



International  
Cooperative  
Alliance

Principal Documents – Part II

# General Assembly

29 November 2024  
New Delhi, India

# AN INTRODUCTION: EVOLVING TO MEET THE CHANGING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN INTRODUCTION

# **International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Strategic Plan Summary 2026–2030**

In 2020, the ICA embarked on a decade-long strategic journey to foster a resilient and people-centered cooperative movement. Midway through this journey, we have refined our focus, aligning our approach to meet new global challenges. This updated strategy, designed to launch formally for the 2026–2030 period, outlines the steps to further strengthen cooperatives worldwide, culminating in the official launch at the World Social Summit on 4–6 November 2026 in Doha, Qatar.

## **Building on the Current Strategy (2020–2030)**

This updated strategy builds upon the original goals established in 2020, reinforcing our commitment to cooperative values in light of profound shifts in the global landscape. With the original foundation intact, this refined strategy adapts to current realities, ensuring that cooperatives remain effective drivers of social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

## **Strategic Timing of the Launch: 2025 – International Year of Cooperatives**

The launch of the updated strategy aligns with a pivotal moment—2025, the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC), declared by the United Nations. This timing symbolizes a collective commitment by the cooperative movement to support the UN in a final, accelerated effort to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as we approach the end of the SDG era. This plan is our pledge to contribute to a sustainable, inclusive future as a preferred partner in global development.

### **The Statement on Cooperative Identity: A Pillar of our Strategy**

A cornerstone of the updated strategy is the reaffirmation of the Statement on Cooperative Identity, reflecting cooperative values and principles that define our global movement. Since 2021, the Cooperative Identity Advisory Group (CIAG) has led efforts to uphold and strengthen this identity, ensuring it remains relevant in today's evolving world. The updated strategy draws on CIAG's work to reinforce our shared values, guiding cooperatives to embody principles of equity, solidarity, and sustainable development.

### **Embracing Change: The Power of Cooperatives to Transform the World**

At the heart of the ICA's Theory of Change (ToC) is the conviction that cooperatives have the power to change the world for the better. The ToC serves as a model for this transformation, emphasizing the importance of a shared vision and mission across the movement. By working together under this unified framework, cooperatives can address global challenges with collective strength, striving for a world rooted in equality, resilience, and sustainability.

### **Focus on the Ultimate Beneficiary: Individual Cooperatives**

While the strategy emphasizes global impact, its ultimate beneficiary is the individual cooperative and its members. Our initiatives are designed to enhance cooperatives at every level, ensuring that all interventions and resources benefit the cooperatives and mutuals that make up the foundation of our movement. This focus on grassroots impact underscores the movement's commitment to uplifting each cooperative, contributing to a broader cooperative ecosystem that thrives locally and globally.

### **Scope and Approach**

As we implement this strategy, we have chosen to leave certain areas out of scope for now, including the social and solidarity economy, “economía popular,” and other forms of the democratic economy. This focused approach allows us to concentrate on the core cooperative movement while leaving room to address these additional aspects in the future as we continue to adapt and grow.

### **Theory of Change: A Pathway to Impact**

Our Theory of Change outlines a strategic model designed to achieve transformative outcomes through Intervention Initiatives—targeted projects addressing core needs within the cooperative movement. These initiatives align with our long-term objectives, structured across two timelines: Short-Term Outcomes by 2030 and Long-Term Outcomes by 2035 and beyond. By leveraging data, enhancing leadership, fostering cooperative identity, and ensuring financial resilience, our ToC seeks to maximize cooperative impact across diverse communities, ultimately fostering a sustainable, inclusive, and cooperative future for all.

# EVOLVING TO MEET THE CHANGING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN DOCUMENT

Section I

## Introduction

# Cooperatives Leading the Way to a Sustainable Future for All

In 2020, we embarked on a strategic journey to advance a people-centered cooperative movement for the second cooperative decade. Midway through this journey, we recognize the need to update our strategy—initially approved in 2019—to address significant shifts in the global landscape. Economic, social, and environmental contexts have evolved rapidly, prompting us to adapt and strengthen our approach to ensure cooperatives remain resilient, forward-looking, innovative, and impactful.

Our commitment to updating this strategy reflects the necessity to respond to these changes, not due to inadequacies in our original plan, but as a recognition of the new realities shaped by advancement of nationalist populism, the COVID-19 pandemic, technological advancements, shrinking civic space - in particular for women -, significantly increased numbers of warfare, and the urgent climate crisis. Cooperatives, with their core values of democracy, equality, equity, solidarity and caring for others, and shared prosperity, are uniquely positioned to lead during these transformative times.

Cooperatives are the obvious partner to the United Nations in implementing all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The Statement of Cooperative Identity is in full alignment with the 17 SDGs. The UN declared 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives, and this Strategy document is the actual starting point for a joint acceleration on the implementation of the SDGs during its last 5 years towards completion. SDG implementation

is lagging behind – only 17% of the targets were achieved by the end of 2024 – and 1,1 billion cooperators worldwide can significantly help a deeper commitment through the unique enterprise model of the cooperative (and mutual). This Strategy is a reflection to this unique sense of urgency.

The timeline for our updated strategy is as follows:

- **Process Overview**  
After approval by the Board in July 2024, we began by creating a strategic framework and Theory of Change (TOC) with a dedicated ICA team, followed by a first phase of in-depth reviews with ICA leadership and regional and sectoral leaders. Together, we have crafted the foundation of this strategy to reflect a shared vision for the future.
- **Progress So Far**  
We have refined the framework and Theory of Change through consultations with ICA leadership. Now, at the global conference, which initiates the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2025, we are introducing a ‘charcoal’ version of the strategy to the General Assembly and ICA community at large for further insight and engagement.

## What’s Inside this Document:

**Section I** – Introduction

**Section II** – Emerging Opportunities

**Section III** – Key Themes

**Section IV** – Communities of Influence

**Section V** – Global Impacts

**Section VI** – Theory of Change

**Section VII** – Intervention Initiatives

**Section VIII** – Individual Co-op Impact

**Section IX** – Going Local

Section I

# Introduction Continued

- **Next Steps**

- **Q1 2025:** Gather revisions and feedback from key stakeholders at the Global Cooperative Conference, enhancing the framework with input from ICA members and partners. Undertake targeted consultations with Regions, Sectors, and Thematic Committees.
- **Q2 2025:** Discussion of the advanced Strategy draft, including inputs from Regions, Sectors, and Thematic Committees, during a special session at the Global Board meeting. Based on feedback from the Global Board, a final draft of the Strategy will be prepared for the ICA General Assembly. This comprehensive Strategy will also serve as a management tool, from which a concise, public version of approximately a dozen of pages will be created. Presentation of the final Strategy draft to members at the General Assembly.
- **Q3 2025:** Development of a public version of the ICA Strategy 2026–2030. Creation of tailored strategy documents by all Sectors and Regions, aligned with the ICA Strategy.
- **Q4 2025:** Global launch of the public version of the ICA Strategy at the second UN World Summit for Social Development in Doha, from November 4 to 6.
- **Q1 2026:** Implementation of the 2026–2030 Strategy, effective January 1.

