International Year of Cooperatives 2025
Cooperatives Build a Better World

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Committee for the promotion and advancement of cooperatives

International Cooperative Alliance

Building a Better World Together: Cooperative Contributions to the SDGs

Clean Water and Sanitation

ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT AND A PREREQUISITE FOR HEALTH, DIGNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Progress on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 underpins advances across the entire 2030 Agenda, influencing outcomes related to food security, public health, education, gender equality, poverty reduction, and climate resilience. Yet, despite notable gains over recent decades, the world remains far off track to achieve SDG 6 by 2030. As of 2024, only 74 percent of the world's population had access to safely managed drinking water services, 58 percent to safely managed sanitation services, and 80 percent to basic hygiene facilities. This leaves approximately 2.2 billion people without safely managed drinking water, 3.4 billion without safely managed sanitation, and 1.7 billion without basic hygiene services.[1] A decade after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, progress is not accelerating at the pace required. On current trajectories, the gap between existing service levels and the SDG 6 targets continues to widen, and the 2025 reporting cycle confirms that the Goal remains off track across virtually all indicators.

The challenge extends beyond access to household services. Progress on water quality and ecosystem protection remains insufficient. Only 58 percent of domestic wastewater is safely treated, resulting in the continued discharge of large volumes of untreated wastewater into rivers, lakes, and coastal ecosystems and undermining progress toward SDG target 6.3. Freshwater ecosystems are deteriorating across many regions, with more than 60 percent of countries in Central Asia, South-Eastern Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa reporting at least one type of degraded freshwater ecosystem. Declining surface water levels across 364 river basins have affected an estimated 93 million people, posing significant risks to water security and ecosystem health and hindering progress toward target 6.6.[2]

Similarly, implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM) remains incomplete, with global implementation at only 57 percent, and current rates of progress suggest that full implementation may not be achieved before 2049.[3] At the same time, more than 2.7 billion people live in countries experiencing severe water stress, highlighting growing pressures on finite freshwater resources. Though the technological solutions to many of these challenges already exist, the principal barriers to progress are increasingly institutional rather than technical. Fragmented governance arrangements, inadequate and poorly coordinated financing, limited local ownership, and weak stakeholder participation continue to constrain implementation. Community engagement remains particularly under-resourced. Although 92 percent of countries report having formal mechanisms for participation in rural drinking water and sanitation services, only 41 percent report high levels of participation in practice, and just 9 percent indicate that sufficient financial resources are available to support meaningful community engagement.[4]

Accelerating progress toward SDG 6 will therefore require not only increased investment but also more inclusive and locally grounded approaches to the governance, financing, and delivery of water and sanitation services. This is particularly important in rural, peri-urban, and informal settlements, where conventional utility-based models have often struggled to provide sustainable and equitable coverage.

THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE AND CASE STUDIES

The strength of the cooperative model lies in its ability to combine community ownership with professional service delivery. Because users are also owners, investments are directed toward service quality, affordability, and long-term sustainability rather than shareholder returns. This institutional arrangement directly addresses several of the barriers identified in the 2025 SDG 6 monitoring reports, particularly weak local participation, fragmented governance, and insufficient financing for community-based water and sanitation systems.

Unlike conventional service delivery models that often struggle to reach dispersed rural settlements, peri-urban communities, and underserved populations, cooperatives are embedded within the communities they serve. Their democratic governance structures enable local people to participate directly in planning, financing, managing, and monitoring water and sanitation services, fostering a strong sense of ownership and stewardship. As a result, cooperatives have consistently demonstrated their ability to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and resilient water and sanitation solutions in contexts where centralized public systems or private providers have been unable or unwilling to operate effectively.

