



Third official regional event of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025

“The cooperative model: nurturing education and future generations”

October 7-10, 2025
Asuncion, Paraguay

ENG
(Final Version)

Context

The International Year of Cooperatives 2025, proclaimed by the United Nations, highlights the contribution of cooperatives to sustainable development and is based on the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations published in 2023² and on the General Assembly Resolution on the Social Economy of the same year. Cooperatives play a fundamental role in building a more just, equitable, and sustainable society. To further this goal of improving the conditions of the communities where they operate and for future generations of cooperative members, the educational field and its role in social, economic, and environmental contexts become even more crucial.

Cooperatives not only promote collaborative work and mutual support, but also foster essential values such as solidarity, responsibility, and social commitment. These principles can transform not only the way we relate to each other as individuals, but also the way we approach educational processes.

¹ Res. [A/RES/78/175](#) of November 2023 and [A/78/L.71](#) of June 2024

² Res. [A/RES/77/281](#) of 18 April 2023; Report of the Secretary-General [A/78/187](#) of 17 July 2023, Third Committee Report [A/78/472](#) on draft resolution [A/C.3/78/L.11](#); Resolution [A/RES/78/175](#) of December 22, 2023

In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, cooperatives not only facilitate access to formal and informal educational processes but also foster life skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, collective decision-making, and the development of a critical and collaborative mindset. They invite people to be an active part of a common project, contributing knowledge and experiences to achieve shared goals. Furthermore, cooperatives play a key role in reducing inequalities by providing access to quality education to vulnerable or marginalized communities where educational opportunities are limited. Through democratic and participatory management, cooperatives create inclusive and accessible educational environments. More broadly, cooperatives promote and disseminate a comprehensive cultural model.

The power of cooperative education lies in its ability to empower people, giving them a sense of belonging and responsibility. Cooperatives are a reminder that learning is not an isolated endeavor, but a collective process that strengthens us all, one that teaches us that when we work together, we are stronger and capable of achieving great goals.

In this context, there are relevant connections with global initiatives. On the one hand, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)³ plays a fundamental role. This international initiative aims to guarantee inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all children and young people, particularly in developing countries. The GPE seeks to eliminate barriers to learning, ensuring that all children, regardless of their background, have access to an education that allows them to develop fully and contribute positively to society. On the other hand, the Global Education Coalition⁴ also presents an urgent call to action to redefine education in an increasingly interconnected world. This compact seeks to make education a key tool for facing the challenges of the 21st century, ensuring inclusion, social justice, and sustainability.

Based on all of the above, at this event, Cooperatives of the Americas seeks to highlight these characteristics of cooperative education and foster the exchange of experiences and knowledge within the cooperative sector and its complementary partners to enhance the transformative role of cooperatives for future generations, with a special emphasis on youth and women.

Goals:

General objective: To analyze the impact of educational initiatives promoted by the cooperative sector in the Americas

Specific objectives:

OE1. Identify the relevance of education as a hallmark of cooperatives. OE2. Understand the regional status of public policies and programs that link education and the cooperative model. OE3. Identify educational and training strategies that foster cooperative entrepreneurship. OE4. Generate contributions to strengthen educational initiatives promoted by Cooperatives of the Americas, their member organizations, and, in general, in the Americas region.

³ <https://www.unicef.org/chad/global-partnership-education>

⁴ <https://www.unesco.org/es/global-education-coalition>

Preliminary agenda

October 8: How we contribute to formal (curricula) and informal education to foster cooperative identity and attract future generations of cooperators.

Participants: Academics, cooperative members dedicated to education from all productive sectors (councils, committees), government actors linked to scientific-educational systems and representatives of multilateral organizations, leaders of cooperative foundations, allies

8:00 – 9:00 Regional Apertura event

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

- Ing. Agr. Ángel Caballero Rotela - President of the University Cooperative, Paraguay
- Jose Alves, President of Cooperatives of the Americas
- Jörg Herrera, Vice Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Paraguay
- Luis Ramírez, Minister of Education of Paraguay

> Axis 1. Cooperative identity and education

ROOM 1 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 1. Promotion and experience of

cooperative identity

Based on the experience of your organization, how is the cooperative identity fostered, expressed and transmitted? at different levels and in different spaces—including organizational culture, educational and training environments, and everyday life—promoting the active participation of women and young people?