With this Strategy, we recommit to the principles that define cooperatives as a force for good, ready to lead in the years ahead and inspire a global movement rooted in cooperative values.

Section II

# Emerging Opportunities

## Emerging Opportunities for the Cooperative Movement

As we build on the foundations laid in 2020, the global environment has shifted, bringing new opportunities alongside evolving challenges. By embracing positive trends and adapting to change, cooperatives have the unique potential to lead, innovate, and inspire in this dynamic landscape.

### 1. Building Peace by Restoring Trust in Governance

In an era of prolific warfares, linked to shrinking civic space and growing repression for women and minorities in particular, and general skepticism toward institutions, cooperatives have a chance to lead by example. By prioritizing transparency, accountability, and ethical governance, cooperatives can rebuild trust within their communities, advocate peace by demonstrating that collective governance can be a force for good. Through collaboration and inclusive practices, and friendships beyond boundaries, cooperatives can be agents of peace and security, and inclusion in a world that increasingly needs bridges, not barriers.

### 2. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability

The intensifying need for climate action presents a prime opportunity for cooperatives to pioneer sustainable solutions and champion resilient, environmentally-friendly economies. By integrating climate-conscious practices and supporting communities in their transition, cooperatives can lead the charge toward a greener and more sustainable future.

### 3. Building a More Equitable Society

The cooperative movement stands as a beacon for social and economic equity, addressing the widening gaps in wealth and opportunity. With the power to create inclusive economies, cooperatives can help ensure that all, especially marginalized communities, have pathways to prosperity. By championing equality, cooperatives can promote fairness and uplift society as a whole.

### 4. Gender equality

The cooperative movement works towards a world in which women and their allies are supported to challenge and change the conditions

Section II

## Emerging Opportunities

of exclusion and also poverty and discrimination they experience and achieve gender justice and equality. We recognize that race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, marital status, and many other factors affect people's experiences. Cooperatives can proactively create a generation of new female business leaders that can help shape transgenerational solidarity with benefits to all men and women worldwide.

### **5. Youth Engagement and Empowerment**

With youth unemployment on the rise, there is an unprecedented opportunity for cooperatives to engage and empower young people as the next generation of cooperative leaders. By creating meaningful work and leadership opportunities, cooperatives can shape a movement that resonates with youth, fostering innovation and sustainability for years to come.

### **6. Embracing Technological Advancements**

In an era marked by rapid digital transformation, technology offers a powerful tool for cooperatives to enhance their operations, governance, and member engagement. Leveraging AI, data analytics, and digital platforms, cooperatives can expand their reach and deepen their impact. By bridging the digital divide, they can ensure inclusivity and access for all members in the digital age. As a decentralized, yet united digital front, cooperatives are uniquely positioned to withstand the ever growing power of Big Data.

### **7. Financial Resilience and Community Stability**

Amid economic uncertainty, cooperatives have a unique opportunity to offer resilient, community-focused financial solutions. By providing stability and security, they can safeguard local economies and support communities through uncertain times, helping to mitigate the impacts of economic fluctuations. Fintech solutions can accelerate growth of cooperative capital markets.

### **8. Advocating for Supportive Legal Frameworks**

Cooperative legislation is advancing worldwide. It enshrines cooperative values and principles. The cooperative movement operates as a custodian and ensures that laws governing cooperatives – including those related to taxation, competition, public-procurement, labour & employment, and technology – do favour the special character of the cooperative enterprise.

### **9. Shaping the Future of Work with Dignity**

As technology reshapes the workplace, cooperatives are uniquely positioned to advocate for dignified, inclusive work. By supporting fair labor practices and adapting to the changing job landscape, cooperatives can help workers navigate technological transitions with security and respect, by co-owning the means of computation.

#### **10. Supporting Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture**

With rising global food demands, cooperatives have a critical role in advancing food security. By promoting sustainable agricultural practices, cooperatives can improve access to nutritious food while protecting the environment, ensuring a healthy future for generations.

#### **11. Expanding Access to Essential Services**

The cooperative model is pivotal in providing equitable access to education, healthcare, and housing. By bridging gaps in access to these fundamental services, cooperatives can foster healthier, more educated communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

These emerging opportunities highlight the cooperative movement's capacity to drive positive change, adapt to global trends, and leverage new solutions for a more equitable, sustainable world.

Section III

## **Key Themes**

### **Expanding on the 5 Key Themes of the ICA**

As we look towards the future, the International Cooperative Alliance's strategic plan is deeply aligned with the Cooperative Identity Statement and five key themes.

The Statement on the Cooperative Identity states that a cooperative is an 'autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

The ICA Strategy ultimately supports the growth and development of the cooperative movement, making each cooperative enterprise its primary beneficiary. Major indicator is a well-measured growing share of the cooperatives and mutuals in the global economy. Thus, promoting, strengthening, and advancing Cooperative Identity lies at the very core of every aspect of the Strategy.

The 5 key themes are critical to ensuring that cooperatives remain at the forefront of global change, driving innovation, equity, and resilience across communities worldwide. Each theme is a cornerstone of our mission to build a just, equal, and resilient future for all.

#### **1. Shaping a Just, Equal, and Resilient Future**

At the heart of our movement is the commitment to grow the share in the global economy. This needs to be done via improved competitiveness and clear a growth strategy of various sectors,

Section III

# Key Themes Continued

and also via tackling inequality and strengthening communities that have been marginalized in the global economy. Our focus is on understanding the unique needs of local membership communities, particularly those that are vulnerable. By engaging directly with these communities, in particular with women as future leaders, we can facilitate the changes needed to build a future that is not only more resilient but also more equitable. Cooperatives have the power to create lasting, positive impacts by fostering economic inclusion, social justice, and environmental stewardship, thereby ensuring that no one is left behind in our global progress.

## **2. Enabling Policy and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

For cooperatives to thrive and fulfill their potential, they need an enabling environment that supports their growth and sustainability. We are dedicated to promoting the cooperative model to policymakers, governments, international organizations, and the public. By advocating for policies that recognize and enhance the unique business case of cooperatives, we aim to create more space for cooperatives within society at large. Our efforts include highlighting the capacity of cooperatives to address pressing social and environmental issues, showcasing their role as vehicles for positive change in both local and global contexts.