1 UN Water SDG 6 Progress report: https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-progress-reports
2 UN 2025 SDG Report: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2025.pdf
3 UNEP: Integrated water resource management: https://www.unep.org/topics/fresh-water/water-resources-management/integrated-water-resources-management
4 UN 2025 SDG Report: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2025.pdf

Expanding Access to Drinking Water and Sanitation

@SAGUAPAC

One notable example is Santa Cruz Public Services Cooperative (SAGUAPAC) in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, widely recognized as one of the world's most successful water cooperatives. Founded in 1979, SAGUAPAC provides drinking water and sanitation services to more than 1.9 million people through an extensive and continuously expanding network of water and sewer infrastructure. Operating under democratic governance and member oversight, the cooperative has consistently achieved service quality and coverage levels comparable to, and often exceeding, those of many public and private utilities in Latin America. Through sustained investments in water production, wastewater treatment, network expansion, and modern technologies that optimize water use, alongside environmental education campaigns promoting responsible water consumption, SAGUAPAC has significantly expanded access to safe drinking water and sanitation while protecting water resources and reducing environmental pollution. Its model has improved public health, supported economic development in one of Bolivia's fastest-growing urban areas, and made a substantial contribution to achieving SDG targets 6.1 (safe and affordable drinking water) and 6.2 (adequate sanitation and hygiene), establishing the cooperative as a regional leader in sustainable water and sanitation service delivery.

The Nordic countries provide some of the most advanced examples of cooperative participation in water service delivery, demonstrating how community-owned models can complement public utilities and contribute to universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In Finland, more than 1,400 water cooperatives provide drinking water and wastewater services to rural communities beyond the reach of municipal utilities. Many of these cooperatives have evolved into professionally managed service providers covering entire municipalities and surrounding rural areas, in some cases serving up to 99 percent of the local population. Their success has been supported by enabling legislation, technical assistance, and cooperative networks such as the Association of Finnish Water Cooperatives (SVOSK), established in 2009 to provide training, knowledge-sharing, and sector coordination.[5] The Finnish experience demonstrates how member-owned enterprises can deliver high-quality, affordable, and sustainable water services while maintaining strong local accountability and long-term infrastructure stewardship.

Denmark similarly relies on a highly decentralized water system in which approximately 2,500 consumer-owned water cooperatives provide services to smaller towns and rural areas, compared with just over 100 municipal utilities serving larger urban centers. Supported by their national federation, Danske Vandværker, these cooperatives receive technical, legal, financial, and managerial support that enables them to maintain high service standards and comply with strict water quality requirements.[6] Together, the experiences of Finland and Denmark illustrate how cooperative water systems can effectively expand access to safe water, strengthen community participation, and ensure the long-term sustainability of water infrastructure. They offer valuable examples of how cooperative enterprises can help achieve SDG 6, particularly in rural and underserved areas where centralized service delivery models face operational and financial challenges.

Similarly, in Chile, the Federation of Sanitary Services Cooperatives (FESAN) supports dozens of member cooperatives that collectively provide water and sanitation services to more than 60,000 people in rural and semi-rural communities. Following major earthquakes and natural disasters, cooperative members worked together to rebuild damaged infrastructure, including wastewater treatment facilities and eco-treatment lagoons. This collective approach has strengthened resilience while ensuring continuity of essential services for affected populations.

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In Côte d'Ivoire, many cocoa-growing communities continue to face limited access to safe drinking water despite their central role in global cocoa production. The Cooperative Society of Modern Eco-farmers of Méagui (ECAMOM), established in 2006 in the country's south-western region, demonstrates how cooperatives can address this challenge through community-led investment. As a Fairtrade-certified cooperative, ECAMOM has strategically invested its Fairtrade Premium in water infrastructure, including the installation of five boreholes serving the villages of Sokoura, Assemiankro, Bolendrikro, Kouakouemikro, and Felixkro.[7] As the cooperative expanded from around 300 members to nearly 3,800 members by 2022, these investments significantly improved access to safe drinking water for cooperative members, their families, and local schools. The initiative has reduced the incidence of waterborne diseases, improved hygiene and public health, and eased the burden on women and children

5 The Association of Finnish Water Cooperatives: https://svosk.fi/svosk-3/the-association-of-finnish-water-cooperatives/
6 Pietilä (2015); Vihanta (2013); GEUS (2015); Sørensen (2010); Danske Vandværker (2016): https://www.irbnet.de/daten/iconda/CIB_DC29457.pdf
7 Fairtrade Africa: https://fairtradeafrica.net/west-africa-cocoa-programme/

who previously spent considerable time collecting water, enabling greater school attendance and participation in income-generating activities.[8] ECAMOM's experience illustrates how cooperatives can leverage shared resources to deliver essential services, strengthen community resilience, and advance SDG targets 6.1 (safe and affordable drinking water) and 6.2 (adequate sanitation and hygiene), while contributing to broader rural development.

