Pan-African Parliament to develop a model law on cooperatives in Africa, Dr. Chiyoge Sifa, the Regional Director of ICA-Africa presented the draft model law to the Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs.

The Model Laws will address the financing gap particularly for Small and Medium-Size Enterprises (SMEs) by advancing the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement for Africa's structural transformation.

April

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS THE FIRST RESOLUTION ON THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY



The United Nations adopted its first-ever resolution on promoting the social and solidarity economy (SSE) for sustainable development during the General Assembly on April 18, 2023. The resolution recognizes cooperatives as part of the SSE and encourages member states to promote and implement strategies, policies, and programs for supporting and enhancing the SSE through dedicated legal frameworks, national statistics, fiscal and public procurement incentives, education curricula, and capacity-building and research initiatives.

May

45TH ICA-AFRICA REGIONAL BOARD MEETING.



ICA-Africa held its 45th Regional Board Meeting on 22 May 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.

THE 10TH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICA MINISTERIAL COOPERATIVE CONFERENCE (TCAMCCO).



The conference brought together government representatives, cooperative leaders, and various stakeholders to deliberate on how best cooperatives can reimagine the cooperative identity for a stronger Africa and sustain cooperation through stronger networks, trade, strategic partnerships, financial inclusion, and cooperative professionalism.

ICA-Africa hosted the 10th Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference (TCAMCCO) from May 22nd to May 24th, 2023, with the theme "Transforming Cooperatives for a Stronger Africa: Building Better Co-operative Identity, Sustaining Cooperation and Reinforcing Institutional Capacity".

The conference was graced by the Cabinet Secretary (CS), Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development, Hon Simon. Chelugui, the Commissioner for Cooperative Development, State Department for Cooperatives in Kenya - Mr. David K. Obonyo and key cooperative messages from International Cooperative Alliance – Africa President - High Chief Ayeola Oriyomi. Read the summary and recommendations.

THE GLOBAL SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY FORUM (GSEF)



The Global Social and Solidarity Economy Forum (GSEF) made history as the first-ever forum of its kind to be held in Dakar, Senegal from May 1st-6th, 2023. The forum explored the theme "Transitioning from informal economies to collective and sustainable economies for our territories". Elected representatives, leaders, and experts from around the world came together to promote this new economy grounded in respect for humans and the environment. The forum facilitated the sharing of experiences and expertise to enable the extension of successful innovations led by local governments and stakeholders in the social and solidarity economy.

June

43RD SESSION OF THE ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



The 43rd Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly was held in Brussels, Belgium from 24th to 28th June 2023, with key debates covering critical raw materials, hybrid threats, and UN Security Council reform. Dr. Chiyoge Sifa, the Regional Director of ICA-Africa, representing cooperatives, delivered a speech emphasizing the importance of engaging the civil society in economic partnership agreements and the EU Global Gateway Initiative. [Read more.](#)

8TH EU-AFRICA ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SHAREHOLDERS' NETWORK



The European Economic and Social Committee held its 8th EU-Africa Economic and Social Shareholders' Network on the 28th-29th, June 2023 in Brussels. The event brought together representatives from organized civil society, including employers, trade unions, cooperatives, farmers' organizations, consumer groups, and NGOs from both continents.

Titled "The AU-EU Partnership for a Sustainable Future," the meeting focused on various topics such as the involvement of economic and social partners in the post-Cotonou agreement, the mid-term review of EU financing instruments for external action, water and nutrition in relation to the Zero Hunger objective and water sustainability, and the mutually beneficial partnership for sustainable development regarding critical raw materials.

THE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



The Co-operative University of Kenya (CUK) hosted Kenya's first Cooperative Movement Stakeholders' Conference, emphasizing the role of cooperatives and MSMEs in driving socio-economic transformation aligned with the government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Themed "Cooperative Model for Socio-Economic Transformation," the conference sought to align stakeholders with BETA goals and build awareness of the opportunities and responsibilities it entails.