## **3. Reaffirming Cooperative Identity**

In a rapidly changing world, it is crucial to reaffirm and deepen our understanding of what it means to be a cooperative. The awareness and practice of the Statement on the Cooperative Identity, which has guided us for decades, must be deepened to help cooperators and cooperatives effectively meet and respond to the current challenges facing cooperatives around the world. This theme is about ensuring that our identity remains relevant and resonant, while also preserving the core values and principles that define us. By reaffirming our cooperative identity, we strengthen our resolve to act as a unified movement, committed to cooperation, solidarity, and concern for others.

## **4. Nurturing Purposeful Leadership**

The future of the cooperative movement depends on nurturing the next generation of leaders—those who can carry forward our values and drive our mission in new and innovative ways. We are committed to supporting young people, women, and other high-potential leaders from within and outside the movement. By building ambition

Section III

## Key Themes Continued

and fostering lifelong learning, we aim to equip everyone with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in a changing world. Purposeful leadership is not just about individual achievement but about cultivating a collective vision for a better future, one that is inclusive, sustainable, and driven by cooperative principles.

### 5. **Securing Access to Smart Financial Solutions**

Financial resources are essential for the growth and sustainability of cooperatives. However, access to these resources has often been limited, particularly in dormant capital markets. Our goal is to unlock these financial opportunities and connect cooperatives with the funding they need to thrive. By securing access to smart financial solutions – FinTech – , we can help cooperatives scale their impact, expand their reach, and contribute more effectively to the global economy. This theme underscores our commitment to financial inclusion and the belief that cooperatives can and should have the tools they need to build strong, resilient businesses that benefit their members and communities.

These five themes will be revisited throughout our strategic plan to ensure that our efforts remain aligned with our mission and that we continue to focus on the areas that matter most for the future of the cooperative movement. As we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, these themes will guide our actions, inspire our initiatives, and help us build a cooperative future that is just, equal, and resilient for all.

Section IV

## Communities of Influence

### **Communities of Influence**

Cooperatives are the final beneficiaries of our strategy. Cooperatives are in daily engagement with different levels of stakeholders in society with whom they make a measurable impact. These Communities of Influence encompass the various spheres where cooperative values and initiatives resonate, ensuring that our interventions reach and benefit cooperatives at every level. The communities we engage include:

#### **Local & Regional Community**

The primary reason for the existence of a cooperative lies in its membership basis: the community they serve. Cooperatives' communities are built through regional and sectoral organizations within specific locales or industries. By working closely with their member base, we can ensure that cooperatives are empowered and reinforced at the grassroots level, reflecting the unique needs and strengths of each region and sector. Local and regional member clusters are instrumental in adapting the strategic goals to resonate with the specific realities and challenges cooperatives face on the ground.

Section IV

# Communities of Influence Continued

## **Policy Community**

The Policy Community includes all legislative and policy creators whose decisions impact the cooperative movement. Engaging with policymakers and regulatory bodies allows us to advocate for supportive frameworks and regulations that facilitate cooperative growth and sustainability. This community is crucial for ensuring that cooperatives are not only recognized in policy discussions but are also positioned as viable solutions to social and economic challenges. National Apex bodies and (Con)Federations are the allies for cooperatives in the national and sectoral arenas

## **Global Community**

The Global Community represents the broader, interconnected world, including the general public and international stakeholders. This community is essential for raising awareness and building affinity for cooperative principles on a global scale. By fostering a deeper understanding of the cooperative model worldwide, we can inspire broader support for cooperatives and promote a positive global perception of the movement's impact on social and economic progress. The ICA is the natural counterpart and interface for cooperatives worldwide and, consequently, in the broader continental regions.

## **Market Community**

The Market Community is the business environment where cooperatives interact, compete, and collaborate with other enterprises. This community includes the broader ecosystem of businesses, suppliers, and partners that influence cooperative operations. By engaging with the market community, cooperatives can strengthen their competitiveness, expand their networks, and advocate for ethical and cooperative-friendly business practices that benefit all stakeholders. Preferred business is integrative cooperative networks of supply, finance and marketing within and between cooperative clusters, sectors and regions.

Together, these Communities of Influence create a comprehensive support system for cooperatives. These engagement areas amplify the impact of our strategic initiatives. By addressing the unique needs and dynamics of each community, we aim to ensure that the cooperative movement thrives across all levels—locally, nationally, and globally—driving sustainable and inclusive growth for years to come.

Section V

# Global Impacts

## Global Impacts of Our Strategic Plan/What Success Looks Like

The International Cooperative Alliance’s strategic plan is designed to have far-reaching and transformative impacts on the global cooperative movement. With its overarching and long-term objective to grow the share of cooperatives and mutuals in the global economy, and by consistently and coherently pursuing our outlined goals and initiatives, we anticipate the following key outcomes:

### 1. More Cooperatives (and mutuals)

Our strategic efforts are expected to lead to the creation of more cooperatives across various sectors and regions. This growth will not only expand the reach of the cooperative movement but will also enhance its influence and ability to address global challenges.

### 2. More Participation in Cooperative Organizations and Networks

A key impact of our plan will be heightened engagement and participation within cooperative organizations and networks throughout the 4 communities of influence. By fostering a more inclusive and connected cooperative ecosystem, we aim to ensure that all members are actively involved and contributing to the success and resilience of their cooperatives.

### 3. More Competitive Cooperatives

Through targeted initiatives such as unlocking financial resources and embracing technological advancements, we expect cooperatives to become more competitive in the global marketplace. This will empower them to thrive in increasingly dynamic and challenging environments, ensuring long-term sustainability and success.

### 4. Cooperatives Contributing to the Fulfillment of SDGs

A central tenet of our strategy is aligning cooperative efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We envision a future where cooperatives play a pivotal role in achieving these goals by providing services and products that promote social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

Section V

# Global Impacts Continued

**5. More Endorsement with Multilaterals, Regulators and Influencers**

A core objective of our strategic plan is to secure stronger endorsements for the ICA and its role as the custodian of cooperative principles; partnerships with multilateral organizations in advancing the cooperative-agenda; influence with regulatory bodies to safeguard the unique features of genuine cooperatives; and influential leaders to encourage generations of individuals and enterprises to embrace cooperation. These endorsements will not only strengthen cooperative advocacy at global and national levels but also open doors to new resources, opportunities, and collaborative platforms, enhancing the cooperative movement's capacity to make impactful contributions globally.

**6. Strengthening the Next Generation of Cooperators**

Our commitment to nurturing purposeful leadership, engaging youth, and empowering women will strengthen the next generation of cooperators. This impact is crucial for ensuring the future vitality of the cooperative model, as well as its ability to adapt and innovate in response to emerging global trends.