Similarly, India is leveraging its extensive cooperative network to strengthen rural water security by expanding the role of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). Traditionally focused on agricultural credit and farm services, PACS are increasingly being designated as Paani Samitis (water committees) under the Government of India's Jal Jeevan Mission, taking responsibility for the operation and maintenance of village piped water supply systems. This approach builds on existing, trusted community institutions rather than creating new governance structures, strengthening local ownership and improving the long-term sustainability of rural water services.

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The initiative has expanded rapidly since 2023. Government data show that the number of PACS identified to manage rural water systems increased from 596 across six states in the early phase of implementation to 1,381 across 12 states and union territories by the end of 2023, and reached 1,833 across 16 states and union territories in 2024. The initiative forms part of a broader cooperative reform under which the Ministry of Cooperation introduced model by-laws enabling PACS to become Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (MPACS), allowing them to undertake more than 25 economic and community service activities, including water and sanitation. Between February 2023 and April 2025, nearly 19,600 new multipurpose PACS, dairy, and fishery cooperatives were registered as part of a national target of establishing 200,000 new multipurpose cooperatives over five years. By integrating water management into village cooperatives with established governance systems and strong community trust, India is enhancing the sustainability of rural water infrastructure while empowering local communities to manage essential public services. The initiative demonstrates how cooperatives can serve as effective institutional partners in advancing SDG target 6.b on strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management, while contributing to universal access to safe and reliable drinking water.

Improving Sanitation, Waste Management, and Public Health

Cooperatives also contribute to SDG target 6.3 by improving sanitation, preventing pollution, and managing waste. In many developing countries, waste picker cooperatives have become critical actors in preventing solid waste from entering waterways, drainage systems, and urban environments.

A leading example is the Solid Waste Collection and Handling (SWaCH) Cooperative in Pune, India, a worker-owned cooperative of more than 4,000 waste pickers that provides door-to-door waste collection services to approximately one million households. By recovering and recycling nearly 83,000 tonnes of waste annually, SWaCH significantly reduces environmental pollution and prevents large quantities of waste from reaching rivers, streams, and landfill sites. The cooperative also conducts community awareness campaigns on sanitation, menstrual hygiene, and composting, generating both environmental and public health benefits while creating dignified livelihoods for thousands of low-income workers, particularly women.

In Colombia, the worker cooperative Planeta Verde has demonstrated how cooperative approaches to waste management can simultaneously improve environmental outcomes and generate employment. By organizing waste collection, recycling, and environmental education activities, the cooperative has reduced local pollution while creating stable income opportunities for workers who previously operated in the informal sector. Such initiatives illustrate how cooperatives contribute to both improved sanitation environments and inclusive economic development.

Strengthening Livelihoods and Community Resilience

The impact of cooperatives extends beyond infrastructure and environmental outcomes. By fostering local ownership, creating jobs, and retaining resources within communities, cooperatives strengthen resilience and improve livelihoods. Water user cooperatives reduce the financial burden associated with unreliable services, improve agricultural productivity through more secure water access, and support local economic development. Waste management cooperatives create thousands of jobs while improving sanitation and environmental quality. Producer cooperatives often reinvest surpluses into water infrastructure, schools, health facilities, and ecosystem restoration projects that benefit entire communities.

Across America, Africa, Asia, and Europe, these experiences demonstrate that cooperatives are not simply alternative service providers. They are institutional mechanisms through which communities organize collective action,

8 Impact report by ALDI and ECAMOM's Fairtrade Partnership: https://sustainability.aldisouthgroup.com/files/aldi-and-ecamoms-fairtrade-partnership-second-impact-report

mobilize local resources, and ensure that water and sanitation systems remain responsive, accountable, and sustainable over time. Their contribution is particularly significant in regions where conventional delivery models face persistent challenges reaching vulnerable populations.