Dr. Chiyoge Sifa represented ICA-Africa, discussing the expansion of cooperative development in East and Central Africa and emphasizing growth potential in cross-border cooperative activities, especially in financial services.

August

CONSULTATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL LAW ON COOPERATIVES IN AFRICA



The Permanent Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs of the Pan-African Parliament in collaboration with the International Cooperative Alliance-Africa (ICA-Africa) held consultations on the Draft Model Law on Cooperatives for Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, on August 29th and 30th, 2023. The consultations marked a pivotal moment in shaping the continent's cooperative landscape. Regional stakeholders came together to share valuable insights and proposals, culminating in a Final Communiqué that outlines the outcomes of their collaborative efforts.

BOOSTING THE AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN AFRICA: FINANCING FOR FARMER ORGANIZATIONS



In a significant stride towards bolstering the agricultural landscape in Africa, Musa Sibandze, Chairperson of the Alliance Africa Agricultural Cooperative Organisation (AAACO), represented farmer organizations and ICA-Africa at the Africa Food System Forum (AGRF) Side Event. The event aimed to find ways to help African farmers' organizations (FOs) secure financial support for their agricultural projects, especially given recent challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine crisis, and climate change.

September

TRANSFORMING KENYA'S COOPERATIVE SECTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY.



The State Department of Cooperatives and key development partners held a consultative engagement meeting on 27th September 2023. The purpose of this gathering was to explore collaborative pathways aimed at developing a cooperative transformation strategy for sustainable development in the country. This strategic partnership seeks to foster collaboration and amplify the positive impact within Kenya's vibrant cooperative sector. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, this initiative promises to unlock new avenues for growth and prosperity, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic advancement of the nation.

POLICY FORUM ON DEVELOPMENT

The Policy Forum on Development serves as a distinctive and inclusive platform for fostering dialogue among various stakeholders engaged in development efforts. Along with representatives of EU institutions and Member States, it brings together local governments, professional and commercial associations, and civil society organizations

Notably, the cooperative movement actively contributes to this forum, with representatives from the four regions of International Cooperative Alliance emphasizing the vital role of cooperatives as key partners in advancing development goals. Through its collaborative and multi-sectoral approach, the Policy Forum on Development facilitates discussions, partnerships, and initiatives that aim to drive sustainable and inclusive development on a global scale.



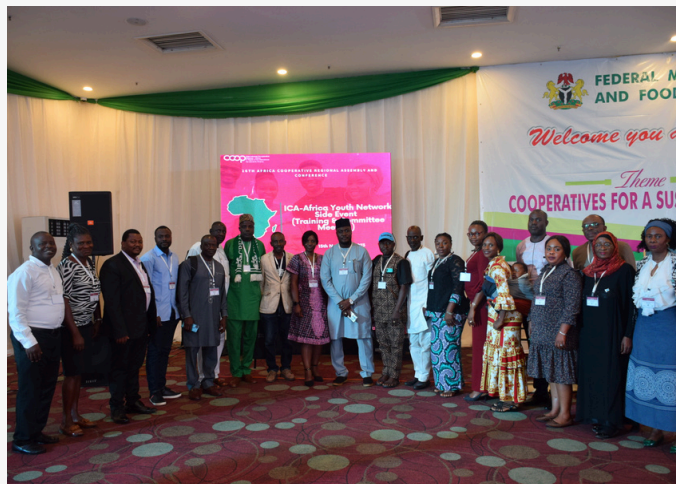
November

16TH AFRICA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CONFERENCE

ICA-Africa successfully convened its 16th Africa Regional Assembly and Conference on November 14th and 15th, 2023, under the theme "Cooperatives for a Sustainable Africa." The event provided a platform for cooperative leaders, stakeholders, and enthusiasts to collaboratively explore and strategize initiatives aimed at fostering sustainability across the continent. The conference underscored the importance of cooperative enterprises in promoting inclusive development, empowering communities, and contributing to the overall resilience and sustainability of Africa's economies.