**7. Greater Global Awareness of Cooperative Identity and Affinity**

Through initiatives like the Global B2B Coop Marque – owned between NCBA and ICA via DotCoop – and the reaffirmation of the cooperative identity, we anticipate a significant increase in global awareness and affinity towards cooperatives. This heightened recognition will reinforce the unique value proposition of cooperatives and attract more members, partners, and supporters.

**8. More Cooperatives Which are More Authentic**

By emphasizing cooperative identity and values, our plan aims to cultivate more authentic cooperatives that are true to their principles and committed to serving their members and communities. This authenticity will enhance trust and loyalty among members, fostering long-term stability and success.

These expected impacts are the cornerstone of our strategic plan, guiding our actions and ensuring that the International Cooperative Alliance continues to drive positive change on a global scale. Through these outcomes, we will reinforce the cooperative model as a powerful force for good, capable of addressing the most pressing challenges of our time.

Section VI

# Theory of Change

## Introduction to Our Theory of Change

Working with a Theory of Change helps us to define transformation paths towards the envisioned sustainable growth of the cooperative sector at large. The assumption is that we match continuity paths with innovation paths from the awareness that the ICA bundles in its huge diversity over sectors, regions, cultures and themes one organization, with one strategy using one brand experience.

Continuity is the further scaling, quality raising and effectiveness—building of our current work streams on inclusivity, gender equality, policy, advocacy, legislation, education, information, promotion of sustainable development and achieving endorsements and recognition. Innovation is the long-term ambition to bundle market-based software solutions with preferred developers and implementing partners that not only reaches out to ICA members, but also has the prospect of delivering additional services through the members towards individual cooperatives. A ‘coop cloud’ as a membership portal under ICA can deliver functional tools to improve social, business, environmental and financial acumen of cooperatives of all sorts, gradually creating our own in-house Big Cooperative Data center.

Our Theory of Change serves as a roadmap for achieving the transformative goals of the cooperative movement through targeted, strategic interventions. This approach begins with **Intervention Initiatives**—groups of projects designed to drive change within specific focus areas. Each initiative is crafted to address key cooperative needs and align with our overarching strategic objectives.

The Theory of Change then outlines anticipated outcomes over two timelines: **Short Term Outcomes** (2030), capturing immediate impacts from our interventions, and **Long Term Outcomes** (2035 and beyond), defining the sustained impact on the cooperative ecosystem and its broader influence.

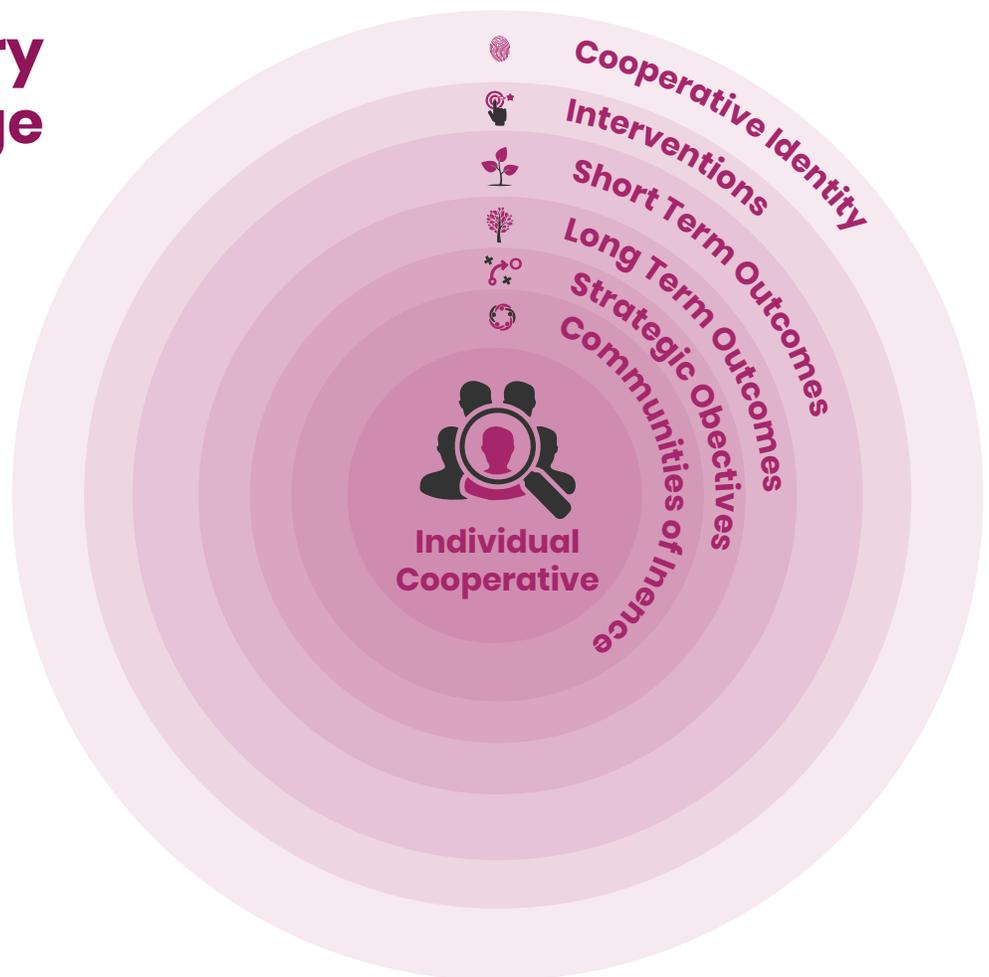
To ensure that each intervention reaches and engages the right stakeholders, we’ve identified four **Communities of Influence: Local & Regional, Policy Community, Global Community, and Market Community**. These communities represent the diverse pathways through

which our initiatives will make an impact, ultimately reaching cooperative members, stakeholders, and the public.

The final component in our Theory of Change is the **Impact on Individual Cooperatives**. This ensures that each intervention is grounded in the practical needs of cooperatives, enabling them to benefit directly from these efforts.

The Theory of Change graphic on our website also allows users to explore these components through five key themes—policy, leadership, identity, future, and financing—providing a clear and dynamic view of how each initiative contributes to our strategic vision.

## ICA Theory of Change





**The Cooperative Identity**—the foundational framework that influences and guides every intervention



**Intervention Initiatives**—groups of projects designed to drive change within specific focus areas. Each initiative is crafted to address key cooperative needs and align with our overarching strategic objectives.



**Short Term Outcomes (2030)**—immediate impacts from our interventions that can be achieved by 2030.



**Long Term Outcomes (2035 and Beyond)**—sustained impact on the cooperative ecosystem and its broader influence from 2035 and beyond.



