



Concept Note

HLPF 2026 Side Event – COPAC

Cooperatives as Drivers and Partners of Transformative and Localized SDG Action

Date: Monday, 6 July 2026

Time: 11:30–12:45 EST

Venue: United Nations Headquarters, Conference Room 8 (CR-8)

Format: In-person and livestreamed via UN WebTV:

<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1k/k1kl8ufzn5>

Background

The 2026 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) convenes under the theme “**Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.**” With only four years remaining until the 2030 deadline, accelerating implementation requires development approaches that are inclusive, locally rooted, scalable, and capable of delivering integrated economic, social, and environmental outcomes.

Cooperatives are uniquely positioned to contribute to this agenda. As people-centered, democratically governed enterprises owned and controlled by their members, cooperatives operate across all sectors of the economy and provide practical solutions to local and global challenges. By combining economic viability with social impact, cooperatives strengthen communities, create decent work, reduce inequalities, foster social cohesion, and contribute to sustainable and resilient development.

This side event is organized in conjunction with the [2026 UN International Day of Cooperatives](#), celebrated on 4 July under the theme “**Cooperatives for a Peaceful World.**” The theme highlights the contribution of cooperatives to peacebuilding through social justice, economic inclusion, democratic participation, solidarity, and community resilience. In a context marked by growing inequalities, conflicts, climate-related challenges, and declining trust in institutions, cooperatives demonstrate how collective action and shared ownership can contribute to more peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable societies.

The event will also mark the launch of a series of [17 SDG Policy Briefs](#) developed by the global cooperative movement, showcasing evidence and case studies of cooperative contributions across the Sustainable Development Goals. These briefs demonstrate how cooperatives serve not only as contributors to sustainable development but also as

strategic partners for governments, UN agencies, development institutions, and local communities in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Objectives

The side event aims to:

1. **Showcase the contribution of cooperatives to transformative and localized SDG implementation**, drawing on evidence from the 17 SDG Policy Briefs.
2. **Highlight the role of cooperatives as partners in achieving the SDGs under review at HLPF 2026**, particularly through community-driven and locally owned solutions.
3. **Demonstrate how cooperatives contribute to peace, resilience, and social cohesion**, in line with the 2026 International Day of Cooperatives theme.
4. **Promote policy dialogue and partnerships** among governments, UN entities, financial institutions, and cooperative organizations to strengthen enabling ecosystems for cooperative development.
5. **Advance recognition of cooperatives as implementation partners** in national and local SDG strategies, Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), and broader sustainable development frameworks.

Draft Programme

11:30 – 11:35

Welcome and opening remarks

Moderator – Andrew Allimadi - UNDESA

- Ms. Enkhsetseg Battsengel, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations.
- Ambassador Kalilu Totangi, Deputy Permanent Representative for Political Affairs of the Sierra Leone Mission to the United Nations
- Mr. Gilbert F. Hougbo, ILO Director General – Video message
- Dr. Ariel Guarco, ICA President – Video message

11:35 – 11:50

Present the 17 SDG Policy Briefs and key findings

- Dr. Ilcheong Yi - COPAC Chair and Head of Partnerships & Senior Research Coordinator at UNRISD
- Joseph Njuguna – Director of Policy at the International Cooperative Alliance

11:50 – 12:30

Multi-stakeholder Panel Discussion: Building Partnerships for Transformative and Localized SDG Action

- Natalie Petrulla - Senior Manager, Programs and Strategic Partnership, Fairtrade International
- Michelle Schry, Strategic Development Director, National Coop Grocers
- Francesca Ottolenghi, Manager, Legacoop
- Palakh Khanna, Founder- Break The Ice, Regional Representative, Asia-Commonwealth Students' Association
- UN representative (tbc)

12:30 – 12:40

Interactive discussion and audience engagement

12:40 – 12:45

Closing remarks and key takeaways