- Presenting: Moderator:
- Mercedes Argaña

- Elibeth Venegas - President, Life Insurance Society of the National Teaching, Costa Rica
- Antonio Ortiz Guanes – Manager, Federation of Multiactive Cooperatives of Paraguay of FECOMULP
- Augusto Ramón Ruiz Díaz - President of the Independent Electoral Tribunal of FECOPAR LTDA.

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 2. Relationship with the community and external stakeholders

How is the cooperative identity evidenced and strengthened in daily interaction with the community and with other external stakeholders, through awareness-raising, education, or communication processes? What role do women and young people play there?

- Presented by: Angel Knight, University Cooperative Ltd.
- Moderator: Mercedes Argaña
- Heloisa Helena Lopes - Vice President, Board of Directors of Sicredi Pioneira (Brazil)
- Mariano Glas - Supermarket Manager, Cooperativa Obrera, Argentina
- Alicia Peña - Financial Manager, Cooperativa COOPEDUC LTDA (member of FECOPAR Paraguay)
- Carlos Barrios - Representative of the Confederation of Rural Cooperatives of Paraguay - CONCOPAR

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 2 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 3. Education for leadership and transformation

How can cooperative education strengthen collective and transformative leadership, promoting leading participation of women, young people and other members in decision-making and in building the future of their cooperatives?

- Presented by: Tereza Ferrando, FECOAC
- Ltda. Moderated by: Daniel Bogado
- Héctor Córdoba – FEDECACES, El Salvador
- Axel Andrés Villalobos Morales, Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica
- Fernando Grifit, Representative of the Federation of Production Cooperatives - FECOPROD LTDA.
- Aldo Jara, Member of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Production Cooperatives - FECOPROD LTDA.

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 4. The role of foundations in promoting cooperative identity

How do foundations linked to the cooperative movement promote, express and transmit the identity of cooperative in different spaces and levels, including organizational culture, educational and training settings, and daily interaction with communities? How do they promote the active participation of women and young people in these processes?

- Presented by: Simona Cavazzutti, CONCOPAR
- LTDA. Moderated by: Daniel Bogado
- Graciana Mujica - Executive Director, NODOS Foundation (Argentina)
- Natalia León - Executive Director, Coopeuch Foundation (Chile)
- Juan Almada - Commercial Manager, University Cooperative (member of FECOMULP Paraguay)
- Ariel Torres - Advisor, Paraguayan Confederation of Cooperatives - CONPACOOOP Paraguay

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 3 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 5. Effective educational approaches with a generational and gender perspective

Considering the diversity of ages, backgrounds, and genders within cooperatives, what educational approaches have proven most effective in transmitting and experiencing the values and principles of cooperative identity, ensuring that they connect with new generations and remain relevant over time?

Presented by: María Noemí Gómez, FECOPAR LTDA.

Moderated by: Bruno Martinez

- Florencia Doná - Education and Training Manager, AFA (Argentina)
- Verónica Morales - Planning Assistant Manager, Riobamba Savings and Credit Cooperative (Ecuador)
- Cynthia Páez - Board Member of the Federation of Multi-Active Cooperatives of Paraguay
FECOMULP
- Mirna Lovatti - President, Education Committee of the Federation of Cooperatives of Paraguay -
FECOPAR LTDA

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 6. Education beyond the technical: sense of belonging and participation

How can cooperative education go beyond technical training, strengthening the cooperative identity, sense of belonging, and active participation of women and young people at all levels of the organization?

Presented by: Daniel Figueredo, 08 de Marzo Cooperative Ltda.

Moderated by: Bruno Martinez member of FECOMULP LTDA.

- Débora Márcia Bruno Ingrisano - Cooperative Development Manager, OCB Brazil
- Arturo Alvarado Hierro - Rector, Mondragón University, Mexico
- Dylan Castro Bolaños, Ministry of Public Education, Costa Rica
- Angelica Villamayor de Vera y Aragón - Director, Polytechnic College of the Capiatá Cooperative Ltda.,

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

> Axis 2. Public policies for cooperative education

ROOM 1 2:15 PM – 3:00 PM Panel 1. Regulatory framework and current programs

Analyzing the public policy landscape in the region, what legal frameworks, programs, and government initiatives currently support or hinder the development of cooperative education, especially those aimed at promoting the active participation of women and young people?

Presented by: Ana Cuevas, CONPACCOOP LTDA.