EMPOWERING AFRICAN YOUTH THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL: LEADERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP.



ICA-Africa organized a dynamic youth network side event and training on worker cooperatives on 13th November. The primary objective of this session was to equip the youth with a comprehensive understanding of worker cooperatives, differentiating them from other cooperative models. The session not only served as a platform for knowledge-sharing but also aimed at inspiring and empowering the youth to actively engage in the cooperative movement. Watch to learn more about worker cooperative.

December

COOPERATIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA (COOPSTAR)



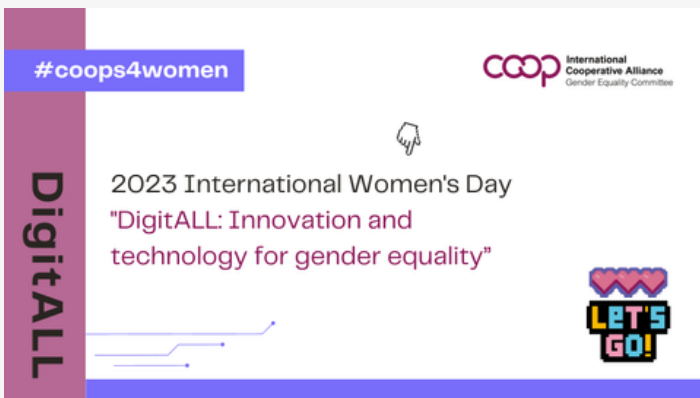
The Cooperatives for a Sustainable Transformation in Africa (CoopStar) workshop - held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3-6 December marked a crucial step forward in the journey towards establishing a project that will support the African cooperative movement to play a key role in the transition towards a circular, green and sustainable economy in the light of the UN Agenda 2030 and to boost sustainable cooperative entrepreneurship in Africa.

Supported by the International Cooperative Alliance, International Cooperative Alliance-Africa, the International Labor Organization, the Korean Federation of Community Credit Unions (KFCC), Cera/BRS, and KU Leuven, the CoopStar initiative brought together experts from 18 African countries to lay the foundation for the book project on the role of cooperatives in transitioning to a circular, green, and sustainable economy,

SECTORAL ORGANISATIONS & COMMITTEES

ICA-AFRICA GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE (GEC)

ICA GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023



The International Women's Day celebrations on March 8, 2023, focused on the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality." Activities included a statement from the ICA Gender Equality Committee and engaging videos created by Prof. Esther, Hilda, and Dr. Sifa.

CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY IN COOPERATIVES IN AFRICA.



As part of the 16th Africa Regional Assembly and Conference, the ICA-Africa Gender Equality Committee organized a meeting on "Contribution of Women in fostering sustainability in cooperatives in Africa." During the meeting, member organizations shared updates on their efforts to promote gender equality and empower women in cooperatives.. The meeting resolved that there is continuous need for gender mainstreaming and enforcing women leadership in cooperatives across African countries. An action plan was also drawn to follow up implementation of gender activities in 2024.

ICA YOUTH COMMITTEE

ICA YOUTH LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAM



The ICA Youth Executive Committee successfully organized two pilot editions of the Youth Leadership Exchange Program an immersive 10-day initiative that allows participants to explore diverse cooperative ecosystems, fostering learning and collaboration among youth from various countries. This program not only promotes cross-cultural dialogue but also empowers youth to become ambassadors for cooperativism, sharing their insights and experiences through social media. By facilitating these exchanges, the ICA aims to cultivate a new generation of cooperative leaders who are equipped to address global challenges through the cooperative model.

CONTACT US

Loresho Mukabi Road; House No.17
P.O BOX 67595-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Phone: +254 20 2323489
Email: info@icaafrica.coop



International Cooperative Alliance-
Africa



ICA-AFRICA1



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www.icafrica.coop