



**International Co-operative
Alliance – Africa**
A Region of the International
Co-operative Alliance

16TH AFRICA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CONFERENCE

DATE: 14-15th November 2023
VENUE: Abuja Continental Hotel

THEME: COOPERATIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE AFRICA

Introduction

Over the past few decades, the world has made remarkable progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the Global Sustainable Development Report 2023, asserts that many countries are struggling to rebuild in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the associated challenges brought about the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the current spiraling world inflation.

Africa's development is threatened by the challenges mentioned above in addition to the persistence and deepening of climate change, food insecurity, unemployment and conflicts etc. The rapidly rising global interest rates and the absence of a well-functioning framework for comprehensive debt reduction and relief threaten to cut access to international financial markets for many countries in Africa¹. According to IMF 2023, growth in sub-Saharan Africa will decline to 3.6 percent in 2023. Amid a global slowdown, activity is expected to decelerate for a second year in a row. Still, this headline figure masks significant variations across the region. The funding squeeze will also impact the region's longer-term outlook. A shortage of funding may force countries to reduce resources for critical development sectors like health, education, and infrastructure, weakening the region's growth potential².

Africa needs coordinated policy changes and sustained action to increase food production, improve distribution, ensure affordability, reduce dependency, and act green for it to spur its growth. Full operationalization of the AfCFTA to facilitate the free movement of labor, inputs, and food across the Africa market, shift from food supply to developing resilient food systems, innovation and environmental sustainability are some of the critical issues that needs to be looked at keenly through such models as cooperatives that embody and are crucial partners in achieving sustainability.

In this context, practical solutions that can accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063 will be urgently needed. In this regard, we would like to demonstrate the contribution of cooperatives in advancing the achievement of the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 in Africa. As natural vehicles of collaborative partnership and prosperity for all, cooperatives contribute to economic, social, and environmental sustainability across regions and economic sectors. It is inherent among them to safeguard community relations, enhance local resources, advocate social responsibility, and adopt sustainable and long-term business practices.

¹ https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/foresightafrica2023_fullreport.pdf;

² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/04/05/africas-growth-remains-low-region-looks-to-tap-resource-wealth-for-sustainable-development-and-transition-to-low-carbon>;

Cooperatives for A Sustainable Africa

The cooperative business model is useful in creating and maintaining sustainable enterprises, offering jobs that not only provide income but also pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, as well as empowering individuals, families, and communities. In particular, the cooperative model enables skilled people that lack capital to pool resources to create employment and contribute to economic development.

The global cooperative movement has been in existence for more than a century owing to the ethics, values, and principles, focusing on the welfare of people. As a people-centered movement, cooperatives and their entities continue to surprise many through the business model, which has stood the test of time. Cooperatives stand out as crucial partners in achieving sustainable growth and development.

Objectives of the Forum

The Africa Regional Conference on Cooperatives aims to bring together key stakeholders, experts, practitioners, and policymakers from across Africa to explore the significant role of cooperatives in promoting sustainable development on the continent. This forum seeks to create a platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and innovative solutions to address Africa's socio-economic and environmental challenges through the cooperative movement.

Specific Objectives

- To identify ways cooperatives in Africa are fostering sustainable livelihood and development in Africa
- How could cooperatives promote peace and development for a sustainable Africa
- What is the evidence of fostering partnerships and collaborations between cooperatives, governments, civil society organizations, and international development agencies to support sustainable development in Africa

Expected Outcomes

- Ways that cooperatives in Africa are fostering sustainable livelihood and development in Africa identified.
- Identification of innovative solutions by cooperatives to promote peace and development for a sustainable Africa
- Development of partnerships and collaborations to support sustainable cooperative development.

Format and Sessions:

The Regional Conference will consist of plenary sessions and interactive panel discussions. This will provide ample opportunities for networking, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. Participants will have the chance to present research findings, case studies, and innovative ideas related to cooperatives and sustainable development in Africa.



Draft Agenda

Days	Time	Activity	Moderator/Facilitator	
Day 1: 13 Nov 2023	0830-0900hrs	Registrations		
	0900-1500hrs	Statutory Meetings- Board Meeting		
Day 2: 14 Nov 2023	0800-0830hrs	Registration	ICA-Africa Staff/Host	
	0900-1000hrs	Introductions and Entertainment Welcome Note	Host	
		Remarks The ICA-Africa Regional Director	Dr. Chiyoge B. SIFA (Mrs.)	
		Remarks ICA-Africa President	High Chief Ayeola Oriyomi	
		Remarks, Chief Guest	TBC	
	1000-1030hrs	Group Photo/ Tea and Coffee		
	CONFERENCE			
	1030-1045hrs	Background Paper on <i>Cooperatives for A Sustainable Africa</i>		
	1045-1145hrs	Session One: Paper Presentations: 1. ways cooperatives in Africa are fostering sustainable livelihood and development in Africa		
		Session Two: Panel Presentations on 2. Innovative solutions by cooperatives to promote peace and development for a sustainable Africa		
1300-1400HRS	Lunch Break			
1400-1530hrs	Session Three: Paper Presentations 3. Fostering partnerships and collaborations between cooperatives, governments, civil society organizations, and international development agencies to support sustainable development in Africa			
15300-1600hrs	Plenary Discussions (Q/A)		Moderator: Name: TBC	



	1600-1630hrs	Conclusions and Recommendations. End of Day One	Moderator: Name: TBC
DAY 3-15 Nov 2023	8:30-9:00hrs	Registrations	Staff
	9:00-16:00	Adoption of Agenda Confirmation of Minutes of the 15 th Regional Assembly Meeting Matters Arising from the Minutes Information Papers: 1. Annual Report 2022 2. Audited Accounts Reports for Approval 1. TBC 2. TBC	President: High Chief Ayeola Oriyomi
		Agenda, Venue and Date of the Next Meeting	President: High Chief Ayeola Oriyomi
16 Nov 2023	DEPARTURE		