Moderated by: Adolfo Balbuena

- Iván Otero, President - League of Cooperatives, Puerto Rico.
- Julia Irene Segovia - SNEC Coordinator, Paraguayan Confederation of Cooperatives - CONPACCOOP.
- Blanca Franco - Academic, National Cooperative Education System (SNEC).
- Fernando Griffit - Representative of the Federation of Production Cooperatives - FECOPROD.

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM Panel 2. Public policies to strengthen cooperative education

Analyzing the public policy landscape in the region, what changes or new policies do you consider crucial to strengthening the development of cooperative education, ensuring the active inclusion of women and young people in training processes and cooperative life?

Presented by: Alcides Quiñonez, FECOMULP LTDA.

Moderated by: Adolfo Balbuena

- Cecilia Tenaglia - Director of Training and Cooperative Education, INACOOOP Uruguay
- David Velázquez Seiferheld, Vice Minister of Higher Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) – Paraguay.
- María Gloria Pereira - Academic Coordinator for CONPACCOOP/CONCOPAR for the incorporation of Cooperative Education into the Curriculum - Law 6.999/22, Paraguay

3:45 PM – 5:15 PM Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 2 2:15 PM – 3:00 PM Panel 3. Strategic alliances for advocacy

What collaborative strategies between the cooperative movement, governments at different levels, and other institutions—such as universities and civil society organizations—have been most effective in promoting public policies that strengthen cooperative education and its impact on development, especially encouraging the active participation of women and young people?

- Presented by: Moderated
- by: Ariel Sandoval
- Barbara Duroselle - Coordinator, International Partnership on Cooperatives, Circular Economy and PortailCoop, HEC Montreal, Canada
- Ana María Aquino - Head of Education Department, Federation of Cooperatives of Paraguay - FECOPAR LTDA
- Ariel Cañiza - General Manager, Medalla Milagrosa Cooperative (member of FECOMULP)
- Raúl Alvarenga - General Manager of CABAL Paraguay (member of FECOMULP)

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM Panel 4. Gender equity and youth empowerment

Considering current socioeconomic and environmental challenges, how can public cooperative education policies be designed that actively contribute to gender equity and strengthen youth participation in the management, decision-making, and promotion of cooperatives?

- Presented by: Eva Noelia Villalba, Cooperativa Universitaria
- Ltda. Moderated by: Ariel Sandoval.
- Nicolás Jacquet - President, Regional Youth Committee of Cooperatives of the Americas
- Ilcheong Yi - Senior Coordinator, UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)
- Myriam Báez - President, Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives FECOAC Paraguay.
- Sonia Brucke - Vice Minister of Equality and Non-Discrimination - Ministry of Women, Paraguay.

3:45 PM – 5:15 PM Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 3 2:15 PM – 3:00 PM Panel 5. Cooperative education for productivity and management

Considering current socioeconomic and environmental challenges, how can public policies for cooperative education be designed to maximize their contribution to productivity and to strengthening management and oversight capacities within the cooperative sector, while promoting the active participation of women and young people?

Presented by: Olga Fisher, FECOAC LTDA.

Moderated by: Nancy Oilda Benitez

- Helmer Velázquez Ferrera, President – INACOP, Guatemala
- Víctor Vázquez, Representative of the Confederation of Rural Cooperatives of Paraguay - CONCOPAR
- Eduardo Valenzuela, Representative of the Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives - FECOAC

15:00 – 15:45 Panel 6. Institutional recognition and inclusive approach

What strategies can be developed within the cooperative movement, in coordination with public and social actors, to achieve greater institutional recognition of cooperative education, while also ensuring that it incorporates a gender perspective and the active participation of young people?

Presented by: Heinz Alfred Bartel, CONCOPAR LTDA.

Moderated by: Nancy Oilda Benitez

- Irving Mathews Soto - Advisor to the Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica
- Hernando Raichakowski - Representative of the Federation of Production Cooperatives - FECOPROD
- Juana Giménez - Representative FECOPAR, National Committee of Women Cooperatives CONPACCOOP

3:45 PM – 5:15 PM Labs and discussion panels

October 9: How we contribute to formal (curricula) and informal education to foster cooperative identity and attract future generations of cooperators.

> Axis 3. Education for cooperative entrepreneurship

ROOM 1 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 1. Technical support and mentoring for entrepreneurs and young cooperators

What innovative models of technical support and mentoring can be integrated into cooperative entrepreneurship education programs to facilitate the transition from idea to action, ensure the sustainability of new initiatives, and promote the leadership of women and young people in these processes?

Presented by: Julius Caesar Guillen, FECOPAR LTDA.