As governments seek to accelerate progress toward SDG 6, cooperative enterprises offer a practical and proven pathway to expand access to safe water and sanitation, improve environmental stewardship, strengthen community participation, and enhance the livelihoods of millions of people. Yet despite these achievements, their contribution remains largely absent from global monitoring and financing frameworks. Greater recognition and support for cooperative approaches could therefore unlock significant additional progress toward achieving universal and equitable access to water and sanitation by 2030.

Protecting Water Sources and Freshwater Ecosystems

Beyond service delivery, cooperatives increasingly contribute to protecting freshwater ecosystems and water sources, supporting SDG target 6.6. This role is becoming increasingly important as climate change, land degradation, and unsustainable land use intensify pressure on freshwater resources.

In Costa Rica, the rural electrification cooperative Coopesantos R.L. has become a recognized leader in watershed conservation. Through investments financed by cooperative revenues, Coopesantos has acquired and protected approximately 237 hectares of land surrounding critical water sources that supply more than 33,000 rural residents. The cooperative has also coordinated the planting of more than 60,000 trees around springs and recharge zones, helping to improve water quality, enhance groundwater recharge, and strengthen resilience to climate-related droughts.[9]

In Ethiopia, the Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union demonstrates how agricultural cooperatives can contribute to water security while improving rural livelihoods. Revenues generated through coffee marketing and value addition have been reinvested into community development projects, including the construction of 56 clean water supply stations serving coffee-growing communities.[10] These investments have reduced the time women and children spend collecting water, improved public health conditions, increased school attendance, and strengthened local economic productivity. The example illustrates how producer cooperatives can transform economic gains into broader social and environmental benefits.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The experiences of water, sanitation, waste management, and producer cooperatives worldwide demonstrate that cooperatives can be effective vehicles for expanding access to safe water and sanitation, improving water resource management, protecting ecosystems, and strengthening community resilience. Yet despite their proven contributions, cooperatives remain underutilized in national and global efforts to achieve SDG 6. Their potential is constrained not by the limitations of the model itself, but by legal, financial, institutional, and informational barriers that prevent them from operating, scaling, and attracting investment on equal terms with public and private providers.

Many of these barriers stem from policy and regulatory frameworks designed around centralized public utilities or investor-owned companies that do not adequately recognize community-owned enterprises. As a result, cooperatives in many countries and localities are often treated as exceptions rather than legitimate partners in water governance and service delivery. Addressing these constraints presents a significant opportunity to accelerate progress toward SDG 6 while advancing the broader commitment to inclusive, participatory, and locally driven development.

Limited Legal Recognition and Enabling Frameworks: In many countries, water, sanitation, wastewater, and waste management legislation does not explicitly recognize cooperatives as eligible service providers. Cooperative laws, where they exist, are often outdated or disconnected from sector-specific regulations governing water and sanitation services. This creates uncertainty regarding licensing, water-use rights, infrastructure ownership, service contracts, and regulatory oversight. In some cases, cooperatives are unable to obtain the permits required to operate legally or access public investment programmes, regardless of their capacity to deliver services.

Creating an enabling legal environment is therefore a critical first step. Governments can strengthen cooperative participation by updating water, sanitation, and cooperative legislation to explicitly recognize cooperatives as legitimate service operators, capable of owning and managing infrastructure, holding licenses and permits, entering into service agreements, and participating in public-private-community partnerships.

Limited Access to Finance and Investment: Access to finance remains one of the most significant barriers facing cooperatives in the water sector. Water and sanitation infrastructure requires substantial upfront investment and long-term maintenance financing, yet most financing

9 Coopesantos R.L https://energy-democracy.net/coopelesca-costa-rica/index.html
10 Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union projects: https://oromiacoffeeunion.com/carbon

mechanisms are designed for large utilities or private companies with significant collateral and borrowing capacity. Small and medium-sized cooperatives often struggle to access affordable credit, long-term loans, guarantees, or investment capital, even when they have strong repayment records and demonstrated community support.

This financing gap is particularly acute in underserved rural and peri-urban areas where operating costs are high and household incomes are low. Without adequate financial support, cooperatives may struggle to expand coverage, upgrade infrastructure, adopt new technologies, or maintain service quality over time. Dedicated financing mechanisms, including blended finance facilities, guarantee funds, concessional lending windows, revolving funds, and community infrastructure grants, could help unlock cooperative investment while ensuring affordability for vulnerable populations.

