

**Voluntary National Review Lab (VNR-Lab) on
Cooperatives for Accelerated Sustainable Development**

Tuesday, 11 July 2023; 09:00 am – 10:00 am (EST)

United Nations Headquarters, New York

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) is organizing a VNR-Lab on 11 July 2023 in support of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. It is also an occasion to commemorate the 2023 International Day of Cooperatives.

The International Day of Cooperatives is celebrated annually on the first Saturday of July by the cooperative movement worldwide and the theme for this year is *Cooperatives: Partners for Accelerated Sustainable Development*. It is an occasion to show how the cooperative way of working, inspired by the cooperative values and principles, has the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of its DNA. Being one of the world's oldest and largest business networks, the cooperative movement was the first group of enterprises worldwide to endorse the SDGs and be recognized as a partner in achieving these goals.

As the international community will hold an SDG summit in September 2023 seeking ways to accelerate progress, it is thus a real key moment to highlight cooperatives as a solution in advancing the achievement of the SDGs and accelerating the recovery from COVID-19.

The event will allow countries that include cooperatives in their voluntary national presentations to exchange experiences with participants (including countries having not yet included cooperatives in their VNRs) for mutual learning and to have a deeper discussion on supporting cooperatives as sustainable and successful enterprises that are vehicles for achieving many SDGs.

Background:

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.

The International Day of Cooperatives was officially proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1995 and is celebrated annually. The aim of the International Day of Cooperatives (#CoopsDay) is to increase awareness of cooperatives. The event underscores the contributions of the cooperative movement to resolving the major problems addressed by the United Nations and to strengthening and extending the partnerships between the international cooperative movement and other actors. Since 1995, the ICA and the United Nations, through the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), have jointly set the theme for the celebration of #CoopsDay.

About COPAC

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) is a multi-stakeholder partnership of global public and private institutions that champions and supports people-centred and self-sustaining cooperative enterprises as leaders in sustainable development.

It consists of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Center (ITC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Draft Programme

Opening session

09:00 – 09:10 Opening remarks by Wenyan Yang on behalf of COPAC (3 minutes)

Opening remarks by Permanent Mission of Mongolia (7 minutes)

Presentations moderated by a COPAC member

09:10 – 09:35 The European Commission (7 minutes)

Republic of Kenya (7 minutes)

Cooperative Republic of Guyana (7 minutes)

a Cooperative/Apex body (4 minutes)

09:35 – 09:55 General Debate moderated by a COPAC member

09:55 – 10:00 Closing remarks by a COPAC member