



**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 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

Moderation by

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

Opening Remarks (5 minutes)

- Harsh Sanghani - President, International Cooperative Alliance Youth Committee



Keynote Address (5 minutes)

- **Annica Floren** - Head of Unit G3 Youth, Education & Research, Culture – DG INTPA, European Commission

Panel Discussion (35 minutes)

Moderated by **Joseph Njuguna** - Director of Policy – International Cooperative Alliance

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 Nyamukuwa - Zimbabwe**
 - Vice President for Africa of the ICA Youth Committee



- **Pritty Sunny - India**
 - Fairtrade Youth Ambassador
 - Coffee producer at Wayanad Agriculture Society

Interactive Dialogue (15 minutes) Moderated by Joseph Njuguna

- Open discussion with participants and stakeholders

Closing Remarks (3 minutes)

Annica Floren, Head of Unit G3 Youth, Education & Research, Culture – DG INTPA, European Commission

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