Procurement and Contracting Barriers: Even where cooperatives are legally recognized, public procurement and contracting systems often favor large commercial providers. Tendering requirements commonly rely on turnover thresholds, technical specifications, and contract sizes that are difficult for community-based enterprises to meet. Consequently, cooperatives are frequently excluded from municipal service contracts, delegated management agreements, and infrastructure development programmes despite having strong local knowledge and proven operational capacity.

Reforming procurement frameworks presents an important opportunity to broaden participation. Governments and utilities can create procurement mechanisms that recognize the specific characteristics of community-owned enterprises, including smaller contract lots, community-provider windows, framework agreements, and evaluation criteria that value local accountability, social impact, and community participation alongside financial considerations.

Capacity Constraints and Technical Support Needs: Many cooperatives operate effectively despite limited access to technical support, training, and professional services. Smaller providers often face challenges in meeting increasingly complex requirements related to water quality monitoring, wastewater treatment, digital reporting, operator certification, asset management, climate resilience planning, and regulatory compliance. These challenges can limit access to financing, licensing, and expansion opportunities.

Strengthening cooperative capacity represents a high-impact investment opportunity. Governments, development partners, universities, and cooperative federations can support the establishment of technical assistance centers, shared service platforms, regional support hubs, and training programmes that enable cooperatives to access expertise, reduce operating costs, and meet regulatory standards. The experiences of Finland's SVOSK and Denmark's Danske Vandværker demonstrate the value of cooperative support networks in strengthening service quality and long-term sustainability.

Exclusion from Water Governance and Decision-Making: Although cooperatives are inherently participatory institutions, they are often absent from formal water governance structures. In many countries, they are underrepresented in river basin organizations, water resource management bodies, national water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) coordination platforms, regulatory consultations, and SDG review processes. This exclusion limits opportunities to contribute local knowledge, influence policy decisions, and advocate for the needs of the communities they serve.

The absence of cooperatives from decision-making forums is particularly problematic given the emphasis placed by SDG target 6.b (Cooperation & Participation) on community participation in water and sanitation management. Greater inclusion of cooperatives in governance mechanisms would not only strengthen democratic participation but also improve policy effectiveness by incorporating practical experience from frontline service providers. Governments can support this objective by ensuring cooperative representation on basin councils, in WASH coordination mechanisms, and in national SDG review processes.

DATA GAPS AND STATISTICAL INVISIBILITY

Despite serving millions of people worldwide, cooperatives remain largely invisible in national and global water statistics. Most monitoring systems do not distinguish service providers by ownership or governance model, making it difficult to quantify the contribution of cooperatives to water access, sanitation coverage, wastewater treatment, watershed protection, and other SDG 6 outcomes. As a result, cooperative achievements often go unrecognized in national planning, policy formulation, and resource allocation processes.

This statistical invisibility has significant consequences. What is not measured is difficult to support, replicate, or finance. Improving data collection on cooperative service provision would enhance evidence-based policymaking and provide a clearer picture of the diverse actors contributing to SDG 6. Governments can address this gap by incorporating ownership and governance categories into WASH information systems, utility registries, and national monitoring frameworks, while international agencies can encourage similar approaches within global SDG reporting mechanisms.

CALL TO ACTION

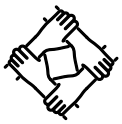
The evidence presented in this brief demonstrates that cooperatives are already making significant contributions to water supply, sanitation, wastewater management, watershed protection, and community resilience across diverse social, economic, and environmental contexts. From water cooperatives in Finland and Bolivia to sanitation cooperatives in India and watershed initiatives in Costa Rica and Ethiopia, cooperatives have shown their capacity to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and locally accountable solutions where conventional approaches often struggle to reach. Unlocking their full potential requires deliberate policy action to create an enabling environment in which cooperative enterprises can operate, invest, innovate, and scale. Governments, development partners, financial institutions, UN agencies, and cooperative organizations should therefore prioritize the following actions:

1. Establish Enabling Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

Governments should review and modernize water, sanitation, and waste management legislation, as well as cooperative legislation, to explicitly recognize cooperatives as eligible service providers and partners in water governance. Cooperatives should be able to obtain operating licenses, access water-use rights, own and manage infrastructure, enter into service agreements, and participate in public-private-community partnerships on equal terms with other providers. Clear legal recognition is the foundation upon which investment, service expansion, and long-term sustainability depend.