Moderator: Mercedes Argaña

- Natalia León - Executive Director, Coopeuch Foundation, Chile
- Araceli Florentín - President of the Youth Committee, Federation of Cooperatives of Paraguay - FECOPAR
- Gustavo Giménez - Vice Minister of MSMEs of Paraguay

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 2. Inclusive financial access for cooperative ventures

What innovative models of financial support can be incorporated into cooperative entrepreneurship education programs to facilitate the launch and sustainability of new cooperatives, especially promoting access and leadership among women and young people?

Presented by: Tomas Villalba, Cooperativa 08 de Marzo Ltda.

Moderated by: Adolfo Balbuena

- Gricel Di Bert - Head of Sustainable Strategic Management, La Segunda, Argentina;
- William Ortiz - President, FideCoop, Puerto Rico;
- Jorge Martínez - Representative of the Confederation of Rural Cooperatives of Paraguay - CONCOPAR;
- Diego Segovia - General Manager, Cooperativa Universitaria, Paraguay

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 2 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 3. Key competencies for a new cooperative generation

What are the essential competencies that cooperative entrepreneurship education programs should prioritize to prepare women, young people, and future generations to create and manage sustainable, successful cooperatives with a positive social impact?

Presented by: Jorge Cruz Roa, CONPACOOPT LTDA.

Moderated by: Daniel Bogado

- Nicolás Jacquet - President, Regional Youth Committee
- Mariela Goldin Pages - Training Manager, NODOS Foundation Argentina
- Laura Rasquin, Representative of the Federation of Production Cooperatives - FECOPROD LTDA.
- Vidalia Burgos - Representative of the Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives - FECOAC LTDA.

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 4. Strategic alliances as catalysts for cooperative entrepreneurship

How can public and private sector networks play a catalytic role in cooperative entrepreneurship education, connecting women and young entrepreneurs with resources, knowledge, and collaborative opportunities that drive the creation, consolidation, and growth of new cooperatives with social impact?

Presented by: Walter Gamarra, FECOMULP LTDA.

Moderated by: Ariel Sandoval

- Walter Alvarado, President – Federal, Guatemala
- Mario León Frutos, Manager of the Territorial Development and Family Farming Program, IICA, Costa Rica
- Iván León, FAO Representative in Paraguay

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels

ROOM 3 9:30 – 10:10 Panel 5. International cooperation and educational strengthening

How have agreements with international organizations contributed to strengthening cooperative entrepreneurship education in the region, and what impact have they had on promoting initiatives led by women and young people?

Presented by: Myriam Baez Rojas, FECOAC LTDA.

Moderated by: Nancy Oilda Benitez

- Viviana Villaraga Ortiz - Partner Relations Manager, SOCODEVI Office in Peru
- Emiliano Estigarribia - Manager of Organizations and Processes, Paraguay University Cooperative
- José Manual Bautista - Director, DGRV Paraguay

10:15 – 11:00 Panel 6. Scalability and sustainability of initiatives led by youth and women

What are the main challenges to the scalability and sustainability of cooperative ventures led by women and youth, and how can cooperative education address them to strengthen their sustainability and long-term projection?

Presents: Carlos Velasquez, University Cooperative Ltda.

Moderated by: Bruno Martinez

- Heyshel Jazmín Cordero Fernández - Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica
- Enrique Bóveda - Representative of FECOPAR LTDA
- Rocío Barros - CONPACOOB Academic.

11:00 – 12:30 Labs and discussion panels 12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:15 – 16:30 Parallel sessions

Parallel session 1. Dialogue of knowledge: cooperatives, education and indigenous peoples

Presented by: Vicente Cabaña - Member of the Board of Directors of FECOPAR LTDA.

Moderation: Maria Gloria Pereira, CONCOPAR - CONPACOOB

- Andrea Lino Machi, President - Tranchichi Emberá Drua Cooperative, Panama
- Yoraima Navarro, Arhuaco leader, Founder
- Josa Peace Builders, Colombia
- Olga Fisher, President of the Education Committee of FECOAC LTDA.