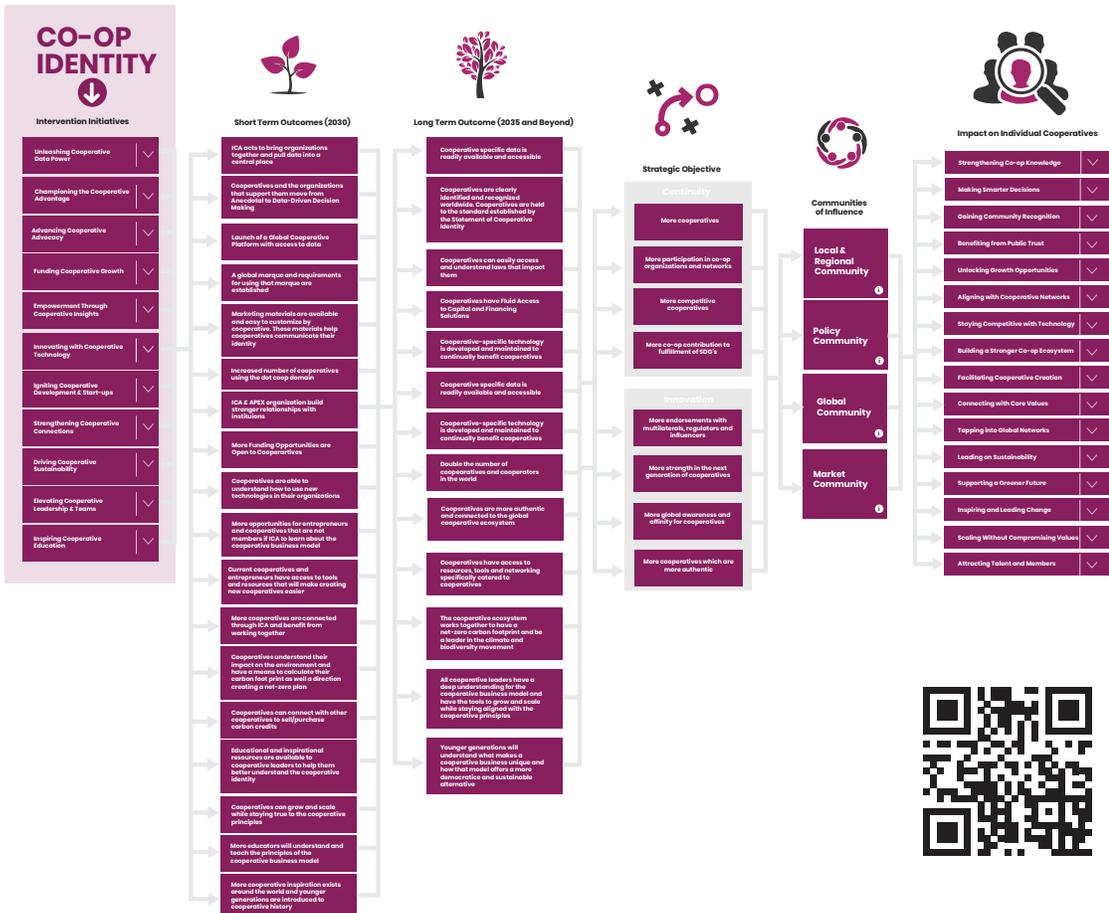
**Strategic Objectives**—the larger directional objectives that each of our initiatives can be grouped within.



**Communities of Influence**—Local & Regional, Policy Community, Global Community, and Market Community. These communities represent the diverse pathways through which our initiatives will make an impact



**Impact on Individual Cooperatives**—Local & Regional, Policy Community, and Market Community. These communities represent the diverse pathways through which our initiatives will make an impact





Section VII

## Intervention Initiatives

### Intervention Initiatives: Building the Foundations for Cooperative Transformation

At the heart of our Theory of Change are the Intervention Initiatives—a series of strategic projects designed to address the core needs and opportunities within the cooperative movement. Each intervention is a focused area of action, created to drive meaningful change by harnessing cooperative strengths, overcoming shared challenges, and embracing new possibilities.

These initiatives serve as the building blocks of our strategic plan, providing cooperatives with the tools, resources, and frameworks needed to thrive in an evolving global landscape. Each intervention is supported by key partners across the cooperative ecosystem, fostering collaboration that extends beyond individual projects to create a ripple effect of positive impact.

From advancing data-driven insights and sustainable practices to fostering leadership and education, each intervention plays a distinct role in achieving the short- and long-term outcomes outlined in our Theory of Change. Together, they lay the groundwork for a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready cooperative movement that can rise to meet the challenges and opportunities of our time.

#### Unleashing Cooperative Data Power

This initiative focuses on harnessing the collective data of the cooperative movement to create a more interconnected and informed ecosystem. By establishing comprehensive data resources, this intervention aims to empower cooperatives with access to shared knowledge and insights that support collaboration, transparency, and growth across regions and sectors.

- **Projects:**
  - Develop a Comprehensive Cooperative List
  - Organize and Grow a Robust Library of Cooperative Stories
  - Create a Universal Data Structure to Benefit all Cooperative Organizations
- **Partners For Example:** Apex Bodies, Federations, Dot Coop, ICETT/P6, Patio, Startin' Blox,

Section VII

## Intervention Initiatives Continued

### Championing the Cooperative Advantage

This intervention is designed to strengthen the identity and visibility of cooperatives on a global scale. By creating unified branding resources and reaffirming cooperative values, this initiative promotes the cooperative model as a trusted, recognizable alternative in the marketplace, helping to attract members, partners, and public support.

- **Projects:**
  - Customizable Marketing Materials and Identity Kit
  - Stories Database and Communications Plan
  - Expansion of Dot Coop Domain
  - Reaffirm the Statement of Cooperative Identity
  - Protect Live and Market Program
  - Develop & Launch a Coop Label/Marque
- **Partners For Example:** Dot Coop, ICEPT/P6”

### Advancing Cooperative Advocacy

Cooperative principles, of which the ICA has been the global custodian since 1895, are increasingly getting enshrined in inter/national law. This reality is among the first instances of successful “law-making” by a Non-Governmental Organization, and for this, the membership and leadership of the ICA, particularly of the 20th century, must be credited. A major legislative landmark for cooperatives in the 21st century was the inclusion of this “NGO-made set of norms” into the legal text of the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation (193) in 2002. Successive reports of the UN Secretary General on cooperatives, have called on member states to review and revise their cooperative laws in line with the Statement on the Cooperative Identity (definition, values and principles) thus attributing a special status to the unique features of the cooperative enterprise as well as the rights & responsibilities of co-operators, must be safeguarded in and by the law. It is now becoming an increasingly valid argument, that the cooperative principles, that began as practices by different cooperative traditions in the 19th century and harmonized to some extent by the ICA through the 20th century, have become an important source of law and part of

Section VII

## Intervention Initiatives Continued

customary international law according to Art. 38.1.c of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the pinnacle of the justice system of the world.

