



**ECOSOC  
YOUTH FORUM**



Building  
Our Future  
Together

**"Innovate, Unite and Transform:  
Youth Shaping the Road to 2030"**

**SIDE EVENT AT THE 2026 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM**

**"Innovate, Unite and Cooperate: Youth Cooperatives Driving  
Innovation, Sustainable Communities and Global Partnerships  
for the 2030 Agenda"**

**Organized by: The International Cooperative Alliance – ICA-  
Youth Committee - ICAYC**

**15th April 2026, 9am to 10am EST**

## **1. Background**

Cooperatives are people-centered enterprises grounded in shared values of democracy, equity, and solidarity. With over 3 million cooperatives worldwide serving more than one billion people, they play a critical role in advancing inclusive and sustainable development.

Youth-led cooperatives are emerging as transformative platforms for entrepreneurship, innovation, and community development. Rooted in the cooperative identity and guided by the seven cooperative principles, these enterprises promote inclusive participation, sustainable practices, and shared



ownership. In particular, Principle 5: Education, Training and Information plays a crucial role in empowering young people with the knowledge, skills, and leadership capabilities required to build and scale cooperative enterprises.

Aligned with the theme of the ECOSOC Youth Forum 2026, this side event will explore how youth cooperatives can drive innovation, strengthen sustainable communities, and foster global partnerships to accelerate progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

This side event is co-funded by The European Union within the multi annual ICA-EU Partnership project called “coops4dev”.

## 2. Objectives of the side event, including relation with the SDGs identified in the Guidelines

- Emphasize Principle 5: Education, Training and Information as a key enabler for building youth leadership, strengthening cooperative capacity, and promoting innovation
- Showcase youth-led cooperative models driving innovation and inclusive economic growth (SDG 9)
- Demonstrate the role of cooperatives in building sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities (SDG 11)
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships across governments, international organizations, and youth networks (SDG 17)

## 3. Programme and names of speakers/panelists

### Opening Remarks (10 minutes)

- Harsh Sanghani- President, International Cooperative Alliance Youth Committee

### Keynote Address (10 minutes)

A Representative from the UN - TBC

### Panel Discussion (35 minutes)

**Theme:** Youth Cooperatives as Catalysts for Innovation and Sustainable Communities



## Speakers:

- **Helena Gorroño - Spain**
  - Social Economy and Coops business development leader in TAZEBAEZ
  - Vice President for Europe of the ICA Youth Committee
  - S.Coop: Consulting, Education and Communication Cooperative in the Basque Country.
  - Youth Ambassador of KONFEKOOP Basque Confederation of Cooperatives
- **Dulce Bustamante - Philippines**
  - PH, Executive Director of Union of Legitimate Service Contracting Cooperatives;
  - Chairperson ICA-Asia Pacific Youth committee
- **Nicolás Jacquet - Argentina**
  - Consultant of the Argentine Federation of Consumer Cooperatives (FACC) President of the Regional Youth Committee and Board Member of Cooperatives of the Americas
  - Vice President of the Youth Committee and Board Member of COOPERAR; Professor of Cooperative Law, Argentina
- **Ronald Yamukuwa – Kenya**  
International Cooperative Alliance Youth Committee- Vice president for Africa

## Interactive Dialogue (15 minutes)

- Open discussion with participants and stakeholders

Moderated by

**Ingrid Colanero**- Head of International Cooperation at the International Cooperative Alliance – and ICA-Youth Committee coordinator

**Joseph Njuguna**: Director of Policy – International Cooperative Alliance

## Closing Remarks (5 minutes)

- A Speaker from the European Commission TBC



## 4. Guiding Questions for discussion

1. In what ways can education, training, and knowledge-sharing (Principle 5) strengthen youth leadership and cooperative sustainability?
2. How can cooperative enterprises contribute to building sustainable and resilient communities in both urban and rural contexts?
3. What policy frameworks and institutional support are needed to enable the growth of youth-led cooperatives globally?
4. How can partnerships between governments, cooperative institutions, and international organizations accelerate progress toward SDG 9, SDG 11, and SDG 17?
5. What successful youth cooperative models can be scaled or replicated across regions to maximize global impact?

## 5. Venue Address (if In-person) and/or Platform to be used for virtual side events including Registration link

**ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/uHztiZ-RQ8W7DSL9qL21EQ>

**Interpretation provided in English and Spanish**