Parallel session 2. Other experiences on education, associative entrepreneurship and future generations

Presents: Mario Pereira, CONPACCOOP LTDA

Moderation: Mercedes Argaña, FECOPAR LTD

- Guillermo Tavernier, Advisor - Sancor Foundation, Argentina
- Javier Di Biase, Manager - Sancor Foundation, Argentina
- Rosa Rivarola, Senior Education Consultant - DGRV
- Pablo Perdomo, President - Federated Agricultural Cooperatives.
- Cynthia Figueredo, Minister of Women, Paraguay
- Joaquín Santiviago, Coordinator Headquarters Paraguay of Current Schools*

Parallel session 3. The voices of young people: challenges and interests in cooperative contexts



Presenter: Cynthia Paez, FECOMULP LTDA

Moderación: Mabel Segovia, FECOPAR LTDA

- Regional Youth Committee of Cooperatives of the Americas
- Technical Baccalaureate in Cooperativism (BTCoop), National School of Commerce No. 1 Alfonso B. Fields.
- The Support Educational Center (CEP) of the San Lorenzo Cooperative Ltd.
- Capiatá Cooperative Polytechnic College Ltd., Ypacaraí Cooperative Polytechnic College Ltd.
- Schools with Cooperative School models from the Lambaré Cooperative.
- San Juan Bautista T.M. Technical School - MICROCOOP Ltda. School Cooperative
- Prof. María del Carmen Morales National School of Achucarro - T.N. Model of Social Responsibility with the Community Cacique Lambaré National School T.N. - Solidarity School Cooperative

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM | Closing remarks 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM | Wine reception and cultural event

8:00 - 9:00 | Registration and Welcome 9:15 - 10:00 | Remarks by Authorities Present

(order to be defined according to national protocol)

Presenter: Master of Ceremony

- César Cruz Roa - Representative of Paraguay, Council of Cooperatives of the Americas
- Jose Alves de Souza - President, Cooperatives of the Americas
- Ariel Guarco - President, International Cooperative Alliance
- Valtencir Méndes - Head of Education, UNESCO
- Regional Office in Santiago
- Carlos Nuñez Agüero - Senator, President of the Bicameral Commission on the Social Economy

10:00 - 10:15 | Context. *Education as a driver of a new paradigm of sustainable development*

- Danilo Salerno - Regional Director, Cooperatives of the Americas

Agreement signed by Cooperatives of the Americas and the UNESCO Regional Office in Santiago

10:30 – 12:00 | Panel “Public Policies for Cooperative Education, Promoting What the transformation Region Needs”

Presenter: Master of Ceremony

Dialogue between:

- Helmer Velasquez Ferrera - President, INACOP Guatemala
- Valtencir Méndes – Head of Education, UNESCO Regional Office in Santiago
- Carlos Romero Roa - President, INCOOP
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Moderated by: Simona Cavazzutti, President of CONCOPAR and President of REDACOOOP - Regional Committee of Agricultural Cooperatives of the Americas

12:45 - 1:45 PM | Lunch

12:45 - 1:45 PM | Lunch

2:00 PM–2:45 PM | Cooperatives, educational models, and cultures among indigenous and native peoples

Presenter and moderator: Cooperatives of the Americas

- Yoraima Navarro - Reporter of the technical workshops held on October 8 and 9
- Andrea Lino Machi - representative of the Tranchichi Emberá Drua Cooperative, Panama
- Carolina Pava, National Gender Officer - ILO Project Office - Colombia (v)

3:00-4:00 PM | Panel "Cooperative Identity: Models for Education and Entrepreneurship"

- Presentation of the results of the research on "Evolution of the cooperative sector between the International Years of Cooperatives 2012-2025": Paula Arzadun - Head of Education, Training and Research, Cooperatives of the Americas
- Danilo Salerno – Regional Director, Regional Director of Cooperatives of the Americas
- Commentators: Nicolas Jacquet, President of the Regional Youth Committee of Cooperatives of the Americas and Myriam Baez, President of the Regional Gender Equity Committee of Cooperatives of the Americas

Presents and moderates: Alicia Maneiro, President of the Regional Housing Committee of Cooperatives of the Americas

4:00 PM–4:45 PM | Report Panel from the October 8th and 9th sessions and official closing ceremony

- Rocío Barros - Academic coordination team for the event
- Blanca Franco - Academic coordination team for the event
- Paula Arzadun - Head of Education, Training and Research, Cooperatives of the Americas

Current situation and perspectives: cooperative education and future generations

- Ariel Guarco – President, International Cooperative Alliance
- José Alves De Souza Neto – President, Cooperatives of the Americas
- Ana Beatriz Riquelme – President of CONPACOOOP and Coordinator of the Law 6999/22 Program

Presents and moderates Danilo Salerno, Regional Director of Cooperatives of the Americas