It remains the perennial responsibility of the ICA and its member organizations, to not just advocate for adequate legal and policy frameworks for cooperatives, but also ensure that such frameworks translate the cooperative values and principles into legal rules and public policy. The most important reason for this is the legal obligation that the ICA has, by virtue of its creation through its Articles of Association, under the laws of the Kingdom of Belgium to ensure its member organizations act in a manner consistent with the Statement on the Cooperative Identity.

With a focus on policy influence, this intervention aims to strengthen the cooperative movement's voice within legislative and regulatory arenas. By mapping relevant laws and building strategic partnerships, this initiative positions cooperatives as advocates for supportive policies, ensuring they have the backing needed to thrive in diverse legal environments.

- **Projects:**
  - Mapping Cooperative Laws
  - Partnership Building with Institutions & Legislative Bodies
  - Mapping of Environmental Legislation
- **Partners For Example:** Legislation Committee, COPAC, UN Bodies, ILO, ICJ, European Commission DG INTPA

### Funding Cooperative Growth

This initiative seeks to expand access to financial resources for cooperatives, enabling sustainable growth and resilience. Through strategic partnerships and resource development, this intervention aims to create a supportive funding environment where cooperatives can access capital tailored to their unique needs.

- **Projects:**
  - Partnership Building with Financial Organizations
  - Cooperative Funding Resources
  - ICA as a Financial Agent
- **Partners For Example:** ICBA, Coop Exchange, Inpulse & Kampani (Global Cooperative Impact Fund)

Section VII

## Intervention Initiatives Continued

### Empowerment Through Cooperative Insights

This intervention aims to equip cooperatives with the tools to measure and benchmark their performance, allowing for data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement. By developing survey and analysis resources, cooperatives can better understand their impact, make informed choices, and share insights across the movement.

- **Projects:**
  - Develop Survey and Benchmarking Tools
- **Partners For Example:** ICETT/P6, Solidaridad Network

### Innovating with Cooperative Technology

This initiative focuses on integrating advanced technologies into the cooperative model to enhance operations, governance, and engagement. Through the development of cooperative-specific AI models and technology education, this intervention prepares cooperatives to leverage digital tools effectively, fostering innovation within the movement.

- **Projects:**
  - Build a Coop AI Model
  - Create Cooperative AI/Technology Education
- **Partners For Example:** ICETT/P6, Startin' Blox, Patio, CICOPA, other sectors

### Igniting Cooperative Development & Start-ups

This intervention is dedicated to nurturing the growth of new cooperatives and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives within the movement. By building resources and networking opportunities for cooperative startups, this initiative provides a foundation for innovation and expansion, supporting cooperatives from the ground up.

- **Projects:**
  - Improve and Develop New Meet & Greet Sessions
  - Develop a List of Cooperative Incubators
  - Compile Cooperative Start-up Resources
- **Partners For Example:** Co-op Incubators, ICETT/P6, APEX, Federations, Cooperative Development Organisations (ICDP Thematic Committee)

Section VII

# Intervention Initiatives Continued

## Strengthening Cooperative Connections

This initiative aims to foster a globally connected cooperative network that encourages knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and mutual support. By creating a digital platform for networking and resources, this intervention enables cooperatives to build relationships and access valuable connections across the cooperative ecosystem.

- **Projects:**
  - Create a Global Cooperative Networking & Resource Platform
  - Encourage participation and grow this global network.
- **Partners For Example:** Apex Bodies, Federations, ICETT/P6

## Driving Cooperative Sustainability

Focused on environmental leadership, this initiative empowers cooperatives to address climate challenges through sustainable practices. By promoting net-zero resources and carbon exchange opportunities, this intervention positions cooperatives as leaders in climate action, contributing to a more resilient and sustainable future.

- **Projects:**
  - Create Net Zero Planning and Preparation Resources
  - Promote a Cooperative Carbon Exchange
- **Partners For Example:** ICETT/P6, Acorn/Rabo, Solidaridad

## Elevating Cooperative Leadership & Teams

This initiative supports the development of strong cooperative leadership and effective teams, essential for long-term success. By offering leadership training, resources for scaling, and support for heritage sites, this intervention fosters capable, values-driven leaders who can guide cooperatives through evolving challenges.

- **Projects:**
  - Create a Masterclass for Cooperative Leadership
  - Help Cooperatives Scale
  - Support and Develop Cooperative Heritage Sites
  - Create a Cooperative Learning Platform
- **Partners For Example:** ICETT/P6, Coop Incubators

### **Inspiring Cooperative Education**

This initiative is dedicated to cultivating cooperative knowledge and values through education. By creating educational materials and collaborating with institutions, this intervention ensures that cooperative principles are passed down to future generations, strengthening the movement's foundation for lasting impact.

- **Projects:**
  - Create and share a cooperative curriculum with educational institutions
  - Building a global map of Cooperative Heritage Sites: An important theme running through cooperative education programmes is the effective use of co-operative heritage to inform and inspire today's and tomorrow's co-operators. The stories of how cooperators faced serious challenges and overcame them are one of the greatest educational resources available. It places a responsibility on all cooperatives: a responsibility to cherish and safeguard their heritage and to use it effectively in their learning programmes. The Stories.coop website is an example of how contemporary stories can be made easily available. Similarly, technology is now enabling heritage items to become more readily accessible.
- **Partners For Example:** OCB Brasil, Coop Universities (Mondragon, St. Mary, Coop Colleges, etc.), Cooperative Development Organisations (CDOs), Stories.coop and others

Section VIII

# Impacts on Cooperatives

## Impacts of the Interventions on Cooperatives

The ultimate goal of our strategic efforts is to create meaningful, lasting impacts for cooperatives around the world. Each intervention within our Theory of Change is designed with cooperatives at its heart, ensuring that the cooperative movement grows stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to face the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Through our targeted initiatives, we aim to empower cooperatives with the tools, knowledge, and networks they need to thrive in a dynamic and evolving global environment. These impacts encompass improved decision-making, greater public trust, access to growth opportunities, technological advancement, and stronger alignment with cooperative values. Together, these outcomes build a foundation for cooperatives to lead the way in sustainability, attract talent, and scale without compromising their principles.

Below are the specific impacts we envision as the result of our strategic interventions, each contributing to a vibrant, sustainable, and connected cooperative ecosystem that benefits all members and stakeholders.