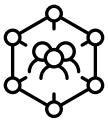
2. Expand Access to Finance and Investment

Governments, development banks, donors, and impact investors should establish dedicated financing mechanisms tailored to the needs of cooperative enterprises. These should include blended-finance facilities, guarantee funds, concessional loans, revolving credit schemes, and grant programmes that support infrastructure development, system upgrades, climate adaptation, and service expansion. Financing frameworks should also incorporate affordability measures to ensure that cooperatives serving low-income and marginalized communities can remain financially viable while maintaining universal access.



3. Reform Procurement and Partnership Mechanisms

Public procurement and contracting systems should be adapted to recognize the specific characteristics and strengths of community-owned enterprises. Smaller contract lots, community-provider windows, framework agreements, and evaluation criteria that value social impact, community participation, and local accountability would enable cooperatives to compete fairly for service delivery and infrastructure management opportunities. Such reforms would broaden the pool of capable service providers and strengthen local ownership of development outcomes.



4. Strengthen Technical Capacity and Cooperative Support Systems

Investment in capacity development is essential for enabling cooperatives to meet evolving technical, environmental, and regulatory requirements. Governments and development partners should support national and regional technical assistance platforms that provide training, certification, digital reporting systems, laboratory services, climate resilience planning, and operational support. Cooperative federations and apex organizations should be strengthened to deliver shared services, facilitate peer learning, and promote innovation across the sector.

5. Ensure Cooperative Representation in Water Governance

Cooperatives should have a formal seat at the table in water governance and decision-making processes. Governments should include cooperative representatives in river basin organizations, water-user platforms, WASH coordination mechanisms, regulatory consultations, and national SDG review processes. As democratic and community-based institutions, cooperatives provide a direct channel for citizen participation and local knowledge, contributing to more inclusive, accountable, and effective water governance.

6. Make Cooperative Contributions Visible in SDG Monitoring and Reporting

National and global monitoring systems should recognize and measure cooperative enterprises' contributions to SDG 6. Governments should incorporate ownership and governance categories into utility registries, WASH information systems, and sector reporting frameworks, while UN agencies and international organizations should encourage the inclusion of cooperative data within SDG monitoring processes. Better data will improve policymaking, attract investment, strengthen accountability, and ensure that successful cooperative models can be replicated and scaled.

7. Promote Cooperatives as Partners in Climate Resilience and Water Stewardship

As climate change intensifies pressure on freshwater resources, governments and development partners should leverage cooperatives' capacity to support watershed protection, ecosystem restoration, sustainable water management, and climate adaptation. Cooperatives are uniquely positioned to mobilize collective action at the local level, making them valuable partners in building resilient communities and safeguarding water resources for future generations.

The barriers that limit cooperative participation in SDG 6 implementation are not structural inevitabilities; they are policy choices that can be changed. Legal recognition enables contracting and investment. Access to finance supports expansion and innovation. Capacity development strengthens service quality. Representation in governance ensures that local experience informs national policy. Improved data makes cooperative contributions visible and investable. Together, these actions create the enabling environment needed for cooperatives to realize their full potential.

This brief is part of the ***Building a Better World Together: Cooperative Contributions to the SDGs*** series, produced by the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) and the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), together with its regional and sectoral organizations: Cooperatives Europe, ICA Africa, ICA Americas, and ICA Asia Pacific.

This series aims to raise awareness, promote growth, and inspire leadership in the cooperative movement. This series explores how cooperatives drive progress toward the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering economic inclusion, democratic participation, and social solidarity for over one billion members worldwide.

Established in 1971, the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) is a multi-stakeholder partnership that champions and supports people-centered and self-sustaining cooperative enterprises. Its current members include the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the International Trade Centre (ITC).

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