Co-operatives and Sustainable Development

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International Co-operative Alliance:

- Independent, non-governmental organization established in 1895 to unite, represent and serve co-operatives worldwide
- 277 member organizations in 94 countries
- Sectors: agriculture, fisheries, retail, banking, insurance, housing, health, industry and services
- Size of co-operative movement worldwide:
  - 1 billion members
  - Largest 300 co-operatives have a turnover of USD 2 trillion
  - Provide jobs to 50 million+
Why are co-operatives engaged in International Development?
Co-operatives are people-centered enterprises:

- Owners / members / producers / users

- Members are stakeholders not shareholders: co-operatives aim to satisfy the needs and expectations of members rather than to maximize profits;

- Wealth generated by co-operatives is distributed to members, communities and society in a fairer way
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Co-operatives are values-based enterprises:

• Co-operative identity, values and principles are commonly agreed at global level;

• Democracy: one member, one vote;

• Equality: no discrimination based on gender, race, religion, etc…

• Inclusiveness: voluntary and open membership, leaving no one behind

• Community: employment, education, environment, empowerment,…
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Co-operatives have a long-term perspective:

- The aim of economic growth is to provide benefits and well-being to all people;

- Social conditions such as decent work and wages, education and training, health and safety, equality, inclusiveness, among others, are fundamental to human dignity

- Preserving the environment is fundamental to ensure the well-being of future generations
Examples (1/3):

- Co-operatives in Development Database: [https://coopseurope.coop/development/](https://coopseurope.coop/development/)

- ≈300 projects; 78 countries; 8 sectors of activity
Examples (2/3):


- More than 60 years, 100 countries, +200 programs

- Senegal:
  - improved food security and nutrition: 1,000,000 people;
  - Household income improved 250%
  - Underweight children reduced 35%
Examples (3/3):

- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (US) [http://www.nreca.coop/what-we-do/international-programs](http://www.nreca.coop/what-we-do/international-programs)

- Providing access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity

- Tanzania: “Let there be light Project” [http://s.coop/1v0f4](http://s.coop/1v0f4)
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How to support this work?:

“The Private Sector is highly diverse” and it includes “cooperatives”

“Each of these private sector actors requires different conditions and incentives to contribute to development, entailing differentiated approaches to their support and engagement for development”

“Cooperatives, social enterprises and other forms of people-centred business are often leading the way in providing decent jobs, sustainable livelihoods and inclusive solutions to social problems.”

EC Communication on the role of the Private Sector in Development
How to support this work?:

TURN WORDS INTO ACTIONS!

MAKE IT GLOBAL!
Thank you!

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