- 1. Strengthening Cooperative Knowledge:** Cooperatives are informed and inspired – learning and improving with a deeper connection to the cooperative world.
- 2. Making Smarter Decisions:** Cooperatives are able to make educated decisions with access to cooperative-specific data.
- 3. Gaining Community Recognition:** Cooperatives that align with the standards set by the Statement of Cooperative Identity are easily identified and benefit from the global understanding of cooperatives.
- 4. Benefiting from Public Trust:** Cooperatives are understood and benefit from favorable public opinion, beneficial policies and overall awareness.
- 5. Unlocking Growth Opportunities:** Cooperatives are able to innovate and grow with access to capital and financing options.
- 6. Aligning with the Cooperative Network:** Cooperatives are able to see how they align with Cooperatives across their sectors, regions and the world to make better decisions and learn from other cooperatives.

Section VIII

# Impacts on Cooperatives Continued

- 7. Staying Competitive with Technology:** Cooperatives understand and have access to technology solutions that help them stay competitive and embrace the future.
- 8. Building a Stronger Ecosystem:** New cooperatives will be supported and more authentic which will elevate the cooperative ecosystem.
- 9. Facilitating Cooperative Creation:** Cooperatives can more easily create new cooperatives and grow with cooperative specific guidance.
- 10. Connecting with Core Values:** Cooperatives are more connected and support leading them to be better aligned with the principles that are core to the cooperative identity.
- 11. Tapping into Global Networks:** Cooperatives benefit from being connected to the greater cooperative ecosystem. They can easily connect with other cooperatives for trade, collaborations and general sharing of best practices.
- 12. Leading on Sustainability:** Cooperatives have the tools and information necessary to measure their carbon footprint and create an environmental sustainability plan.
- 13. Supporting a Greener Future:** Cooperatives can support other cooperatives as they reduce their carbon footprint.
- 14. Inspiring and Leading Change:** With a deeper understanding of the cooperative identity, leaders are able to inspire their teams, members and community as well as promote their business in a more meaningful way to their customers.
- 15. Scaling Without Compromising Values:** Cooperative leaders can scale and grow without shifting away from the Cooperative Principles.
- 16. Attracting Talent and Members:** With a better global understanding of cooperatives, existing cooperatives will be able to recruit talent and attract more members and customers.

Section IX  
**Going  
Local**

## **Regional and Sectoral Interpretations**

### **A. Introduction to Regional and Sectoral Interpretations of the Strategic Plan**

As the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) advances its global strategic plan, it is essential to recognize the diverse needs and priorities of our regional and sectoral organizations. While the overarching themes, expected impacts, and long-term goals provide a unified direction for the cooperative movement, the specific projects and scope of goals may vary according to local contexts and sector-specific challenges.

This section of the strategic plan invites our regional and sectoral organizations to offer their interpretations and adaptations of the global strategy. Each organization will align with the ICA's broader mission and goals while tailoring their efforts to reflect the unique circumstances and opportunities within their regions or sectors. These localized versions of the strategic plan will maintain coherence with the global framework but will focus on projects that are most relevant and impactful within their specific domains.

Through these interpretations, we ensure that the global cooperative movement remains flexible and responsive, allowing each region and sector to contribute meaningfully to our collective objectives. The collaboration between the ICA and its regional and sectoral partners is vital for the successful implementation of this strategic plan, as it allows for a more nuanced approach that respects the diversity and strengths of our global cooperative network.

In the following sections, each regional and sectoral organization will present their tailored strategic plans, highlighting how they intend to contribute to the global goals while addressing the specific needs of their members and communities. These interpretations will demonstrate the power of the cooperative model to adapt and thrive in varied contexts, ensuring that our movement continues to grow and succeed worldwide.

Section IX

# Going Local Continued

## **B. Interpreting the ICA Strategic Plan: A Guide for Sectoral, Regional, and Thematic Leaders**

The purpose of this guide is to assist you, as a sectoral, regional, or thematic leader, in reviewing the ICA’s strategic plan and determining where your group can make the most significant impact. We encourage you to either focus on specific goals that align with your group’s strengths or provide an interpretation for all the goals. The key is to establish SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) for both the short term (to be achieved by 2030) and the long term (to be achieved by 2035) that align with the global vision while being realistic for your context.

### **Steps for Developing Your Interpretation**

#### **1. Review the ICA Global Strategy**

Begin by thoroughly reviewing the ICA’s strategic plan. Familiarize yourself with the goals, key themes, and expected global impacts. This will give you a strong foundation for identifying the areas where your group can contribute most effectively.

#### **2. Identify Key Goals for Your Group**

Reflect on your sector, region, or thematic area and ask yourself:

- Which goals from the ICA strategy align with our strengths and mission?
- Where can we make the greatest impact, either regionally or sectorally?
- Are there specific challenges or opportunities unique to our group that could align with certain global goals?

You may choose to focus on a subset of the goals where your group can excel, or you can provide an interpretation for all goals if it aligns with your capacity.

#### **3. Set Realistic Goals (Short Term & Long Term)**

Based on your review, set short-term goals (5 years, by 2030) and long-term goals (10 years, by 2035) for your group. Ensure your goals are SMART:

Section IX

# Going Local Continued

- **Specific:** Clearly define what you want to achieve.
- **Measurable:** Establish concrete criteria for tracking progress and measuring success.
- **Achievable:** Ensure the goal is realistic given your resources and constraints.
- **Relevant:** Make sure the goal aligns with both the ICA’s global strategy and your group’s context.
- **Time-bound:** Set a clear timeline for when the goal will be achieved.

#### 4. Align with the ICA’s Global Strategy

Make sure the goals you set contribute to the overall mission of the ICA. Your group’s efforts should align with the key global impacts identified by the ICA, such as increasing cooperative participation, fostering sustainability, and expanding cooperative access to financial resources.

#### 5. Collaborate and Seek Input

Engage your team and stakeholders in the goal-setting process. Their insights can help ensure that the goals are not only aligned with the global strategy but also practical and relevant to your context.







**Step 4: Alignment with ICA Global Strategy**

How do your group’s goals align with the ICA’s global strategy? (Consider impacts like participation, sustainability, financial access, etc.)

ICA Impact Area	How Will Your Goal Contribute?

**Step 5: Resources and Support Needed**

What resources or support will you need to achieve these goals? (e.g., partnerships, funding, expertise, etc.)

ICA Goal Number:	Resources Needed	Who Can Provide Support

## EVOLVING TO MEET THE CHANGING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

2026–2030 Strategic Plan

Working with a Theory of Change helps us to define transformation paths towards the envisioned sustainable growth of the cooperative sector at large. The assumption is that we match continuity paths with innovation paths from the awareness that the ICA bundles in its huge diversity over sectors, regions, cultures and themes one organization, with one strategy using one brand experience.

