



11TH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICA MINISTERIAL COOPERATIVE CONFERENCE (TCAMCCO)

THEME: *Cooperative Visibility for a Better Africa: Celebrating the 2025 International Year of Cooperatives*

Background And Context

In June 2024, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives. This underscores the important role cooperatives play in sustainable development more in particular in alleviating poverty, generating employment and creating socially inclusive and just societies. These objectives align well with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

However, global challenges have significantly had the greatest impact to low-income economies which are home to more than 40 percent of people struggling on less than \$2.15 a day. These economies have been the focus of global efforts to end extreme poverty. Yet their progress has come to a virtual standstill amid rising conflict, frequent economic crises, and persistently weak growth. At the start of the twenty-first century, 63 countries were classified as “low-income.” Since then, 39—including India, Indonesia, and Bangladesh—have entered the ranks of middle-income countries. The remainder, which were joined by South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic in the 2010s, have simply stagnated: on average, their inflation adjusted GDP per capita has grown by less than 0.1 percent annually over the past 15 years.¹

Today, 60% of Africa’s population lives in poverty, the result of per capita income growth that has averaged just 1.1% a year for the past several decades. Unemployment of African youth sits at over 25% and more than 85% of Africans live with severe or moderate food insecurity. Low economic productivity across all sectors resulted in a 35% reduction in GDP growth over the last decade. Governance of the regional and national institutions at its foundations remain challenged across many parts of the continent. Investments in infrastructure and many critical social services such as education and health have fallen behind as fiscal headroom in many countries is under pressure.² According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), growth in Africa is expected to increase only to around 4.3 percent in 2025.

¹ [Global Economic Prospects, January 2025;](#)

² [Foresight-Africa-2025-2030-Full-report.pdf;](#)

On the global stage, Africa will be at the forefront in 2025 as South Africa takes the leadership of the G20 and the African Union's second year of permanent membership. Additionally, with less than 6% of the SDGs on track in Africa, and 17% on track globally, the next five years will require concentrated, accelerated action and partnerships for a full economic potential. With this in mind, Africa must harness its diversity, leverage its strategic assets, and mitigate emerging challenges that come with globalization. Indeed, with its varying resources, human capital, and economic capacities the continents need to position itself uniquely in the global marketplace as a major contributor to sustainable development.

Cooperatives and the 2025 International Year of Cooperatives

Cooperatives are well-placed to contribute to economic, social, and environmental sustainability, as well as good governance. They are enterprises designed to meet the economic needs of their members while simultaneously addressing socio-cultural interests and environmental protection. Beyond job creation, poverty alleviation, and the promotion of inclusive societies, cooperatives offer an alternative and sustainable business model.³

The economic contributions of cooperatives, though often overlooked or undervalued, are substantial. According to the 2023 World Cooperative Monitor, the top 300 cooperatives and mutuals worldwide have a combined turnover exceeding two trillion dollars—more than the GDP of any single African country.

In Africa, cooperatives play a crucial role in achieving food security, financial inclusion, poverty reduction, community development, and employment creation. However, despite these significant contributions, cooperatives remain underrepresented in policy discussions at the regional level.

The declaration of 2025 as the second International Year of Cooperatives presents an opportunity for UN member states and the international community to strengthen partnerships aimed at accelerating progress toward the SDGs. The 2025 International Year of Cooperatives will help raise awareness of the cooperative business model, highlight its role in achieving the SDGs, and foster political commitment and global consensus on addressing 21st-century social challenges for a secure and just future.

Against this backdrop, the International Cooperative Alliance-Africa (ICA-Africa) is organizing its 11th Technical Committee of the Africa Ministerial Cooperative Conference to launch the 2025 IYC activities and its objectives below:

³ [wcms_306072.pdf](#);

- Increase the visibility of cooperatives and raise public awareness about their contributions to sustainable development,
- Promote the growth and development of cooperatives through capacity-building initiatives, knowledge-sharing, and collaborative partnerships.
- Advocate for enabling environment and supportive legal and policy frameworks for strengthening their entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Inspire young people to join the movement and promote the impact cooperatives have on building a better world.

As Africa strives to achieve developmental goals, enhancing the visibility of cooperatives and its activities is important to unlocking their full potential for a better Africa. The increase of cooperative visibility, supportive policies and fostered cooperation can propel cooperatives to further contribute to sustainable development and amplify the role of cooperatives in shaping a better Africa.

General Objective

The general objective of this conference is to bring together government officials, cooperative leaders, and other stakeholders to deliberate on strategies for enhancing cooperative visibility at national, regional, and global levels while celebrating the 2025 International Year of Cooperatives.

Specific Objectives

- To identify potential strategies, synergies, and opportunities for cooperation nationally, regionally and internationally to foster cooperative development and visibility.
- To share knowledge of best practices and identify challenges hindering the visibility and impact of cooperatives within the region
- To promote and advocate for an enabling environment that promotes cooperative development into national development plans

Expected Outcomes

- Potential strategies, synergies, and opportunities for national, regional, international cooperation identified.
- Knowledge that enables cooperatives and other stakeholders in Africa to engage effectively in the promotion of cooperative visibility at national, regional and international level shared.

- Stakeholders encouraged to promote an enabling environment (laws & policies) that promotes cooperative development into national development plans.