Continuity is the further scaling, quality raising and effectiveness-building of our current work streams on inclusivity, gender equality, policy, advocacy, legislation, education, information, promotion of sustainable development and achieving endorsements and recognition. Innovation is the long-term ambition to bundle market-based software solutions with preferred developers and implementing partners that not only reaches out to ICA members, but also has the prospect of delivering additional services through the members towards individual cooperatives. A 'coop cloud' as a membership portal under ICA can deliver functional tools to improve social, business, environmental and financial acumen of cooperatives of all sorts, gradually creating our own in-house Big Cooperative Data center.

Our Theory of Change serves as a roadmap for achieving the transformative goals of the cooperative movement through targeted, strategic interventions. This approach begins with Intervention Initiatives—groups of projects designed to drive change within specific focus areas. Each initiative is crafted to address key cooperative needs and align with our overarching strategic objectives.

The Theory of Change then outlines anticipated outcomes over two timelines: Short Term Outcomes (2030), capturing immediate impacts from our interventions, and Long Term Outcomes (2035 and beyond), defining the sustained impact on the cooperative ecosystem and its broader influence.

To ensure that each intervention reaches and engages the right stakeholders, we've identified four Communities of Influence: Local & Regional, Policy Community, Global Community, and Market Community. These communities represent the diverse pathways through which our initiatives will make an impact, ultimately reaching cooperative members, stakeholders, and the public.

The final component in our Theory of Change is the Impact on Individual Cooperatives. This ensures that each intervention is grounded in the practical needs of cooperatives, enabling them to benefit directly from these efforts. The Theory of Change graphic on our website also allows users to explore these components through five key themes—policy, leadership, identity, future, and financing—providing a clear and dynamic view of how each initiative contributes to our strategic vision.

## The Elements:



**The Cooperative Identity**—The foundational framework that influences and guides every intervention.



**Intervention Initiatives**—groups of projects designed to drive change within specific focus areas. Each initiative is crafted to address key cooperative needs and align with our overarching strategic objectives.



**Short Term Outcomes (2030)**—immediate impacts from our interventions that can be achieved by 2030.



**Long Term Outcomes (2035 and Beyond)**—sustained impact on the cooperative ecosystem and its broader influence from 2035 and beyond.



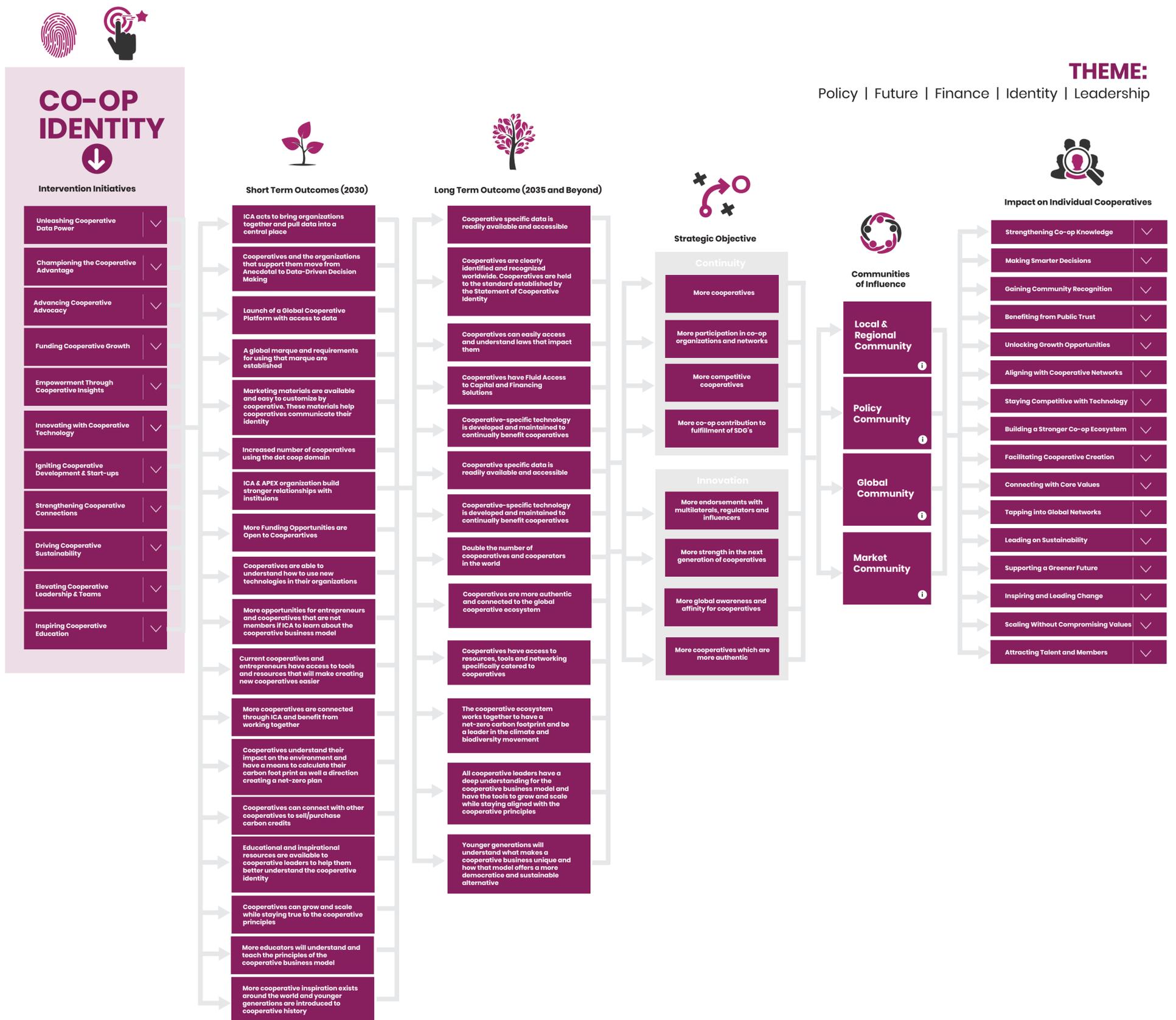
**Strategic Objectives**—The larger directional objectives that each of our initiatives can be grouped within.



**Communities of Influence**—Local & Regional, Policy Community, Global Community, and Market Community. These communities represent the diverse pathways through which our initiatives will make an impact



**Impact on Individual Cooperatives**—Local & Regional, Policy Community, Global Community, and Market Community. These communities represent the diverse pathways through which our initiatives will make an impact





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